

Setting Clear Roles and Limits when Supporting Students with FND

Supporting students with Functional Neurological Disorder in educational settings works best when roles, responsibilities, and limits are clear. Unclear expectations can lead to inconsistency, strain, and misunderstandings that affect both students and staff.

This toolkit focuses on establishing clear, professional roles and limits that support students with FND in sustainable and appropriate ways.

Why Role Clarity Matters

Clear roles help ensure that support is consistent and reliable.

Role clarity can:

- reduce confusion about who is responsible for what
- prevent support from becoming inconsistent or informal
- protect students from mixed messages or changing expectations

Clarity supports stability for students and staff alike.

Distinguishing Support From Responsibility

Educators play an important role in supporting access to learning, but they are not responsible for managing a student's medical condition.

It may help to distinguish:

- educational accommodations from medical care
- classroom support from clinical decision-making
- professional responsibilities from informal expectations

Clear distinctions help maintain appropriate boundaries.

Communicating Limits Professionally

Setting limits is part of ethical and effective educational practice.

Limits may involve:

- availability outside of school hours
- scope of support provided in the classroom
- consistency with school policies and resources

Communicating limits clearly helps prevent misunderstandings and protects long-term support.

Aligning Support Across Staff

Students with FND may interact with multiple staff members.

It can help to:

- document agreed-upon supports
- ensure consistent understanding across relevant staff
- avoid relying on individual accommodations that cannot be maintained

Shared understanding supports continuity.

Responding When Expectations Drift

Over time, expectations may shift without formal discussion.

When this happens, it may help to:

- revisit agreed-upon roles and supports
- clarify what is realistic to maintain
- adjust plans collaboratively rather than informally

Revisiting expectations supports sustainability.

Maintaining Respectful Collaboration

Clear limits do not reduce care or commitment.

Respectful collaboration involves:

- transparency about roles
- openness to review and adjustment
- focus on student access rather than perfection

Boundaries support trust when they are communicated clearly and respectfully.

Supporting Students Through Clear Practice

Setting clear roles and limits when supporting students with Functional Neurological Disorder helps create predictable, sustainable educational environments. When expectations are realistic and well-defined, students are more likely to receive consistent support over time.

This toolkit is intended to support professional practice that balances student needs with long-term sustainability in educational settings.