

Support positive peer relationships

A suggestion for implementing the strategy
'Foster relationships and partnerships' from
the Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

Includes:

- Build relationships for learning
- Facilitate friendships
- Foster buddy systems
- Circle of friends
- Foster collaboration and group work
- Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

Strategy: [Foster relationships and partnerships](#)

Suggestion: [Support positive peer relationships](#)

Date

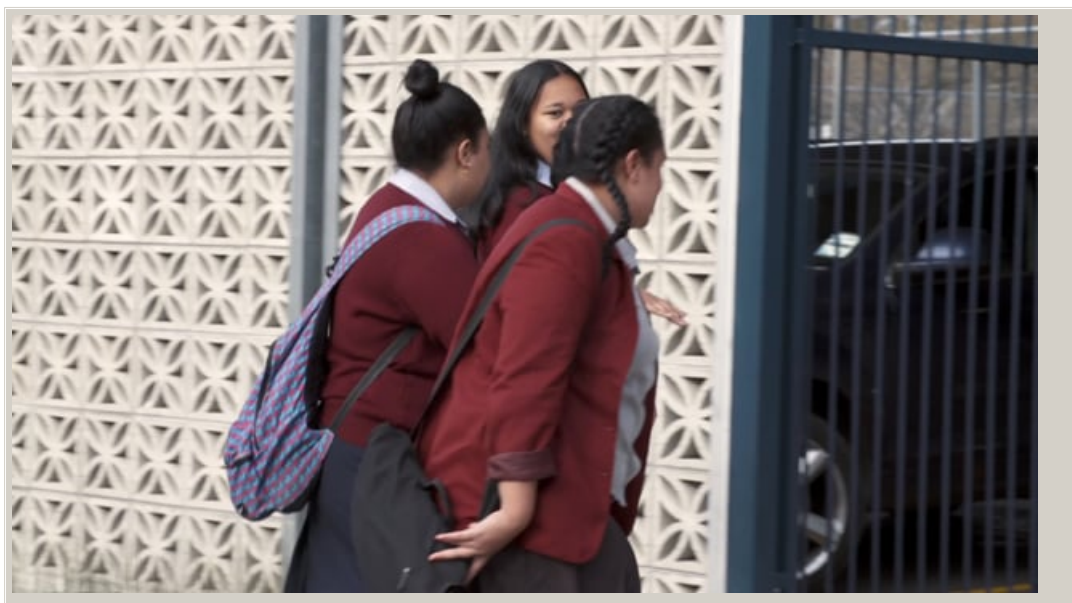
15 September 2025

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/behaviour-and-learning/support-positive-peer-relationships

Build relationships for learning

McAuley High School staff and students talk about how they are conscious and caring of each other and seek to build a collective sense of belonging and acceptance.



Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/221215340>

Closed Captions

Source:

[Education Review Office](#)

<https://ero.govt.nz/our-research/relationships-for-learning>

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Facilitate friendships

Friendships are an important foundation in an inclusive classroom.

Some strategies to create and maintain friendships.

- Identify interests – Allow learners to express their interests through discussion, surveys, games, and clubs to help them discover other students who are like-minded.
- Highlight strengths – Highlight student strengths to help learners to feel valued and confident among their peers.
- Emphasise social skills – Embed opportunities to teach social skills in the curriculum, for example, in games, problem-solving activities, class meetings or discussions.
- Provide opportunities – Encourage friendships through social opportunities such as play, group work, class trips or school-wide activity days.

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Foster buddy systems

The tuakana-teina relationship provides the model for a buddy system. The older or more expert tuakana helps and guides the younger or less expert teina as these learners create digital stories.



Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/61992804>

Closed Captions

Source:

[Enabling e-Learning \(NZ\)](#)

<https://elearning.tki.org.nz/Teaching/Future-focused-learning/Digital-stories/Teaching-digital-stories-using-tuakana-teina>

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Circle of friends

Creating a student support network.

A teacher shares how she uses the Circle of Friends strategy to tackle challenging behaviour and promote inclusion in year 7.



Video hosted on Youtube http://youtu.be/dYCsvr_rQLc

No captions or transcript

Source:

[Teachers Media \(UK\)](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dYCsvr_rQLc

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Foster collaboration and group work

Provide opportunities for ākonga to work with others. Carefully design group or pair activities to maximise productive interactions and learning.

- ✓ Encourage tuakana-teina relationships and create a culture where students provide support for each other.
- ✓ Provide a kete of strategies to help students to listen actively to each other, share ideas, and recognise different points of view.
- ✓ Use a variety of thinking tools, such as [De Bono's thinking hats](#).
- ✓ Assign roles such as speaker, listener, and note-taker to the group members.
- ✓ Develop cross-cultural communication skills, learning how conventions for conversation vary across cultures and contexts.
- ✓ Monitor the discussions to ensure that all students understand the task and have opportunities to participate.

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Useful resources



Sparklers website

The Sparklers website offers a variety of activities to support kindness and friendship.

Publisher: Sparklers

[Visit website](#)



Kei Whea a Mauri Tau

Resource for parents and teachers to read to tamariki aged 6 to 8 years to help them learn about connecting with themselves, others and the environment, and to learn how to respond to their emotions.

Publisher: He Paiaka Tōtara

[Visit website](#)

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