

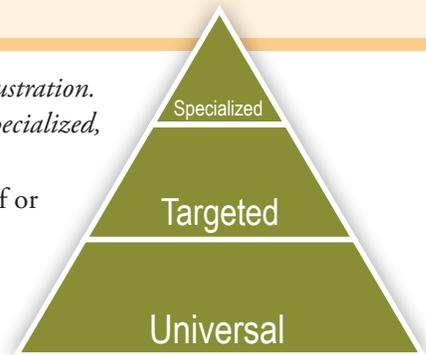
# Managing frustration



**Having the tools to manage frustration allows students to experience more positive interactions with others and participate more fully in learning activities.**

*Choose the statement below that best describes how this student manages frustration. This will help you identify a starting point for selecting strategies (e.g., 1=specialized, 2=targeted, 3=universal).*

- 1. Requires one-to-one adult assistance/support to express himself or herself appropriately when frustrated
- 2. Requires frequent (e.g., more than three times per week) reminders to demonstrate appropriate behaviour when frustrated
- 3. May require occasional (e.g., less than twice per week) reminders to demonstrate appropriate behaviour when frustrated



## Universal Supports benefit all students

- Create an understanding about what frustration is through class discussion, brainstorming and examples from literature.
- Help students use **reframing** to change their perception of situations they typically interpret as frustrating.
- Teach student strategies **for asking for help**, such as:
  - Ask Three, Then Me
  - **What to Do When I'm Stuck.**
- Teach **frustration-management strategies** that students can use when they begin to feel frustrated, such as:
  - using positive visualization prior to a difficult activity or situation
  - recognizing stress in their bodies and taking time to calm down
  - using **self-talk** to calm themselves down (e.g., "I am calm" or counting to 10)
  - **STAR Strategy (Stop, Take a deep breath And Relax).**
- Teach, practise and review strategies related to managing frustration at beginning of school year and throughout potentially stressful times of the year (e.g., holidays, exam time).
- Set up a **safe place** in the classroom where individual students can go to calm down, think about choices and, if needed, make a plan before rejoining the group.
- Post **visual reminders** of strategies for reframing and managing frustration. When appropriate, collaborate with students to develop these visual reminders.
- Teach and reinforce social **problem-solving strategies.**
- Use descriptive feedback to reinforce individual students when they demonstrate effective strategies to deal with frustration.





### Targeted Supports benefit students with more specific needs

- Pair individual students with positive peers who can serve as role models and provide support during potentially frustrating situations. Rotate these peers at regular intervals throughout the year.
- Provide proximity by positioning yourself nearby individual students who may require support and encouragement during potentially frustrating situations.
- Intersperse activities in which students experience success with activities that are frustrating for them in order to help them to regain control of their frustration.
- Work with individual students to develop low-key **cues and prompts** that you can use to remind them to use their frustration management strategies.
- For students with high levels of physical energy, create multiple **opportunities for movement** throughout the school day. This type of physical release can reduce frustration levels for many individuals.
- Work with individual students to identify potential situations that cause frustration and put strategies in place to help to alleviate or reduce frustration.
- For students who require increased structure and reassurance, develop and review **social stories** to help them manage typical situations that may cause them frustration.
- Practise managing frustration through **role-playing** situations that students identify as frustrating.
- Develop **self-monitoring strategies** students can use to reflect on and keep track of how they manage frustration throughout the school day.
- Set up a systematic approach to **reinforcement** for students who are working on managing their frustration levels.

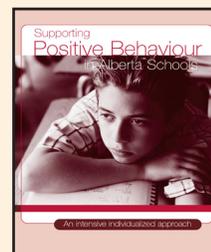
Parents know their children well and can offer insights on how to support their social and emotional well-being. There is strength in collaborating on strategies that could be used at home, at school and in the community.



### Specialized Supports benefit the small number of students with sensory, physical, cognitive or behavioural needs that require intensive, individualized interventions

- Consider time-limited participation for specific activities that trigger intense frustration for an individual student. They may benefit from participating in part of the activity and, if possible, gradually increasing their participation time throughout the school year.
- Develop an individual **behaviour support plan** focused on managing frustration that could include **reinforcement strategies**. Collaborate with the student's family and other community service providers to develop strategies and supports for the student.

For more information and strategies, see:



LearnAlberta.ca  
(Keyword: Positive Behaviour Support)

