

Support social interaction

A suggestion for implementing the strategy

'Key areas to support' from the Guide:

[Dyspraxia and learning](#)

Includes:

Teach and practise social skills

Approaches to support social skills

Foster collaboration and group work

Plan for successful transitions

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From

Guide: [Dyspraxia and learning](#)

Strategy: [Key areas to support](#)

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Date

12 June 2026

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inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/dyspraxia-and-learning/support-social-interaction

Teach and practise social skills

Give students multiple opportunities to learn how to act in given social contexts.

- ✓ Explicitly teach non-verbal communication strategies, such as eye contact, facial expressions and body language.
- ✓ Explicitly teach skills associated with social interactions, such as joining a group, taking part in two-way conversations, and reading non-verbal cues.
- ✓ Practise skills using role plays, scenarios and turn-taking games.
- ✓ Reduce social demands in learning activities by giving options for smaller groups or independent work.
- ✓ Build a supportive peer group.

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Approaches to support social skills

Professor Amanda Kirby describes how to help children with social and communication skills.



Video hosted on Youtube <http://youtu.be/i-WyTh32-8Y>

No captions or transcript

Source:

[dystalk \(UK\)](#)

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Foster collaboration and group work

Provide opportunities for ākongā to work with others. Carefully design group or pair activities to maximise productive interactions and learning.

- ✓ Encourage tuakana-teina relationships and create a culture where students provide support for each other.
- ✓ Provide a kete of strategies to help students to listen actively to each other, share ideas, and recognise different points of view.
- ✓ Use a variety of thinking tools, such as [De Bono's thinking hats](#).
- ✓ Assign roles such as speaker, listener, and note-taker to the group members.
- ✓ Develop cross-cultural communication skills, learning how conventions for conversation vary across cultures and contexts.
- ✓ Monitor the discussions to ensure that all students understand the task and have opportunities to participate.

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Plan for successful transitions

Plan ahead for students changing schools, moving on to secondary school or leaving school.

- ✓ Ask the student about their concerns and their ideas about the best ways to support their transition.
- ✓ Talk to the SENCO at the new school or your school's Learning Support Coordinator to find out about the learning environments they will be moving to.
- ✓ Give the student the opportunity to spend time in their new school, meeting their teachers and other students and visiting the classrooms where they will work.
- ✓ If the student would find it helpful, work with the new school to introduce them to a buddy to support the transition.
- ✓ Support students to practise the skills needed for job interviews.

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