

## Guidelines and Suggested Materials When Setting up a Nurturing Support Centre in Your School

**Note: In setting up a Nurturing Support Centre (NSC) it is important to select a space that can provide the following areas in order to maximize the service and support which you will be able to offer to your school population.**

Type of Area	Purpose
<b>Welcoming area</b>	Having a personalized entrance that is inviting will help student to feel safe and know that they have come to the right place to get their needed support. Greeting students as soon as they arrive will be key. Reading their needs if they are not sharing verbally will be an asset. Having a comfy chair or rocking chair can be both comforting and inviting.
<b>Individual work stations</b>	Having individualized work stations in different parts of the room is an asset. Many students face great vulnerability when learning is challenging. By having a private space to work in helps them to feel safe and take risks in their learning.
<b>Teacher-led area</b>	Many students require additional explanations/review and support with their learning. By having a teacher-led area that is inviting, such as gathered at a kidney-shaped table, the students are in close physical proximity with the teacher and they can receive spontaneous support as they come across their academic challenges. This close support and proximity also provides good emotional support where coaching is easily delivered in non-vulnerable ways. Please ensure that a community basket is available from which students can borrow any items they may need to do their work. Offer items generously to ensure that the student's needs are met and he/she is well equipped to do the requested task at hand.
<b>Alternate work stations</b>	Providing students with a variety of stations helps them feel that they have choices and can control how/where they will get their work done. Offering clipboards, working on the window ledge, standing stations, dry erase magnetic boards, easels or on the ground will make a huge difference in helping to engage students with their learning.
<b>Alternative seating options</b>	Chairs are wonderful, however many students benefit from different seating options as they body requires more sensory and movement input to sustain attention to tasks. Having and offering different types of stools, sensory cushions, bean bag chairs and benches will provide a great opportunity for choice and to engage into getting to task. Students gravitate to these options, over time we can determine which are most helpful to sustain attention and maintain student engagement. These can then be recommended to the classroom teacher.
<b>Cocooning areas</b>	When emotions run high, some students seek and benefit from private place to cocoon to have time for themselves without having others look at them. They are often highly sensitive to regard and these can quickly fuel situations. By having cocooning options students can progressively come to manage their ranges in emotions without repercussions and consequences. It helps to preserve their dignity. These areas should be enclosed, but still allow adults to see the student inside. Offering a flashlight or some form of dim lighting and sensory tactile items is often helpful.
<b>Private space for discussions</b>	Most students coming to the NSC are there for emotional reasons, they will benefit from speaking 1:1 with an adult, however it is most beneficial if this can be away from others in the room. It can be in a cornered off area, the goal is to have the discussion (which most often involves vulnerability) and maintain dignity.

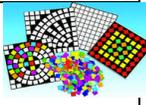
<b>Puzzle table</b>	Setting up a community puzzle table is key in the NSC, students gravitate to puzzles out of intrigue, but the outcome is that they begin to look for pieces gradually place a few meanwhile beginning to switch gears as their mind has shifted to something else. The goal is not to complete the puzzle in one setting. It is to have some with sufficient pieces that it will grow over time with different individuals contributing some time and effort along the way. For some students, the puzzle table is their 'entry point' as they are not ready to talk about what brought them to the NSC, however after some time working on the puzzle, adults can approach and gently come alongside to offer their support.
<b>Building area</b>	Having a table or area that offers different types of building games is of top value in the NSC! This offers movement, creativity, physical work of building, taking apart and trying again. It simulates 'real life' where things don't always work out how we would like! The constructions can be kept for some time, community building when judged appropriate. Please remember to take pictures of the constructions before they are taken apart to create anew! This can be individual or in small groups with supervision.
<b>Creation area</b>	Having materials ready and available is an asset. Some students gravitate towards building and creating crafts. Others seek to draw, sketch, paint and doodle. By having different materials on hand, we offer students another avenue for expressing their emotions. By teaching some individual crafts (eg. Corking, knitting, Rainbow looms) these can become therapeutic in helping students manage their emotions, meanwhile creating different items.
<b>Sensory area</b>	If you have an additional space, you can create a sensory room. If not, having different sensory items available within the NSC will be helpful. Consider alternate lighting, sound reducing headphones, various fidget tools, weighted animals and sensory cushions to sit on.
<b>Emotions Room</b>	If you have the luxury of an additional space for the expression of big emotions, setting up an Emotions Room is of great intervention benefit. Please see resource documents to that effect for further information regarding the purpose/benefit and suggested items when setting up an Emotions Room.
<b>Reading area</b>	Offering a wide range of children's literature is invaluable. This is a great opportunity to expose students to a wide range of book that focus on emotional expression and adults who support children in their daily challenges. Please offer to read your favorite to the students, hand pick ones that would meet their needs. Books provide information one step removed to express emotions, opening up the doors to expression when one's emotions are too vulnerable to share. A list of recommended Children's literature priming a language of emotions is available in both English and French.
<b>Wall surfaces</b>	Consider that visual stimulation can be most distracting for some students, hence be selective of what you put up on the walls for decoration. Aim to put up photos of emotions which provide a full range of emotions. Be careful that they are photos and not pictograms or emoticons. In order to help children identify with and name emotions, their best reference point is other people demonstrating different emotions.

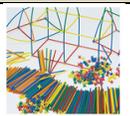
**Suggested materials that will aid in  
Making your Nurturing Support Centre Welcoming, Safe and Predictable**

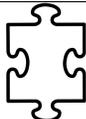
<b>Name of item</b>	<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Purchased from</b>	<b>Cost estimate</b>	<b>Photo image</b>
Cirkustält - Circus tent	Having a space in which to cocoon is often beneficial. It provides a private space for a child to experience their emotions, maintain dignity and resurface when ready to benefit from an adult's support and care. This tent can also be used for puppetry work and	IKEA	\$25	

	emotional expression via drama or role-playing.			
Puppets – ready made	Many companies sell a wide range of puppets (animals, people), having a range is key.	Brault & Bouthillier (B & B) FDMT Coles/Chapters/Indigo Wintergreen Scholars Choice		
<b>Supplies to make puppets</b>				
Fabric puppet starters Skin tone fabric 'base' from which to create your own puppet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The making and creating of puppets, simple to complex is a pleasure and experience with children.</li> <li>▪ The key is to provide a wide range of materials, for these to be accessible to them when they are inspired to create, build and express all that is within themselves.</li> <li>▪ Adults should provide much space for their emergent and creative energy.</li> <li>▪ The process and their delight are the desired elements, not that they copy a sample made by the adults or a purchased item.</li> <li>▪ Originality and personality require space and opportunity to grow!</li> </ul>	B & B' puppet glove' item #2232171	\$6 for a package of 6	
Felt puppet starters		B & B	\$8.25 for a package of 10	
Googly eyes		<p>Note: These items can be purchased via different school material suppliers. Your school will most likely have a number of these already in stock!</p>		
Feathers				
Felt sheets				
Liquid glue				
Hot glue gun & glue sticks				
Pipe cleaners – different types and textures				
Foam cut out shapes				
Buttons, Beads				
Yarn				
Ping pong balls or Styrofoam balls (for 3-D eyes)				
<b>Fidget items</b>				
Last mouse lost	This item can be used as a fidget item or a game, instructions are included.	FDMT	\$8	
Go Bong!	This item can be used as a fidget item or a game, instructions are included.	FDMT	\$10	

Play dough	Play dough is enjoyed as a tactile experience by many children. Care must be given to ensure that children are not eating the play dough. Purchasing non-scented play dough helps to reduce the desire to taste it.	Omer DeSerres	14 containers for \$15	
Balloons	Used to make a stress ball fidget tool– insert one individual container of play dough into the balloon and tie it closed. This is preferred to filling with flour, sugar or rice – it does not make a mess if it happens to break. Ensure to buy thick rubber balloons.	Dollarama	10 balloons for \$1.25	
Loopez	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having fidget items that children can manipulate in their hands is an avenue to help them manage their anxiety, stress and emotions.</li> <li>Providing a range in size, texture and shapes helps children explore and discover different venues to expend energy.</li> </ul>	FDMT	\$7	
Orbo ball		FDMT	\$11	
Atomic Stress balls		FDMT	\$4	
DNA balls		FDMT	\$8	
Rabbit massagers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some children enjoy being touched and receive massages. These two items provide different sensory experiences – the rabbit massager vibrates, the harmony rollers is hand operated.</li> </ul>	FDMT	\$12	
Harmony rollers		FDMT	\$8	
Eggscizer	These fidget tools are of different density, check the colour-density when ordering.	FDMT	\$13	
Smiley Man Bendables	Children enjoy bending them in all directions. The smile helps them focus on their good intentions and to try again.	Smilemakers	\$26 for a package of 24	
<b>Drawing/Coloring/Writing Supplies</b>				
Magnetic Gel Board	Great individual tool for expression or drawing. Re-usable and versatile.	FDMT	\$15	
White board/dry erase board 24 x 36 inches or bigger	Having this available and accessible encourages emotional expression and creativity. Great tool to support and encourage academic learning in a fun and experiential manner.	Grand & Toy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prices depend on sizes and quantity</li> </ul>	
Individual white magnetic boards	Great individual tool for expression or drawing. Re-usable and versatile. Having this available and accessible encourages	B & B	Item #2121184 Package of	

	emotional expression and creativity. Great tool to support and encourage academic learning in a fun and experiential manner.		6 for \$40	
Dry erase markers set of mixed colours	Having a set with a range of colors is often very inviting for students.	Grand & Toy	Price is dependent on size of set purchased.	
Re-usable Dry erase Pockets	These are wonderful to insert work sheets, word searches, search'n find activities. Students work with a dry erase marker. Having a different medium is often engaging for students.	B & B	\$15/10/pkg \$40/25/pkg	
Mandalas	The act of coloring has a calming, centering and soothing effect. Children should be encouraged to use pencil crayons to have the greatest benefit. Providing different options mandalas to students is often encouraging and engaging. Provide 2 or 3, then encourage to complete at least one prior to giving another.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many can be found online.</li> <li>B &amp; B, Omer DeSerres, Indigo/Chapters has a variety of books.</li> </ul>		
Colouring pages	<i>Melissa and Doug</i> have pads of designs/coloring pages on 11 x 17. Variety of themes available. Children enjoy these large coloring pages and the opportunity to choose which one they would like to color. Great tool to provide as a Quiet time or transition activity.	Indigo, book stores, craft stores	\$6 per pad (50 different designs/pad)	
Never-ending sketchpad	Versatile easy to carry, can be used in different positions and locations. Quiet tool to draw, write and make designs.	B & B	\$35	
Paints / paint brushes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The key is to provide a wide range of materials, for these to be accessible to the children when they are inspired to draw, paint create, build and express all that is within themselves.</li> <li>Adults should provide much space for their emergent and creative energy.</li> <li>The process and their delight are the desired elements, not that they copy a sample made by the adults or a purchased item.</li> <li>Originality and personality require space and opportunity to grow!</li> </ul>	<p><b>Note:</b> These items can be purchased via different school suppliers. Your school will most likely have a number of these already in stock!</p>		
Pencil crayons				
Thin markers				
Wide markers				
Large banner paper roll				
Pastels				
Large sheets of paper				
Spectrum mosaics	There are templates to provide suggestions, however children should be encouraged to be inspired to create their own designs.	B & B	\$10 item # 1203819	

<b>Other items to consider</b>				
Legal size clipboard	These are to provide a 'work station' that can go where the child would like to position himself/herself within the room.	Grand & Toy	\$1.50	
Sand timers (mini 3 inches tall)	2 minute timers – good for a short waiting or transition time. Children tend to focus on the sand going down and temporarily distracts from their upset.	FDMT	\$8	
Sand timers (large 9 inches tall))	Different increments of time 3, 5, 10 min suggested. Children tend to focus on the sand going down and temporarily distracts from their upset. Great to use for work or activity time.	FDMT	\$18	
Pinwheels	Good tool to focus on breathing, centering one's energy. One of many options that can be introduced to children to help them manage their anxious energy.		\$42 for a package of 48	
Time Timer	Great tool for individual or group use in a classroom. Prized items by teachers as it provides student with a visual of time elapsing. Can be set-up with a beeping sound when time is elapsed, or it can be turned off.	FDMT	Price dependent on size purchased	
Nature scenes	Having a variety of different nature scenes in strategic areas of the room can be helpful in attracting students attention, distracting them from their upset and providing a safe place to live their emotions. These can also include photos taken on trips that bring back memories of times shared with family. Some students will benefit from having a personal selection of nature scenes and photos that are meaningful for them.			
Establishing Nooks in which to curl up in for privacy and quiet moments – meanwhile 'being' in a room with adult supervision	These can be established in 'natural' areas within the physical layout of a room. They can be created under counter space, tables with fabric lay over, etc. Please consider having a soft surface to sit on (large foam interlocking tiles, carpet, etc), cushions, flashlight, books to look at, a variety of fidget tools, coloring pages and pencil crayons. Some students will benefit from headphones to help cut out the ambient noises and help them return to a calmer state. Having a side wall with scenery paper may also be inviting and calming.			
Background scenery paper	This can be used inside a Nook area or in a section of a Quiet Room/Calming Area to help set a calming and inviting mood to a particular space	B & B Rolls of 4 feet wide x 50 feet long	\$39	Under the Sea, Sky themes
<b>Building Toys</b>				
Straws & Connectors	Create energy will lead to building a variety of structures! Requires space for movement and building. Children enjoy the freedom of building high, wide and 3-dimensional structures.	B & B	Prices depend on size of package being purchases	

Puzzles	Consider setting up a permanent puzzle table, these are 'community puzzles' that all students coming to the Nurturing room will be able to contribute to. For some, it's a great way to transition into the room and have the necessary 'time alone' before they'll engage with an adult. The puzzles are ongoing so they don't provide an increase in frustration when its time to leave and clean-up/put away!	Note: Available in several stores, prizes dependent on size of puzzles purchased.		
Legos	Consider having loose Lego to build with and large plaques so that ongoing structures can be preserved as 'works in progress'	Note: Available in several stores, prizes dependent on size of sets purchased.		
K'Nex	Consider having a good quantity to promote imagination and creativity. Children enjoy building high and mixed types of constructions.	Note: Available in several stores, prizes dependent on size of sets purchased.		
Create a maze marble run	The option to create mazes with different shapes, seeing what works well and not. Good activity for trial and error with no great consequence and prime energy to try again!	B & B	\$39	
Marble race	Children enjoy the opportunity to build. Some go high and wide, requires space to maneuver and create. Good activity for trial and error with no great consequence and prime energy to try again!	B & B	\$47	
GEARS!	Great game for problem-solving, seeing how things interconnect. Make your own creation and see if the gears will turn, if not, back to creation to find another way that it could work - adaptation and futility all rolled up in one!	B & B	\$60	
Connectagons	Use these bold slotted wooden pieces to create an endless variety of bold and bright sculptures - let your creativity guide you!	B & B	\$55	
Super Acrobat	Connecting game that promotes creativity, building 3-dimensionally. Good for individual or small group intervention.	B & B	Price depends on size of set purchased	
Squigz	Suction cup building game -promotes creativity and fun. Good activity for trial and error with no great consequence and prime energy to try again!	B & B	Price depends on size of set purchased	
Plus plus blocks	Interlocking connecting game that promotes creativity and building 3-dimensionally. Good for individual or small group intervention.	B & B	Price depends on size of set purchased	

## Fine-motor activities

Corking		<p>Note: The use of fine-motor activities where children learn a skill, there is trial &amp; error, things can be fixed and tried again, provides great opportunities for attempts, growth, working through a range of emotions, meanwhile being supported by adults.</p>
Knitting with looms		<p>The process of creating, seeing the project grow and come to fruition is both exciting and validating for children.</p>
Rainbow Loom bracelets		<p>Some children find great comfort in the rhythmic and repetitive movement of the task at hand.</p>
Weaving with looms		<p>Products for these activities can be found in a numerous stores; Wal-mart, DeSerres, Michael's, Brault &amp; Bouthillier and other craft supply stores.</p>
Making different types of fidget tools	<p>Note: Many fidget items may be purchased but there is great pleasure in making fidget items. A little bit of research on the internet can bring different ideas to try out. Again, the key element is that not all find benefit from the same items.</p>	
Scrapbooking	<p>Note: Scrapbooking in an album or making frames – creativity it at play. Providing a variety of items to use, different textures, wide range of colours will help to stimulate expression.</p>	
Sketching	<p>Note: Some children gravitate to drawing, sketching, doodling, cartooning – whichever their preferred angle, providing them with a sketchbook containing many pages encourages its use over time. Some prefer a smaller size sketchbook, others are inspired with large pages. Some children are intimidated by the blank pages of a sketchbook, it is best to orient to other activities and possibly revisit at a later date.</p>	
Dot-to-dot pages	<p>Note: Some children like the wonder of what will unfold within a semi-structured activity, dot-to-dot pages provides this calming opportunity that guides them through to a result. These can be placed within a re-usable dry erase pocket and traced with a dry erase marker to save on paper!</p>	