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Classroom calming corner

Social & Emotional Learning share tweet pin it share email ***Disclosure: This post contains an Amazon affiliate link that at no additional cost to you, I may earn a small commission when you purchase through the link from my blog. Thank you for your support!In the hustle and bustle of our children's lives, both in the classroom and at home, finding a small sanctuary can be a transformative experience. As a teacher, I've journeyed alongside numerous children as they navigate their vast world of emotions. From excitement to anger, from happiness to nervousness... It's from these shared moments that I've come to deeply appreciate the magic of an effective Calm Down Corner. Even though I'm not in the classroom anymore, I plan on creating a designated safe space for my own daughter in our home.If you are reading this post, it means that you care and are thinking of doing the same. Thank you, for being that adult that wants to create a safe space for children. Whether you are creating one at home or in your classroom, you are doing something amazing. Just want to say that I have now written multiple posts about Calm Down Corners, how to create them, how to implement them, etc. You can also check them out here. This blog post, we will explore multiple ideas to make the Calm Down Corner you are creating even better. If you're tight on space, need more toys, or just browse, you will find something that is beneficial.Let's check out the 11 different calm-down corner ideas! Organize your calming tools in a neat and accessible manner. This way, children know exactly where to find what they need. If you don't have a space to dedicate to as a Calm Down Corner, you can name it Calm Down Caddy. The child can just come to grab the caddy to help them self-regulate.Calm Down Corner Ideas: Calm Down Caddy & Mindfulness ActivitiesWall-mounted organizers can hold visual aids, coping strategy cards, or self-regulation tools. You don't need to have stuff on the floor; just hang them all! Here, I included a reflection journal, mindfulness activities, calm down tools, markers, and calm down kit cards. The calm down kit is a resource that I created from what I found worked when I was in the classroom. Click the picture to take you to the resource, and for the wall hanger, this is the exact one that I used.Calm Down Corner Ideas: Calm Down Wall HangerMost kids need movement to help them self regulate. However, movements can be quite distracting in a classroom. Proving a moving chair or wobbly cushion can solve both problems. Rocking or swivel chairs can provide gentle motion that calms and helps children process emotions. Source: American Journal of Occupational Therapy.Literacy Workshop Rotation Slides Math Workshop Rotation Slides Bright Rainbow Station Rotation SlidesGuided breathing exercises can significantly reduce stress. Cards with simple graphics can guide deep breathing or count breaths. You can have them in small card forms or posters. Here, I added breathing cards that allow children to trace along with their fingers. I created these cards from what I found worked when I introduced breathing exercises to help with self-regulation when I was in the classroom. You can click on the picture to take you to the resource if you are interested.Calm Down Corner Ideas: Breathing CardsFidget toys or textured materials provide a sensory experience, aiding in grounding and calming. Activities such as coloring, drawing, and tracing can also help children use their hands to make movements, focus, and calm down.Boho Rainbow Breathing Book Rainbow Breathing Book For KidsSoft plush toys can offer comfort. Some children find solace in hugging or holding a stuffed animal. Having a calming buddy available can be quite comforting. Which kind of plush toy should you use? This is all up to you or the child. Here, I used Toby, the Sloth. Toby has a long history but he was my class mascot for a couple of years and he is super soft.Calm Down Corner IdeasKeep a selection of calming picture books or stories that encourage relaxation and mindfulness. Wordless books, photo books, or books about breathing can be quite useful to have around. Something that a child and flip through and distract their mind from negative thoughts.Breathe Like A Bear - Books For Calm Down CornerIn louder environments, these can help children shut out distractions and focus on calming down. Even if you are not in a loud environment, shutting down all the noises around can really be calming. Noise canceling headphones can help children drown out all the noises and self-regulate.A gentle timer can indicate when it might be time to rejoin the group. Hourglasses are great for this purpose, they are also quite calming to look at. Also, consider a simple recording system where children can note what they felt and how they calmed down.Rainbow Calm Down Corner ResourceInstead of putting up posters, use plastic pockets. This helps your change out your posters or visual aids easily. You can easily switch things up to go with the season or holiday. Of course, you don't have to, but it's nice to change things from time to time. I got my plastic pockets from the dollar section at Target. I also use ones from amazon here: bright colorful dry erase pockets & white trim dry erase pockets.Calm Down Corner Ideas: Plastic PocketsWriting or drawing can provide a constructive outlet for children to express and process their feelings. Not every child will use this, but there are children that will appreciate having it. You can add reflection sheets for students or journal for your child at home.Social Emotional Learning Read Alouds To Teach Diversity Jay's First Day of Alien School - Back To School Read Alouds Let's Create A Calm Down Caddy Scented Sachets - Adding scented sachets can really pull the corner together. However, this can also be a personal preference so I might not be the best for the classroom. Check out calming scents like lavender which can induce relaxation. Source: The National Sleep Foundation. Soft Lighting - Dimmable fairy lights or soft-glow lamps can set a serene atmosphere. This might not be possible for every classroom and home.Visual Calming Tools - Items like liquid motion timers or glitter jars captivate attention and can be therapeutic. You can create a glitter jar with your children to add a more personal touch. Comfortable Cushions or Blankets - Soft seating options provide physical comfort, further promoting a sense of security.Pin Me! 11 Calm Down Corner IdeasEvery child, with their diverse emotional landscape, deserves a space that acknowledges and respects their individuality. As we craft our calm-down corners, it's essential to be adaptive, ensuring the environment continually meets the child's evolving needs. The space you create today might need a touch-up tomorrow, and that's perfectly okay.I would love to hear about your calm-down corner adventures. What worked? What surprised you? Were there unexpected successes? As we share, we grow together, fostering a community where every child finds their serene corner. Tag me on Instagram @LittleYellowStarTeaches! Happy calming! Bye for now,Prima from LittleYellowStar * * * Get To Gnome Me - Back To School Resource Calm Down Corner Kit - Boho Rainbow Morning Meeting SEL Focused For The Whole Year Relaxation Menu (Word document) Acknowledging Student Difficulties (related situation on this site) Behavioral Momentum to Build Confidence (related situation on this site) Visual Chunking for Math (related situation on this site) Break Cards (PDF) Square Breathing (PDF) ANXIETY BUSTERS (PDF) relaxation booklet (PDF) This resource was authored by Watson Institute Special Education Consultant, Lisa Plastino, M.Ed. If you have questions or concerns about the Watson Institute's use of this information, please contact us. Being able to calm yourself when emotions run high - or self-regulate - is a learned skill. Similarly, how a child is taught to tie their shoe once they have the fine motor skills to do so, once a child's brain is developmentally ready to self-regulate, they can learn different strategies and ways that work well for them. Think about what worked well for you the last time you felt angry, unheard, anxious or any other negative feeling. Did you go outside to get fresh air? Did you practice yoga or meditation? Take 10 deep breaths? Go to your favorite room in your home and read? We all have different coping mechanisms we've learned to use to regulate our emotions and return to a more neutral or positive space. Kids are no different! One way to help children learn how to self-regulate is by providing them with calm down corners. A calm down corner is a designated space in a home or classroom with the sole intent of being a safe space for a child to go to when they feel their emotions are running too high and they need to regain their emotional and physical control. These spaces are equipped with comforting objects and soothing materials that can promote mindfulness, breathing and reflection. The overall goal of a calm down corner is to provide the child with a space in which they'll feel safe recognizing and regulating their emotions in a healthy way. These corners don't need to be complicated and don't even require purchasing any new materials or items if you do not want to. Calm down corners can be developed and promoted in a variety of ways and in both home and school settings. At Home Try designating a corner in a typically quiet room in your home as your child's new calm down corner. Fill the space with a soft rug or mat, bean bag chair, or other plush options for sitting or lying down, and with some of your child's favorite books, stuffed animals or quiet toys. If your child is older, you can utilize short bookcases to help block the space out to provide your child with some privacy. At School Find a corner in your classroom that can permanently act as your new calm down corner. Designate the space as a special area where your students can spend time on their own when their emotions are running high. Like with calm down corners at home, fill the space with soft, plush seating options and options for books, quiet toys, art and journaling supplies, blankets and stuffed animals. Activities such as these help children explore... Self-Awareness and Self-Management: Calm down corners help children to practice identifying feelings and emotions to better manage stress, self-regulate and control their impulses. Having a space designed to support them emotionally and physically helps them feel safe and comfortable, allowing them to let down their guard to process different feelings. Relationship Skills: Learning how to communicate one's feelings and emotions can be difficult, but calming spaces such as this help children practice mindfulness and develop skills they need to identify their emotions and communicate them when necessary. Stronger communication skills help them form stronger relationships with others and develop skills in empathy. Tips Some children find calming music to be helpful in regaining control of their emotions. In classroom settings, try having headphones available so the music doesn't interrupt other students. Add artwork to your space - some ideas that may work well for your children or students include nature and landscapes, or happy family photos. For calm down corners in the classroom, make sure the space is inclusive and accessible to all your students. Although there may be students that need or want to utilize the space more than others, it's important that all students know they're welcome to use it, as well. Don't think of it as a "time out" or punishment - there shouldn't be any stigma associated with the calm down corner. Although you may encourage a child to spend some time in the space when you feel they're starting to become distressed, the goal is that eventually the child will recognize when they want to be there and will go there on their own in order to self-regulate and calm down. Categories: Social-Emotional Health, At Home, At School, Digital Resource Back to activities Go to step 5 As a teacher, administrator, counselor or coach, you know how challenging it can be to not only help kids learn but also to support their emotional wellness. A calming corner (or peace corner, reset zone, calming space, calm-down corner, etc.) is a safe, designated spot in the classroom where students can go to regroup when they are experiencing strong emotions or simply need a break. Reset spaces provide kids an opportunity to be more aware of how they feel and to practice managing their emotions in healthy ways. No one is born knowing how to cope, so we all have to learn healthy ways to manage our emotions. Setting up a space in your classroom that is free to whomever needs it, whenever they need it (no questions asked), helps teach your students it is OK and normal to take a break and practice healthy coping strategies. Empower your students to regulate their emotions and manage their stress in helpful ways. Allow your students to get the place where they're ready to learn and enjoy class (in the short term). Instill confidence in your students' abilities to handle challenges that come their way (long-term). There are many ways to create a calming corner. Here are some general tips to keep in mind as you create one that works for your classroom: Limit distractions. You want your students to feel comfortable and safe using coping strategies without too many distractions, so try to find a spot that is somewhat out of the way. Provide structure. Even though kids may resist it, structure and clear expectations make them feel safe. Work with your students to establish clear guidelines about how the calming corner should be used. It's important that everyone understands the space is not a way to escape learning or other responsibilities, but rather a place to take a break and reset. Make agreements about: How long students can stay in the space (consider including a sand timer, and practice using it ahead of time). How students can signal if they need more time. What behaviors are safe or unsafe in the space. Teach coping skills. Introduce and practice new coping strategies when everyone is calm (instead of in the heat of the moment). Encourage students to try lots of different coping strategies to help them find what works best for them. Provide choices. A coping strategy that works for one student may not work for another, and what is successful one day may not be helpful the next. Be sure to include multiple options in the calming corner so your students can choose what works best for them. Practice coping skills. Whether it is practicing yoga poses, deep breathing or squeezing a stress ball, practice each coping strategy that is available in the space so your students feel confident using them on their own. Be a positive role model. If your students see you taking a minute to manage your emotions in healthy ways, they are more likely to do it themselves. In order for a calming corner to work well for your classroom, your students need to know it's not a punishment, time-out or penalty. Set a positive tone. It takes confidence and vulnerability for someone to admit they need to pause and reset, and your students won't use the space if they feel any shame or judgment for doing so. Be mindful of how you speak about the calming corner, and encourage all your students to keep it positive. The more you embrace it and allow kids to use it without question, the safer it will feel. Promote independence. It may be tempting to question a student's use of the calming corner from time to time, but doing so may jeopardize the effectiveness. Whenever you catch yourself doubting a student's intentions with the space, try to remember that the goal is for students to use it independently. Allowing students to practice identifying when they need to take a break or use coping strategies leads to more trust and confidence. Encourage use of the space. If you feel like a student could benefit from using the reset space (but isn't), try encouraging them instead of forcing or persuading them. Licensed therapist Jody Baumstein, LCSW, suggests gently saying something like, "I wonder if you might feel better if you hung out in the calming corner for a little bit. What do you think?" Remember, this space is not a punishment, and if kids feel like it is, they won't use it. Do your best to help them see it as a positive experience and something they can choose to use to help themselves feel better. Adjust as needed. If you notice your students rarely want to use the calming corner, it might be a sign that something isn't working. Have open conversations with your students about why the space isn't getting used. Maybe they don't feel comfortable there or don't understand the expectations. Once you have found the right spot in your classroom for the calming corner, it's time to decide which items to include in it. (Don't forget to include your students in the process!) A calming space doesn't have to be fancy to be effective; it simply needs to be comfortable and inviting. Some ideas may include: Something comfortable to sit on. It's hard to relax when you're uncomfortable. Whether it's a soft bath mat, blanket, pillow or beanbag, give your students a spot where they can sit back and let go. Something to squeeze, play with or hold. Having something to squeeze, hold or manipulate can help students work out tension in their body or feel comforted (e.g., stress balls, fidget spinners, pinwheels or reversible sequin pillows). Calming fidget bottles. Combine clear glue, water and glitter to represent how emotions can feel in your body. A still, settled glitter bottle represents a calm body. A shaken glitter bottle represents strong emotions. Consider making a few different bottles with varying amounts of glue. A bottle with more glue takes longer to settle, giving students more time to concentrate on slowly breathing in and out as the glitter settles. Visual prompts. Sometimes we need a visual reminder of what coping skills are available to us (especially in the heat of the moment). Have your students help decorate the space with feelings and coping skills written, drawn or printed out. This could also include visuals of different stretches and yoga poses, too. Coloring pages. Coloring is a great tool for kids of all ages. Some kids find the rhythmic motion of coloring to be soothing, while others may use it as a form of self-expression. If you're looking for some calm corner ideas for the classroom then this post is for you. I'll show you ideas for all different ages including how to set up your calm space and the essential items to add to your calm down area. This post may contain affiliate links. This means that if you make a purchase using my link, I make a small commission -at no cost to you. Read the full disclosure here. Understanding the Calm Corner The Purpose of a Calm Down Corner A calm corner, also known as a reset down corner, is a designated safe space in a classroom where a student, can go to manage their emotions and practice self-regulation when feeling overwhelmed or upset. The main goal of this area is to provide students with a setting where they can remove themselves from a stressful situation and regain composure. In a calm corner, you can add sensory-friendly items and a cozy atmosphere designed to help students filter out chaos and focus on regaining emotional balance. The elements in this corner can vary, but common features include soft lighting, muted colors, comfortable seating, and calming materials to interact with, such as stress balls and fidget toys. Other Names for the Calm Down Corner Calm corner is the most popular name for this safe place in your classroom but there are tons of other creative names you can use as well including: Relaxation Station Chill out Zone Peace Corner Zen Den Calm Cave Peaceful Pod Pause Palace Benefits for Emotional Regulation Reduced Anxiety: A calm corner provides an environment that can help kids feel less anxious by offering a soothing and quiet space. Pause and Reset: When students are overwhelmed, the calm corner allows them to take a break, regulate their emotions, and return to the classroom with a clearer mind. Improved Focus: By providing a designated space for students to manage their emotions, the calm corner helps them refocus on their work more effectively. Enhanced Well-being: A calm corner encourages self-care, contributing to students' overall well-being. Better Learning: When big emotions are managed, students can focus better on learning and participating in class. Creating a safe place for students can bring numerous benefits, including improving emotional regulation, reducing anxiety, and enhancing mental health. It's a break space that usually includes different ways for students to deal with negative emotions, get away from sensory overload and rebalance. Setting Up Your Calm Corner Ideas for the Classroom Establishing Rules Before you create your calming corner, it's important to establish clear expectations and rules for its use. Teach your students when and how they can access this area and outline appropriate behavior while they're there. This will help students understand the purpose of the designated space and encourage them to treat it with respect. Here are some ideas for rules for this space: You can create a "I need a break card" that student can grab and show you to let you know that they are heading to this designated space. You can set up a time limit and include timers in the space so student can know the amount of time they have spent in the area. Remind students that this is a quiet area so if they need to talk to keep voices down. Selecting the Right Location Your calm down space should be located in a quiet, low-traffic area of the classroom. Consider setting up the space in a corner or along an unused wall to create a cozy, semi-enclosed feel. Make sure it's away from sources of noise or bright light that can be overstimulating. Your setup will also depend on what activities you make available for students in the space. Check out some calm corner setup ideas below to find what works for your classroom. 1 | Calm Teepee Image Source | primarypurposefulplay a teepee creates a cozy environment perfect for creating a calm-down area in your classroom. This would be the perfect space to curl up with a book or work on breathing techniques. 2 | Corner Desk Image Source | paigeteachesprimary If you want to set up a dedicated space where students can read, color and work on puzzles then a desk in the corner of the room might be the setup idea you're looking for. 3 | Small Table Against the Wall Image Source | teachingwithmissalsha This Zen Zone includes a small table two stools, and even an affirmation station. Seating Ideas Comfortable seating can make a huge difference to create a cozy space. Here are a few ideas for seating options: Bean bag chair: A bean bag chair can offer adjustable and cozy support. Cushion or pillow: A large, soft cushion or pillow can provide a comfortable surface to sit or lie on. Soft rug: A plush rug can add warmth and texture to the space, inviting students to sit down and relax. Check out some seating ideas for your calm down area below. 4 | Throw Pillows Image Source | good.morningmiss A few throw pillows on the floor would help create a relaxing cozy corner in your classroom. 5 | Inflatable Chair Image Source | learnwith.m.s.b An inflatable chair is an easy and affordable seating solution. 6 | Bean Bag Chairs Image Source | lifeandloveoflearning This teacher opted for two comfortable bean bag chairs to complete her calming area. 7 | Floor Desk Image Source | clairecandrea A space saving solution in your calm corner may be to include a small lap desk where students can sit right on the floor to access calming activities. Calm Colors Choosing calming colors for this space can help set a soothing ambiance. Soft, muted colors like pastels, neutrals, or earth tones can create a peaceful environment. Consider using colors like light blue, gray, or soft greens. Include a cozy blanket or pillows in these colors to enhance the soothing effect. 8 | Relaxing Pastel Color Scheme Image Source | teachpal You can't go wrong with natural and soft pastels in your calm down corner to create relaxing vibes. 9 | Soft Retro Color Palette Image Source | dreamteachlove This retro color palette sets a calming vibe in this space. If you love the posters, you can find them here. 10 | String Lights Image Source | mrs.m.style String lights would provide a nice ambient lighting and pretty feel in your calming corner. Calm Corner Tools and Materials Sensory Tools Provide a variety of sensory items for students to explore and use when they feel overwhelmed or anxious. These can include fidget tools, sensory bottles, stress balls, and playdough. Make sure to have items with different textures, sizes, and weights. Weighted Stuffed Animal Provide a weighted stuffed animal or weighted blanket for deep pressure stimulation, which can help reduce anxiety and promote relaxation in overwhelmed or stressed students. 26 | Weighted Sloth Stuffed Sloth | Find it Here This weighted sloth stuffed animal is designed to give students that hugging back feels and soothing sensory experience. Plus, its super cute! The Worry Monster Introduce The Worry Monster, a plush toy, where students can write or draw their worries and feed them to the monster. This helps them externalize their fears and feels like a supportive system. 27 | Worry Monster Stuffed Animal Soft Worry Monster | Find it Here The Worry Monster toys have a month that unzips and opens so he can eat your troubles. Encourage students to write down their troubles and feed the worry monster. 28 | Worry Monster Workbook Interactive Workbook | Find it Here This workbook includes activities for kids to do to help deal with stress and anxiety. The Color Monster A popular book for regulating emotions is, The Color Monster. You can read student this book and then incorporate this theme into your peace corner. Check out how to do that below. 29 | The Color Monster Book Color Monster Book | Find it Here If you want to add a color monster theme to your calm down corner start by reading your student this book which is designed to tap into both socio-emotional growth and color concepts in a simple, friendly way. 30 | Troll Rolls Monsters Image Source | ms.gemma teaches You can create TP roll monsters to help children decide how they are feeling. 31 | Feeling Spoons & Posters Image Source | mrs.w04d You could also include wooden spoons and feeling posters to go along with the book. 32 | Stuffed Color Monster Toys Image Source | miss.be77 If you're crafty you can make little feeling monsters like this teacher did. If you're not so crafty Amazon has some cute plush monster toys that you can find here. Zones of regulation Zones of regulation is a learning curriculum designed to help students learn to express and regulate their emotions. Many teachers like to set up their calming corner based on these zones. Check out below how you can do that too. The four zones are as follows: Blue Zone: Sad, Bored, Tired, Sick Green Zone: Happy, Focused, Calm, Proud Yellow Zone: Worried, Frustrated, Silly, Excited Red Zone: Overjoyed/Elated, Panicked, Angry, Terrified 33 | Zones of Regulation Curriculum The Zones Curriculum | Find it Here This curriculum includes learning activities that are designed to help students recognize when they are in different zones and learn tools to help them stay in a zone or move to another. 34 | Zone Baskets Image Source | learnwithmisskatie This teacher created baskets based on three zones, red, yellow and blue. If you want to copy this idea here are some ideas for each basket. Red Basket: Calming music Breathing Cards Finger Maze Liquid Bubble Maker Calm Coloring Pages Yellow Basket: Lacing Beads Sensory Ball Calm Bottle Pop Fidgets Sensory Scarf Blue Basket: Emotion Stones A weighted stuffed animal Re-usable Stickers & Puzzles 35 | Zones of Regulation Corner Image Source | missrose.y2 This zone of regulation corner includes a zone check in station where students can move their name tag to the zone, they are in. Color coded folders with zone activities for each and a basket of calming tools. 36 | Zone of Regulation Posters Color Zone Posters | Find them Here Here are some feeling posters to help students identify what feeling zone they are in. 37 | Zone Classroom Rug Color Zone Rug | Find it Here This color zone rug comes in a few different sizes and would make a good addition to a color zone themed calming corner. Calm Corner Ideas for Small Spaces If you're short on space, consider creating a calm trolley that can be rolled out when needed. You could also set up the calm station on a small shelf in the classroom. Check out some more space saving calm corner ideas for the classroom below. 38 | Tranquil Trolley Image Source | eyfs.fun.missd A trolley is a great way to save space and provide healthy coping strategies for students that can be wheeled around the classroom when needed. 39 | Calming Bookshelf Image Source | mrs.m.style If you don't have room to dedicate a corner for calming how about a bookshelf in your class library? 40 | Little Calming Corner Image Source | harmonyathomeyorkshire Even a small space like this could be a great resource for your students. Calm Basket Another space saving idea is to create a Calm Basket. Fill a portable container with calming items like fidget toys, coloring pages, and a stress ball that students can take to a designated calm area within the classroom. Check out some calm basket examples below. 41 | Small Calm Basket Image Source | missdidiaries If you don't have room for a calm down space in your classroom you can add a calm basket to your classroom library. This come basket includes: Pop fidgets Color monster emotion logs Breathing exercise cards and Puppets 42 | Calm-Down Kit Image Source | calmspaceclassrooms You can create a calm kit in a small bag that is easily portable, and you could even have students take it home. 43 | Calm Box Image Source | alpacabaguk Another great idea is to create a small calm box with the necessary tools for self regulation. This one includes: Pop fidgets Raindrops of regulation cards & Various sensory toys Creative Calm Corner Ideas for the Classroom Consider using creative elements like a lava lamp, mini-Zen Garden, or soft lighting to make your designated calm space inviting and peaceful. Collaborate with your students to get additional ideas and suggestions to personalize the space. Check out some more creative ideas for your peace corner below. 44 | Class Made Calm Thoughts Book Image Source | second.grade.smiles Second grade students each contributed one page to this class calm thoughts book. Children were asked to draw something that made them calm or write about a memory or place that left them feeling calm. 45 | Calm Caddies Image Source | teachingwithhappness To avoid student going to the calm-down space just to play this teacher created a calm caddy that she brings out when students need it. She has students sign to her r for red when they feel like they are in the red zone. She then gets out the calm caddy full of soothing sensory toys. Frequently Asked Questions What items are essential for setting up a calming corner in a high school classroom? For a high school calming corner, you'll want to focus on creating a space where students can engage in quiet self-regulation. Consider including comfortable seating, such as bean bag chairs or cushions, a small bookshelf with calming literature, and sensory objects like stress balls or fidget toys. Make sure the area is removed from high-traffic areas and distractions. What calming strategies work best for a middle school calm corner? Middle school students benefit from calming strategies such as deep breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, and visualization techniques. Providing access to self-help books, stress-relief toys, or visually engaging items like lava lamps or kinetic sand can also aid in helping students regain composure and focus. How can I create a soothing corner area in an elementary school setting? In an elementary school setting, keep the calm down corner inviting and engaging by including colorful visuals, soft seating, and sensory-based materials such as playdough or putty. Incorporate soft textures with pillows or stuffed animals and provide access to simple mindfulness activities like deep breathing exercises or affirmation cards. What should be included in a preschool calm down area? For a preschool calm down area, focus on creating a comfortable space with soft materials like blankets, pillows, or stuffed animals. Introduce basic emotion identification tools, such as emotion charts or visual aids, to help young learners express their feelings. Add simple sensory materials like tactile books, calming jars, or soft music to create a soothing environment. What are some effective printable resources for calm down corners? Effective printable resources for calm down corners include visual schedules of sensory strategies, emotion identification sheets, or deep breathing instructions. You can also provide coping skills worksheets or activities that promote grounding techniques, such as 5-4-3-2-1 sensory strategies. How does implementing a calm corner support classroom management based on research? Research shows that calm-down corners help students develop emotional self-regulation skills and decrease disruptive behaviors in the classroom. By providing a designated space for students to cope with stress, anxiety, or other emotional challenges, they can return to class focused and ready to learn, reducing interruptions and creating a more productive learning environment. Pinterest Calm Corner Ideas for the Classroom I created this post to make it easy to save your favorite ideas to your Pinterest boards. To do that just click on the picture, then the P and then choose your board. Hopefully you now have some new calm corner ideas for the classroom that you are going to try out this year. If you liked this post, please share. If you liked this post here are some more to check out. 25 Cozy Reading Corner Classroom Ideas for Your Book Nook 65 Best Classroom Ideas: Creative Ideas for Teachers The Ultimate Classroom Design Guide 27 Brilliant Kindergarten Classroom Ideas for Setup & Decor Second-grader James is having a rough day. He overslept and was late to school, missed out on breakfast. His best friend is out sick today. At recess, he had and skinned his knee, and other kids made fun of him for crying a little. Now, it's time for reading, his most challenging subject. After the third time he makes a mistake and is gently corrected by his teacher, Ms. Hernandez, he's simply had enough. He throws the book on the floor and shouts that everyone hates him, and he hates them too. Ms. Hernandez asks the rest of the reading group to read silently, then quietly leads James to the classroom calm-down corner. Calm-down corners are a popular tool in classrooms these days and with good reason. Teachers recognize that kids, like adults, have a lot of feelings and emotions to process throughout the day. Sometimes, it's all too much, and the result can be bad behavior. A calm-down corner, sometimes known as a peace corner or even Antarctica (a place far away from everyone else), gives kids a place to recenter and refocus so they can join the learning again. Here's how to build and effectively use one in your classroom. Just a heads up, WeAreTeachers may collect a share of sales from the links on this page. Thank you for your support! 1. Create a safe and cozy space The best calm-down corners feel a little separated from the rest of the classroom. If you have space, set yours up with a physical barrier of some kind. Low bookshelves work well since teachers can easily see over them, but kids still feel like they've got distance from everyone else. Make your calm-down corner a space that feels safe and cozy, the kind of place where a kid can just relax for a few minutes. Throw pillows, floor cushions, and a stuffed animal or two can create just the peaceful atmosphere you're looking for. If you don't have a lot of space in your classroom, think creatively. Give kids the illusion of separation by letting them turn their back to the rest of the classroom. Have them sit on the floor under a desk or table, and provide noise-canceling headphones so they can block out what's around them. The point is to find a space where kids can tune out the rest of the world for a few minutes and focus on processing their feelings. 2. Provide guides to calm down Sending kids to a safe space is a good start, but they'll need help to calm down and refocus once they're there. If you have the wall space, hang posters and signs to guide them. This kit from Natalie Lynn Kindergarten has terrific resources for helping students identify how they're feeling and find ways to regain their calm. No room for signs, or want the ability to take your calm tools with you? Try a binder instead. This one from Pre-K Printable Fun has a nice selection of exercises kids can use anywhere when they need to find a sense of peace. Here's another option we really like: the Calm Down Cloud pack from Oriental Trading. The cheerful colors and truly helpful ideas are bound to be popular with students. 3. Offer calming books There are so many amazing books focused on helping kids with social emotional learning . Add a few to your classroom library to use for read-alouds, and keep them in your calm-down corner for kids to look at when they need them most. Here are a few of our favorites. Find Your Calm (Garcia/Pineda): The narrator in this book does a great job describing what anxiety can feel like ("My body feels like it's moving in every different direction. I'm overwhelmed.") It acknowledges those big feelings, and provides thoughtful suggestions for overcoming them. When I Am Angry (Gordon): Anger is a powerful emotion. This rhyming book for young readers helps them understand that anger is natural, but we need to find safe ways to handle it. Mindful Kids: 50 Mindfulness Activities: Not a book, but a set of 50 cards containing mindfulness and meditation activities. Kids can sort through to find one that works for them. The Secret to Clara's Calm (Lentil/Bondy): Clara is cheerful and fun, popular with the other kids. But she also has a nasty temper when things go wrong. Fortunately, a bird named Brodhi is on hand to teach her the secret to finding her calm. Little Monkey Calms Down (Dahl): This cute book is ideal for the pre-K-set. Little Monkey is having a rough day, but he uses simple coping strategies to feel better again. The Magic of Me: My Magical Choices (Cummings/Svoboda): This book reminds kids that they can make choices about their behavior, and gives helpful suggestions for making good ones. 4. Add fidget toys and other tools Stock your calm-down corner with a few meaningful toys and tools. A pair of noise-canceling headphones will help overstimulated kids find a little quiet, while fidget toys are an ideal way to work off some nervous energy. Small zzzzzzzzz simple bunnies toys can help kids something concrete to focus on as they process emotions, and creative outlets like coloring books or sandcrafts can be soothing too. Find all of our favorite options for your calm-down kit here. Calm-down jars are a popular tool, too. Kids will be mesmerized as they shake these jars and catch the colors mix, then magically separate again. Add a little glitter for an even better glow! Learn how to make the jars here. 5. Take it digital Virtual classrooms have become the new norm in a lot of places right now, so calm-down corners are going digital too! You can use these in an online school environment, or in a traditional classroom. The well-reviewed Digital Calm Down Corner from The Counseling Teacher Brandy has a mood check-in and a nice selection of calming videos and activities. It also pairs well with Google Classroom. Mindfulness and meditation apps are really useful too. One of our favorites is Do Nothing For Two Minutes. Start the app, then spend two minutes doing nothing but listening to waves as you stare at the ocean. If you move the cursor, the time starts over again. Find more apps to combat anxiety and stress here. The web is full of wonderful mindfulness and meditation videos for kids too. Keep a playlist handy on a tablet or in your Google Classroom tools for kids to view when they need a few minutes of calm. 6. Teach kids how to use the space It's really important that a calm-down corner be a useful tool for kids, rather than something they view as a punishment or playtime. That means you'll need to spend some time introducing the space and helping students understand how to make it work for them. Work some social emotional learning lessons into your curriculum over the first few days of school, and then open the corner when you feel kids are ready to make good use of it. Set rules for the corner. Will students need to ask you before going there, or can they simply take a few minutes there as needed? Unless you have a lot of space, limit the corner to one student at a time so it doesn't become a place to chat or play. A time limit is a good idea too, have a student set the timer for 5 minutes when they first enter the corner. At the end of 5 minutes, they should feel calm enough to return to class. If not, they can ask you for an extension. Do you use a calm-down corner in your classroom? Share your tips and ask questions on the WeAreTeachers HELPLINE group on Facebook. Plus, 10 Ways to Help Students With Anxiety.