

Strategies to support neurodivergent learners

A FEW OF MY FAVORITE (UDL) THINGS



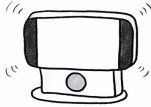
Time Timers



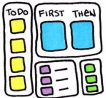
MOVEMENT BREAKS



NOISE CANCELLING HEADPHONES



SOUND FIELD SYSTEMS



VISUALS



FIDGETS



BREAK CARDS



CURTAINS (TO HIDE STUFF ON SHELVES)

HE AROHA WHAKATŌ
HE AROHA PUTA MAI

*If kindness is sown
then kindness you shall receive*

Ko wai koe?



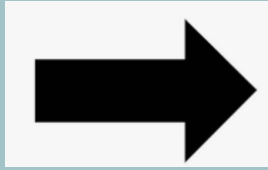
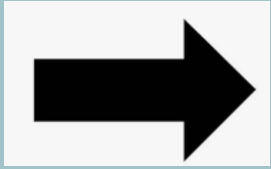
Making connections Who is the room with us today?

Round the room introductions

- Introduce self in any way that you feel comfortable
- School
- Role and year levels that you support

SEE ME

Strategy - Making connections - whakawhanaungatanga



Housekeeping



Strategy - Communication in many forms



In our session today we will ...

“..identify, share, discuss and implement a range of strategies to support ākonga of all ages. We aim to harness the wealth of knowledge and experience in the room, providing opportunities for you to share and kōrero”.

-
- SBHCM
- Movement break
- Scenarios

Break 10.00 am (ish)

- More strategies
- Visual supports
- Evaluation and conclusion

Strategy - Pre-loading - let me know what is happening



Some Boys Have Colourful Mullets

Kathryn Berkett ENGAGE training, 2024

S

See me

Greet me every day, learn about me and my identity, talk to me, include me, support me to have a voice.

B

Give me a sense of belonging

I need to know where I belong in the team. Where can you see my thumbprint in the room?

H

Tell me what is happening

Routine and structure are important to me. Surprises can throw me.



C

Let me feel in control.

Choice and voice.

M

Mana respecting

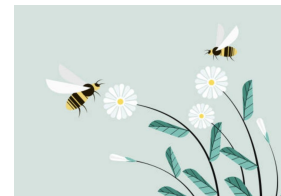
Preserve and uphold my mana.

"Be my metronome. Help me belong. I need a felt sense of safety, secure relationships and predictable routines. Limit change or let me know ahead of time what is going to happen. Give me a sense of control".



Breaks

Task - exit out the kitchen door, circuit back through the side door, talk to someone from a different school and discuss your top three brain break activities.



When you come back in, time to re-group. Mix it up with people from different schools, maybe secondary group together. Cross pollination

Popcorn style sharing - top brain breaks...

“Engaging in physical activity increases blood flow and oxygenation in the brain, boosting neural connectivity and stimulating nerve cell growth in the hippocampus, the center of learning and memory”.

Strategy - Brain/movement/sensory breaks





**always
always
always
always
presume
competence**



Strategy - Presume competence

It's all about you!



BRIGHTEN UP A STUDENT'S DAY
@kiwfens62

SHOW UP
BREATHE
SLOW DOWN
BE PRESENT
LEAVE YOUR EGO AT THE DOOR
BE AWARE OF YOUR OWN STRESS
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

LIGHT UP
SMILE BRIGHTLY
HAVE "SOFT EYES"
GREET STUDENTS BY NAME
GIVE A MOMENT OF YOUR FULL ATTENTION
LISTEN WITH YOUR HEART
CHOOSE JOY

BUILD UP
START WITH STRENGTHS
HAVE A PLAN & A PURPOSE
FOSTER INDEPENDENCE
REDUCE STRESSORS
SCAFFOLD LEARNING
MEET NEEDS

NEVER GIVE UP
GIVE FRESH STARTS
EMBRACE A GROWTH MINDSET
ASK: WHY? & WHY NOW?
BE A STRESS DETECTIVE
OFFER UNCONDITIONAL POSITIVE REGARD
EVERYONE IS DOING THE BEST THEY CAN

YOUR POSITIVE, SUPPORTIVE PRESENCE IS ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCES ON A STUDENT'S DAY
"YOU ARE THE STRATEGY" ~ SUSAN HOPKINS

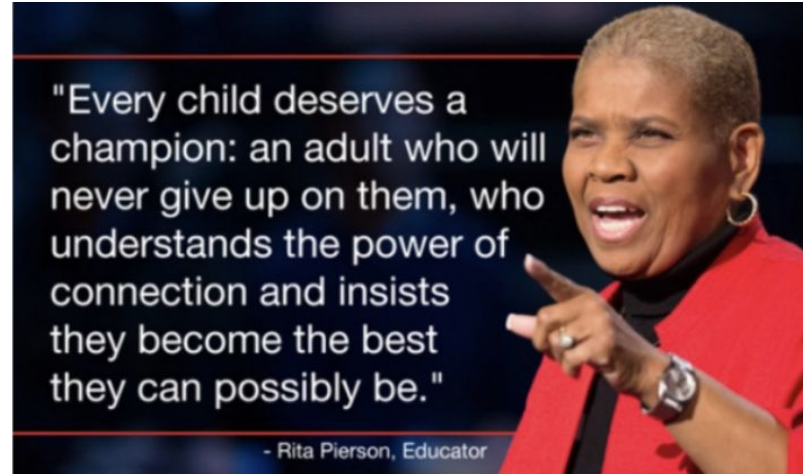


Connection and attachment

The biggest drivers for regulation are connection and attachment.

They have the power to

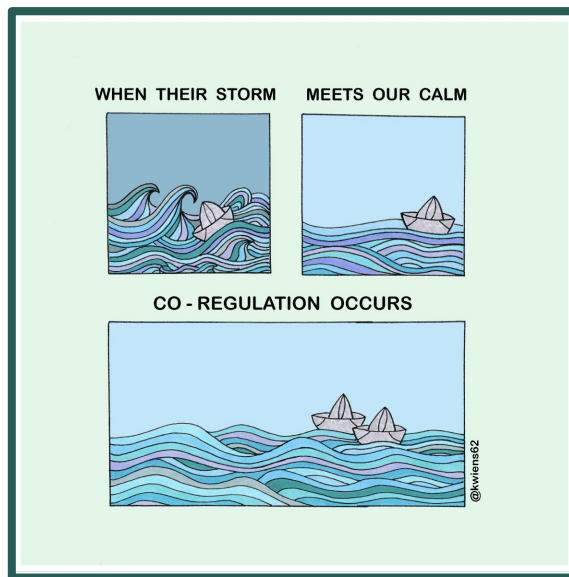
- Co-regulate us
- Soothe us
- Calm us
- Reattach us
- Give us identify and purpose
- Focus us
- Remind us



So what do we do? We keep showing up.



Be the attuned adult - co-regulation



Strategy - Co-regulation “I’m
here”

Unsolved problems

A scenario

What could have been done differently?



Scenario

Antecedent	Behaviors	Consequences
9:46 Independent Maths Task	B1 - Disruptive noises	LA1 verbal agreement, work first then game
	9:48 Continued making noises and talked inappropriately to peers Attempted an equation	Peers didn't respond 9:49 LA1 praise for attempt at work
	Ask LA1 to move away	She agrees and moves away
	Within 1 minute began making noises again, jumped up and down then lay on the floor, then asked for help	Received support Redirected back to the agreement
	Worked for a duration of 7 minutes	Positive praise Reminded that work was finishing and the game would start
	9:49 followed instructions and packed up, was asked to get a peer, replied "I don't know what to do"	LA1 took B1 to get the peer and showed him where to go and modelled what to say to him



Strategies

1. **Sensory Support:**

- Provide a range of sensory supports, and a variety of seating options. Explicitly teach the expectations of these for the whole class ahead of introducing them. Set up an individual desk with a 'science display board' as a 'learning office'. This will support Student A remain focused and regulated.

2. **Visuals and Structured Strategies:**

- Display daily visuals to support understanding and transition into tasks. Use the "First/Then" strategy to help clarify expectations and reduce anxiety about upcoming tasks. Refer to the classwide daily visual timetable throughout the day, particularly before transitions. Use a UNO 'change of direction' card if things on the daily plan change. Break tasks into 3 achievable chunks - communicate these on a 3 part 'to-do' list.

3. **Connection and Positive Reinforcement (Two for Ten):**

- Focus on building a positive connection with Student A, using statements like, "I'm so glad you're here today!" and maintaining a consistent structure. Reinforce positive behavior with phrases such as, "I chose to have you in my group" and "Let's meet after break to discuss reading."

4. **Mindfulness and Breathing Techniques for Transitions:**

- Specific breathing technique cards will be shared with staff members, along with interoception activities to help regulate sensory input.



Strategies

1. **Social and Emotional Learning:**

- Share a Social and Emotional learning slide show with the entire class during Term 4. This will contribute to building social-emotional skills for all students, including Student A. Create a non verbal way of for emotional check-ins after breaks eg Emotional Roller Coaster from <https://sparklers.org.nz/activities/emotional-rollercoaster/>.

2. **Behaviour Modeling and ‘think alouds’:**

- Deliberately model behaviors such as pausing to stop and think before acting. Utilize non-verbal cues to help remind Student A to pause and consider their actions. Encourage the use of self-talk to clarify what needs to be done in specific situations. Remember ‘ The rule of 5’.

3. **Cooperative Social Skills and Problem Solving:**

- Role-play social scenarios that require cooperation and encourage positive peer interactions. Explicitly teach and model problem-solving strategies for managing conflicts or challenges. Introduce small levels of tolerable stress through supported board games such as snakes and ladders,

4. **Structured Daily Routine:**

- Use a consistent routine (game-break-learning-game) to help Student A feel secure and supported throughout the day. This predictable structure will provide stability and reduce stress during transitions.





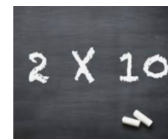
2 x 10 Strategy

The 2x10 strategy is simple: spend 2 minutes per day for 10 days in a row talking with an at-risk student about anything she or he wants to talk about.

Use the 'Two-by-Ten' strategy to promote caring relationships with your students, especially those whose behaviour challenges you most. This involves identifying a student with challenging behaviour and committing to having a personal conversation on anything that interests the student for two minutes every day, for 10 consecutive days.

Strategy - 2 by 10

1. Choose one student whom you would like to strengthen your relationship with.
2. Select when you are going to approach the student (e.g., at the beginning of a class period).
3. Find the student and start a conversation with them. To build a productive relationship with a student, adults will likely have to initiate the connection.
4. The focus of these conversations should be:
 - **Brevity.** These conversations should last two minutes or under.
 - **Student Voice.** Invite them to share something non-academic with you about their day or life. Here are some great get-to-know-you question prompts.
 - **Honesty.** Model transparency and authenticity by sharing something personal/non-academic with the student.



Drop and go statements

- Brief statements that show you know the student and care about them but that **don't require a response**
- EG: "I noticed you enjoyed the video we watched the other day and I saw this book you might like to check out."
- "I saw a book in the library about *** and I thought of you"
- "I heard you had an important rugby game over the weekend. I hope it went well!"

Strategy# - Drop & Go statements





The Rule of Five



Strategy# - The Rule of Five: Fewer than 5 words, wait 5 seconds



Wait time is think time

Wait time refers to two specific practices where an intentional pause is used.

1. a 5 second (or longer) pause between asking a question and soliciting an answer.
2. a 5 second (or longer) pause after a student response.






Strategy - Wait time



Calming strategies

5•4•3•2•1 Grounding

Calm down by focusing on your senses in the present moment instead of the thoughts and feelings that are bringing you distress.

-  Name **5** things you can **SEE**
-  Name **4** things you can **FEEL**
-  Name **3** things you can **HEAR**
-  Name **2** things you can **SMELL**
-  Name **1** thing you can **TASTE**

Count to Calm



Count to **10**
(or more)



Count backwards
from **10** (or
more)



Count all the
objects you see
of a certain color

Mindful STOP

It's easy to get caught up in all the stresses of daily life. STOP is a ritual where we pause for a "mindful moment" to turn our brain off "autopilot mode."



Stop

whatever you're doing. Just pause for a moment.



Take a few breaths

Your breath is an anchor to the present moment. Let it draw your attention to right here, right now.



Observe

your experience just as it is. Notice where your mind is, what you feel, what you're doing.



Proceed

with intention. Use what you learned to *respond* to what's happening instead of *reacting*.

Strategy - Lower heart rate



Visuals - why?

- When we have heightened emotions, or we are tired, we struggle to process words.
- If words are too complicated to understand or process, a picture or object may help.
- Words are easy to forget but pictures, symbols, and objects don't disappear, they can remind us of our tasks or behaviours.
- Visuals reduce anxiety, frustration, and increase independence and help us feel in control.

Strategy# -Use visuals



9 REASONS TO USE VISUALS

www.northstarpaths.com

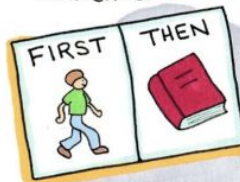
@kwiens62



- VISUALS ARE PERMANENT
(SPOKEN WORDS DISAPPEAR)



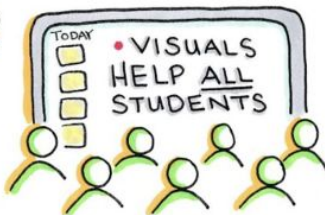
- VISUALS ALLOW TIME
FOR LANGUAGE PROCESSING



- VISUALS PREPARE
STUDENTS FOR TRANSITIONS



- VISUALS HELP KIDS
SEE WHAT YOU MEAN



- VISUALS
HELP ALL
STUDENTS



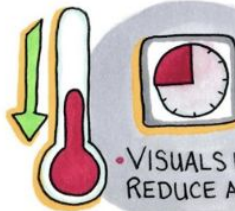
- VISUALS HELP
BUILD INDEPENDENCE



- VISUALS ARE TRANSFERABLE
BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTS
AND PEOPLE



- VISUALS HAVE NO ATTITUDE
• NO TONE • NO FRUSTRATION
• NO DISAPPROVAL



- VISUALS HELP
REDUCE ANXIETY

Kiwitani 2017

Visuals

Check In and Exit Tickets

I am Feeling...		Exit Ticket	Notes
5	😊😊😊😊😊	How are you feeling?	
4	😊😊😊😊	What did you learn today?	
3	😊😊😊	What did you like to do today?	
2	😊😊	What did you do well on today?	
1	😊	What did you struggle with today?	

Communication Log	
Name	Date
Teacher/Support	Time
Student/Parent	Time
Notes	Notes
Notes	Notes
Notes	Notes
Notes	Notes
Notes	Notes
Notes	Notes
Notes	Notes
Notes	Notes
Notes	Notes

Name: _____	
How did you feel about today's lesson?	
😊😊😊😊😊	
What did you learn?	
What do you need to work on next time?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on my learning <input type="checkbox"/> Keep my hands <input type="checkbox"/> Listening when <input type="checkbox"/> Giving my friend a go <input type="checkbox"/> Working on my goal	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on my learning <input type="checkbox"/> Keep my hands <input type="checkbox"/> Listening when <input type="checkbox"/> Giving my friend a go <input type="checkbox"/> Working on my goal

40



Timers and Time-timers

- Timers provide students with clear expectations for time management.
- With modelling and practice, they can support students to become more independent.
- Timers provide a visual to match the time expectation and can help the teacher uphold the time stated.
- Timers support students to stay on task – students become aware of the block of time available to complete their work.
- A timer can be motivating for students.

Time timer
App on phone or iPad



Ready or Not Ready Visual

Use an electronic timer and this visual.



Also have pictures for when they need further help, like shown, or select your own to suit the tamariki.



49

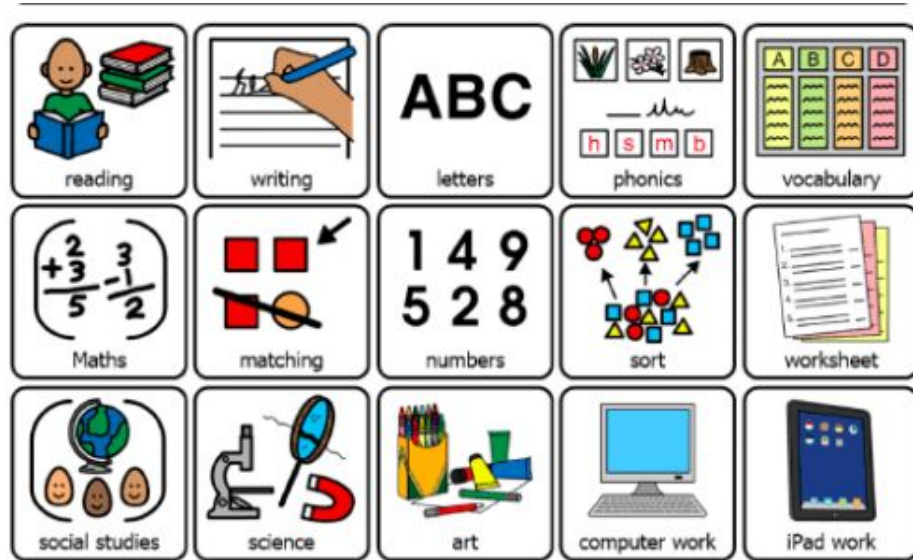


Visual Schedules

Use a visual schedule to show your ākonga the steps needed to complete a task.

They can be used in group time activities, at home, or for the entire school day, including breaks.

They need to be taught, talked about and shifted when each task or subject area has been completed.



[This Visual is from Education Hub.](#)
Free download if you register your email

Visual Schedules

Use pictures or photos to show each step of a routine or breaking tasks down into chunks.

Using visuals to break up the routine helps pupils to learn the sequence of the routine and/or sustain attention.

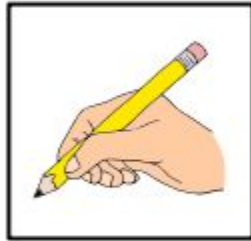
Include brain and or movement breaks.



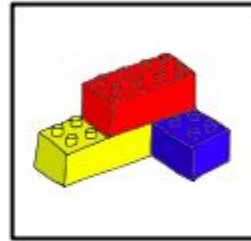
Sensory Table



Read



Writing Work



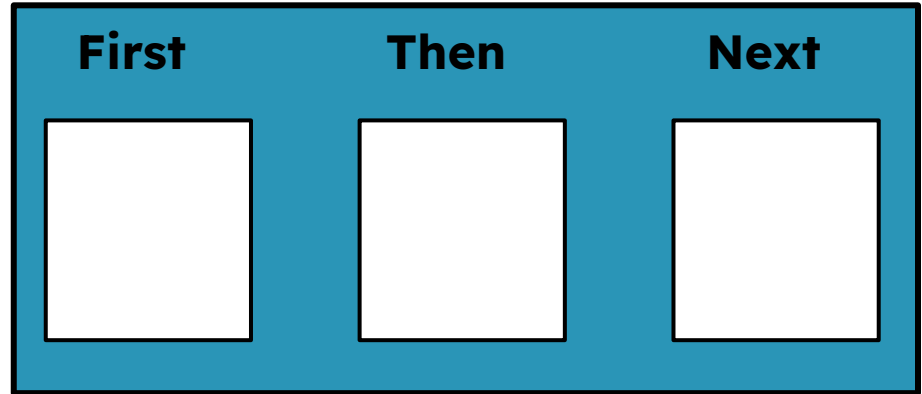
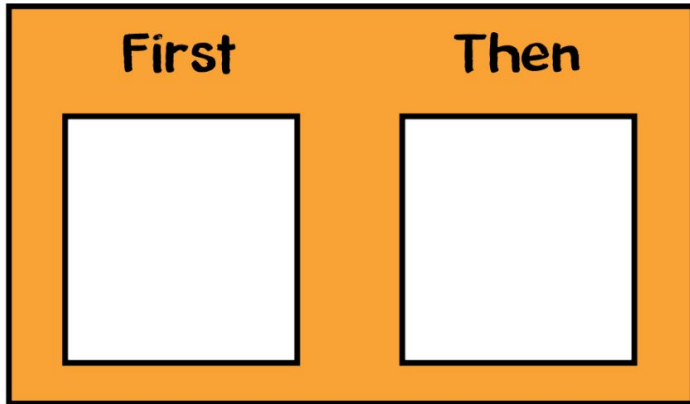
Blocks



Computer

First / then

The FIRST activity is YOUR choice (low motivation – must do).
The THEN is THEIR choice (high motivation).
Can be FIRST, NEXT, THEN or more

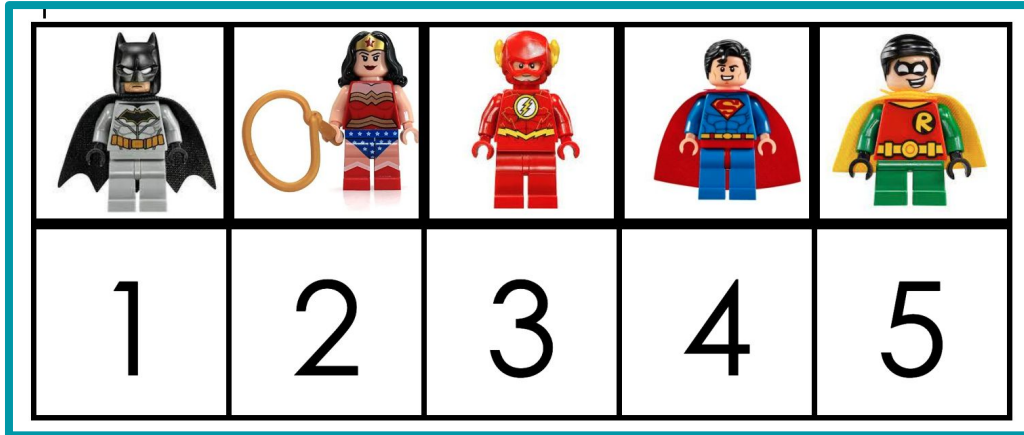


Countdown Strips

Countdown Timers are made the same way as the Flip Visuals. They are created, so the adult has control of the time left to do a task and or number of problems to do.

How to use:

- Close the flap down to indicate the time left.

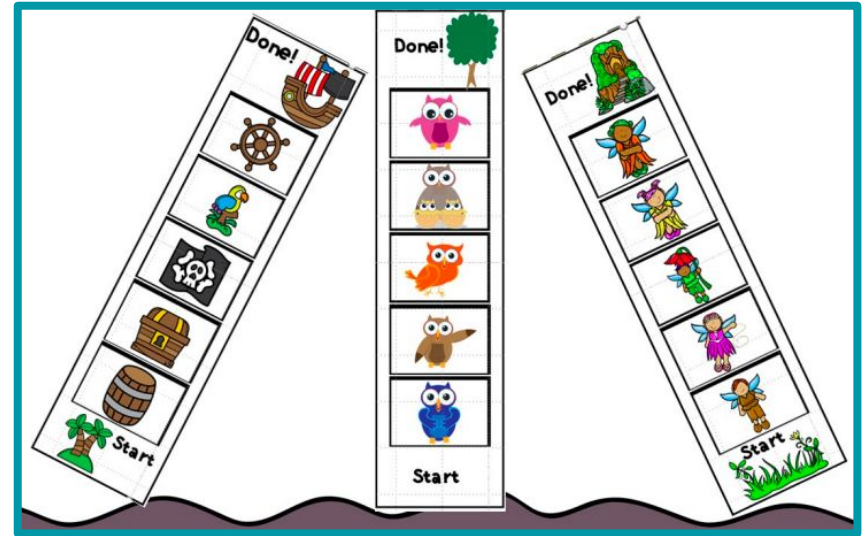


Countdown Strips

Countdown Strips are used like a timer, but the adult has more control of the time available to complete the task or the reward.

- They can be used to support transition to a new activity
- Show when an activity needs to finish

You can use numbers, symbols, or pictures of interest to the child or as a schedule.



Must dos

The MoSCoW method of prioritizing tasks

Today's Self-directed Learning Agenda

 <p>Non-negotiable - I MUST focus time/energy on these learning engagements today!</p>	 <p>Learning engagements that should be completed today - using good time management!</p>	 <p>MUST and SHOULD all done! No time to waste - plenty more challenges</p>	 <p>As an agent of my own learning some things I want to engage in today are:</p>
What I MUST do today	What I SHOULD do today	What I COULD do today	What I WOULD LIKE to do today

Cartoon Strip Conversations

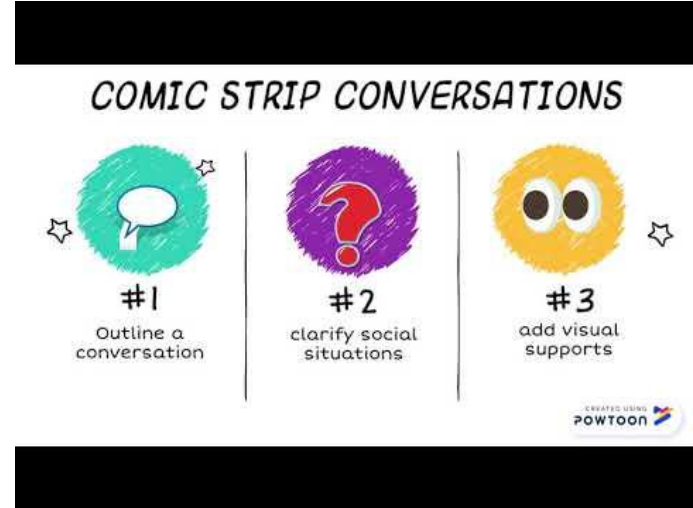
Carol Gray designed Comic Strip Conversations.

They can show:

- What was actually said in the conversation
- How people might be feeling
- What people's intentions might be

Comic strip conversations use stick figures and symbols to represent social interactions and abstract aspects of conversation. Colour represents the emotional content of a statement or message.

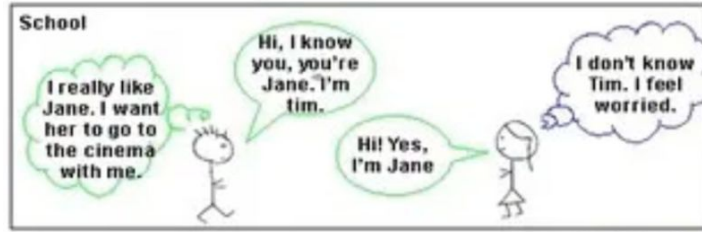
Click on the [link](#) to learn more.



See Speaker notes for more links

Social Stories

Collaborative Narratives



Video self-modelling

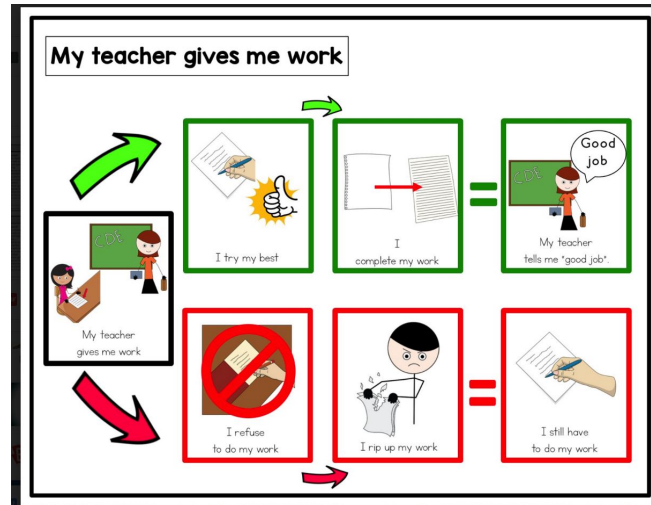


Red Choice, Green Choice Social Story



Some red choices are: throwing things, saying mean things, yelling, taking things from others, hitting, hurting others, refusing to work, and not following the rules.

Contingency Mapping



Power Cards

[Power Card-Tips for Teachers](#)
Handout

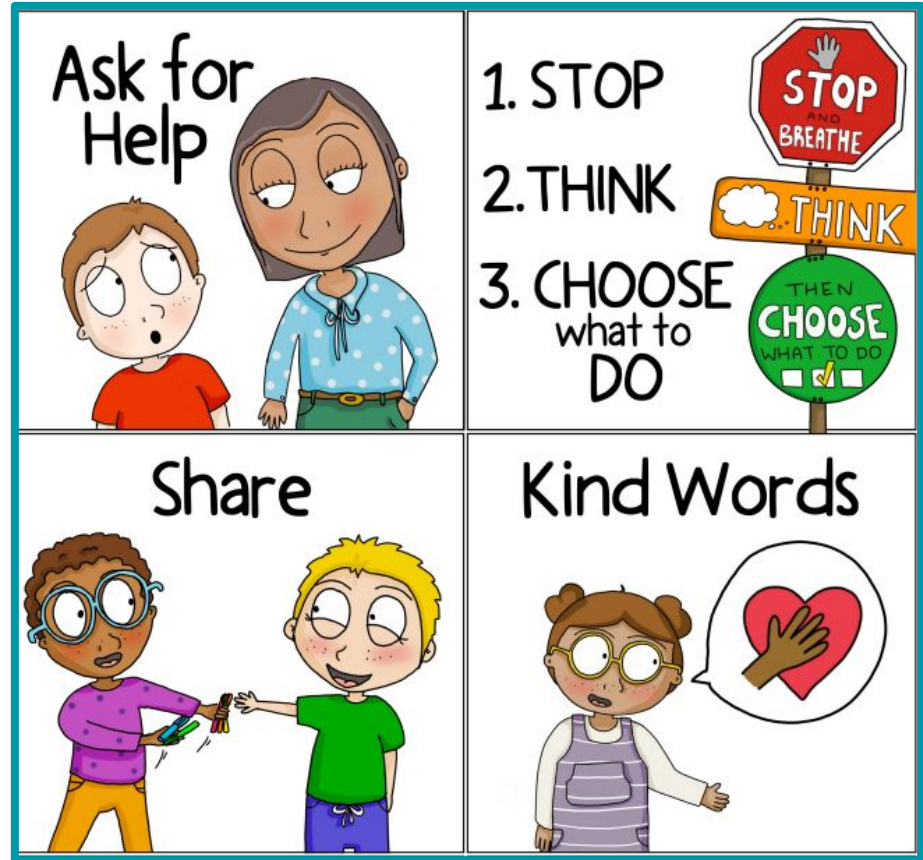
Spiderman Needs Help
Even a superhero like Spiderman needs help sometimes. Not even a superhero can do everything alone. At first, Spiderman was scared to ask for help. He didn't want people to think he was weak. He also didn't want people interrupting him when he didn't need help. Then Spiderman had a great idea. He could raise his hand to let people know when he needed help. This would keep them from interrupting, but also get him help when he needed it. When we need help, we can raise our hand just like Spiderman.

Reminder cards

Cards like these are useful for reminding students of behaviours they should uphold.

What cards could you create/select to support great behaviour.

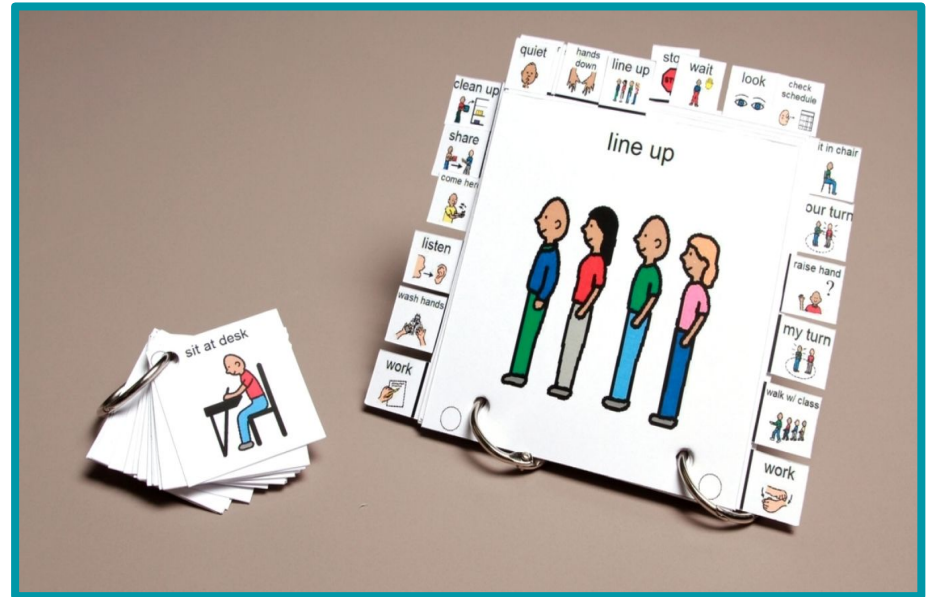
(Refer to files)



Cue cards

Behaviour Cue Cards – Autism Circuit

Behaviour cue cards are visual reminders that may help to reinforce or replace verbal directions.



Zones

The Zones of Regulation programme is a framework designed to foster self-regulation and emotional control.
Leah Kuypers, 2011

<https://www.zonesofregulation.com/index.html>

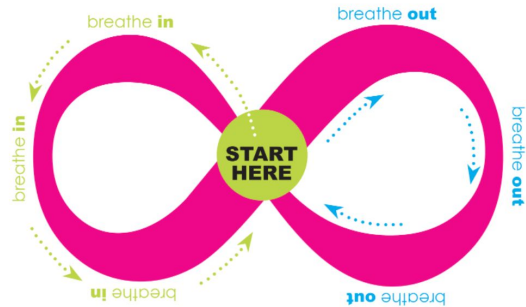
Free resources, also check out Facebook



Image from [Mrs Priestley ICT](#)

Other breathing activities to try:

- Star Breathing
- Square Breathing
- 5 Finger tap
- Lazy 8 Breathing



Chu, C., (2021) 5 Finger Breathing. Retrieved from <https://www.wellnesspediatrician.com/downloads/>

Emotional literacy

Check-In & Coping Tools Checklist

I FEEL ...	I CAN...
 lonely disappointed sad	TAKE DEEP  BREATHS
 silly excited hyper	TREAT MYSELF & OTHERS WITH  KINDNESS
 frustrated annoyed angry	CREATE ART  OR BUILD  SOMETHING.
 tired sick hungry	USE POSITIVE  SELF-TALK
 worried anxious scared	 ASK FOR HELP
 happy calm focused	 EXERCISE
 shy confused embarrassed	FOCUS  ON THE GOOD
 brave proud hopeful	STRETCH OR  DO YOGA
	BRAINSTORM  SOLUTIONS &  TRY AGAIN
	GET A DRINK OF  WATER
	 TAKE A BREAK
	TALK  OR WRITE  ABOUT IT

Check ins & exit tickets

I am Feeling...

5		
4		
3		
2		
1		

Exit Ticket	Name: _____
<p>How am I feeling today?</p>	<p>Rate your understanding of today's learning goal (Circle One):</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> I had all the tools I needed <input type="checkbox"/> I needed more talk time <input type="checkbox"/> I needed more equipment <input type="checkbox"/> I needed more quiet <input type="checkbox"/> I needed more thinking time <input type="checkbox"/> I needed more movement </p>
Comments:	

Name: _____	
How did you feel about today's session?	
What did you learn?	What do you need to work on next time?
	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on my learning <input type="checkbox"/> Keep trying <input type="checkbox"/> Considering others <input type="checkbox"/> Giving everything a go <input type="checkbox"/> Worked on my goals

Communication Log	
Date: _____	Notes
Was ready for learning	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
Completed learning activities	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
Needed support	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
Focus	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
Instructional Match	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
Behaviour	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
	Reflection - Next Steps

Digital tools

- To insert digital timers or videos, watch this YouTube Clip that I have inserted for you.
- A digital timer is a useful tool. To search for a 5-minute timer: Insert; Video; YouTube; enter 5-minute timer in YouTube search bar: select the timer that would be most appropriate for your student/s; format as above.



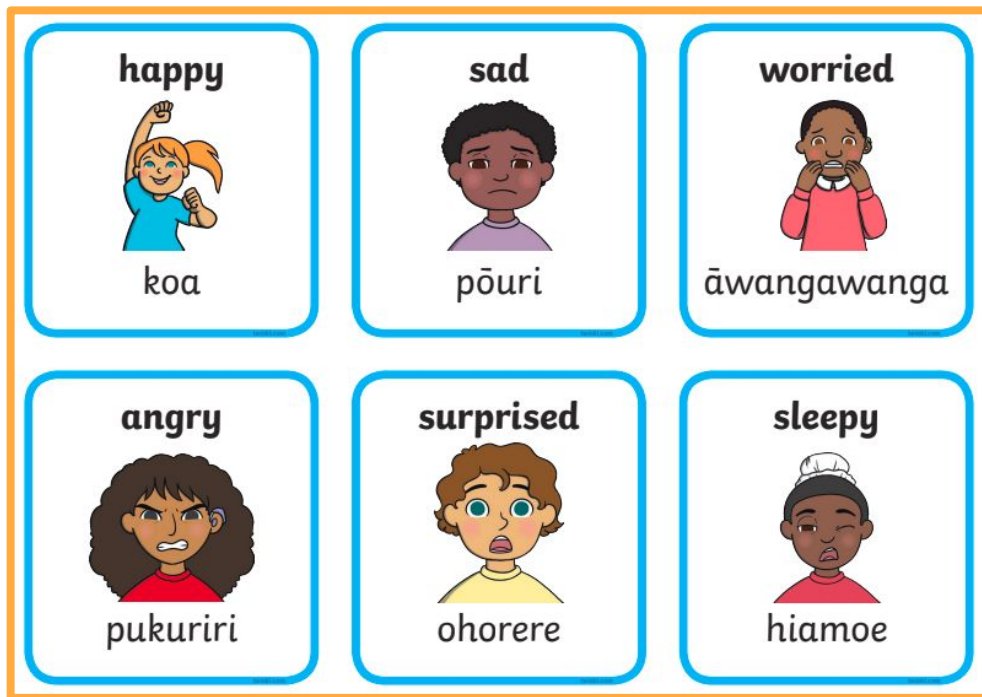
3-minute video from Veed Studio.

Te reo Māori and Pacifica

- [Twinkle](#)
- [Te reo Māori Classroom](#)

Twinkle also has resources in:

- Samoan
- Fijian
- Niue
- Tongan
- and many other languages



Choice board

Place symbols, or write the name of objects or activities that your child likes to engage in.

Show the child the board at times when they are able to make a choice about what they would like to do.



Timers

- Timers provide students with clear expectations for time management.
- With modelling and practice, they can support students to become more independent.
- Timers provide a visual to match the time expectation and can help the teacher uphold the time stated.
- Timers support students to stay on task – students become aware of the block of time available to complete their work.
- A timer can be motivating for students.

Time timer
App on phone or iPad



Colour coding

SUBJECT VISUAL ORGANIZER

To maintain organization, it can be helpful to organize your subjects by color. Below is an example of how you can organize your subjects that you can use as a guide.

There are several customizable templates you can use to create your own subject visual organizer. Once you are finished, print and attach it to the front of your binder to help build the habit of remembering what materials belong in which folder.

Elective

English

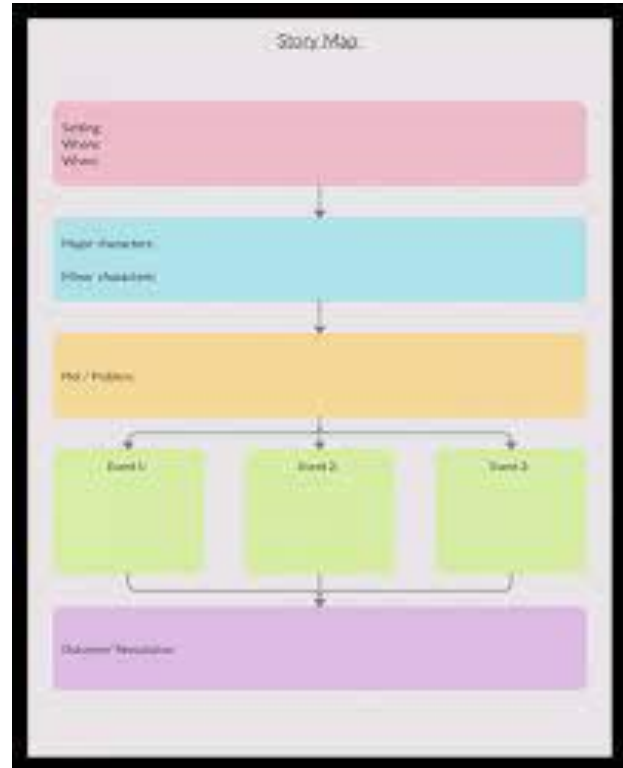
Math

Social Studies

Science

Foreign Language

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Who, what, why, when?

**The
What**

What are the real results we want to achieve?

**The
Why**

Why do we want to achieve these results? What will be the benefits for the various stakeholders?

**The
How**

How can we do our best to achieve the results? What are the key strategies we can follow to give ourselves the greatest chance of success?

**The
Who**

What will be the responsibilities of the various people - and the spirit we want them to demonstrate - on the road to achieving the results?

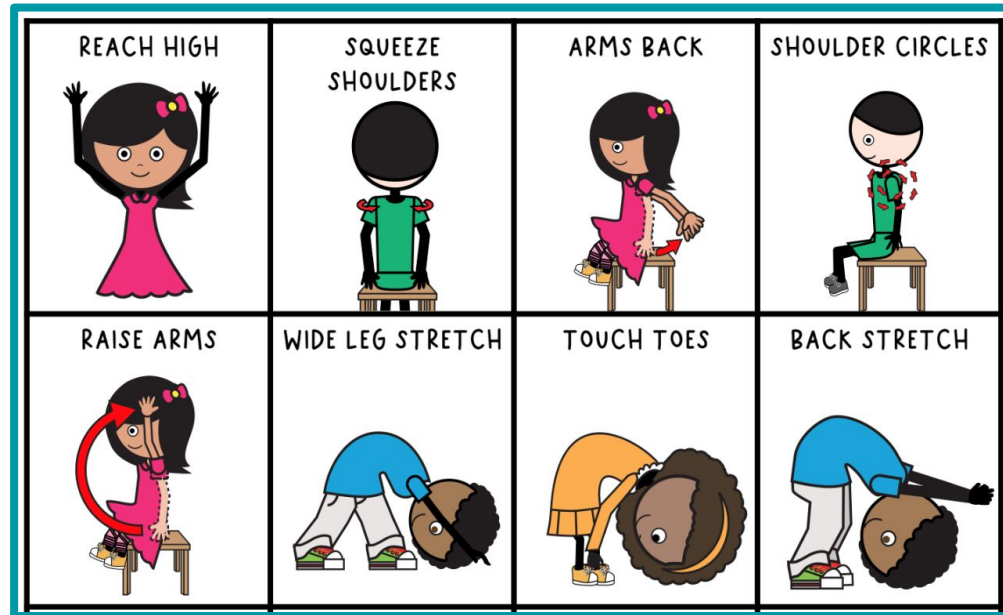
**The
When**

What will be the specific things that will be happening - and when - on the road to achieving the results?

Movement break visuals


Use movement or brain break visual cards.

Movement or brain breaks are important tools for our own and our tamariki wellbeing and brains.



Take a breather

What Does the Downward Spiral Look Like?

WHAT THE STUDENT MAY FEEL ...		HOW THE TEACHER, PARENT OR PEER MAY INTERPRET ...
"The demands upon me are too hard/too easy/stupid/pointless, etc."		"The student doesn't seem to care about schoolwork."
"The teacher's directions are confusing me."		"The student is not listening and following directions."
"Even when I try, I fail."		"The student needs to try harder."
"I can't sit still and pay attention in class."		"The student does not pay attention."
"I always forget what I have learned."		"The student does not remember what I have taught."
"The teacher doesn't care about me."		"The student does not respect me."
"I'll never do well in school."		"The student is not motivated."
"I don't want to go to school anymore. I might as well drop out."		"I can't get through to this student."

TAKE A BREATH STRATEGY

I will use this strategy when

1. I feel I am losing control
2. I am trying to decide what to do
3. I do not want others to see they have upset me

Breathe deeply

Rub my fingers together

Eyes closed and open again

Ask myself how I am doing

Toes move up and down

Hum a song silently

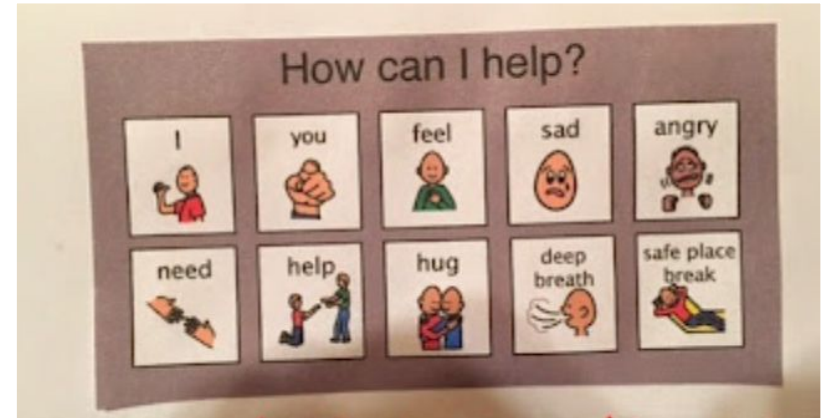
Eyes closed and open again

Repeat until you feel calmer

Ready or Not Ready Visual

Use an electronic timer and this visual.

Also have pictures for when they need further help, like shown, or select your own to suit the tamariki.





Technology to Support Learner Independence

The website is called: **Control Alt Achieve, transforming education with technology**

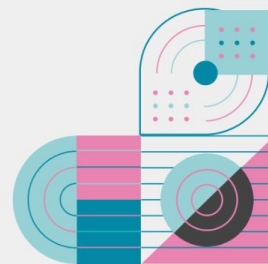
<https://www.controlaltachieve.com/>

WHAT?

This is a handy website for teachers who have students with literacy needs, English language learners, neuro-diverse students and those with processing disorders. Some suggested Chrome extensions include:

- **Read&Write** for Google Chrome (a good general extension with a range of features)
- **Immersive Reader** (a read-aloud extension with other features such as colour coding)
- **Read Aloud** (this is a text-to-speech extension with a good range of voices to choose from)
- **Voice In Voice Typer** (this is a speech-to-text extension)
- **Mercury Reader** (this removes distractions such as ads, comments, etc)
- **Reader View** (this has a range of features, such as stripping away distracting backgrounds)
- **OpenDyslexic** (this overrides all the fonts on a web page, replacing them with OpenDyslexic font)
- **Color Overlay** (this adds a coloured filter to the browser to help some students visually)
- **Visor** (this darkens out the page except for a moveable horizontal band)
- **Auto Highlight** (this highlights the important information in a text, like a summary)
- **Move It** (this tells students to have a break and do something physical)

Plus many other Google Extensions that can help our ākonga.



Countdown Strips

- Shelley Moore Countdown Strips and how to use them -great for transitions [5MM Special Edition: Home Learning Series Episode 9 - Countdown Strips](#)
- <https://fivemooreminutes.com/>
- [adaptingforautism - 10 countdown strip](#)
- [5 countdown strip](#)

Explore Specialist Advice – Health Care NZ

<https://www.healthcarenz.co.nz/service/explore-specialist-advice/>

[Zones of Regulation https://www.zonesofregulation.com/index.html](https://www.zonesofregulation.com/index.html)

