

SPOTLIGHT

the best of the
BAY AREA

REEL Supports Neurodivergent and Twice-Exceptional Learners

As students across the country return to classrooms this fall, REEL (Resilience & Engagement for Every Learner) is launching our back to school campaign ***Bridge the Gap, Build the Year.***

Roughly 1 in 20 students are “twice-exceptional” (2e); learners who show both advanced skills for their age while also being neurodivergent, such as autistic, dyslexic, or having ADHD, among others. Yet too often, these learners go unseen. The mental health toll is real.

50%



Up to 50% of autistic and ADHD students experience depression

70%



70% or higher of these students experience anxiety

50%

50% of students with dyslexia reported being bullied or teased

Bridge the Gap, Build the Year encourages educators to see the whole child—and to co-create strong partnerships with families to better support neurodivergent learners. The campaign focuses on uniting families, educators, and students through collaboration and three core commitments:

1. **See the Strengths** – Collaborate to recognize each child’s unique abilities, not just their struggles.
2. **Grow Together** – Build strong, collaborative networks of families, educators, and advocates to foster open communication and prevent anxiety and depression.
3. **Share the Tools** – Equip parents, caregivers and educators with strategies and resources that foster consistent, strength-based support at home and school.

By focusing on these three pillars, we can bridge the gaps that hold students back and create a truly collaborative start to the year—one that supports both academic success and the emotional well-being every learner needs to thrive.

To help spread awareness of this issue, REEL invites educators, parents, administrators, and advocates to explore, share and:

1. download our free parent toolkits
2. attend an upcoming event in our Signature Speaker Series
3. dive into the Silicon Valley State of Neurodiversity Pulse Check findings
4. watch and share our Social Impact Video

All elements of our campaign can be found at:
<https://www.reel2e.org/post/bridge-the-gap-build-the-year>



Together, we can reimagine what back-to-school looks like—for every learner—fostering not only academic success, but also emotional resilience and mental well-being. By **focusing on students’ strengths, sharing practical tools and resources, and building collective awareness**, we can grow together as a community and create lasting change on this critical issue.



About REEL

REEL (Resilience and Engagement for Every Learner) is a community-driven non-profit organization that ensures Silicon Valley neurodivergent, twice-exceptional students thrive in school by raising parent and educator awareness and understanding of practical, research-based strategies to address their needs successfully. To learn more about REEL, visit www.reel2e.org.

“At REEL, we believe every neurodivergent & twice-exceptional student deserves to be recognized for their strengths.” said **Abby Kirigin**, Executive Director of REEL.

“When these students are misunderstood in school, the impact extends beyond academics, affecting mental health, eroding confidence, and impacting long-term well-being.”



ABBY KIRIGIN, Ed.D.
Executive Director

