



## UTILIZING THE TAKE A BREAK SPACE

The “Take A Break” space is a small space in the hallway, just outside of the Pre-K room.

The space is used when a child is overstimulated, having a hard time participating in the main activities, out-of-control, making poor choices, needs a breather, or just a few moments to decompress.

The goal of the “Take A Break” space is to help a child recognize and regulate their emotions.

When in use, the space would always be monitored/assisted by a Wonderfully Made trained team member. It is NOT a space where kids can go just to play.

The space includes: two bean bags for sitting, two sensory bins filled with different items, and time-in posters (emotions, calming strategies, etc.) that help guide your time and discussions.

### How to use the “Take a Break” Space

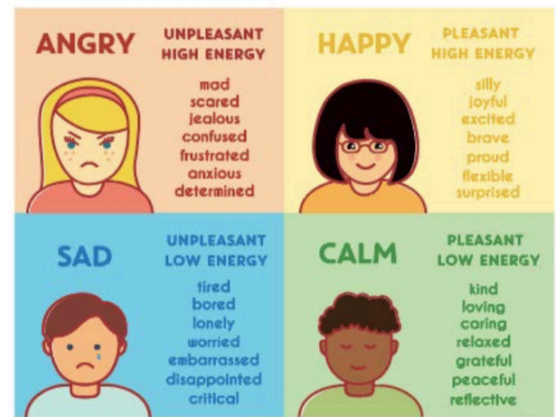
**Step 1:** In the heat of the moment, some kids may need to calm their body before they can do anything else. Some ideas to help...

- Play a card game
- Stretch a resistance band
- Squeeze a sensory ball
- Do wall push ups
- Have child lie on tummy to do a puzzle



**Step 2:** Help the child become aware of how they are feeling.

- Let the child know that all emotions matter.
- On the “My Feelings” poster, there are 32 different feelings categorized into 4 color coded categories.. Each mood category is marked as being either high or low in energy and high or low in terms of how pleasant it feels in our body when we feel that emotion.
- Some kids may be able to identify how they are feeling right away. Others may need help to become aware. Go through the list of feelings with the child and talk about how the different moods feel in our bodies.



**Step 3:** Help the child select a calming activity.

- Have the child choose two or three calming strategies, which are listed on the big poster. Then, have them practice the calming activities selected.
  - Work on a puzzle
  - Blow on pinwheel
  - Read or Look at a book
  - Take 3 deep breaths
  - Hold a fidget toy
  - Squeeze a ball
  - Draw or Color a picture
  - Hug a stuffed animal
  - Close your eyes
  - Take a drink of water
  - Stretch your body
  - Think a happy thought
  - Count to ten



**Step 4:** Help child decide if they are ready to return

- Once the child has completed their calming strategies, ask the child to find the Feeling Card that shows how they are now feeling in that moment.
- Ask the child if they are feeling better.
- If the child answers Yes, have them decide if they are ready to return to the activities happening in the room.
- If the child answers No, suggest that he or she picks a couple more calming strategies that can help.
- Sometimes we have to set a time limit for how long we stay in the Take-A-Break space. 5 minutes is usually a good amount of time to help the child calm down and be ready to go back to the classroom, but it's ok if more time is needed.

**Step 5: Walk the child back to the classroom**

- Sometimes the walk back can create problems too. If your child is young enough, offer your hand to hold as your return to the classroom
- If your child is older or still has a lot of energy, suggest one more quick “physical” activity before walking back, such as 10 push ups or 5 jumping jacks.

