

# Provide social and emotional support

A suggestion for implementing the strategy

'Concussion: Support a return to learning and activity' from the Guide: [Acquired brain injury and learning](#)

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- Includes:**
- Notice where support is needed
  - Demonstrate empathy
  - Useful teaching strategies
  - Reflection questions
  - Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

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

Strategy: [Concussion: Support a return to learning and activity](#)

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

Date

31 August 2025

Link

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

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## Notice where support is needed

Many symptoms 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.

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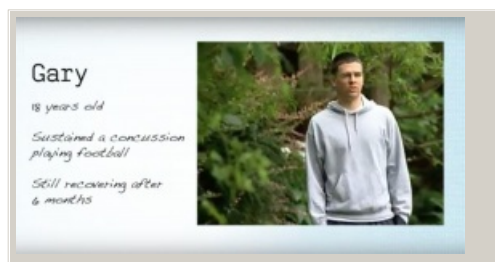
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## Demonstrate empathy

A student talks about the value of adults having empathy for his invisible injury.



Video hosted on Youtube <http://youtu.be/pirBeouSHco>

No captions or transcript

Source:

[CDCFoundationTBI \(USA\)](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCf8JU8VzTkVOZffh1ixHTdw>

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## Useful teaching strategies

Select teaching strategies to support the recovery of a child or young person with a concussion.

Seek feedback on what's helpful.

Adjust as needed.

- ✓ Maintain an organised, uncluttered, and calm learning environment.
- ✓ Create predictable and consistent routines.
- ✓ Prepare for and give reminders of upcoming transitions or changes in routine.
- ✓ Allow wait time for processing what is being said and to allow children and young people to form their own responses.
- ✓ Cue that what you are about to say is important.
- ✓ Teach children and young people to advocate and ask for clarification.
- ✓ Discuss and practise what is expected prior to events.
- ✓ Build awareness of how words and behaviours affect others.
- ✓ Teach thought-stopping, relaxation, or coping strategies, such as taking deep breaths, calming self-talk, and leaving the situation until calm.
- ✓ Incorporate breaks from the setting to regroup, calm, and rest.

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## Reflection questions

Adapt and adjust for your own context.

How could you reduce situations that may trigger anxiety (for example, minimise changes in routine, cramped working spaces, noise, clutter, unstructured activity, frequent transitions)?

Where could you teach and incorporate relaxation and coping strategies into the curriculum?

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

How will you strengthen children and young people's self-advocacy skills?

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## 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](#)

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