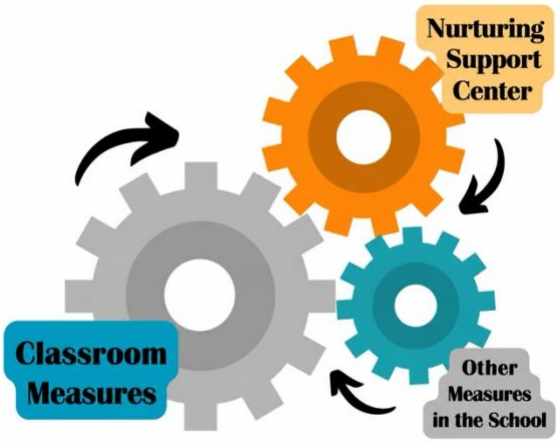
What Is a Nurturing Support Center?



Far more than simply a designated room, the NSC is a physical space embedded within an inclusive school culture grounded in care, the professional posture of adults, and the recognition of diverse student needs.

The NSC is a complementary support measure within a continuum of interventions offered to students who require structured and ongoing support to adapt, progress, and remain engaged in school.

Every aspect of this initiative has been carefully considered, planned, and validated to ensure that nothing is left to chance. From the design of the physical space and the selection of materials to staff training and the definition of individual roles and responsibilities, these key elements have been intentionally established to maximize the benefits of the NSC.

In practical terms, the NSC is a designated space within a school where an identified student may go at predetermined times to address specific needs. These may include taking a moment of respite, accessing a quiet environment for independent work, finding a safe space to express and regulate emotions, receiving academic support, or accessing other forms of assistance.

Strong connections between the NSC and classrooms are essential to promote consistency in adult practices and maximize students' emotional engagement and participation in classroom learning.

The NSC is primarily designed to support students with more targeted and individualized needs. However, it may also provide support in other circumstances, including unexpected or temporary situations (*please refer to the list of potential student support pathways presented later in this guide*).

A high-quality Nurturing Support Center is built upon several essential foundations that guide its implementation and daily functioning.

1. Complementarity and Consistency

- The NSC is a complementary support measure, never the primary or sole response to the challenges faced by a school.
- It is embedded within a systemic approach, aligned with universal practices and other support measures already established within the school.

2. Preventive and Proactive Orientation

- The NSC provides support before situations escalate into crises, focusing primarily on addressing students' underlying needs.
- The emphasis is placed on development and regulation rather than punishment or control.

3. Emotional Safety and Relational Climate

- A sense of safety is the starting point for all interventions within the NSC.
- Students should experience the NSC as a calming, emotionally supportive environment that fosters trusting relationships with consistent, caring adults.

4. Neurodevelopmental and Inclusive Approach

- Interventions are grounded in current knowledge of human development, attachment, trauma and neuro-affirmative practices.
- Traditional behaviour management practices centred on punishment or rewards are critically examined in favour of approaches that prioritize co-regulation, attachment, and inclusion.

5. Reflective Practices and Continuous Adjustment

- The purpose of the NSC is not to "fix" the student, but rather to adjust the environment and adult practices to better respond to the student's needs.
- Interventions are intentionally planned, monitored, and regularly reviewed in alignment with the student's Preventive Action Plan or Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

6. Collective Vision and Shared Responsibility

- The NSC belongs to the entire school community: teachers, school administrators, consultants/professionals, support staff, other relevant school staff, parents, and students.
- Responsibilities are shared and grounded in interdisciplinary collaboration and teamwork (*please refer to the list of shared responsibilities presented later in this guide*).

7. Realistic and Adjusted Expectations

- The NSC does not guarantee that students will progress in a linear or predictable manner.
- It may serve as a compensatory support measure, helping students to adapt socially and academically rather than focusing exclusively on "behavioural improvement."

Key Principle

The NSC remains a preventive and regulation-supportive environment where students can access the assistance they need to become more available for learning and social engagement.

Interventions aim to reduce emotional, sensory, and cognitive overload while supporting students in maintaining the fullest possible participation in classroom learning, at a pace that respects their individual needs and capacities.

Through this dedicated space and the collaborative work surrounding it, school teams can develop a deeper understanding of each student's profile, identify more appropriate and individualized preventive strategies, and progressively transfer these practices back into the classroom.

The ultimate goal is not simply to support students within the NSC, but to strengthen their capacity to participate, engage, and thrive within their regular learning environment.