

Guide for Educators

SWOT Analysis

for Career Orientation in Neurodiverse
Classrooms



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KEY TERMS & DEFINITIONS



NEURODIVERGENT YOUTH

Young people whose brains function differently from what is considered typical. This includes conditions such as ADHD, autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia, and others.

NEURODIVERSITY

The concept that **neurological differences are natural variations of the human brain and should be recognized and respected** as part of human diversity.



ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)

A condition that affects attention, focus, and impulse control. It can lead to challenges in organization but often brings strengths like creativity and high energy.



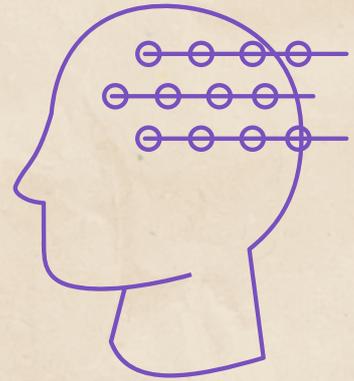
DYSLEXIA



A learning difference that primarily affects reading, writing, and spelling skills. People with dyslexia often have strong problem-solving and creative thinking abilities.

DYSPRAXIA

A condition that affects motor coordination and planning, sometimes impacting organization and time management. Individuals often excel in strategic and analytical thinking.



DYSGRAPHIA

A learning difficulty that makes writing by hand challenging, affecting spelling, handwriting, and the ability to express ideas on paper clearly.



SWOT ANALYSIS

A tool to evaluate Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats of a person, project, or organization to guide better decisions and strategy.



INTRODUCTION

This guide is part of the C-Skills Project, co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union and implemented in North Macedonia, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Czechia.

The project develops tools and resources to help mentors, educators, youth workers, and other professionals support young people in planning their careers and professional growth.

The guide promotes inclusive and personalized career guidance, especially for neurodivergent youth, using practical methods like SWOT analysis.

It is designed to work alongside other C-Skills tools, helping professionals deliver structured, engaging, and supportive activities so that young people can discover their strengths, overcome challenges, and make informed choices about their

WHY IT MATTERS?

Career planning is an essential part of education. It helps students make informed choices about their future while building skills they will use throughout life.



Career planning is an essential part of education. It helps students make informed choices about their future while building skills they will use throughout life.

For neurodivergent youth, such as those with ADHD, dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, or autism, this process can be even more complex.

These youth often face unique challenges in communication, organization, and decision-making, but

they also bring exceptional strengths such as creativity, problem-solving, and innovative thinking that traditional career guidance methods often overlook.



WHY A SWOT ANALYSIS?

A SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) is a practical and effective tool for self-reflection and planning that empowers students to:

- **Recognize their strengths** and how they can be applied to careers.
- **Identify their weaknesses and challenges** that may require support from professionals.
- **Explore opportunities** for training, internships, and support.
- **Prepare themselves** for all sorts of barriers or obstacles.
- **Build confidence.**



For neurodivergent youth, SWOT is especially effective because it **offers a clear structure, uses visual organization, and presents their skills and traits in a positive way**, helping them see their unique abilities as strengths.

WHY SCHOOLS SHOULD IMPLEMENT IT?

Implementing SWOT-based career orientation in schools is essential because it:

(1) Promotes inclusive education by providing equal opportunities for all students, including those who are neurodivergent and by valuing diverse skills and perspectives.

(3) Prepares students for real-life situations like job interviews, self-advocacy and applications.

(2) Prepares students for personalized career planning, helping them choose paths that fit their strengths and interests.



(4) Builds self-awareness, confidence, and decision-making skills, which are critical for future success.

(5) Supports guided learning and career development, ensuring that students have the tools and strategies they need.



THE ROLE OF EDUCATORS

Educators play a critical role in making career guidance **inclusive and effective**. During these activities, teachers and counselors can:

- **Create a supportive environment** where students feel safe to share ideas.
- **Guide discussions** to help students recognize strengths they may overlook.
- **Guide discussions** to help students recognize strengths they may overlook.
- **Encourage positive language when describing weaknesses** (e.g., use terms such as “areas for growth”).
- **Provide real-world examples of careers** where diverse skills are an advantage.
- **Break down complex tasks into smaller steps** for better understanding.
- **Use visuals and templates** to make activities clear and accessible.



PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The guide is designed for three sessions of 45–60 minutes each:

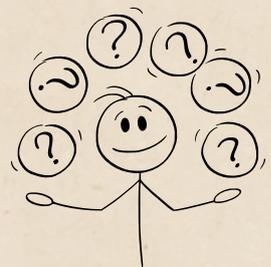
SESSION 1:
Introduction to SWOT & Self-Reflection



SESSION 2:
Group Brainstorming & Peer Support



SESSION 3:
Action Planning for Career Choices



SESSION 1:

Introduction to SWOT & Self-Reflection

Objective:	Students learn what SWOT means and create their own personal SWOT chart.
Duration:	45 minutes
Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whiteboard or projector• Task Sheet 1: Personal SWOT Map• Pens or pencils, sticky notes

STEPS

STEP 1: EXPLAIN SWOT IN SIMPLE TERMS (10 MIN)

Use a relatable example: “Imagine someone who is creative (strength) but finds organizing tasks difficult (weakness). A good career choice for them might be in design, where creativity is valued, and uses digital tools to help him/her with organization.”





Step 2: Group Discussion (10 min)

Ask students:

- What do you think are personal strengths?
- What are weaknesses?
- What is an opportunity? Or a threat?



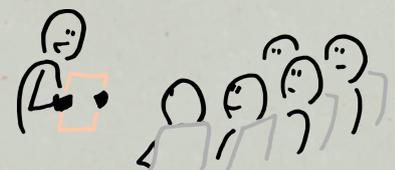
Step 3: Personal SWOT Map Exercise (25–30 min)

(3.1) Students identify their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats using Task Sheet 1 from page 10.

(3.2) Students complete the SWOT chart individually while educators guide them with examples from Educator’s Toolbox and prompts.

Prompts:

- Strengths: “What are you really good at?”
- Weaknesses: “What do you find challenging?”
- Opportunities: “What could help you succeed?”
- Threats: “What might get in the way?”



Task Sheet 1: Personal SWOT Map

STRENGTHS

“What are you really good at?”

WEAKNESSES

“What do you find challenging?”

OPPORTUNITIES

“What could help you
succeed?”

THREATS

“What might get in the way?”

SESSION 2:

Group Brainstorming & Peer Support

Objective:	Students share ideas and learn from each other's experiences.
Duration:	~ 60 minutes
Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large paper sheets for group SWOT charts• Markers• Sticky notes

STEPS

STEP 1: FORM SMALL GROUPS OF 5–6 STUDENTS (5-10 MIN).

Keep the groups small enough to give every student the opportunity to share his/her opinions. Consider mixing students with different strengths, interests, and neurodivergent profiles. Assign simple roles to keep groups focused (e.g., a facilitator, notetaker, reporter, timekeeper), and set clear instructions and time limits for each activity.



Step 2: Encourage sharing personal SWOT Maps (15-20min).

Instruct students to share one strength and one weakness from their personal SWOT maps from Session 1. Encourage positive framing by asking them to consider how they might turn their weaknesses into an opportunity. Example: “I sometimes struggle with focus, but I’ve learned strategies to manage it and finish projects on time.”

Step 3: Group SWOT Discussion or Peer Feedback (20–25 min).

3.1. Ask students to create a group SWOT chart that identifies common strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

3.2. Give students large sheets of paper with four quadrants, sticky notes and/or markers.

3.3. Ask each student to contribute with at least one idea.



3.4. Use sticky notes so students can move or cluster ideas.

3.5. Encourage discussion and examples sharing: “Can someone give an example of how this strength could be used in a career?”

Offer prompts such as:

- “Which of your strengths could help you in a team project?”
- “Can one of your weaknesses be turned into a skill to learn?”

Task Sheet 2: Group Swot Chart

STRENGTHS

“What is the group really good at?”

WEAKNESSES

“What is challenging for the group?”

OPPORTUNITIES

“What could help the group succeed?”

THREATS

“What might get in the way of the group?”

SESSION 3:

Action Planning for Career Choices

Objective:	Help students turn their SWOT analysis into a practical career plan with goals and actions.
Duration:	45-60 minutes
Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Task Sheet 3: Career Action Plan• Career examples (printed or PPT)

STEPS

STEP 1: REVIEW PERSONAL & GROUP SWOT (10 MIN)

Give students a few minutes to revisit their personal SWOT map and note any new insights gained from their group work.

Encourage them to highlight 2-3 key strengths and opportunities that stand out.

To assist them, use an example SWOT map on the board.



Step 2: Set SMART Goals (15 min)

Guide students to create 2–3 SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) based on their SWOT analysis.

Examples:

- “Improve time management by using a daily planner for one month.”
- “Explore three careers that match my creative strengths by next semester.”

Step 3: Identify Action Steps & Resources (15 min)

3.1. Encourage students to list practical steps to achieve each goal or overcome 2-3 weaknesses or threats (e.g., “Join a study skills workshop,” “Talk to a mentor,” “Take an online course”).

3.2. Encourage them to also identify resources to achieve those goals (e.g., school programs, community projects, online platforms).

Step 4: Peer Sharing & Feedback (10–15 min)

Form small groups or pairs in which students share one goal and its action steps. Instruct peers to give suggestions for improvement, highlighting strengths in each other’s plans, and to jointly brainstorm careers where these strengths apply.

Task Sheet 3: Career Action Plan

MY STRENGTHS

MY OPPORTUNITIES

CAREER MATCHES

STEPS TO OVERCOME
WEAKNESS /THREATS

EDUCATOR'S TOOLBOX

Supporting Youth with SWOT Analysis

This section provides practical resources, examples, and prompts to help educators guide all students, especially neurodivergent youth.

1. Examples for Each SWOT Category

Use these examples to help students reflect on their own skills and experiences:

Category	Examples
Strengths	Creativity, problem-solving, curiosity, focus on detail, empathy, leadership, communication, resilience, technical skills, artistic talent
Weaknesses	Difficulty with time management, challenges with focus, shyness, disorganization, sensitivity to criticism, slow reading/writing
Opportunities	Internships, mentorship programs, workshops, online courses, supportive networks, project-based learning, volunteering, assistive technology
Threats	Peer pressure, lack of support at school or home, bias or misunderstanding by employers, limited resources, high-stress situations

Tip for educators:

Ask students to add personal examples to each category after reviewing the table.

2. Transforming Weaknesses into Opportunities

Encourage students to re-frame challenges as potential advantages.

Weakness	Positive transformation / career opportunity
Difficulty with organization	Use digital tools or structured routines; explore creative fields or tech careers with project management support
Shyness	Build confidence through workshops; focus on careers valuing observation, research, or one-on-one interaction
Slow reading or writing	Use visual or hands-on learning methods; explore design, arts, or tech-focused careers
Impulsivity	Channel energy into dynamic fields like entrepreneurship, marketing, or events management

Tips for educators:

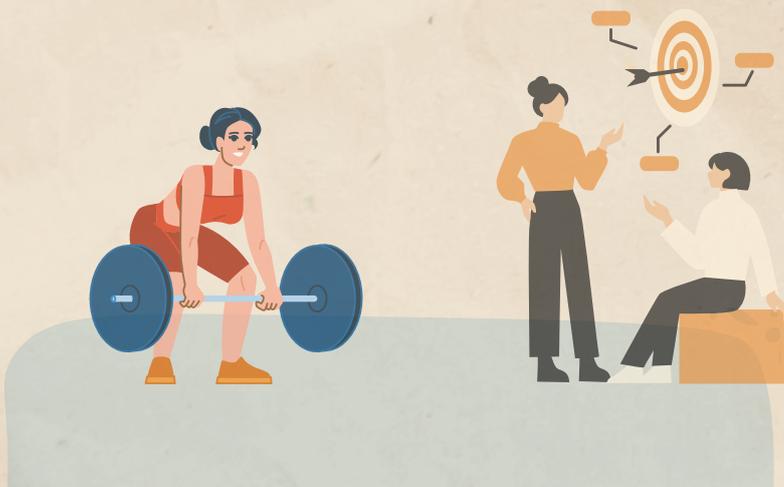
Highlight real-life examples of people who turned their “weakness” into a unique career advantage.



3. Matching Strengths to Career Opportunities

Use this table to inspire students to think about careers aligned with their strengths:

Strength	Potential Careers / Roles
Creativity	Graphic designer, architect, UX/UI designer, marketing specialist
Attention to detail	Data analyst, laboratory technician, quality control, coding
Empathy	Social worker, counselor, healthcare professional, teacher
Problem-solving	Engineer, software developer, consultant, researcher
Leadership	Project manager, team leader, community organizer
Resilience	Entrepreneurship, coaching, advocacy roles



4. Key Skills Required in Diverse Careers

Discuss these skills with students to help them connect personal strengths and interests to real careers:

- **Communication & Collaboration** – teacher, journalist, HR professional.
- **Analytical & Logical Thinking** – data analyst, engineer, software developer.
- **Creativity & Innovation** – designer, marketer, product developer.
- **Empathy & Social Awareness** – social worker, psychologist, healthcare professional.
- **Technical Skills** – IT, coding, laboratory research
- **Adaptability & Problem-Solving** – project manager, entrepreneur, consultant.

Tips for educators:

Ask students to highlight which skills they already have and which they want to develop.

5. Classroom Prompts and Discussion Questions

Use these to guide reflection and group work:

- “What is one skill you are proud of?”
- “What challenge have you overcome recently?”
- “Which careers interest you and why?”
- “How could one of your weaknesses become a strength in a job or project?”
- “What opportunities could help you grow or learn new skills?”

Tips for educators:

Give students time to think individually before sharing in pairs or groups.

ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR EDUCATORS

- **Use positive language:**

Encourage terms like “areas for growth” instead of “problems.”

- **Offer visual aids:**

Use charts, icons, color-coding to make activities clear.

- **Give one step at a time:**

Especially for students who struggle with attention or executive function (ADHD).

- **Allow multiple ways of responding:**

E.g., writing, drawing, or using digital tools.

- **Celebrate progress:**

Acknowledge each student’s efforts, not just the final result.

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