

Creating a Calming Corner

A calming corner is a designated space for students to diffuse BIG emotions. A visit to this area is a proactive behavior management strategy, rather than a punitive one.

Use a calm voice when offering the break as a positive choice. With training, students can learn to self-advocate for a break as they feel emotions building.

Here are the key components:

Digital Timer

When introducing the space, set the expectation that this is a place to cool off and not escape the work demands.

Include a digital timer set to about 3 minutes. Please take time to teach the students how to use this tool properly. Let them practice at a time when they are calm and cooperative.

Calming Strategies

Post visual calming strategies for student reference.

Examples include the 5-4-3-2-1 technique and various breathing exercises. Practice these strategies together while students are in a regulated state. Students may not be cooperative or open to suggestions while their emotions are escalated.

Soft & Safe Items

Add comfortable seating like chair cushions, soft pillows, or bean bag chairs. An area rug and plushies can also create an inviting cozy space.

Relaxing Tools

You know your students best. What do they need to re-regulate themselves? Some ideas include fine motor activities like fidget tools, stringing beads, and drawing. This is a nice opportunity to conduct a quick preference assessment to see what the students think would work.

Private Space

Ideally, this space should be away from their peers' line of vision, which is why a corner is often suggested. However, do your best if this is not possible in your space.

Personalize it

These calming areas have various names such as Chill Zone, Cool Off Spot, and Cozy Corner. Consider giving students a sense of ownership by allowing them to select a name for the space.

Reminder: Be sure to familiarize students with when and how to use each item in the area so expectations are clear.

