

# Understand social norms, diversity and masking

Encourage and value diverse ways of interacting rather than expecting all learners to socialise in the same way.

For some students, pressure to adhere to social norms and mask or hide individual differences can cause anxiety, stress and exhaustion. Consider the ways that communication varies across cultures and contexts.

For example, eye contact may be an inappropriate social skills goal as it can be uncomfortable for some autistic people and those with anxieties, and is disrespectful in some cultures.

Appropriate social skills are those that support the individual's strengths, needs, personal goals and values. Work with whānau and ākonga to identify appropriate social and emotional goals.

This information was downloaded/printed from the Ministry of Education's website "Inclusive Education". Except where otherwise noted it is Crown Copyright 2018.

Information on the Inclusive Education website is regularly updated so we recommend you check the website version of this information to ensure it remains current.

---

