

Quiet Corners

When it comes to children's or youth ministry, we often think that the more fun we have, the more fun we have! But for some students, loud, crowded, and even yes - really fun - environments can feel overwhelming. And this can lead to challenging behavior in the classroom. But when we provide a calm space for these students to visit, we can meet their needs better.

Three Things to Consider Before Creating a Quiet Corner

1. Will it meet your goal? - Quiet spaces are great for students who want to avoid sensory input, like those who feel overstimulated by their environment. However, they do not help students who want to seek out sensory input, like many students with autism. So, if your goal is to create a break space for students with developmental disabilities, consider creating a Sensory Break Area instead. However, if your goal is to give all of your students a place to feel calm, then a quiet corner may be just the right thing.

2. What should it look like? - Quiet corners work best when they are away from the action. They should still be in the view of teachers. Its ideal if they are away from the exits. This is important in case you have students who tend to run out of the room when they feel overwhelmed. Great items to add to the space include sensory seating, like bean bag chairs or gliders, as well as, oil and water toys, weighted items (research the proper ways to use these), noise cancelling headphones, and quiet activities. It's best to avoid adding super fun toys that may keep kids from returning to their group.

3. How does it work? - Before setting up your corner, think through guidelines for how students and volunteers should use it. Then make sure that you communicate these expectations to everyone.

One More Thing - Quiet time matters for everyone. This week, spend some intentional time in your own quiet corner connecting with God.