



## **NURTURING SUPPORT CENTRE - SECONDARY**

*A Support Centre for students with behavioural and emotional challenges*

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### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

Some students require more support in managing their behaviour than what the classroom teacher alone can provide. A Nurturing Support Centre (NSC) is not a segregated class but rather an in-school resource that provides an environment and an intervention plan to meet student needs so they can continue to attend regular classes. It is designed to provide emotional, behavioural and academic support to help students succeed. Its use is guided and supervised by a school support team. Shortened class time, options for dealing with challenging situations, organizational support and adult guidance are provided to those students who have a hard time behaving appropriately in class and also during unstructured and transition time. NSCs are being used successfully in both Elementary and Secondary Schools.

### **THE NURTURING SUPPORT CENTRE (NSC) MODEL**

In the last 15 years, our understanding of the factors that affect student behaviour has improved significantly with the explosion of information from neuroscientific research. Coupled with the theoretical framework provided by the attachment-based developmental paradigm of Dr. Gordon Neufeld, it became apparent that alternative approaches had to be developed for dealing with students who are struggling to behave as they should in a school environment.

What distinguishes the NSC from previous support centres is the overarching principle that deep and caring attachments with significant adults, and intervention plans that emphasize flexible but coherent structure will, in time, provide the conditions for development to occur which will result in long-lasting behavioural change.

The adults in the NSC have a common vision and philosophy. Their intervention strategies are carefully selected and coherent with the guiding principles arising from the concepts of maturation, vulnerability and attachment. The foundation of all interventions is an understanding that without safe and secure attachments, children cannot grow and develop as they should and so creating and maintaining significant attachment with adults is the first priority.

Behaviour is, of course, a significant issue for many of the students, but the frame of reference is different: the behaviour difficulties are recognized as symptoms indicating that the student has significant problems with maturation and vulnerability. Having a hard time managing frustration and/or an inability to manage complex demands appropriately in the classroom and the school, are not seen as a failure to learn proper skills, but rather as part of the immaturity and vulnerability of the individual student and these must be taken into account when creating an intervention plan for the student.

Therefore, the NSC is set up in such a way as to provide support for students as soon as they enter the room and in such a way as to make it easy for them to participate in the interventions that are created.

The NSC is conceived for students identified by the administration and staff as needing regular and consistent intervention to help them to meet the behavioural demands of the educational setting. The NSC is not meant to be a drop-in centre, a disciplinary room, nor is it meant to be a “dumping ground”.

Students who are formally identified with a “code” for behavioural problems or for mental health issues are considered for the service. Other students, without formal codes, are also identified because the typical behaviour management, individual interventions and disciplinary practices of the school have failed to resolve their problems.

How the NSC is used with each student is based on their unique needs and circumstances. For example, the constraints of timetables, the impact of negative peer interactions, and the stress of family difficulties, such as parental illness, mental illness and other challenging life events, are all taken into account. The degree of a particular student's current vulnerabilities, such as anxiety, high sensitivity and/or a diagnosis of a specific syndrome etc., are also important considerations when considering the student's eligibility for the NSC and in developing a plan for the student.

The challenging behavioural characteristics of students who have experienced adverse childhood experiences (i.e. difficult family circumstances or complex trauma) are now recognized as being a result of the effects of these experiences on brain development. Recent studies have shown, among other effects, poorer development of the corpus callosum and in certain areas of the pre-frontal cortex across genders. Other studies indicate that some children who experience neglect and abuse, have a kindled amygdala that may cause them to over-react to situations more easily handled by other students. These students usually have behavioural difficulties and benefit from involvement with the NSC.

Although it is not always easy, it is crucial that the adults remain in charge of the relationship with the students in the NSC. Furthermore, the primary workers, and the consultants and administrators must make sure to bridge relationships with other adults, especially the teachers, with whom the student interacts.

It is acknowledged that change is slow, and so the notions of "taking time" and "being patient" are essential to the NSC philosophy. Students are not hurried in and out of the service.

### **SETTING UP AN NSC**

A school that wishes to create a Nurturing Support Centre will have to ensure that certain conditions are met even before the room can be set up.

#### **Understanding of and adherence to a developmental and trauma informed approach:**

The administration, staff and board personnel must be informed by an understanding of the developmental approach and of how adverse childhood experiences affect the overall development and behaviour of children. Adherence to this approach includes an understanding that it takes time for change to happen and that some students may require long-term support. Knowledge of the Neufeld Developmental paradigm is highly encouraged, as well as the work of trauma specialists such as Bruce Perry, Regalena Melrose, Delphine Colin-Vézina, Sonia Lupien and Bessel van der Kolk among others.

#### **Principal/Administrative support and Staff support:**

The NSC will require the allocation or re-allocation of school resources, both in terms of staff and budget. It is important that the staff of the school and the administrator are in agreement with the implementation of this project so that there is an understanding of the interventions and to avoid resentment of how the resources are being allocated or re-allocated.

#### **School/School Board Professional Involvement:**

Because of the needs of the students involved, extra support from Professionals is essential for proper planning and implementation of interventions. The School Board must be willing to see involvement with the NSC as part of the role and responsibility of the Board Professionals.

#### **Creation and Involvement of an NSC Core Team:**

The NSC Core Team would consist of those involved with the functioning of the NSC.

This would include **staff** who will be in the NSC on a daily basis, the **administrator**, **Resource Teacher** and the **Professional**. Time needs to be allocated so that the members of the NSC Core Team are able to meet regularly to plan and to evaluate the interventions for students.

### **Physical Space:**

The best size for the NSC is that of a regulation-sized classroom. This space should be for the sole use of the NSC. If at all possible, there should be access to water (a sink) and also sufficient electrical capacity to support a microwave oven and a small fridge. A larger room would be even better.

### **Staffing:**

The NSC should have funding for **two full-time staff positions** so that the NSC can be available to students from early morning, over the lunch hour and to the end of the school day.

### **Budget:**

There should be sufficient funds to allow for equipping the room with furniture, appliances, intervention materials, basic school supplies, food and some on-going funds for day-to-day expenses. Funds should also be available for regular staff training if Professional Development funds are not available.

## **STUDENTS ASSIGNED TO THE NURTURING SUPPORT CENTRE**

The students chosen for the NSC are those who are experiencing significant difficulties with their behaviours and very often with their learning. Most frequently, they are students who experience many frustrations on a daily basis. Some students express these frustrations by acting out and others are more internalized in their expression. Both types of students use the NSC as a safe place in which to express and deal with their emotions so that they can once again reengage with their academic learning.

### **Determining eligible students**

The NSC is meant to provide support to:

- Students who cannot remain for extended periods in the classroom and who require modified timetables. While these students, from time to time, may spend significant parts of their school day in the NSC, the goal is always to reintegrate the student back into the regular classroom as soon as possible.
- Students who need support during a predetermined class period or part of a period in their timetable, such as when a substitute teacher is in the classroom, or during an activity that the student has particular difficulty managing.
- Students who have difficulty with transitions e.g. morning start up; recess/break time; lunch, and end of day.
- Students who have been identified as needing help with handling their behaviour in a variety of situations and require help when they become “overwhelmed”.
- Students needing help with managing significant anxiety or stress during specific times of the day, the week, or the school year.
- Students for whom the usual behavioural interventions and standard classroom management strategies have not been successful, e.g. discussion with student, consequences, parents have been contacted, detentions, suspensions etc.
- Students experiencing significant life events such as placement in a group home, parental illness or death, targets of severe bullying, among others, are also eligible.

### **Referring students to the NSC**

A **referral process** is crucial to the selection of students. Some already have a Ministry “code” that has identified that the student is experiencing significant behavioural and/or mental health difficulties. The NSC team then determines which of these students would benefit from the services offered by the NSC and which services offered by the NSC would best meet their needs.

Other students are referred to the NSC team by their teachers or administrators when referrals are taken and throughout the school year. The team reviews their needs and determines if the NSC is an appropriate service for them. A plan is created by the NSC Core Team.

Regular consultation involving the school team along with simple but ongoing record keeping allows for the determination of next steps in a student's evolution.

### **THE NURTURING SUPPORT CENTRE STAFF AND TEAM**

It has been found to be most effective if at least **two adults** are assigned to be in the NSC on a regular basis providing support to students during the entire school day. If at all possible, it would be best if one of these persons were a Resource teacher or a classroom teacher with an understanding of learning difficulties as well as behaviour challenges. Other possibilities include a Behaviour Technician, Special Education Technician and/ or special education Attendant, Aide, Educational Assistant or Childcare Worker.

The School Board **Psycho-educator, Psychologist, Behaviour Specialist and/or other designated Student Services Professional** such as a Special Education Consultant, are an essential resource for the NSC team and the school team. Their role is to help with the development, evaluation and revision of student plans (or IEPs) on a regular basis. Ideally, they are there to provide active supervision to the staff to help them to better understand the emotional, behavioural and academic needs of these students. They can also communicate and bridge with parents and outside agencies, arranging for necessary outside services.

The school **principal and vice principal** are key to the functioning of the NSC. Their support of the guiding principles, their availability to consult with the team and their communication with teachers and with parents are all essential to the successful implementation of this service. The principal will also need to support and enable Professional Development for the school team and additional in-depth professional development for the NSC Core Team.

**Classroom teachers** remain responsible for the academic progress of students assigned to the NSC. They collaborate in the development of the student plan and in its day-to-day application. They ensure that students have meaningful work when in the NSC. They provide on-going feedback to NSC team as to the effectiveness of the plan. And in turn the teachers continue to receive on-going feedback and input from NSC team about how to best meet this student's academic, behavioural and emotional needs.

**Resource teachers**, if not part of the daily staff, should be part of the support services to the NSC Core Team to provide input for academic programming, especially if a student is unable to attend classes. They also provide academic strategies and tools to support students who are struggling with their learning. They help bridge these strategies from the NSC to the classroom.

**Parents** should be introduced to and allowed to visit the NSC. Parents generally agree to their child receiving services from the NSC because the NSC is seen as a support and not a punishment or consequence. Good communication with the staff is encouraged, and parents are asked to attend meetings when significant changes in intervention plans are being made.

**NSC Core Team:** The NSC Core Team consists of those involved with the functioning of the NSC; staff who will be in the NSC on a daily basis, the administrator, Resource Teacher and the Professional. The members of the NSC Core Team meet regularly to plan and evaluate the interventions for students.

### **QUALITIES OF THE STAFF IN THE NSC**

The staff in the NSC need to be knowledgeable about the needs of children with challenging behaviours. Having an understanding of the developmental process, immaturity, vulnerability and the impact of adverse childhood experiences or complex trauma on student behavior is key. They should be relationship oriented, having both a desire to care for children with challenges and yet, be able to take on and maintain an alpha role, which means they are comfortable with being in charge of managing behaviour. They should have a willingness to create a warm, caring and

supportive environment for the immature. When managing behavior, the staff in the NSC focus on creating structure and routines and not on the use of consequences.

Students referred to the NSC are not easy to manage and therefore, the staff involved in the NSC need to constantly re-evaluate what works and what does not work. And so, staff must be comfortable with reflecting on their practices. They should not perceive a questioning of their interventions as a critique but rather as a path to understanding how to do things in a more effective way. The analysis of what and how things unfolded, and the dynamics involved in any particular situation is undertaken in order to know where, when and how interventions can be improved to better support students in the NSC.

### **BUILDING A SCHOOL-WIDE CULTURE THAT SUPPORTS THE NSC**

The NSC is one intervention within a continuum of interventions available to students and staff. It is important that the staff becomes informed of the underlying philosophy of the NSC so as to understand its role in supporting students with challenges.

The entire school team should be offered a presentation that explains the philosophy and the kinds of interventions that will be offered so that staff will understand the intention behind certain interventions. It should become clear to staff that the NSC is an additional source of support to students and teachers.

Once the physical space has been set-up, hosting an 'Open House' to visit the NSC will help explain why the room is set-up with individual areas and the interventions which will take place in each of these.

When students come to the NSC, they are involved with different intervention materials, in work stations based on their particular need for support. A wide range of materials are used to elicit interest and involvement with students with a specific purpose in mind, this may sometimes be confusing to some adults. The 'Open House' presents an opportunity to explain how certain interventions and materials are used so as to avoid misunderstanding.

### **PROGRAMME SUPPORT, DEVELOPMENT AND ON-GOING EVALUATION**

In order to best serve the students, there needs to be on-going evaluation of the intervention plans for the students. The NSC requires considerable commitment from the school team in order to provide comprehensive services for students.

#### **NSC Core Team Coordination meetings**

Despite busy schedules and unforeseen events at school, **regular meetings**, at least every four to six weeks, with the Centre staff, an administrator assigned to the service, and the pivotal Student Service Professional(s) should take place. This is the NSC Core Team.

This NSC Core Team is a coordination committee. The members strategize about the logistics of running the program and take a preventative approach. They work as a team to discuss challenges and to find solutions regarding the functioning of the NSC within the context of the school community. They develop means of communication, discuss the allocation of and finding of resources, set schedules and responsibility of the staff and take part in professional development.

During the school year, on pedagogical days and before the start of the student schedule, general operational meetings occur to reinforce the philosophy, set objectives and to resolve practical and logistical issues.

### **HOW THE NSC IS USED**

#### **Student schedules - who gets adapted schedules and how long do they last?**

In the NSC, each student is an individual. His/her schedule will be adapted to meet their present needs. A wide range of options are considered based on their need for support.

Regular monitoring of interventions is key to note both progress and to make adjustments with interventions. It is also key that the NSC Core team and the school team be patient and

supportive in order to prime the conditions for desired growth. There is no set timeline when looking at how long a student will have an adapted schedule. It is important to note that with each small step of progress, the gradual return to the regular demands, is supported by adults to ensure that the student feels safe and confident that he/she can manage these steps.

### **Before Class Time:**

Some students come to the NSC to help them to prepare for their day by reviewing their daily schedule and ensuring that they have the necessary materials. Staff have a chance at this time to determine a student's emotional readiness to be in the classroom and may choose to keep the student at the NSC if the student is struggling due to a difficult bus ride, family issues or other circumstances. For some students lockers for their use are placed in the NSC.

### **During Class Time:**

Some students have difficulty during certain parts of their day or during certain subjects. It may be decided by the NSC team in collaboration with the teacher that a student have a scheduled time in the NSC to provide both emotional and academic support at specific times. This intervention is reviewed periodically. Some students require a calm, quiet environment to be able to attempt and/or complete their work. Being in a space that has less stimulation and distractions can make a marked difference.

If a Resource Teacher is part of the NSC team, students may have scheduled time either individually or in small groups to provide academic teaching and support. The NSC Teacher will work in collaboration with the classroom teacher in order to align the interventions and support provided to the students.

### **During Transition Times:**

Some students become overwhelmed during times of transition, they are unable to manage themselves due to the noise level, density of the population around them and lack of personal space. For some, coming to the NSC a few minutes prior to a school transition (ex. recess, lunch hour) can make the difference between being able to manage themselves and becoming overwhelmed and disorganized. Behavioral outbursts often take place during transitions. This intervention helps students manage themselves successfully and progressively. As they are able to handle some of the challenges of having more people in their personal space, they are gradually reintegrated with their group during transition times.

### **During the Lunch Hour:**

Sheltered lunch is required for students who become overwhelmed on an emotional and/or sensory level during the lunch hour. For some going to the cafeteria can set off the remainder of their day. Being in the NSC provides students with an opportunity to eat with a smaller group of students with less noise and distraction. It allows them to "re-set" in a calm environment and to be supported by adults in their social interactions with peers. As students are capable of managing themselves more successfully, they are gradually reintegrated with their group during the lunch hour. Some older students also become mentors to younger students during this time block in the NSC.

### **During Recess/Breaks:**

Some students find the lack of structure and the intense peer interactions difficult to handle. These students are assigned to the NSC at recess time and are usually provided with an opportunity to go outside at another time accompanied by an adult.

### **At the end of the day:**

Some students come at the end of the day to receive help with organizing themselves for doing homework and with planning for the next day. In some circumstances, coaching to help them manage their return home and to map out their time at home is provided.

**Using a "Pass":** When the NSC team determines that the use of a "pass" would be beneficial for a student, he/she and their teacher will be given one or more of the following passes so as to

facilitate the movement of the student from the classroom to the NSC. Possible passes include: “I need a break”, “I have a scheduled time”, “I need to talk with an adult”, “I need a quiet workspace”, “I need to be supervised by an adult”. Other cards can be created to meet different needs.

### **Academic Materials**

Workbaskets for the students are essential so that when students are ready, they can have appropriate activities that keep them engaged in academic learning. Materials need to be provided by their assigned teachers so that class time spent in the NSC is as close to a regular school day as possible. These baskets also include work that can be done when specific classwork has not been assigned, but which is beneficial to the student’s academic progress. If a student has an IEP, an IEP Kit is created that includes tools and strategies which support their IEP goals and should also be included in their work baskets.

### **Documentation and Record Keeping**

Every effort should be made to keep records in an efficient and flexible way. A daily log of the students and their progress helps with future planning.

### **PHYSICAL SET UP OF THE NSC**

An NSC functions best with clearly delineated areas. The room should be large enough to house the areas described below. Please see **Appendix A** for photos.

- ⊖ An **ENTRANCE** or **COLLECTING AREA** so that students can enter the Centre in a manner that does not disrupt the other students, but so they can be easily seen and welcomed by staff.
- A **TEACHING AREA** that contains tables and/or desks for the students as well as workspaces for the adults. Individual work stations are set-up as these provide privacy and reduce distractions when students require a quiet space in which to complete their schoolwork. Students who are assigned to the NSC have baskets that contain schoolwork and personal tools, strategies and intervention materials.
- A **SOCIAL AREA** where students are gathered at recess and lunchtime to eat together, socialize with each other and also with the adults in the room. Snacks and fruit are provided to help meet students’ needs. Having a fridge, a microwave and a sink is an asset.
- Two smaller **PRIVATE AREAS** that are accessed through the main area. These areas provide some privacy so that adults can meet with, coach and tutor students without peer interference. These are also used as quiet areas for students who need a break from being over stimulated.
- Two **COCOONING AREAS** which also provide space for anxious and stressed students who need to a quiet place in which to deal with their emotions. Students are provided with tools for quietly expressing their emotions or with tools for helping them to calm themselves.

### **Furnishings and other supplies**

The NSC should be furnished with desks, chairs, tables, bookshelves, storage areas as well as a small fridge, microwave, washing station and other necessities so that student needs can be met. See Appendix A for a list of furnishings photos of an NSC at the Secondary level.

### **CRISIS INTERVENTION**

The school must provide protocols that include places and persons to deal with students in crisis so that the NSC remains a psychologically safe environment for the assigned students. Once students have regained some self-control, they may return to the NSC. This re-entry is always based upon consultation with the adults in charge.

Best practices for crises need to be clear in the event that a student’s behaviour escalates while in the NSC. Staff needs training, such as is provided by the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI), in managing incidents so as to do no harm to students.

Time for NSC staff to debrief after a crisis is also essential, especially if a restraint had to be imposed. In some School Boards, such a debrief is mandatory for planning and record keeping purposes.

**EMOTIONS ROOM:** When space is available within a school, having an Emotions Room can be highly beneficial. The Emotions Room is a safe place, under adult supervision, where a student who is having a melt-down can express their big emotions. This intervention provides students experiencing significant emotions a venue to express themselves without the risk of repercussion. The Emotions Room provides a private context where a student's dignity is preserved. The student is always accompanied by an adult during this time. To learn more about the Emotions Room, please visit the [www.cebm.ca](http://www.cebm.ca)

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

On-going Professional Development is essential to maintain the integrity of the NSC programme. Training of staff in the attachment-based developmental paradigm of Dr. Gordon Neufeld, along with a solid understanding of the effect of complex trauma on the developing brain, is considered to be essential.

It is suggested that the NSC team commit to taking courses every year and that the Professional Learning Community (PLC) model be used so that information can be ingested in manageable chunks and discussed thoroughly so that theory can be more effectively **be** applied to practice.

**During the school year 2020-2021, the Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Management (CEBM) will be offering a series of online presentations for those who wish to set up and use a Nurturing Support Centre. Please visit [www.cebm.ca](http://www.cebm.ca) for more information**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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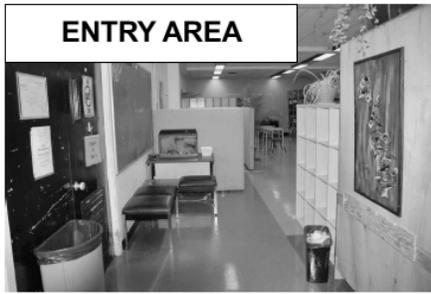
*"When dealing with the immature, we need to win their hearts to open their minds to our influence."* **Gordon Neufeld, PhD**

*"The key to any intervention is to 'read' the student before us and to match the intervention that will best support the student at that time. This benefits not only the student but also the teacher, the class group and the school as a whole."*  
**Martine Demers, Behavior Consultant, RSB, CEBM**

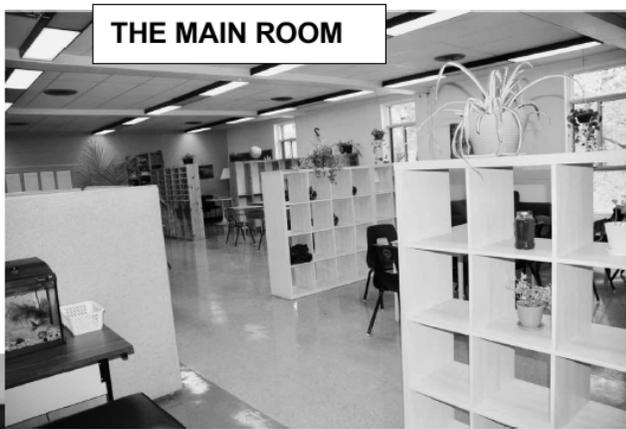
For more information about the **Nurturing Support Centre** model, please contact:  
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## RESOURCE LIST

1. ***Hold on to Your Kids*** Gordon Neufeld & Gabor Maté | Random House / Knopf | 2013  
[www.neufeldinstitute.org](http://www.neufeldinstitute.org)
2. ***Reclaiming our Students*** Hannah Beach & Tamara Strijack | Page Two Books | 2020
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[www.drmelrose.com](http://www.drmelrose.com)
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<http://acestoohigh.com/2012/04/23/lincoln-high-school-in-walla-walla-wa-tries-new-approach-to-school-discipline-expulsions-drop-85/>
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<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/about.html>
6. ***The Boy who was Raised as a Dog*** Bruce D. Perry & Maia Szalavitz |Basic Books| 2006  
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7. ***The Body Keeps Score: Brain, Mind and Body in the Healing of Trauma***  
Bessel van der Kolk |Penguin Books| 2014
8. ***Waking the Tiger: Healing Trauma*** Peter A. Levine | North Atlantic Books | 1997
9. ***Unconditional Teaching*** Alfie Kohn |Educational Leadership| 2005  
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10. ***Educating Oppositional and Defiant Children*** Philip S. Hall and Nancy D. Hall  
|Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development| 2003
11. ***The Explosive Child*** Ross W. Greene, Ph.D. |Harper Collins Publishers| 2001 (2nd Ed)
12. ***The First Days of School: How to be an Effective Teacher*** Harry K. Wong |Harry K. Wong Publications| 2004  
<http://teachers.net/gazette/wong.html>
13. ***Secrets of Discipline for Parents and Teachers and With All Due Respect – Keys for building effective school discipline*** Ronald G. Morrish These books are available from  
[www.realdiscipline.com](http://www.realdiscipline.com)
14. ***Real Boys*** William S. Pollack |Owl Books| 1999
15. ***Rest Play Grow*** Deborah MacNamara, | Aona Books 2016  
<http://macnamara.ca/>



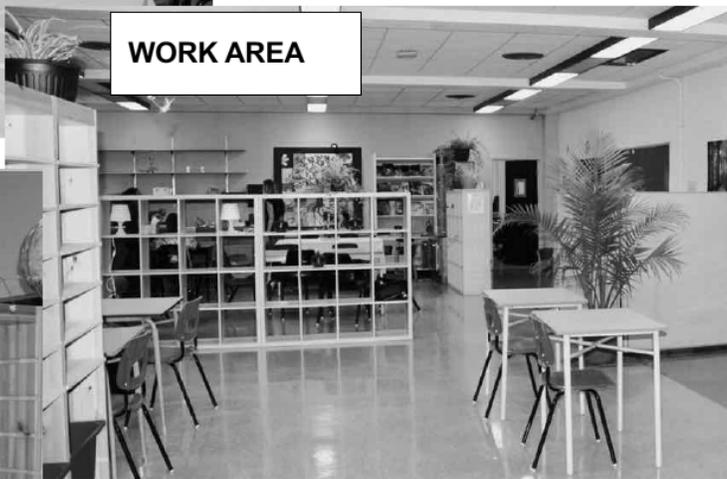
**ENTRY AREA**



**THE MAIN ROOM**



**KITCHEN/SOCIAL AREA**



**WORK AREA**



**QUIET WORK AREA**



**LOCKER AREA**

**APPENDIX A: Set-up of an NSC****Appendix B: NSC - Suggested FURNISHINGS AND OTHER SUPPLIES**

<b>Collecting Area</b>	<b>Teaching Area</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Welcome Poster providing a warm invitation to enter</li> <li>- Books to look at</li> <li>- Fidgets to manipulate</li> <li>- Paper, pencils &amp; crayons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual workstations</li> <li>- Community basket of supplies needed to do work</li> <li>- Smartboard, computer and projector</li> <li>- Large dry erase board</li> </ul>
<b>Private Areas</b>	<b>Kitchen Area</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Two in different areas of the room</li> <li>- Art and sensory materials are readily available</li> <li>- Space and visual prompts for yoga</li> <li>- Fine-motor activities</li> <li>- Comfortable chairs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Table, chairs</li> <li>- Refrigerator</li> <li>- Microwave</li> <li>- Shelving or cupboard space to store food, utensils and cleaning products</li> <li>- Sink, if at all possible</li> </ul>
<b>Staff Area</b>	<b>Individual Work Stations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A table or desk - strategically placed to provide optimal supervision</li> <li>- Individual chair for student by the desk to offer a 'personal conference area'</li> <li>- Intervention tools 'on hand' ready to offer students in need</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supplies needed to do work at each station</li> </ul>
<b>Academic tools and strategies</b>	<b>Community Project Table</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Privacy folder with Math, ELA or FSL visual supports</li> <li>- Organizational tools to make large tasks manageable</li> <li>- Various options to help bridge written work to other mediums</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ongoing Building &amp; Creating: yarn creations (knitting, corking, looming, weaving), quilt making, bead and thread creations</li> <li>- Puzzles</li> <li>- Mural making, Lego wall</li> </ul>
<b>Reading Area</b>	<b>Physical Space</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comfortable chairs or bean bags</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Book shelves to create areas and provide storage of intervention materials, games and supplies</li> <li>- Baskets to organize and store materials</li> <li>- Lamps to create dim lighting</li> </ul>

**Appendix C:****HISTORY OF OASIS, A NURTURING SUPPORT CENTRE, AT MASSEY-VANIER HIGH SCHOOL, ETSB**

The challenge was given to the staff at Massey Vanier High School of the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) in Quebec to develop an intervention that put theory into practice. The OASIS programme was the result and thus, the framework for the Nurturing Support Centre concept was created.

The OASIS Centre (Organization/ Acceptance/ Safe haven/ Individual/Support) had its beginnings at the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) in 2008, at Massey-Vanier High School. Students (approximately 700) are transported from communities across a wide geographic area to this rural High School.

A small group of committed adults proposed the development of a centre that focused on providing a safety net at school for those students who were identified as lacking the ability to cope with the demands of a large secondary school without adult support. This centre was meant to include both those students with acting-out behaviours and those experiencing emotional distress, or a combination of both. With the former group the intent was to keep them from behaving in ways that could result in a school suspension, and with the latter to provide support to allow them to persist in meeting school demands.

At Massey-Vanier before the development of the OASIS, students who exhibited disruptive behaviours were all assigned to a detention room, with a classic behavioural paradigm that used rewards and consequences, reflection sheets, contracts and social skills training or some combination thereof. Suspensions, long and short term, were frequent. Students with emotional difficulties other than disruptive behaviours did not often receive any services. School staff, including teachers, administrators and Student Services, was dissatisfied with the outcomes for the students. The rewards and punishment approach did not foster positive relationships between the students and the adults at the school, nor did it significantly change the behaviour of those students who were frequently in trouble.

Dissatisfaction with the behavioural approach coincided with an increasing number of teachers, administrators and professionals receiving training in the Neufeld attachment-based developmental paradigm and in trauma-based interventions.

And so, OASIS was established.

The model of the Nurturing Support Centre is based on the many years of experience of the staff working in and with the OASIS Centre.

Over time, this centre continues to evolve, constantly reviewing and revising best practices in keeping with an attachment-based developmental paradigm and trauma-based research.

The unhurried nurturing environment that was created is welcomed by the students, if not initially, then soon after they experience the support. The OASIS Centre is not seen as punitive. As a result, students often seek out the service and are more willing to be guided by the adults in the school.

The school has seen a decrease in the number of suspensions and an increase in students who complete their academic studies. It has been in existence now for 12 years.