

# Provide social and emotional support

A suggestion for implementing the strategy  
'Non-traumatic brain injury: Support a return  
to learning and activity' from the Guide:

[Acquired brain injury and learning](#)

- 
- Includes:**
- Notice where support is needed
  - Monitor frustration
  - Gently support participation
  - Useful teaching strategies
  - Reflection questions
  - Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Supporting learners with acquired brain injury](#)

Strategy: [Non-traumatic brain injury: Support a return to learning and activity](#)

Suggestion: [Provide social and emotional support](#)

Date

29 June 2026

Link

[inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/brain-injury/provide-social-and-emotional-support-3](https://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/brain-injury/provide-social-and-emotional-support-3)

---

## Notice where support is needed

Many symptoms of a brain injury can often be misinterpreted.

Instead, these symptoms are signals that a brain is still healing and needs a supportive environment to aid recovery.

- ✓ Behaviour changes triggered by minor events
- ✓ Reduced impulse control
- ✓ Frustration over not being able to do things they could do before
- ✓ Easily overwhelmed
- ✓ Reduced problem-solving skills
- ✓ Unaware of changes in ability
- ✓ Less able to read social cues
- ✓ Inflexible thinking.

## Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Supporting learners with acquired brain injury](#)

Strategy: [Non-traumatic brain injury: Support a return to learning and activity](#)

Suggestion: [Provide social and emotional support](#)

Date

29 June 2026

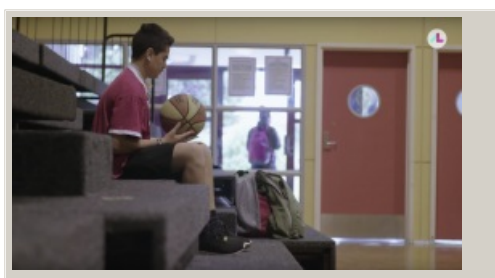
Link

[inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/brain-injury/provide-social-and-emotional-support-3](http://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/brain-injury/provide-social-and-emotional-support-3)

---

## Monitor frustration

A child or young person is likely to find it very frustrating that they can't do what they could in the past.



Video hosted on Youtube <http://youtu.be/Xp--W4QaNSU>

Closed Captions

Source:

[Attitude \(NZ\)](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1pEecEFODR1WZtH5woZTpw>

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Supporting learners with acquired brain injury](#)

Strategy: [Non-traumatic brain injury: Support a return to learning and activity](#)

Suggestion: [Provide social and emotional support](#)

Date

29 June 2026

Link

[inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/brain-injury/provide-social-and-emotional-support-3](https://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/brain-injury/provide-social-and-emotional-support-3)

---

## Gently support participation



Source:

Ministry of Education

[View full image \(7.8 MB\)](#)

## Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Supporting learners with acquired brain injury](#)

Strategy: [Non-traumatic brain injury: Support a return to learning and activity](#)

Suggestion: [Provide social and emotional support](#)

Date

29 June 2026

Link

[inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/brain-injury/provide-social-and-emotional-support-3](https://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/brain-injury/provide-social-and-emotional-support-3)

---

## Useful teaching strategies

Select teaching strategies to support the recovery of a child or young person with a traumatic brain injury.

Seek feedback on what's helpful.

Adjust as needed.

- ✓ Maintain a daily routine as much as possible.
- ✓ Practise dry runs for unfamiliar situations.
- ✓ Provide more structure and fewer choices.
- ✓ Provide activities for unstructured times.
- ✓ Give directions slowly and support them with visual cues.
- ✓ Teach self advocacy skills and prompts, such as “Can you help me get started?”
- ✓ Focus on success – what the child or young person can do.
- ✓ Offer lunchtime buddy groups.
- ✓ Provide direct feedback on social skill development.
- ✓ Suggest and model alternative words and actions in situations that escalate. Avoid descriptions or explanations.
- ✓ Avoid time outs (the child or young person is not likely to independently regroup or calm down).
- ✓ Use social stories to help teach solutions or coping strategies for different situations.

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Supporting learners with acquired brain injury](#)

Strategy: [Non-traumatic brain injury: Support a return to learning and activity](#)

Suggestion: [Provide social and emotional support](#)

Date

29 June 2026

Link

[inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/brain-injury/provide-social-and-emotional-support-3](https://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/brain-injury/provide-social-and-emotional-support-3)

---

## Reflection questions

Adapt for your own context.

**How could you reduce situations that may trigger anxiety?** (Consider minimising changes in routine, cramped working spaces, noise, clutter, unstructured activity, frequent transitions).

**Where can you teach and include relaxation and coping strategies?**

**What processes will you use to regularly check-in with the child or young person?**

**How will you strengthen self-advocacy skills?**

## [Inclusive Education](#)

From

Guide: [Supporting learners with acquired brain injury](#)

Strategy: [Non-traumatic brain injury: Support a return to learning and activity](#)

Suggestion: [Provide social and emotional support](#)

Date

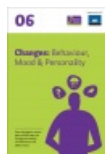
29 June 2026

Link

[inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/brain-injury/provide-social-and-emotional-support-3](https://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/brain-injury/provide-social-and-emotional-support-3)

---

## Useful resources



### Changes: Behaviour, mood & personality

Read time: 3 min

This leaflet explains how damage to certain parts of the brain can change personality and behaviour and affect mood.

[Download PDF](#)



### BrainSTARS: Regulation of emotion

This is a list of practical strategies for teachers and parents supporting students with a brain injury.

Publisher: BrainLine

[Visit website](#)

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.