

Calm Corners - Teacher “Manual”

Fits into PBIS, Responsive Classroom, Love and Logic in the classroom, Trauma Sensitive Schools, and Mindfulness

Purpose: The purpose of calm corners is to help students learn self-regulation strategies; so students can learn and the teacher can teach; to teach calming strategies to all students; have students think about making a different choice.

***This is NOT a punishment or a place for only the “naughty” students.**

When: Introduce the first week, or so, of school as part of routines and norms.

How should the student be sent to the calm corner?:

Begin by talking about the purpose of the calm corners or “Take a Break” spots - they are a place for students and teachers to go to when they are not feeling ready to learn (strong emotions). Everyone feels this way and sometimes by taking time to self-regulate, we can help ourselves feel better and get back to being ready to learn “thinking brain”.

- *Practice using this with all students as well as adults to model.*

A goal would be for students to use it when they feel it is beneficial for them to go, but they may be asked to visit.

Teaching the Calm Corner:

Teach and model how to go to the calm corner, how to be in it and how to come back without disturbing others in the class.

- Walk to the spot in a calm and quiet way
- Keep as quiet as possible while in the calming corner
- Take 3-5 deep breaths when you get to the spot
- Use 1-2 strategies (fidgets, book, etc)
- Walk back to your spot in a calm and quiet way
- Show them the kits (materials and ideas) and the student manual

Model as the adult what this would look and sound like, and then have all students model when and how they would use the spot. Have all students use the calm corner throughout the next few weeks.

Additional tips:

- You can set limits on what is allowed in the space. The calm down kits have set things inside them, but use what you are comfortable with.
- Teach children how long to stay in the space. “Until you feel calm” or “Until you are ready to learn.” Around 3-5 minutes.



- **If you feel like the student is using this space to “avoid” work:** If you feel this is happening, please have a one on one conversation with the student to talk this through in a proactive manner.
 - Could set up a simple tracking system: Have students put their initials or student number on a form that shows when they used the spot and for how long. Things to look for:
 - Is a student always using the spot during math?
 - Is there any other patterns that we can address?
 - Data to show students using the spot less often and using strategies on their own more by the end of the year?
- **Watch for students who don’t want to use the space:** If you notice a student who needs to self-regulate and doesn’t want to go to the calm corner, you could give them a tool to use at their spot, give them wait time, or you could try asking them to go to a buddy classroom (that is set up ahead of time, somewhere they are comfortable going) or call the counselor to assist.
- **If students are “playing” with the tools in the calm corner:** the novelty will wear off if you are consistent with reinforcing how they use the calm corner and when. It’s also a time to think about if they are “playing” or if they are using the tools to calm down internally, we can’t always tell what someone is feeling just by how they look.
- Any questions, please come see me to talk it through!

