# Transcript, Module 3: Supporting students with complex needs

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| **Audio** | **Visual** |
| **Narrator:** Supporting students with complex needs. | Slide 1:  *Teacher and teacher aides working together*  *Supporting students with complex needs.*  *Module 3 Presentation*  *Photo: (seated at a table, left to right) teacher holding opened notebook, child with glasses, teacher looking at the opened notebook, child wearing white and pink dress* |
| **Simon:**  Hi, my name’s Simon. I have two daughters: Alicia and Jacinta.  Jacinta has a condition called Rett syndrome, which means she has a lot of challenges.  She needs help with communication and all her personal needs.  Jacinta’s a bright, happy kid who’s very sociable and loves people. | Slide 2:  *Introducing Simon.*  *Our narrator Simon is Jacinta’s dad.*  *Jacinta has been receiving teacher aide support throughout her time at school.*  *Photo on the right: headshot of Simon.* |
| **Simon:** This module is intended to help you think about how you work with students who need support with communication or with their physical or personal care.  The module is for both teachers and teacher aides.  You can work through it yourself, but it’s best if people who are working together, learn together.  There are questions for you to consider as you work through the presentation.  If you’re working with another person, please take the time to talk them over. | Slide 3  *Introducing the module.*  *This module is about provision of support for students who need physical, personal care, and communication support.*  *It is for both teachers and teacher aides.*  Appears on the bottom right of slide 3  *Please take your time to think and reflect.* |
| **Simon:** Throughout Jacinta’s time at school, her communication has been a big focus for us.  At one stage she was using a switch attached to her computer to express herself. She would often need a minute or two before she was ready to hit the button.  Sometimes, people working with Jacinta would take her hand and move it to hit the button.  I didn’t really like seeing that because it wasn’t Jacinta expressing herself, it was the other person guiding her hand that was in control.  Another way that people communicate with Jacinta is by showing her two options on cards. Jacinta moves her hand or chin towards her choice.  The teachers and teacher aides at Jacinta’s school taught all the students how to communicate with Jacinta in this way. It was awesome seeing the kids take the symbols out of Jacinta’s bag and asking her what game she wanted to play at lunchtime.  At these times, Jacinta was just another kid on the playground.  What do you think about my story?  And what does it stay about how students like Jacinta can be supported in ways that make them feel empowered and respected as learners. | Slide 4  *Simon/Jacinta’s story*  *Four thumbnail photos, left to right: close-up – Jacinta eating watermelon, close-up ­– Jacinta wearing Angry Bird hat, close-up – Jacinta smiling, close-up – Jacinta and her father Simon*  Across the bottom of the screen  *What does this story tell you about how to support students with complex needs in ways that are empowering and respectful?* |
| **Simon:** Jacinta has support needs in relation to her physical and personal care and her communication.  With the right kind of support, students like Jacinta enjoy quality education just like everybody else.  Teacher aides can play a big part in making sure students with complex needs are able to get those needs met so they can get on with the job of learning. | Slide 5  *Why this module?*  *Some students require extra support at school for their physical and personal care and communication.*  *The purpose of this support is so that the student can access quality education.*  *Teacher aides are a valuable resource in contributing to this support.*  *Photo on the right: (left to right) two girls holding hands as they walk next to a teacher holding hands with boy seated a wheelchair* |
| **Simon:** So, what is the right kind of support?  It’s support that’s provided with respect and empathy.  The students themselves are listened to and taken into account.  There are some special skills involved, so if you’re supporting students with complex needs, it’s likely you’ll need some training and support. | Slide 6  *Why this module?*  *The “right kind of support” for students with complex needs is provided with empathy and respect.*  *You may need access to appropriate training and support.*  *Photo on the right: teacher, who is standing, works with student, who is seated at a table, on a craft project* |
| **Simon:** The way you treat students with complex needs can influence other people.  If you focus on a student’s disability, so will their peers.  But if you see and value the whole person, their classmates are likely to do the same. | Slide 7  *Being a role model*  *How you interact and include students with complex needs influences students and how they treat their peers.*  *If you see and value the whole person, others are likely to do the same.*  *Photo on the right: young boy, special needs child, and teacher work together on a puzzle* |
| **Simon:** People with complex needs can need help with their personal and physical care. Things like eating, lifting, positioning, toileting, medicines, and moving around.  People who require this support don’t want other people’s attention drawn to it.  They wanted to feel respected and maintain their dignity.  Like anyone else, they want the power to make their own decisions. | Slide 8 *Respecting privacy and dignity*  *Some students need help with their physical and personal care.*  *This support should:*   * *be unobtrusive* * *respect privacy and dignity* * *empower the student.* |
| **Simon:** When you respect someone, you don’t just make assumptions about what they want.  Talk to the student and to their whānau about how to provide support that meets their needs and aspirations. | Slide 9  *Respecting privacy and dignity.*  *Find out what the student and the family and whānau want.*  *Talk to them and listen to what they have to say.*  *Photo: (seated at a table, left to right) teacher holding opened notebook, child in a wheelchair, teacher looking at the opened notebook* |
| **Simon:** How good are you at seeking your students’ views about what they want?  Try thinking about a particular student and ask yourself:  Have I allowed the student time and opportunity to tell me what they want?  Have I asked the student what they prefer with physical transitions?  Do I speak to the student the same way as I do to other students?  Do I know what class the student doesn’t want to miss so I can work around this?  It’s also a good idea to think about how you would like to be treated.  Having thought about this, is there anything you might like to change in how you support this student? | Slide 10  *Seek the student’s views.*  *Have I allowed the student to tell me what they want?*  *Have I asked the student what they prefer with physical transitions?*  *Do I speak to the student in the same way [I would] with other students?*  *Do I know what class or subject the student doesn’t want to miss so I can work around this?*  *How would I like to be treated?*  *Is there anything I think I should change?* |
| **Simon:** If a student requires a high level of physical care, a specialist may help develop a health-care plan or a moving and handling plan.  The specialist may also show you the strategies and techniques needed to carry out the plan.  These plans are private, but they do need to be available to all the people who care for the student.  You can learn more about health-care plans by reading the Ministry resource *Health Conditions in Education Settings*. | Slide 11  *Supporting students who require a high level of physical care.*  *Some students require a health-care plan or a moving and handling plan.*  *A specialist may help develop the plan and show you how to aid the student.*  *The plan is available to those who work with the student, while respecting the student’s privacy.*  *See* Health Conditions in Education Settings *(Ministry of Education, 2006).* |
| **Simon:**  Some students with high communication needs use assistive technology such as a Braille writer or personal FM system.  Jacinta has used Switches, is currently using a Pod, and will soon be trialling some eye-gaze equipment.  You may need help from a specialist to learn how to use a particular method of communication.  You can then pass that learning on to other people.  You can also help students interact with each other by modelling respectful communication and by explaining how to do it. For example, explaining that Jacinta can hit the button to answer for herself if you just give her an extra moment.  Some students have an … *(video cuts out)* | Slide 12  *Supporting students with high education needs.*  *A specialist may show you how to work with assistive technology.*  *Show others how to work with assistive technology.*  *Model respectful ways of communicating.*  *Photo:* *Student wearing headphones and working on his laptop.* |