

Support participation and confidence

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Helpful classroom strategies years 1-8' from the Guide: [FASD and learning](#)

Includes:

- Recognise student effort
- Minimise or remove homework
- Use trauma informed approaches
- Design the day
- Give students time
- Foster collaboration and group work

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and learning](#)

Strategy: [Helpful classroom strategies years 1-8](#)

Suggestion: [Support participation and confidence](#)

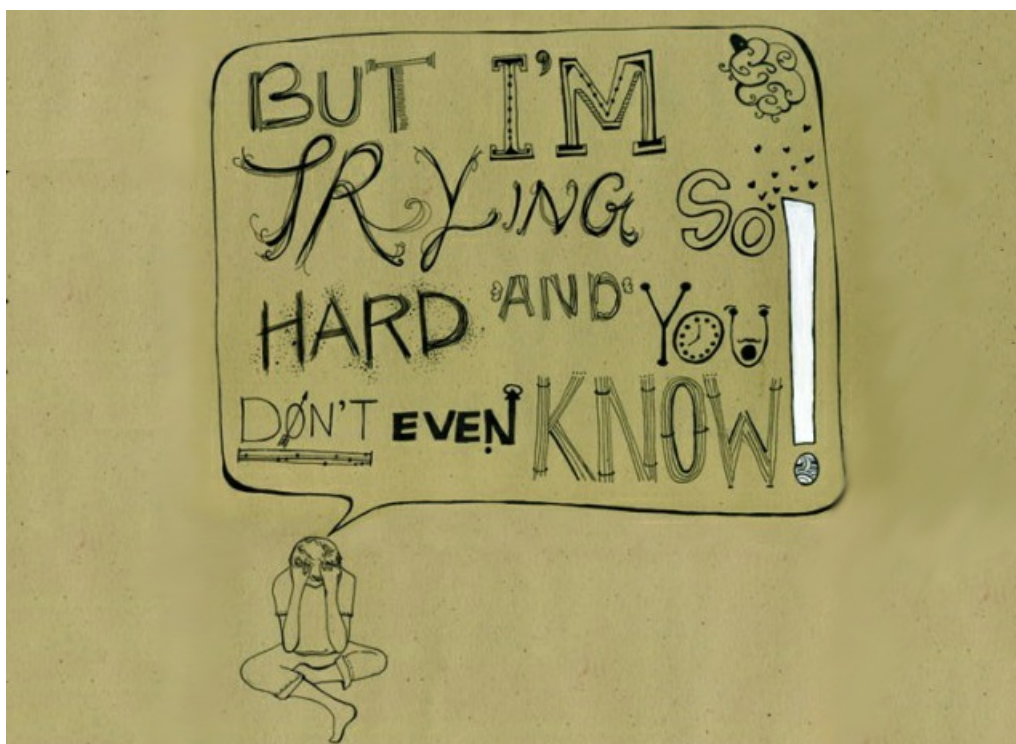
Date

11 June 2026

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inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-and-learning/y1-8-support-participation-and-confidence

Recognise student effort



Source:

[Poppytalk](#)

<https://poppytalk.com/>

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Minimise or remove homework

The school day can be exhausting for a student with FASD. Their brain has to work harder to concentrate and complete each and every task they are given.

When I am at school I use an enormous amount of my energy to keep myself safe and focused.

At the end of school I am extremely tired and do not cope well with homework.

Can you please think about ways to minimise homework for me and make it manageable?

Student

Source:

[Fetal Alcohol Network NZ](#)

https://www.fasd-can.org.nz/caregiver_whanau_support#fasd-and-the-education-system

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Use trauma informed approaches

At Napier's Henry Hill School, their trauma-informed approach includes yoga, regular 'brain breaks' and Te Āhuru Mōwai, the sensory garden which forms a relaxing zone, grounding students in the natural world.



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

Closed Captions

Source:

[Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards 2021](#)

<https://youtu.be/XgpYiLuRybc?si=IyO5RbrMh4xIOSzY>

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Design the day

Careful programme design can help all students, including those with FASD, to be successful, regardless of whether they are in a single classroom, an open plan space or other environment.

Each student will have different needs so collaborate with the ākonga, whānau and the school team.

- ✓ Schedule regular check-ins with ākonga.
- ✓ Assign peer support and supervision for all parts of the school day.
- ✓ Design a timetable to suit the learner with regular quiet or low sensory times.
- ✓ Reduce daily choices and decisions by creating a predictable personalised timetable.
- ✓ Limit the number of different people the student needs to interact with and the time spent with larger or noisy groups of students.
- ✓ Use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to provide flexible learning options to suit students.
- ✓ Design transition signals and consider personalised systems. For example timers, music, traffic light systems.

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Give students time



Source:

Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

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Foster collaboration and group work

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

- ✓ Assign a peer to support students during group work.
- ✓ Plan turn-taking games and circle games to encourage appropriate social interaction.
- ✓ Provide physical items such as a cushion or mat to define personal space or a talking stick or stone for ākonga to hold when it is their turn to talk.
- ✓ Encourage tuakana-teina relationships and create a culture where students role model and provide support for each other.
- ✓ Create social stories that break down a task or social situation into small and easy-to-understand steps, accompanied by descriptive pictures.
- ✓ Teach specific speaking and conversation skills. For example, rehearse ways to start and close a conversation and read body language.
- ✓ Assign group roles such as speaker, listener, and note-taker to the group members.
- ✓ Monitor the discussions to ensure that all students understand the task and have opportunities to participate.

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