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Take Note

Co-Regulation Strategies Tip Sheet

Take Note, a mindfulness self-regulation skill, aims to build awareness of the body and how physical sensations can provide important feedback to help youth self-regulate. Take Note exercises direct youth to pause and notice the physical sensations in their bodies during times of relaxation, stress, anger, sadness, joy, or another emotion, building their capacity to recognize and respond to physical self-regulation cues. When combined with other co-regulation strategies, Take Note can help youth balance their emotions and regulate behavior for healthier decision making.

Prepare ahead of time. Decide when to introduce the strategy, and plan when to use it over the course of a class series. Look for places to plug it in, but be open to using it when an opportunity arises. For example, you can use the strategy when two students are engaged in a heated discussion and need to cool off.

Watch for signs of stress. Pay attention to signs that a student is experiencing stress, like a short temper, anxious body posture, or shutting others out. These situations are opportunities to use a Take Note exercise to check in with students and help them become aware of the physical sensations in their bodies (such as stress, tension in muscles, or a tight stomach).

Combine it with other strategies. Co-regulation strategies can and should be combined! Show students how to use Take Note in conjunction with strategies like Breath to Focus and Rest & Return. Suggest that if they find areas of tension or stress during Take Note, they can do some deep breathing to help with that, or take a moment to rest, regroup, and then return.

Make it your own. As with other co-regulation strategies, your ability to successfully teach Take Note is stronger if you practice it regularly yourself. Self-care is a key component of being an effective facilitator; use Take Note to see what parts of your life need time and attention. Get comfortable using this strategy by choosing two or three Take Note exercises to practice outside the classroom.

Tailor it to your reality. Many facilitators are pressed for time delivering lesson content and find longer mindfulness exercises unrealistic to implement. Identify exercises you can modify to fit an abbreviated schedule. Encourage students to find opportunities to try the strategy outside of class. For example, print quick and easy exercises on a card that students can take after class, then follow-up to ask how they went.

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