

In-Class Breaks

The opportunity to take breaks in the classroom when needed, gives students a tool and space to practice safety and self-regulation when they are feeling heightened emotions.

- Procedures should be posted and taught to all students
 - Example:
 - Get comfortable
 - Choose a calm-down tool
 - Set the timer
 - Get back to work
- Asking for a break should be normalized so students feel empowered to take breaks when needed
- It is recommended that an occupational therapist provide consultation on break areas and the sensory items that are used within the break area.
- Breaks teach an important coping skill for students who experience emotional dysregulation
- Breaks are an intervention, but should be used as a universal support for all students.

WAYNE RESA, 2019

EXAMPLES

- Calming Kits with a variety of sensory items that can be used at the student's seat
- Safe location in the classroom
- Taking a break and using regulation strategies that work for the student (this can be done in any location)
- Brain breaks, mindfulness, and yoga for the whole class.
- Early Childhood - NCPMI's Turtle Technique, teacher can use the story "Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Think" to teach the procedure.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION (DEI) and CULTURE CONSIDERATIONS

- In class breaks are not meant to silence or suppress emotions like anger, rage, sadness, or grief
- Students should have voice and choice in the activities and/or strategies they use in the calming kit or during an in class break

RESOURCES

[WAYNE RESA. \(2019, August\). *Trauma-Informed Practices within a Tiered Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Framework: A Guide for Implementation.*](#)
[Additional Turtle Technique Information and Resources](#)