

Wellness Room

Teaching students how to self-regulate and manage stress

The purpose of the Wellness Room is based on physiology and brain science



We are teaching students two main concepts:

- 1) to recognize how their stress response system works
- 2) what coping skills they can use to self-regulate. We are all doing the work of self-regulation every day

Rates of anxiety and depression are increasing in children and adolescents. Two out of three of youth between the ages of 12 and 17 report they have experienced one major anxiety episode in the past year. We know the root of anxiety is fear. The key is bringing our attention to the present moment. When we are intentional about being aware of our thoughts and emotions in the moment, we are more empowered to cope in healthy ways. Learning how to recognize our emotions and self-regulate is a lifelong skill that can help decrease anxiety and depression. The Wellness Room provides a safe and comfortable space to do the work of self-regulation.



Some classic signs of anxiety may include:

- Easily frustrated
- Somatic Complaints, e.g. stomach aches, headaches, trouble breathing
- Exhibits fear
- Seems on the lookout for danger (hypervigilant)
- Easily upset by mistakes (perfectionism)
- Cries
- Startles easy
- Blushes, trembles
- Frequently expresses worry
- Has difficulty completing work



Less obvious signs of anxiety may include:

- Acts irritable
- Acts angry
- Does not follow school rules
- Has inconsistent patterns in antecedents
- Exhibits ritualistic or repetitive behavior
- Is inflexible
- Acts out of the blue; seems over-reactive

When our amygdala detects a threat, the emotion brain shuts down the thinking brain and we become dysregulated. Our nervous system activates to prepare us for fight or flight. In that moment, we need to regulate our nervous system to bring our thinking brain back online so we can choose how to respond, rather than react. Using the Wellness Room allows students to take a deep breath, take a walk, and engage in a sensory soothing activity in a safe and calm environment. These healthy coping skills empower students to self-regulate, a skill they need their entire life

