

Thesis Question

How can architecture and design be used to better accommodate the unique needs of neurodivergent people and improve the wellbeing of building users?

Abstract

Most resources available to neurodiverse people are provided by their K through 12 schools. Once they graduate, there is no way for many to get the assistance they need to live happy and productive lives. This thesis explores how architecture can impact the well-being of neurodivergent people and what the built environment can do to better accommodate the unique needs of individuals in this population.

This project explores designing for neurodivergent people through the design of a community building centered around the needs of neurodivergent people that serves as a place to obtain resources and assistance that isn't otherwise available. Accessibility for those with different neurological functions is currently under addressed in architecture. This thesis will demonstrate that by using calming environments, sensory zoning, wayfinding aids, limiting distractions, reducing stressful situations, and implementing escape spaces that architecture can better accommodate and provide benefit to neurodiverse people. This project also aims to improve the acceptance of neurodiverse identities and push back on the negative stigmas often associated with this population.