

Designated area in the classroom

A meaningful intervention within the Continuum of Interventions in Schools

Creating a Designated (Quiet) Area in your classroom

Rationale:

A place for students to go to when they need:

- Quiet time
- Thinking time
- Alone time
- Reflection time
- Calming time
- A change of environment
- A break
- Self-monitoring
- A “re-set”!



Who benefits from this?

- Students with high sensitivity and/or are anxious
- Students who struggle managing their emotions
- Students who occasionally require some time for themselves to switch gears or transition to another activity
- Teachers

When to use this Area:

When I notice that a student is:

- Showing signs of anxiety/stress
- Tired
- Asking to have a break
- Not available to learn
- Acting up

The keys to a setting up a **'Designated (Quiet) Area'** in your classroom:

Materials can include...

Visuals	Hands on	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Breathing techniques ▪ Exercise/yoga pictures (how to) ▪ Emotions/feelings ▪ Search and find bottle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Calming basket (fidget tools) ▪ Books (picture books, mazes, search and find, emotions, etc.) ▪ Tactile bins (rice bin, lentil bin) ▪ Different writing utensils (triangular shaped crayons, chalk and chalkboard, white board and dry-erase markers, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Calm lighting (flashlight, lava lamp, etc.) ▪ Timers (sand timer, time timer) ▪ Earbuds and music

Best Practices: Using the Area

You can:

- Ask students to use a break pass/card to indicate they want to use the area
- Hand a break pass/card to a student indicating you want them to use the area
- Encourage students to ask to use the area
- Establish pre-set times when a particular student will benefit (ex. Transition from recess/lunch for a few minutes)
- Use a timer (judgement call)
- Send students one at a time (set the rules)
- Explain it's not a play zone
- Try to conference with student same day
- Acknowledge the proper use of the area by providing feedback to the student after they have used the area
- Have resources available for use
- Remind student to join class when he/she is ready

Benefits

For the student:

- Provides time and a safe space for the student to feel and experience their emotions
- Increases self-awareness
- Provides a context where the student can try out different tools to help process and manage their emotions, discover what works best for them
- Over time may decrease impulsivity
- Can increase attention/focus skills
- A respectful way of working with emotions
- Benefits from support within the classroom

Benefits

For the teacher:

- Continues to build the student-teacher relationship
- Demonstrates empathy and understanding towards a student
- Provides a context where emotions are normalized, welcomed and given a safe place to be experienced
- Prevention and intervention rather than managing challenging situations or crisis due to unmet needs
- May decrease disruptive student behaviour
- Enables the teacher to manage the group and then provide individualized attention to the student in the Quiet area
- Can eventually increase teaching time