



Brain Breaks: Active & Quiet



Research-Tested Benefits of Breaks

Students are easily distracted, but regular, short breaks can help them focus, increase their productivity, and reduce their stress.

<http://www.edutopia.org/article/research-tested-benefits-breaks>

Rationale:

Organized activities for students to participate in a group or individually. Activities can be held in class, in the hall, or in the NSC. Physical activities reduce stress and anxiety supporting favorable academic behaviors and achievements. Quiet activities allow for rest which calms the nervous system and supports students in processing and retaining information.

Benefits:

Physically active breaks:



Improve staying on task, increase attentiveness, and restore energy and motivation. **For whom:** Students that need to get energy out, that are hyposensitive, and or that lose interest quickly. The learning environment is preserved during teaching periods and there are less distractions from fidgeting students.

Quiet breaks:



Improve emotional well-being and cognitive functioning. **For whom:** Students with high sensitivity and /or are anxious, who require more time to switch gears or transition to another activity. For those who don't respond well to high energy physical activities. Teachers can continue teaching routines during this intervention and the students can seamlessly step back and reintegrate without disturbing others.

Tier 1 Universal practices:

Whole group (in the classroom)
Implementing brain breaks into your regular classroom routines will benefit all students. The group can follow dance videos, team challenges, or yoga. Switch up activities regularly.

*Those that are too emotionally charged may benefit from *Emotional Release Activities*.

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/emotions-intervention-area>



Links to supporting documents, videos & activities:



[Video Capsule](#)

- [Brain Break Suggestion Cards](#)
- [Brain Break: List of activities \(in class and online\)](#)
- [Brain Break resource links](#)
- [Brain break research references list](#)
- [Cerveau Actif Project document](#)
- [Brain Break Ideas](#)



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Tier 2 Targeted practices:

Small group (e.g. in the hall)
Set up a movement station or active hallway for a small group or two students at a time. They can take a quick break without disrupting others.



Links to supporting documents, videos & activities:



- [Movement Break Posters \(copyright - from Teachers Pay Teachers\)](#)
- [Wiggle brain break cards](#)

Tier 3 Individual practices:

One-to-one (e.g. in the NSC)
Prepare an area for individual use or to be accompanied by an adult. Students can do wall pushups, stretching or listen to music. Consider setting up a personal bin with their favorite recentering activities.

Links to supporting documents, videos & activities:

Personal Bin:  [Video Capsule](#)

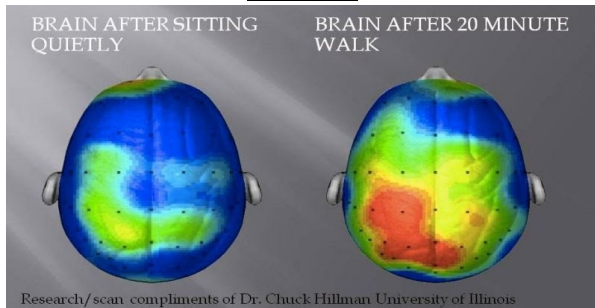


Caution Elements:

Avoid using brain breaks as a reward or a punishment. Breaks should be given as part of a regular schedule regardless of behavior. Students should not be excluded as a form of consequence, nor should they earn breaks through a reward system.

Links: [Problem with consequences](#) [Problem with reward systems](#)

Research



Exercise is as effective as certain medications for treating anxiety and depression.

J. J. Ratey (2008), *Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*

