

Support understanding

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

Includes:

- Keep verbal information brief and to the point
- Keep communication simple and specific
- Use ten communication strategies
- Use visuals
- Develop an online space
- Use digital technologies

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From

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

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

Suggestion: [Support understanding](#)

Date

11 June 2026

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-and-learning/y9-13-support-understanding

Keep verbal information brief and to the point

Listening to teachers make speeches. I can't handle that.

I ... just sat there looking at the book. So I can read it okay, but I can't listen to it properly. It's like "What?"

And then I totally, I had to ask somebody, and then by the time I am asking somebody the question or the answer, then I've already lost the next part too.

Student

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Keep communication simple and specific

Effective communication for students with FASD means keeping things simple, specific, and slow.

- ✓ Use clear language and repeat with less detail
- ✓ Use positive phrasing and avoid what not to do
- ✓ Avoid idioms
- ✓ Be consistent and repeat key messages
- ✓ Use visuals
- ✓ Give directions one at a time
- ✓ Give directions in order
- ✓ Ask concrete questions
- ✓ Ask ākongā to show understanding
- ✓ Allow more time

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Use ten communication strategies

Students may have behavioural reactions when they experience language problems.

Use these strategies to enhance your communication with all learners, including those with FASD.



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

Closed Captions

Source:

[POPFASD \(Canada\)](#)

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

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Use visuals

Build a shared understanding of the meaning of visuals.

Some students may focus on unexpected parts of the image that you have not noticed, for example, items in the background.

- ✓ Make visuals of daily tasks, processes and steps.
- ✓ Use visuals that are relevant to the New Zealand context.
- ✓ Label resources with visuals, colours and text for easy identification.
- ✓ Make resources easy to find by using clearly divided zones, for example a maths resources zone.
- ✓ Use charts, visual calendars, colour-coded schedules, visible timers, and visual cues to increase the predictability of regular activities.
- ✓ Offer graphic organisers and flowcharts to break tasks into shorter chunks.
- ✓ Use visuals, social stories and video models to support learning of new skills or behaviours.
- ✓ Provide feedback in visual as well as verbal formats. Visual formats include written comments and things such as symbols and smiley faces.

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Develop an online space

Anywhere, anytime access to lessons for students, tutors, and family enables a support network.

Set up an online space with information and resources to support current areas of learning for your students.

Make the space easy to navigate and include:

- videos that explain or demonstrate concepts
- easy to understand information
- assignment tasks, worksheets or handouts
- your email address so students or their parents can ask questions.

Example: [Pakuranga College – Year 10 Maths](#)

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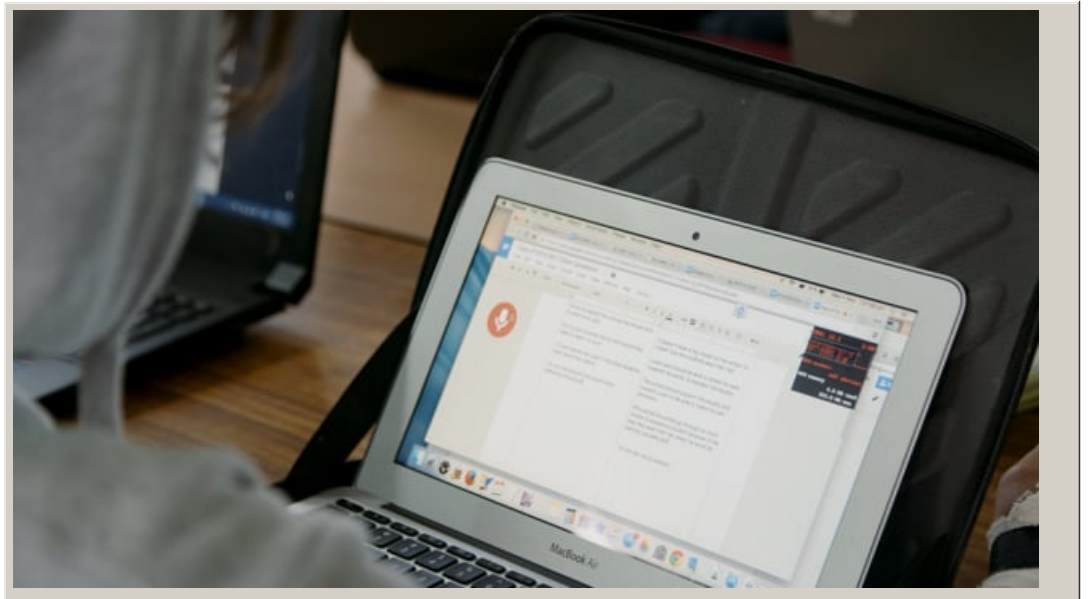
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Use digital technologies

Wellington High School teacher Ben Britton explains the benefits 1-1 devices provide his students.

Tools such as a screen reader improve accessibility.



Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/160672115>

Closed Captions

Source:

[Enabling e-Learning \(NZ\)](#)

<https://elearning.tki.org.nz/Teaching/Inclusive-practice/Supporting-English-language-learners/BYOD-supporting-inclusion>

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