



## Classroom Management Strategies & Techniques

Running a classroom can be stressful and challenging. While we want students to have a space for creativity, individuality, and self-expression, we also need to maintain safety, academic achievement, and developmental growth. Managing a classroom takes practice and is an ongoing process.

Here are five strategies that make a positive difference in managing your classroom and creating a safe learning environment for your students.

### 1. Building Trusting Relationships with your Students

Although it may be challenging to take the time to get to know every one of your students, making an effort to explore their interests regularly could change the classroom environment to feel more comfortable and safe for them. Practice the 2x10 technique: dedicate two minutes a day for ten days to get to know your students. [30 Fun Icebreaker Questions To Get To Know Your Students | Games4es!](#)

### 2. Creating a Safe Space in your Classroom

Stress, worry, anxiety, sadness, and feeling overwhelmed are common experiences for growing children. Dedicating a safe area in the classroom that is available to all students when they feel overwhelmed or need a minute to take a breather could help them manage big emotions. Providing calming tools in your students' safe space, such as squeeze toys, puzzles, books, or art materials, can help students cope, re-set, and return to learning.

### 3. Celebrating Student Achievements

Little milestones happen every day, so why not acknowledge those achievements or accomplishments. Doing so can make students feel valued and respected. This could be as simple as verbal praise, high fives, positive notes on their work, or giving them a pencil or sticker.

### 4. Creating Routines

Having organized and structured routines could help eliminate some students' anxiety, stress, or frustration. Creating organization and routines in the classroom can help the students understand what is expected of them. Visuals, such as charts, writing the day's schedule on the whiteboard and referring to it, or utilizing the First-Then approach ("First we will complete the spelling test, then we will line up for lunch") are easy ways to help students remain on task.

### 5. Accommodating All Types of Learners

Every student is different when it comes to how they learn. Some students learn better by seeing visuals or pictures. Other students learn best through talking or lectures. Students also learn better by doing hands-on assignments or group work. Creating lessons that can accommodate different learners will allow students to engage in your teaching materials.

### this issue

Classroom Management P.1

LGBTQ+ Students P.2

Eating Well for Mental Health P.3

SCICON P.4

Benefits of Mindfulness P.5

Don't Puff Your Life Away! P.6

Empathy-Building Tips P.7

College Bound P.8

Help Students Learn Their Learning Style P.9



# CA Department of Education's Laws and Policies on Supporting LGBTQ+ Students

Schools serve a very diverse population of students, and each student has individual needs and challenges. School administrators and educators hold a big responsibility to ensure their students' safety, well-being, and developmental growth. LGBTQ+ students may experience fear, depression, or anxiety while navigating their understanding of themselves. Schools are often a space where students seek to be accepted, valued, and supported. Being familiar with LGBTQ+ laws and resources is a significant first step.

Laws and regulations evolve and change, and sometimes things can get missed. To help bring awareness, the following are a few laws and policies for local educational agencies to support Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ+) students and provide safe learning environments that protect the health and safety of LGBTQ+ students.

- **California Healthy Youth Act (2015)** The act requires sex education curriculum to be inclusive for students of all genders and sexual orientations. Middle school and high school students will be given sexual health and HIV prevention information.
- **SB 731 Supporting Transgender Foster Youth (2015)** Foster youth have the right to be placed according to their gender identity regardless of the sex listed in records.
- **Fair, Accurate, Inclusive, and Respectful (FAIR) Education Act (2011)** Schools include facts about the history of people with disabilities and LGBTQ+ people into the curriculum.
- **School Success and Opportunity Act** The act protects the rights of transgender and gender non-conforming students to participate in programs/activities aligned with their gender identity. Programs and activities include playing on sports teams & physical education classes. In addition, LGBTQ students have the right to use restrooms/locker rooms in alignment with their gender identity. California Student Safety and Violence Prevention Act prohibit discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- **Counseling Services** School counselors recognize the school experience can be significantly more difficult for students with marginalized identities. School counselors work to eliminate barriers impeding LGBTQ student development and achievement.

For more information to support your students, please visit, [Supporting LGBTQ+ Students - Educator Excellence \(CA Dept of Education\)](#)



# Eating Well for Mental Health

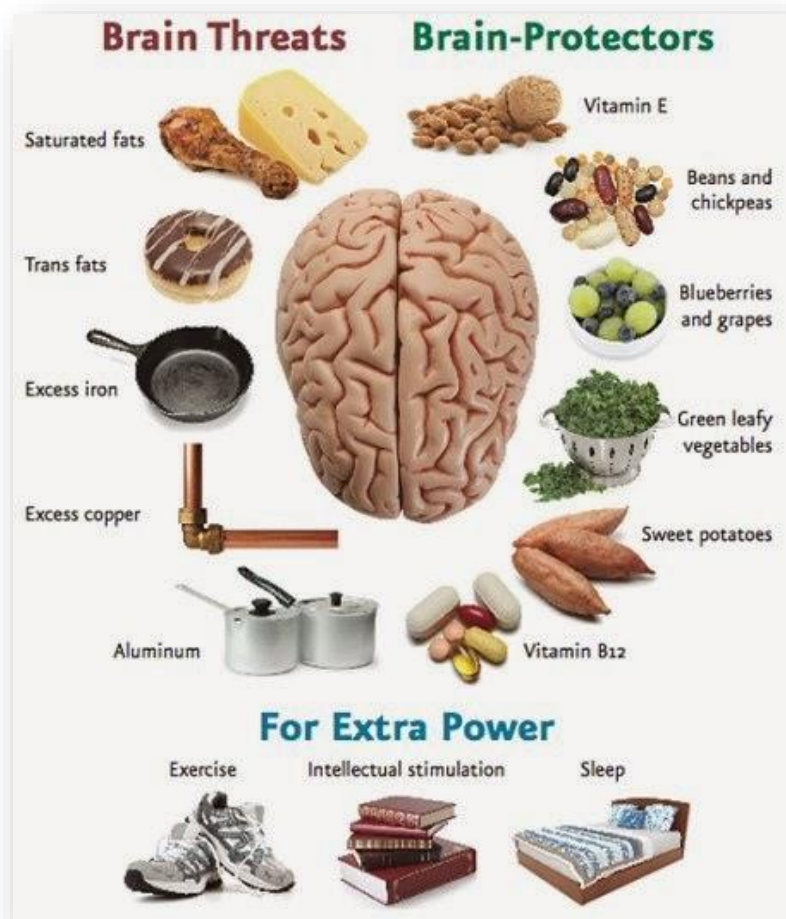
Although many of us know that what one eats affects physical health, what one eats also affects one's mental health. When we are physically ill, we are encouraged to eat "healthy foods" to feel better and have a speedy recovery. Similarly, if we feel sluggish, down, or recognize that we need to improve our mental health, eating the right amount of foods and staying hydrated can significantly improve our mood.

Much research supports the idea "we are what we eat," reflecting that what we fuel our body impacts its functions. The brain, just like any other organ, needs proper nourishment to function correctly. A well-balanced diet can boost our mood by providing us with more energy, boosting our immune system so that we don't become physically ill (which will impact our mood), and improving our sleep to improve our mood during waking hours.

In addition, studies have shown that deficiencies of various nutrients and vitamins impair our cognition. For example, a lack of vitamin B12 can cause fatigue, lethargy, depression, and poor memory. An appropriate vitamin D intake has been associated with better attention and concentration (Gomez-Pinilla, F., & Nguyen, 2012).

So what can we do to improve our mental health through our food intake? Just like for our physical health, eat your "[Five a Day](#)." Stay hydrated, eat plenty of protein, and small amounts of healthy fats.

For tips to start a healthier diet, visit [Six simple ways to smarter, healthier eating - Harvard Health](#)



**Reference:** Adan, R. A. H., van der Beek, E. M., Buitelaar, J. K., Cryan, J. F., Hebebrand, J., Higgs, S., Schellekens, H., & Dickson, S. L. (2019). Nutritional psychiatry: Towards improving mental health by what you eat. *European Neuropsychopharmacology*, 29(12), 1321–1332. <https://doi-org.falcon.lib.csub.edu/10.1016/j.euroneuro.2019.10.011>



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# Being a SCICON Counselor can Boost Students' Resumes or College Applications

Do you want to help your students land a job or get into a college? Encouraging students to seek leadership opportunities, extracurricular activities, and volunteer opportunities is ideal for boosting their applications. One great program available to all High School Junior and Seniors is SCICON.

## WHAT IS SCICON?

SCICON is an outdoor school of science and conservation where many sixth graders spend a week learning about natural science while being outdoors. Students have an opportunity to hike trails, visit a raptor center, and explore the great outdoors that SCICON has to offer. SCICON is located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, above Springville.

## WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A SCICON COUNSELOR?

It is important to realize that you can make a difference in 6th graders' lives. Many people who participated in SCICON still remember their SCICON counselor. SCICON wants positive, encouraging, and responsible high school students to take on a leadership role and become positive role models to sixth-grade students. If you are looking for an opportunity to lead young children and have fun, SCICON is your place.

## WHO CAN BE A SCICON COUNSELOR?

You must be a current junior or senior with good academic standing to participate (meet with your high school counselor to determine if you qualify).

## WHAT DO SCICON COUNSELORS DO?

As counselors, you will stay in a cabin with 10-12 students, accompany them to hikes, and demonstrate positive behavior. Some of the duties assigned to counselors are supervision of students in the cabin, dining lodge, activities, and trails (be ready to hike!). A counselor will also show enthusiasm when displaying activities provided by the program.

As mentioned, SCICON is looking for good role models willing to impact the lives of young sixth graders. Being a SCICON counselor comes with many advantages, like putting their time at SCICON on their resume or college application, learning responsibility, leadership skills, and mentorship. This experience will enhance your communication skills and social skills. You will receive training before working with sixth graders and you can always access support from SCICON staff. You will also have time to complete classwork for the week, so you will not fall behind.

If you are interested in signing up, meet with your high school counselor to complete the documents under “Forms for High Schools”

- [TCOE | Forms](#)



# THE BENEFITS OF PRACTICING MINDFULNESS



According to the American Psychological Association, mindfulness practices have many benefits. To be mindful is to be fully present and aware in the here and now, or present moment, without judgment. Mindfulness has been associated with overall physical and mental wellness and contributes to effective emotion-regulation strategies, including stress reduction. Here are five ways mindfulness is beneficial for educators and students.

## 1. BOOSTS MEMORY

Mindfulness is shown to strengthen the hippocampus (memory part of the brain), allowing you to recall memories and information and memorize new information.

## 2. FOCUS

Research has examined how mindfulness meditation affected participants' ability to focus attention and suppress distracting information.

## 3. LESS EMOTIONAL REACTIVITY

Mindfulness is shown to decrease emotional reactivity, help people stop exaggerated thinking, and build tolerance in receiving criticism/negative feedback.

## 4. MORE COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY

In addition to helping people become less reactive, mindfulness meditation may also give them greater cognitive flexibility, adapting their behavior and achieving goals in a new environment.

## 5. RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION

Research has revealed that a person's ability to be mindful can help predict relationship satisfaction — the ability to respond well to relationship stress and the skill in communicating one's emotions to a partner.

For more information, please visit:

[Benefits of Mindfulness by the American Psychological Association](#) | [Care for the Pack](#) | [Blogs](#) | [Loyola University New Orleans \(loyno.edu\)](#)

Apps to start your practice of Mindfulness:



# Don't Puff Your Life Away!

## Did you know?

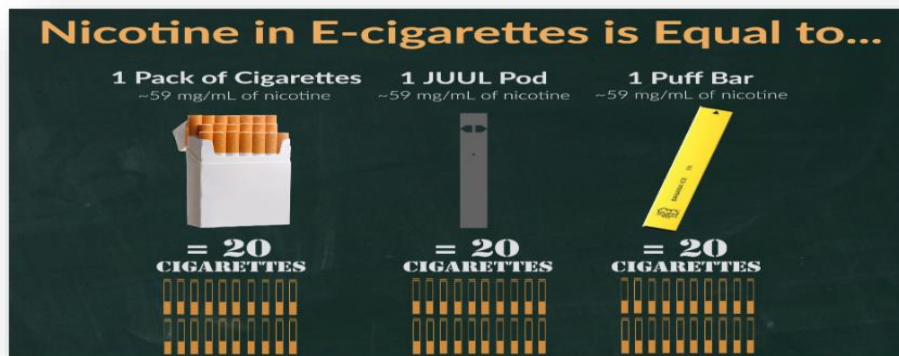
Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health? — Smoking harms nearly every organ in your body, including your heart. Roughly one-third of deaths from heart disease result from smoking and second hand smoke.

In February 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirmed 2,807 e-cigarette or vaping use-associated lung injury (EVALI) cases and 68 deaths attributed to that condition.

**Nicotine** is the primary agent in regular cigarettes and e-cigarettes, and it is highly addictive. It causes you to crave a smoke and suffer withdrawal symptoms if you ignore the craving. Nicotine is a toxic substance, and it raises your blood pressure and spikes your adrenaline, which increases your heart rate and the likelihood of having a heart attack.

**Vaping** is becoming more popular amongst the youth. E-cigarettes, especially disposable ones, are more popular than any traditional tobacco product among youth. According to the 2021 National Youth Tobacco Survey, more than 2 million U.S. middle and high school students reported using e-cigarettes in 2021, with more than 8 in 10 of those youth using flavored e-cigarettes. The U.S. Surgeon General has called youth e-cigarette use an epidemic.

**How common is vaping amongst students?** According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 4.7 million middle and high school students use at least one tobacco product, including e-cigarettes. 1 in 20 middle school students and 1 in 5 high school students reported in 2020 that they used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days. Did you know that students are often vaping while in class, and teachers do not know it? For information on how to detect substance use, visit: [Vaping-What School Staff and TeachersNeed to Know](#)



## So what can we do to encourage students to quit vaping?

1. **Ask Questions:** What made you want to start? What triggers your cravings? What's been stressing you out? How could I help make quitting easier?
2. **Be Patient:** Remember, withdrawal can cause irritability, so you'll need to be as understanding as possible.
3. **Develop a Plan:** Build a list of actions and activities to distract yourself when cravings strike. The quitSTART app has games and challenges to help people quit. Many people find that keeping their hands busy with a stress ball or rubber band can help.
4. **Don't Give Up:** It takes the average smoker or vaper several attempts at quitting to make a permanent change in their life.

# Six Empathy-Building Tips for Teachers



A school year is typically 180 days, which means teachers dedicate about 1,440+ hours teaching our future generations all they need to know to enter the world. Of those hours, how much time is dedicated to teaching students the practice of empathy? Empathy is an essential life skill that reaps many benefits in helping our youth become caring and supportive adults. Here are six ways to teach empathy in the classroom.

## 1 - Be a Positive Role Model

Share positive affirmations with your students and remind them of all the good things when they seem discouraged. This will help create rapport with the students and show you truly are invested in them!

## 2 - Help Them Understand the Other Person's Point of View

Role-playing activities can help develop perspective-taking. Have students create a dilemma and discuss it appropriately and respectfully. This can help maintain engagement even in disagreements and help with classroom management and control.

## 3 - Help Them Understand the Triggers that Lead to Misconduct

Have a conversation and come up with alternatives to punishment. A Stanford study showed that student suspensions were cut by 50% when the staff was trained on empathy. Students may be misbehaving for underlying reasons that will not be resolved with a reprimand (i.e., poor nutrition or sleep, recognizing their unique learning style, etc.)

## 4 - Positive Classroom Culture

Consider greeting students at the door or taking a minute to help students "reset" when they enter your classroom (i.e., deep breathing, listening to a song, or brain teaser). This will help create an atmosphere that feels like a safe and supportive community for everyone.

## 5 - Talk about Feelings in Life

With all the time spent with the students, it is essential that they feel validated by the adults in their life. Teachers maybe some of the few, if not the only, adults that children can go to about issues. Allow them to talk about their real-life situations without shame or guilt.

## 6 - Create Opportunities for Collaboration

Allows students and teachers to work as a team and avoid "power struggles ." This will strengthen their communication skills and leadership skills.

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## Use of a Calm Box

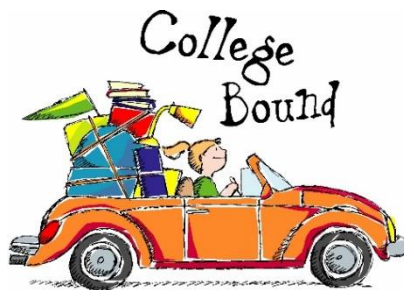
As an educator, you may have come across students you feel need support managing their emotions or dealing with difficult circumstances. If this is the case for you, a Calm Box might be something that you want to consider.

A Calm Box is a small box filled with activities the student can do at home and independently. These boxes can be customized according to the student's interests, but some ideas for what to include in this box are: fidget toys such as spinners, monkey noodles, play-doh, and pop-itz. It is also a good idea to add a pack of crayons and some blank paper for the students to write or draw anytime they need to. Calm boxes can also be used in the classroom if students ever need to take a break from their regular daily routine.



For More Information and Ideas for Calm Boxes, Visit [How to Make A Calm Down Box in 5 Minutes \(for Kids and Adults\) - \(childsavers.org\)](https://www.childsavers.org)





There are many steps to take when making the transition to college. In this article, you can find tips to support students in knowing where and how to apply for scholarships, how to build your resume, and opportunities to volunteer within the community to gain experience and insight on a preferred career goal.

### **Scholarship Applications**

Encourage students to connect with their academic counselor to talk about local scholarship opportunities or visit scholarship websites online. Here are different websites to use to find scholarships.

- [www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com)
- [Scholarships | Chegg.com](http://Scholarships | Chegg.com)
- [Scholly - #1 College Scholarship App - Win Free Money for College \(myscholly.com\)](http://Scholly - #1 College Scholarship App - Win Free Money for College (myscholly.com))
- [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

**Volunteering** is another excellent way to explore interests as students choose a major and figure out what career they want to take. Below, you can find a list of organizations and their websites available to high school students.

- Big Brothers, Big Sisters: <https://www.bbbs.org/>
- CASA of Tulare County: <https://www.casatulareco.org/>
- The Source LBGT+ Center: <https://www.thesourcelgbt.org/>
- Boys and Girls Club: <https://www.bgca.org/>

**Thoughts on what to do this summer?** Community Services Employment Training (CSET) program can help students figure that out. They offer various programs that benefit youth to become the leaders of tomorrow through skill-building and life experiences. Here are a few programs to consider.

**#LEAD Program** focuses on building life skills, outreach, and exploring career opportunities that can assist youth network and even obtain their first job.

- Who Qualifies? Juniors and Seniors in High School
- Where is it located? College of the Sequoia's campus in Visalia and Tulare, and Porterville College

**Techconnect** focuses on IT work, computer programming, and the VITA program (training youth to be expertise in filing taxes).

- Who Qualifies? High School Seniors or High School Graduates
- Where is it located? Cutler and Orosi

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act** focuses on providing an opportunity for youth to explore leadership positions and advocate and interact with different organizations by volunteering and networking.

For more information on applying for these programs, visit the CSET website at: <https://www.cset.org/contact> or call [\(559\) 732-4194](tel:5597324194).

**Tell Students, “Your Future is Waiting, Reach Out for Support, and Invest in Yourself!”**



# Help Students LEARN their LEARNING STYLE

Each student has a specific way of learning. There are three core learning styles - **auditory**, **kinesthetic**, and **visual**. Below are study tips that may be beneficial to incorporate into your study plan.

Take the quiz to identify your learning style and learn about additional study tips:

<https://www.how-to-study.com/learning-style-assessment/>

## AUDITORY LEARNERS

These types of learners remember the class material by listening and speaking.

### Study Tips

- Record classroom lectures (with teacher's permission)
- Read aloud
- Study with a friend
- Ask your teacher to repeat or to clarify the material
- Read your papers aloud to proofread
- Participate in class discussions



## KINESTHETIC LEARNERS

These types of learners need to engage in their learning actively. Being physically active helps retain and recall information.

### Study Tips

- Notate each paragraph
- Write vocabulary words on an index card
- Teach the material to someone else, your pet, or even a stuffed animal
- Take notes in class and during reading assignments
- Listen to music while studying
- Use your finger as a guide when reading your textbooks
- Go for a walk as you read or study your index cards



## VISUAL LEARNERS

These learners need visual simulation such as seeing pictures, graphs, charts, and maps.

### Study Tips

- Use highlighters for main ideas within the chapters and your notes
- When using highlighters, color code
- Study the graphics within the chapters
- Make a checklist or a study plan
- Sit in the same seat in your class; this helps recall information your teacher discussed in class.

