

# THE MASKING ICEBERG (Children)

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Masking is when a child hides or changes their behaviour to fit in or feel safe. It is common in neurodivergent children and can be exhausting over time.

## ON THE OUTSIDE



Quiet,  
well-behaved



Doing well  
at school



Polite, no trouble



"Coping"



Follows rules

## UNDER THE SURFACE



Copying  
others



Hiding  
confusion



Forcing social  
behaviour



Trying not  
to stand out



Rehearsing  
what to say

## DEEPER DOWN



Exhausted  
after school



Anxiety about  
getting things  
wrong



Meltdowns  
at home



Feeling  
different



Overwhelmed  
by social  
situations

## DEEP IMPACT



Low self-esteem



Does not ask  
for help



Fear of being  
judged



Difficulty knowing  
who they are

A child who looks fine may be working very hard to cope.

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