Strategies for Self-Care in the Classroom
What We Will Know and Do

● Build an understanding of what is self-care and why is it important for students

● Leave with some strategies or techniques that you can try in your classroom to support student self care
Self Care for Students

What is self care for students?

It is a set of activities that you can use in your classroom that maintains physical, mental, and emotional well-being of your students.
Why Teach Self-Care to Students?

Teaching students how to take care of themselves can lead to more critical life skills later on.

A 2018 survey of over 80,000 U.S. postsecondary students shows that anxiety, stress, trouble sleeping, and depression are the top factors affecting academic performance among students.
Pause and Reflect

Why do you think students need self-care practices in the classroom?

What practices have you shared with your students to support their wellbeing?
Strategies to Promote Self-Care
We are hopeful that you will engage in each of the strategies as they are presented.

Consider learning the strategy then pause to practice the strategy and reflect on how you will use in the classroom.
Introducing Mindfulness and Self-Care

Take time to introduce the how and the why of activities

Take time to share ideas with students’ families so they can practice at home and give input

Remember that some students may not want to practice--give them a choice with expectations
Voice and Choice

Take time to get to know your students. Self-care practices should be a choice, and they should have voice in what they want to try.

Closing your eyes or meditation can be anxiety producing for some. You can give choice by asking them to focus on something in the room, or sit quietly.

Ask them to speak to you privately if they have any concerns or a negative experience.
Pause and Reflect #2

Why is it so important to have voice and choice in self-care practices?

How will you incorporate voice and choice?
Help Students Create Their Self-Care Plan

My self care plan

I can exercise my body by...

I can be a good friend by...

Important people Who I trust

I can relax my body and mind by...

This is me

I can keep myself clean and tidy by...

I can make myself happy by...

My hopes and dreams...

I can eat healthy foods...

www.elsa-support.co.uk
Self-Care Spaces

Peace corners
Talk it out tables
Don’t get mad, get glad cubbies
Chill corners
Elementary Example

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=11&v=dxBv1w4SQyw&feature=emb_logo
Secondary Example

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=YxC_Q8zE0SU&feature=emb_logo
Successful Use of Space

It’s important to introduce the space, model how to use it, and create a process on when and how to access.

Make sure you review how to access in your classroom, the routines and procedures, and remember to review/ practice.
“A brain break is a short period of time when we change up the dull routine of incoming information that arrives via predictable, tedious, well-worn roadways. Our brains are wired for novelty. We know this because we pay attention to every stimulus in our environment that feels threatening or out of the ordinary. This has always been a wonderful advantage. In fact, our survival as a species depended on this aspect of brain development.”

Lori Desautels
Brain Breaks Continued

Link to Article

Invisible Pictures: Have a student draw a picture in the air while their partner guesses what it is. You could give them categories such as foods or places, or other ways to narrow the guessing.

Opposite Sides: Movement is critical to learning. Have students stand and blink with the right eye while snapping the fingers of their left hand. Repeat this with the left eye and right hand. Students could also face one another and tap the right foot once, left foot twice, and right foot three times, building speed they alternate toe tapping with their partner.
Sound: The use of sound is very powerful for engaging a calm response. In the three classrooms where I teach, we use rain sticks, bells, chimes, and music. There are many websites that provide music for focus, relaxation, and visualization.

Free Apps: Research free mindfulness apps you can use in the classroom. One example is InsightTimer. There are websites like Go Noodle.
Breathing cards,
https://childhood101.com/fun-breathing-exercises-for-kids
Take 5, Video in Adult Self-Care Module
Fingertip Breathing, Video demonstration on next slide
Let’s Practice
Example: Fingertip Breathing

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=16&v=biynm5sqEI4&feature=emb_logo
Meditation

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3jBjSs_cpk&feature=emb_logo
Trauma-Sensitive Yoga

- Chair Yoga - quick stretches in the chair
- Yoga Sequence - choose a few poses that students can do after a transition
- Yoga posters or yoga cards
Self-reflection

Examples of self-reflective assessments:

- Prompts: An inclusive prompt - students receive a question that is inclusive of everyone and evokes thought, but also connects to the lesson taught

- Journals: Students submit entries in the form of a selfie video, or vlog, that can be uploaded to Canvas or another learning management system

- A “gallery walk”: Students walk around the room observing and exploring the work of their fellow students.
The Take Care of Me List

Students must fill a page with a list of specific things I could do as their teacher to take care of them as learners. I ask them to explain each item with a few sentences. I purposely don’t restrict the types of responses so that each list will give me the true flavor of each student’s personality.

Link to Article
Instructions: Identify one of the strategies we have discussed (or one of your own ideas) that you would like to try. Pick something that will take relatively little effort to implement.

–Think about particular students you would like to use the strategy with

● Why did you pick the strategy you did?
● How would you put it in place or get started?
● How would you practice it? Or how would your students practice it?
● What will your immediate next steps be?
Team Talk: Review the “How”

How will you adjust your practices to support learning for students who have experienced trauma?

How will you involve families and students in practices?

Fill this in on your Action Plan under “Objectives and Action Planning”
Record Numbers of College Students Are Seeking Treatment for Depression and Anxiety — But Schools Can't Keep Up

Mindfulness in High School

Video: Peace Corner: Creating Safe Space for Reflection

Video: De-Escalation Spaces: Helping Students Manage Emotions
Energy and Calm: Brain Breaks and Focused-Attention Practices

- Video: Mindful Breathing: Fingertip Breathing Exercise
- Video: Rosa Parks Elementary Receives Classroom Fidgets
- Video: "Arrive" - A Mindful Minute Helps Students Arrive in the Classroom

How to Get Started with Yoga in the Classroom

Roylco Body Poetry Illustrated Yoga Cards with Instructions - 8 1/2 x 11 inch - Set of 16