

Recognise and manage stress and anxiety

A suggestion for implementing the strategy
'Supporting literacy and numeracy in NCEA'
from the Guide: [Dyslexia and learning](#)

Includes:

- Reduce anxiety
- Schedule regular check-ins
- Provide timely, useful guidance
- Support self-advocacy
- Developing growth mindsets
- Useful resources

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From

Guide: [Dyslexia and learning](#)

Strategy: [Supporting literacy and numeracy in NCEA](#)

Suggestion: [Recognise and manage stress and anxiety](#)

Date

14 September 2025

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Reduce anxiety

Recognise and help ākonga manage anxiety as they participate in literacy and numeracy learning and assessment activities.

- ✓ Reduce surprises and provide support when ākonga do a new task or assignment type for the first time.
- ✓ Give ākonga the chance to practice newly learned skills in a safe place.
- ✓ Create opportunities for ākonga to share successes (if they are comfortable to do so).
- ✓ Talk with ākonga about the ways in which their dyslexia influences their learning and what supports are useful and would be valuable in assessments.
- ✓ Make time to discuss recognising and managing anxiety with the whole class, provide options such as a padlet or anonymous box where learners can post questions or ask for help.
- ✓ Encourage ākonga to look ahead and anticipate key dates and pressure points, such as assignment deadlines or timed assessments and work through scenarios and solutions.
- ✓ Introduce and explore the concept of adopting a growth mindset.

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Schedule regular check-ins

At your regular check-ins with ākonga, ask how they are feeling.

Also ask what supports and strategies are working well and what needs to be adjusted.

- ✓ What's working well for you at the moment?
- ✓ How are you coping with the workload? Let's look at your timetable/organiser and see what changes we can make.
- ✓ Is any part of the work challenging at the moment?
- ✓ What kind of support would be useful?
- ✓ What's something you're looking forward to in the next few days?
- ✓ Is there anything I can do to help?

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Provide timely, useful guidance



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Support self-advocacy

Encourage ākonga to identify learning needs and preferences and how to advocate for them across multiple contexts.

Create opportunities for ākonga to genuinely practice self-advocacy.

- ✓ How to identify when to work alone and when to collaborate.
- ✓ How and when to use text-to-speech and speech-to-text tools.
- ✓ How and when to use text-to-speech to read back text to support editing.
- ✓ How to select the best physical environment for a task or assessment to support attention, focus and achievement.
- ✓ How and when to request and use headphones.
- ✓ Knowing what supports editing in an assessment: Reading aloud written examination responses and correct as they read or hearing what they wrote, and determining whether it is what they intended.

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Developing growth mindsets

Watch this video with ākonga.

Discuss how to move from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset in literacy and numeracy learning.



Video hosted on Youtube <http://youtu.be/DKGO5RjbSgc>

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Useful resources



The dyslexia-stress-anxiety connection

Read time: 10 min

This resource explains stress and anxiety and how they connect with dyslexia. It includes a step-by-step guide for supporting individuals to de-stress.

Publisher: International Dyslexia Association

[Visit website](#)



Too stressed for exam success?

Read time: 7 min

Strategies for neurodiverse learners to develop their study skills, organise themselves with online planning tools and places to find help and support.

Publisher: Young Minds

[Visit website](#)

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