

Using Breaks with a Student

WHAT is a break? Breaks provide a reprieve from demands and an opportunity to engage in coping strategies for self-regulation.

- Breaks can be scheduled or taken/requested as needed.
- Activity choices are based on students' needs and preferences.
- Breaks happen in consistent location(s).
- Teaching and rehearsal/practice are required.



WHY use breaks? Breaks support students' emotional regulation and allow them to consider constructive problem-solving options.

- Students learn self-advocacy and self-care, as breaks help preserve their dignity.

HOW?

More Inclusive ←————→ Less Inclusive

Whole Class Breaks	Classroom Break Station	Breaks Outside the Classroom
<p>Everyone benefits when teachers consider the physical and mental demands of daily activities and set up their schedule with these in mind.</p> <p>Aim to balance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving vs. sitting • Mentally demanding vs. routine tasks <p>Ideas for whole class breaks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness/belly breathing • Stretching/yoga • Running around the school perimeter • Following along with a dance video • Using Plasticine or putty • Drawing or printing practice • Reading a book 	<p>Create a dedicated classroom break station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small table • Comfy chair (e.g. beanbag) • Pop-up tent <p>The break station should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inviting and uncluttered • Available any time • Viewed as a positive place to relax and regroup <p>Ideas for materials at the break station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of fidget tools • Items from nature • Mirror and emotions cards • Pencils, pencil crayons, and note paper • Templates for reflection: "How Are You Feeling?" • Visual script and timer 	<p>Determine how much support the student requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they recognize when they need a break? • Should regular breaks be on the student's schedule? <p>Determine how the student will ask for a break:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal or visual request? <p>Decide on break activities and locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What helps the student relax and regroup? • Does the student need to be quiet, active, or both? <p>Consider supports for transitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will a timer be used?

