

Teacher Tools: Sensory-Inclusive Classroom Design



- Minimize visual and auditory distractions when possible.
- Allow flexible seating and movement options.
- Designate a quiet area in the classroom with items or activities to support regulation.

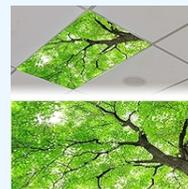
What can you try in your classroom?

Visual Strategies:

- Reducing visual clutter - use bins to organize materials and resources neatly and out of direct line of sight, when possible.
- Allow natural lighting if possible, or try alternatives to fluorescent lighting (e.g., lamps, light filters).
- Opt for neutral or less stimulating visuals during lessons or presentations.



Curtains covering classroom supplies.



Fluorescent light filters.

Auditory Strategies:



Use visuals for clear noise level expectations throughout the day.

- Buffer noise levels - use rugs, curtains or sound-absorbing panels to minimize echo and excess noise.
- Monitor volume - be mindful of the volume of voices and other classroom sounds.
- Quiet spaces - noise-cancelling headphones available to all in quiet space, or individually as needed.
- Consider music to regulate the room - soft instrumental music or nature sounds can be beneficial for general calming.

Movement and Flexible Seating:

- Offer a variety of options - beanbag chairs, wobble stools, rocker chairs, or even allowing students to stand while completing work.
- Incorporate movement into lessons, offer breaks with stretching or yoga poses to re-regulate and promote focus.
- Offer fidget tools and model how to use them to support focus and attention - these can be as basic as a strip of Velcro on a student's desk (to provide tactile input), or a piece of cloth to hold or rub while listening.



Teacher Tools: Calming or Quiet Corners



Nature Themed



Secluded



Sensory Items Included

- Choose a relatively secluded area, away from high traffic zones and other distracting elements. Set a clear boundary for the space.
- Comfortable and inviting furnishings, such as a soft rug, beanbag chair, cushions, rocking chair or egg chair.
- Include sensory tools such as weighted lap pads, fidgets, body sock, visual sensory bottles, headphones, books or magnadoodles. A quiet colouring space may be beneficial for some students.
- Relaxing music within headphones or other nature elements can help promote mindfulness and relaxation.
- Students will need to learn how to use the space; cues or support may be required when the student begins to use it.

Classroom Examples



Cluttered and Visually Busy Classroom

Vs.



Neat and Visually Calming Classrooms