

# Support participation and build confidence

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Helpful classroom strategies years 9-13' from the Guide: [Down syndrome and learning](#)

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## **Includes:**

- Give lots of positive feedback
- Encourage sustained participation
- Survey students about preferences
- Support students to tell their story
- Impact of effective support
- Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Down syndrome and learning](#)

Strategy: [Helpful classroom strategies years 9-13](#)

Suggestion: [Support participation and build confidence](#)

Date

19 June 2026

Link

[inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/down-syndrome-and-learning/support-participation-and-build-confidence](https://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/down-syndrome-and-learning/support-participation-and-build-confidence)

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## Give lots of positive feedback



Source:

[Sheba\\_Also](#)

<https://flic.kr/p/dU5rQX>

[View full image \(267 KB\)](#)

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# Encourage sustained participation

Discuss with students what will support their participation and motivation.

Build these suggestions into your teaching practice.

- ✓ Establish clear classroom routines.
- ✓ Teach strategies to help ākongā when they get stuck.
- ✓ Break work into short manageable chunks.
- ✓ Give positive, timely feedback.
- ✓ Brief students about changes to routine.
- ✓ When changing classroom layout, provide a plan of new layout and when it will happen.
- ✓ Provide easy access to quiet spaces for working or winding down.
- ✓ Schedule brain breaks.
- ✓ Notice avoidance tactics or increasing anxiety, implement supports quickly.
- ✓ Offer leadership opportunities based on knowledge of student's expertise and interests.
- ✓ Connect learning to student's interests.
- ✓ Foster tuākana-teina relationships where students support each other.

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## Survey students about preferences

Ask students what supports their learning and what gets in the way.

I personally do a survey at the beginning of every class, every semester ... to get an idea of who is in the classroom to begin with and what they would benefit, or what they want to see in the class, what would work [and not work] for them.

**Nancy Searcy**

**Source:**

Student profiles - UDL supporting diversity in BC schools

[Inclusive Education](#)

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## Support students to tell their story

Support students with Down syndrome to tell their story to others.

Be guided by the student and their whānau.



Video hosted on Youtube <http://youtu.be/-cA3t1HW1Ow>

Closed Captions

Source:

[Jeff Jones \(US\)](#)

<http://youtu.be/-cA3t1HW1Ow>

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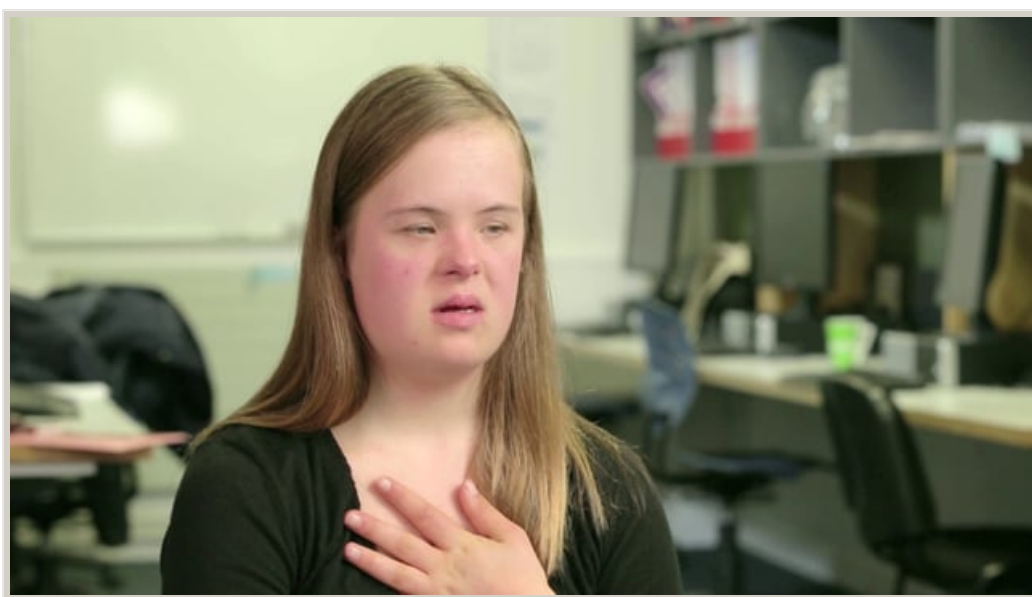
Link

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## Impact of effective support

Katrina  
from  
Onslow  
College  
describes  
how her  
school has  
supported  
to achieve  
her goals.



Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/100662381>

Closed Captions

Source:

[Ministry of Education, inclusive education videos \(NZ\)](#)

<http://vimeo.com/album/2950799>

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## Useful resources



### Positive steps for social inclusion

Read time: 8 min

A guide to supporting social inclusion.

Publisher: National Down Syndrome Society

[Visit website](#)



### Resource hub

Information guides and resources from Down Syndrome Australia that can help to support parents, learners and educators.

Publisher: Down Syndrome Australia

[Visit website](#)

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