

# Support sensory integration

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Support self-regulation and positive behaviour' from the Guide: [FASD and learning](#)

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**Includes:**

Ask the student about their environment

Auditory strategies

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Calming spaces and quiet zones

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Useful resources

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Inclusive Education

From

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

Strategy: [Support self-regulation and positive behaviour](#)

Suggestion: [Support sensory integration](#)

Date

18 January 2019

Link

[www.inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-and-learning/support-sensory-integration](http://www.inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-and-learning/support-sensory-integration)

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## Ask the student about their environment

Some students feel bombarded by sensory information; others seek out intense sensory experiences.

Students with FASD who have sensory process difficulties misinterpret everyday sensory information such as touch, sight, sound, movement, and smell.

Ask the student to describe everything in the classroom that they:

smell

see

hear

taste.

Use the information to guide your design of the environment.

Select strategies to reduce sensory overload.

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## Auditory strategies



Source: [Paul Hamilton](#)

**Source:**

[Paul Hamilton](#)

<https://flic.kr/p/oykm3A>

[View full image \(876 KB\)](#)

To support focus, offer ear protectors or headphones to filter out sounds.

Play soft music. Offer the option to the whole class or on a personal device.

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## Timetable adjustments

Build flexibility and supports into the classroom environment.

- ▲▲ Provide physical activity breaks throughout the day to increase engagement.
- ▲▲ Break up longer tasks with short relaxation breaks to give students opportunities to recharge and refocus.
- ▲▲ Timetable sitting still activities before morning tea and lunch breaks where students have been active.
- ▲▲ Include a Swiss ball or mini-tramp in the classroom environment. Movement assists concentration and can release tension.
- ▲▲ Regularly timetable activities that promote relaxation, such as singing.

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## Calming spaces and quiet zones



Source: Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

Source:

[Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga](#)

[View full image \(4.5 MB\)](#)

Make a calming space available to students when they are overwhelmed by sensory stimuli.

Support students on how to use this space. Emphasise it is not a time out or punishment.

[What educators need to know about FASD](#) pp 38-45.

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## Provide sensory supports

Provide students with a sensory support to help them with calming down.

Useful sensory support will vary from student to student. It could be:

- ▲▲ looking at a book
- ▲▲ paper and pencils to draw or doodle
- ▲▲ music or soft soothing sounds to listen to
- ▲▲ a hand-held toy to manipulate, or a slow moving oil and water toy to watch
- ▲▲ a weighted blanket or warm fleece blanket
- ▲▲ a deep back massage or squeezing hands or feet can be soothing for some children.

Talk with your student, and ask your occupational therapist for some safe and appropriate suggestions for calming the nervous system.

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## Useful resources

### Dealing with sensory overload for children with an FASD

Read time: 25 min

Publisher: Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

[Visit website](#)

### Sensory processing

Publisher: British Columbia Ministry of Education

[Visit website](#)

### Fetal alcohol exposure: Time to know, time to act

Read time: 15 min

Publisher: Ontario Provincial Conference, 2013

[Visit website](#)

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