

Create structure in a flexible environment

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

-
- Includes:**
- Walk in your student's shoes
 - Build routines
 - Provide a predictable environment
 - Create structure in a flexible space
 - Minimise distractions
 - Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

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

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

Suggestion: [Create structure in a flexible environment](#)

Date

11 June 2026

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-and-learning/y9-13-create-structure-in-a-flexible-environment

Walk in your student's shoes

Take a walk around the classroom. Use all your senses to consider how the classroom might look, sound, and feel to your student.

Consider:

- ✓ routines and ways of working
- ✓ how you will make timing of assignments and assessment tasks manageable
- ✓ the practical challenges for students, such as timetabling, and managing their time
- ✓ how the student will find and access resources
- ✓ how the classroom is laid out
- ✓ where to create a quiet place for students to work
- ✓ where your student can go if they need to calm down, and what your student needs for a calming space.

Inclusive Education

From

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

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

Suggestion: [Create structure in a flexible environment](#)

Date

11 June 2026

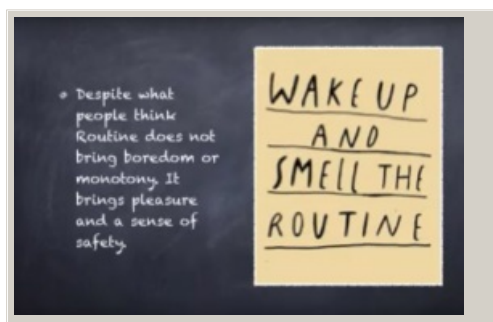
Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-and-learning/y9-13-create-structure-in-a-flexible-environment

Build routines

Consistent routines reduce stress and anxiety for students.

Develop simple routines, which are used daily to support successful learning and transitions with the students.



Video hosted on Youtube <http://youtu.be/qpbLnTvs2EQ>

No captions or transcript

Source:

[WRaP Schools \(Canada\)](#)

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChuAycUoRt_HkcbdXnKiV_Q

Inclusive Education

From

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

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

Suggestion: [Create structure in a flexible environment](#)

Date

11 June 2026

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-and-learning/y9-13-create-structure-in-a-flexible-environment

Provide a predictable environment

Create predictable routines to reduce anxiety and allow students to manage themselves independently.

- ✓ Use personalised and class timetables
- ✓ Clarify expectations and teach appropriate behaviours
- ✓ Signal upcoming transitions
- ✓ Talk through last minute changes that may be startling to students
- ✓ Use task boards to break large tasks into components
- ✓ Develop strategies for times of anxiety
- ✓ Share key information across the school for example with staff, leaders and relief teachers

Inclusive Education

From

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

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

Suggestion: [Create structure in a flexible environment](#)

Date

11 June 2026

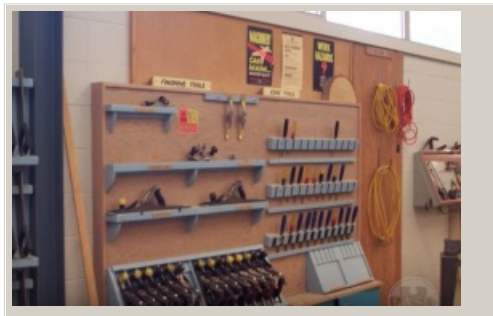
Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-and-learning/y9-13-create-structure-in-a-flexible-environment

Create structure in a flexible space

Set up your environment to minimise students' cognitive load.

Providing support for students' specific needs enables them to work more independently.



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

Closed Captions

Source:

[POPFASD \(Canada\)](#)

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWRoE1YnO371Fc_hWx6Pnhg

[Inclusive Education](#)

From

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

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

Suggestion: [Create structure in a flexible environment](#)

Date

11 June 2026

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-and-learning/y9-13-create-structure-in-a-flexible-environment

Minimise distractions

Minimise auditory and visual distractions to help diminish the confusion and frustration some students experience, and maximise their ability to focus on the task at hand.

Reduce visual distractions

- Strategically place the student's seat away from distractions, such as doorways and windows.
- Clear the student's desk of everything, except the lesson at hand.
- Put away (or out of view) teacher's equipment and books competing for a student's attention.

Reduce auditory distractions

- Seat student closest to where you present information.
- Seat student next to students who do not distract others.
- Provide nonverbal cues that are familiar to the student to help them stay focused and working quietly, for example: use hand signals, move close to student.
- Create quiet spots in your classroom.

[Inclusive Education](#)

From

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

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

Suggestion: [Create structure in a flexible environment](#)

Date

11 June 2026

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-and-learning/y9-13-create-structure-in-a-flexible-environment

Useful resources



Environment

A checklist for setting up a classroom environment that considers routines and structure, and reduces sensory overload.

Publisher: POPFASD

[Visit website](#)

This information was downloaded/printed from the Ministry of Education's website "Inclusive Education". Except where otherwise noted it is Crown Copyright 2018.

Information on the Inclusive Education website is regularly updated so we recommend you check the website version of this information to ensure it remains current.