



Classroom **WISE**

Well-Being Information and
Strategies for Educators

MODULE 1:
Creating Safe and Supportive
Classrooms

Creating a Safe Space



The physical space and layout of a classroom can play a big role in determining how safe and secure students feel. Distinct areas and organization can help students know what to expect and also provide them with visual cues that can improve behavior. One area that can be useful is a safe space or calming area, which can allow students to take a moment away from potential triggers and practice self-regulation skills in a comfortable space.

LOCATION

It can be hard to find extra room in a classroom, but look for a corner or space that can provide students a bit of privacy away from the regular gaze of classmates. While a simple desk or chair will work, it can be great to add comfort to the space with a beanbag chair or pillows.

ACTIVITIES

While some students will only use the safe space for a quick moment away, others may need some help regulating their feelings.

Signs with breathing techniques or a feelings thermometer can help students with self-regulation, while calm-down tools (e.g., stress ball, sensory dough) can provide students with a tangible way to help calm down.

FOLLOW-UP

Remember to follow up with students after they choose to use the space, either through a quick survey or conversation, to help gauge how they are feeling.

SAFE SPACE ACTIVITIES

- feelings thermometer
- guided mindfulness (e.g., breathing techniques)
- headphones with calming music
- sensory objects (e.g., dough, stress balls)
- art supplies

Prepared March 2021 by Maximilian Macias and Shannon Nemer for the MHTTC Network and NCSMH. All material, except that taken directly from copyrighted sources, is in the public domain and may be reproduced or copied without permission from SAMHSA or the authors. Citation of the source is appreciated.



MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

