

Identify barriers to learning and wellbeing, and ways to ease cognitive stress and overload

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Support inclusive teaching practices' from the Guide: [ILEs](#)

Includes:

- Ask students what can help
 - Consider student perspectives
 - Reduce students' stress
 - Understand the affective network
 - Monitor student overload
 - Useful resources
-

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Planning innovative learning environments \(ILEs\)](#)

Strategy: [Support inclusive teaching practices](#)

Suggestion: [Identify barriers to learning and wellbeing, and ways to ease cognitive stress and overload](#)

Date

21 January 2019

Link

www.inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/planning-innovative-learning-environments-iles/identify-barriers-to-learning-and-wellbeing-and-ways-to-ease-cognitive-stress-and-overload

Ask students what can help

Emotion and cognition are inextricably linked in the brain. Ask students what you can do to help them learn.

Source: [Ministry of Education, inclusive education videos \(NZ\)](#)

Closed Captions

Source:

[Ministry of Education, inclusive education videos \(NZ\)](#)

<https://vimeo.com/album/2950799/sort:date/format:thumbnail>

 Play video

Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/100662365>

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Consider student perspectives

The ways classrooms are organised and managed can create anxiety for some students.

Discuss possible triggers for anxiety with students and identify ways to reduce them:

- ↙ working in large, open spaces
- ↙ lining up in cramped spaces
- ↙ speaking in front of the class
- ↙ group work
- ↙ changing layout of furniture
- ↙ changing layout of rooms and spaces
- ↙ changes to routine
- ↙ lots of choices
- ↙ unable to see, read, or hear information
- ↙ noise levels
- ↙ bright lights and glare
- ↙ moving around the school with large numbers of people at once.
- ↙ hot seating (no fixed desk).

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Reduce students' stress



Source: Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

Source:

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

[View full image \(925 KB\)](#)

Emotions vary across subjects, tasks, and times of day. Use [these strategies](#) to reduce stress, build a positive emotional environment, and support students to develop emotional resilience.

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Understand the affective network

Some learners are highly engaged and motivated by spontaneity and novelty, while others are disengaged, even frightened by those aspects, preferring a predictable routine.

To create environments that are safe for all learners, teachers need to:

- develop a pedagogical understanding and sensitivity to learner differences in order to challenge learners without ridicule or demotivating them

- ensure the physical or online space where learning takes place contributes to student learning and well-being rather than creating stress

- adopt approaches that enhance students' motivation to learn – this includes: using student interest and expertise, providing authentic contexts for learning, and utilising technologies.

To build further understanding, explore the videos and supporting resources from the Alberta UDL Summer Institute 2011 relating to the UDL principle of **multiple means of engagement**.

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Monitor student overload

Students experience cognitive stress and overload when a task or situation is overwhelming. Cognitive fatigue accumulates. The student's performance may deteriorate as the day progresses, or toward the end of the school week or term.

- Regularly connect with the student and parents to discuss their workload and what is happening at home.
- Work with the student, and their family, to prevent overload. For example, negotiate in advance expectations around completion of tasks.
- Find out what the signs of the student being overloaded are.
- Find out what triggers overload for the student.
- Discuss with the student what support they need to self-manage when they are overloaded. For example, use a break card, withdraw to a quiet space, tell the teacher they are overloaded.
- Agree as a class: how to communicate if something is too hard, how to ask for help, how we look after our friends and recognise when they are stressed, where we can go if we are stressed.

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Useful resources

Tiredness in deaf children

Read time: 5 min

Publisher: National Deaf Children's Society

[Visit website](#)



The impact of physical design on student outcomes

Read time: 94 min

Publisher: Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

[Download PDF](#)

Will my child get lost in an innovative learning environment?

Publisher: CORE Education

[Visit website](#)

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