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Kirby Institute



# Supporting students with disability who are anxious about vaccines



**Easy Read**

[www.kirby.unsw.edu.au](http://www.kirby.unsw.edu.au)

# About this information



This information is about how to support students with disability who are worried about **vaccines**.



**Vaccines** are medicines that stop you and your family from getting sick.



You get vaccines in a needle.



Many students at **special schools** get their vaccines there.



**Special schools** are schools where only student with disability go to.



Many students at special schools are worried about getting a vaccine.

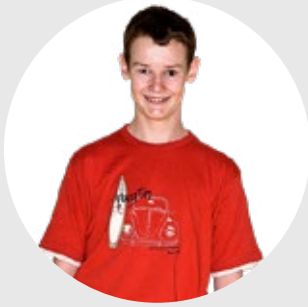


When you feel very worried about something it is called **anxiety**.

This information talks about things that can



- Make students have more anxiety



- Help students not feel so much anxiety.



We got this information from a study we did at special schools in NSW.

# Things that can make students have anxiety



There are things that can make students have anxiety about getting the vaccine.



It could be that something bad happened when they had a vaccine before.



They might be scared of the needle.



They might feel they can not have a say about what happens when they get the vaccine.



They might not know what is going to happen.



It could be that they get the vaccine somewhere they do not know.



It could be that getting the vaccine stops them from doing things they usually do.

# Things that can help students have less anxiety



There are things that can help students have less anxiety about vaccines.

## Get students ready

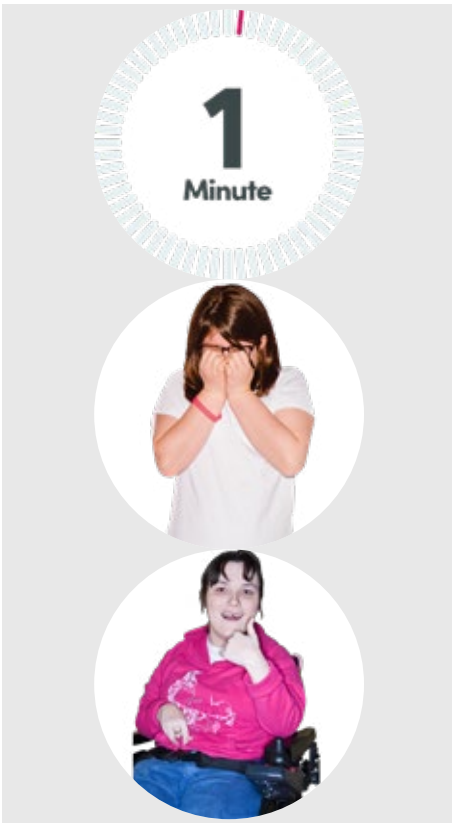


The student can get support to feel ready for the vaccine.



Someone can tell them

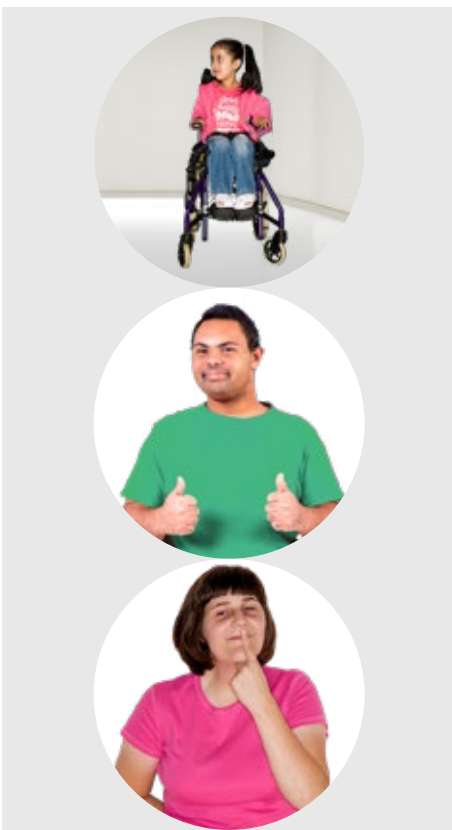
- Why they need the vaccine
- What will happen when they get the vaccine.



They can tell them things like

- It will be quick
- It will not hurt for long
- Vaccines keep everyone healthy.

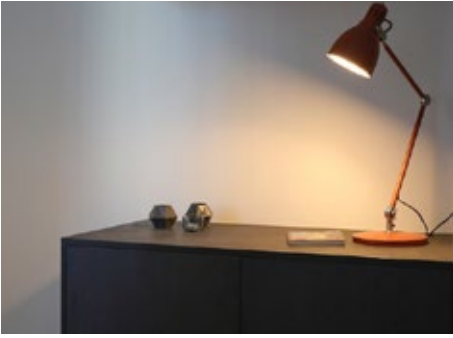
## Give the vaccine in a safe place



The student can get the vaccine in a place that

- They know
- They feel ok in
- Is quiet.





There can be things to help the student relax like very little light.



Schools can make sure there is not a lot of people around.

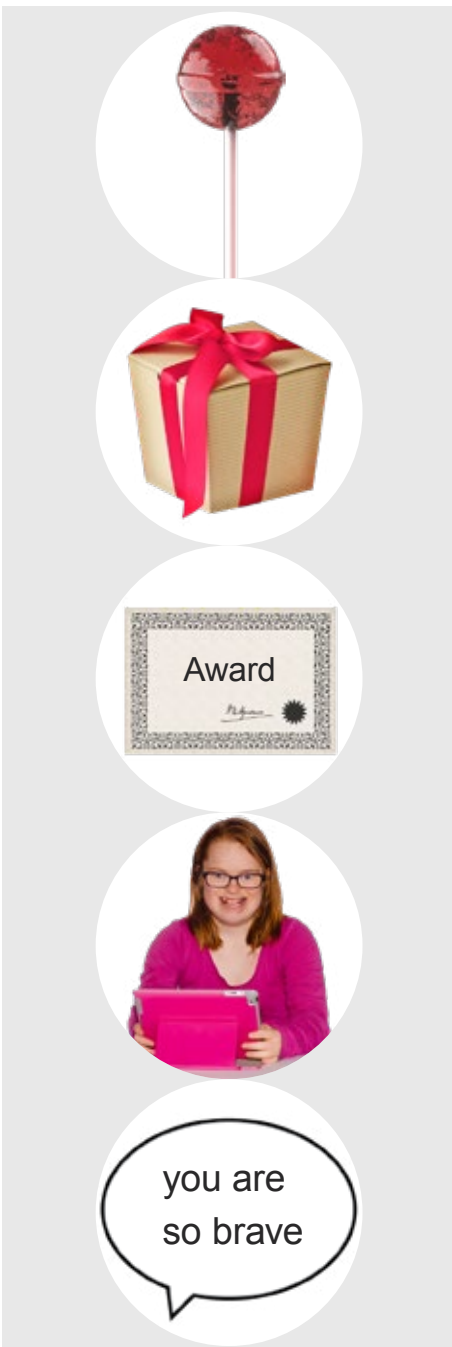


They can also make sure there are no people around that the student does not know.

## Give good things to students



It can help students feel better about vaccines if they get something good after.



This could be

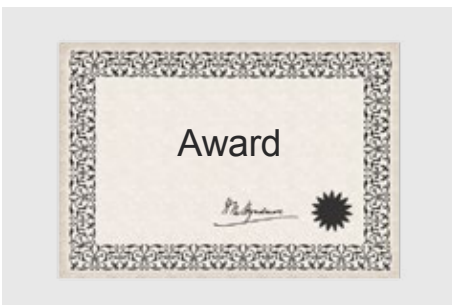
- Food they like
- A gift
- An award for doing a good job
- Doing a fun thing
- Telling them how well they did.



Lots of people give food to students.



But other people say that the student might get health issues from the food.



Some people feel it is better to give students awards at **school assembly**.



**School assembly** is when everyone from the school gets together.



It is good to think about each student and what they want.

# Support person



A support person can help students feel less worried about getting a vaccine.



A support person should be someone the student knows and trusts.



It could be a

- Teacher
- Support staff
- Parent.



The support person can help the student calm down and not think about the vaccine.

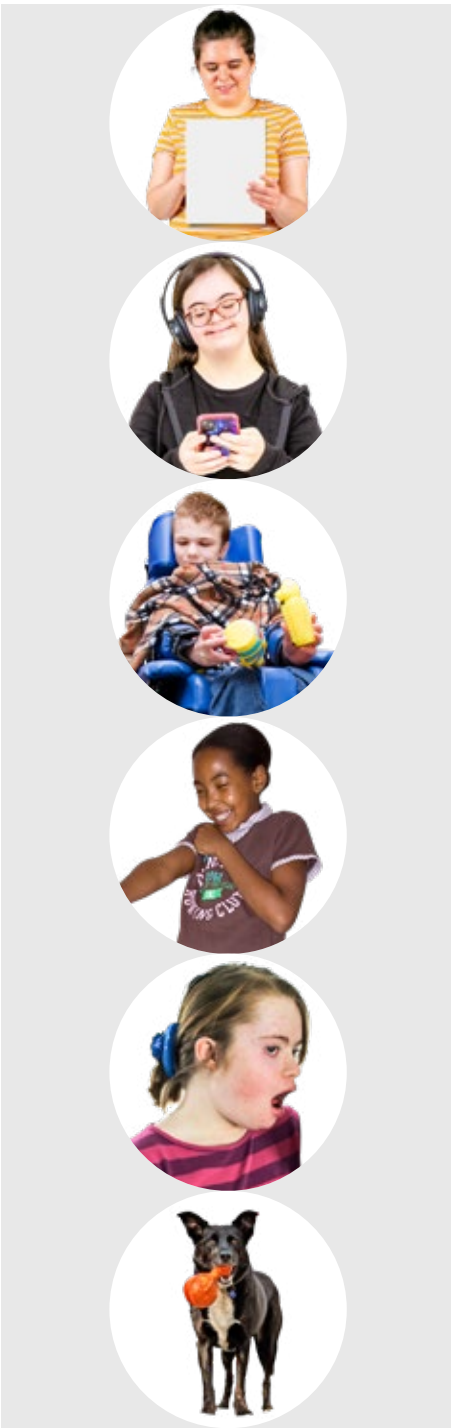


They can help the student feel good after they get the vaccine.

## Think about other things



Vaccines are easier for students if they think about other things.



It can help if the students

- Look at pictures
- Listen to music
- Play with toys
- Tell a funny story
- Take deep breaths
- Play with a therapy dog

These things can help the students feel less

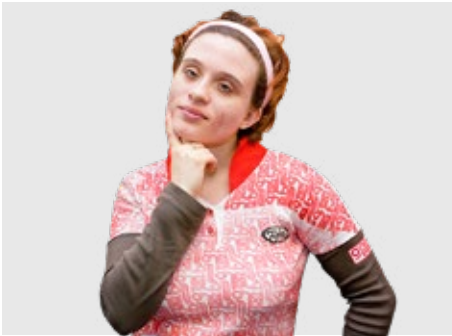


- Pain

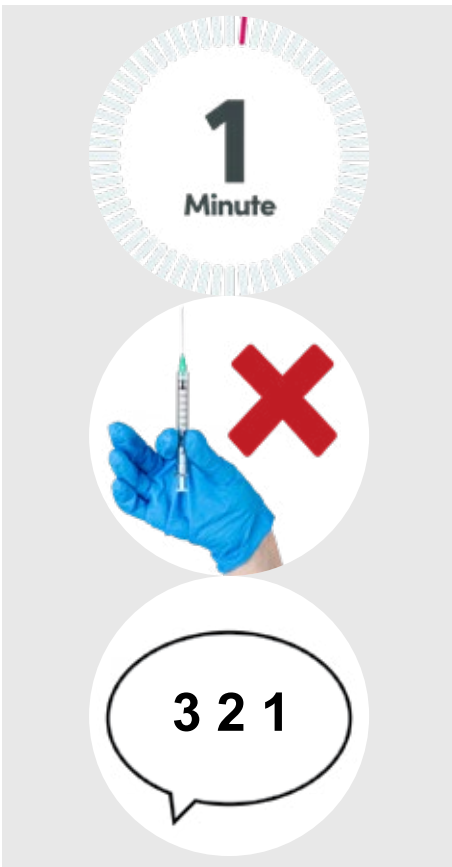


- Stress.

## Change how the vaccine is given



Students might feel less worried if we change how they get the vaccine.



Nurses say they could

- Give the vaccine more quickly
- Not show the student the needle
- Count down before they give the needle.



It is good to ask the student before how they want to get the vaccine.

## Things that should not happen



There are things that should not happen when a student gets a vaccine.



The student should not get surprised by getting the vaccine.



The student should not be touched by strangers.



The student should not be forced to get a vaccine.





The student should not be **threatened** to get a vaccine.

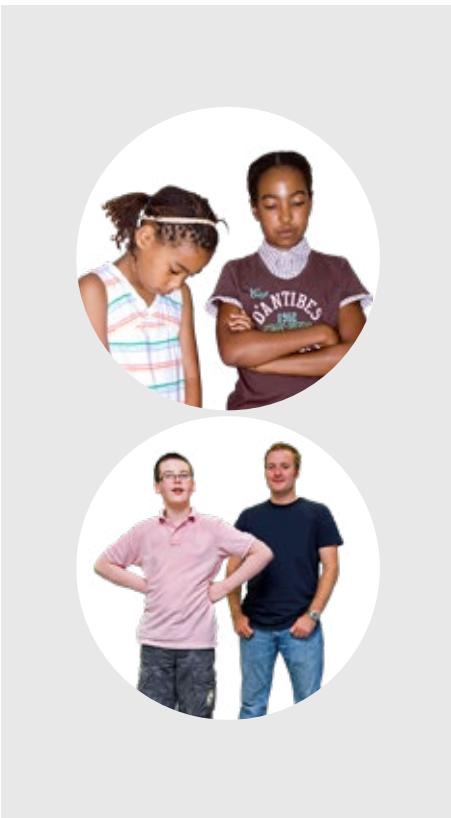


**Threaten** means the nurse might say they will tell the parents if they do not get the vaccine.

## Students who feel more anxiety



There are some students who have lots of anxiety about vaccines.



Nurses and school staff should

- Know about the students who feel this way
- Give them lots of support.



Nurses and school staff should think about how to support each student the best way.



They should make sure each student feels ok and safe about getting vaccines.



Schools should work together with the parents to do this.

## More information



For more information contact Lexie Young from the Kirby Institute.



You can send her an email at **[ayoung@kirby.unsw.edu.au](mailto:ayoung@kirby.unsw.edu.au)**

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