



Return to on-site schooling

Communicating with families

During times of increased anxiety and change, some students with disabilities may experience greater challenges in their learning, behaviours or emotion regulation. Take time to speak to parents and the student about how they coped during this period and what areas they may need support in during the transition. You can learn more about the student, identify relevant strengths and areas where support may be needed, share strategies that have been effective at home and at school and work towards creating consistency across settings.

The following tips can provide a prompt and guidance when speaking with parents or students:

1. Be ready

Write down any areas you specifically want to talk about.

2. Encourage active participation

Sometimes parents or students may assume more of a listening role when meeting with a teacher. Reassure them that conversations are an opportunity for collaboration. Encourage active participation and problem solving through asking students and caregivers to share their perspective, concerns and experiences.

3. Start with the positive

Discuss the student's strengths first. Share with the student and their family any strengths you feel are relevant, and ask them what strengths they have identified. Strategies that draw on the student's strengths may be most effective - access AllPlay Learn's [inclusive questions](#) for a guide to drawing on students' strengths and [strengths and abilities communication checklist](#) for a list of some possible strengths.

4. Discuss areas where support may be needed

This is an opportunity to share areas where the student may benefit from support and set goals accordingly. The student or caregiver may have identified opportunities for support that you were not aware of, and vice versa. It may be important to work together to explore what the priorities may be, and to share strategies that may be effective.

5. Discuss ways in which you can create consistency across home and school

You may wish to discuss ways in which a caregiver can support a student's education at home, such as setting up a homework routine, or through ongoing communication. Similarly, families may have routines or strategies at home that you can support students with at school. Partnering with each other can create consistency and stability for a student.