



Connect & Recharge:

Designing Your Customized Staff
Relaxation Zone



One way to increase staff well-being is to provide a space where staff can decompress, connect with colleagues and rejuvenate.

Use the following implementation plan and step-by-step guide to create a space that meets the needs of your staff and aligns with the culture of your workplace.

Let's get started!

Quick Start Guide

STEP 1: Find & Name Your Space

Work with leadership and facilities teams to find a quiet space that all staff can easily access (e.g., staff lounge, an area within the main office, a corner of the library). Next, give it a name! Engage staff in developing a creative name, such as a “Rejuvenation Room” or “Zen Den.”

STEP 2: Map Out Your Ideal Setup

Once you’ve identified the perfect spot, [map out the physical space](#) with a setup that works for you. Establishing norms and displaying clear signage can help keep your space clean, respected and collegial. Survey staff to gain their opinions and inform your choice of well-being stations (*see next section*) that meet the needs of your staff and space.

STEP 3: Create Your Relaxation Zone

Make a list of materials and resources needed for the space, identifying those you already have readily available and those you can acquire through donation or purchase. Develop a plan of where you’ll position them, keeping in mind the space can evolve over time, and invite staff to share ideas or help set up.

STEP 4: Unveil the Space to Staff

Once you’ve set up your space, give it a red carpet reveal! Host an “open house” tour to showcase your new spot and highlight rationale for its creation, guidelines for use, and any expectations for shared cleaning and maintenance.

STEP 5: Gather Feedback and Make Adjustments

At least quarterly, check in with staff to gauge if the space is being utilized and meeting the well-being needs of your staff. Use this opportunity to capture new ideas or any restocking requests.

Setting Up Your Space

Ensuring staff feel welcome, safe and able to relax is essential for success. Review the following best practices and tools for setting up your space to get started.

Entrance Sign

Create a sign for the door or area so people are reminded of the purpose of this space.

PRINTABLE ENTRANCE SIGN 

**Staff
Relaxation
Zone**

What are you leaving at the door?

Room Rules

Create a list of rules for your space. Once created, post these in a prominent place near the entrance. For example:

- Leave work at the door.
- Be respectful of our colleagues and their needs.
- Leave the space cleaner than you found it.
- Honor that anything shared in this space stays in this space.

Talking Cards

When entering the space staff may want to signal to one another whether they want to talk or not. Post this sign and provide a deck of yellow and blue cards for staff to display next to themselves.

PRINTABLE INSTRUCTION CARD



To Talk or Not to Talk...

Sometimes we feel like talking and sometimes we don't.

If you'd like, take a card to let folks know how you're feeling. Yellow means "I don't feel like talking today" and blue means "I'd like to talk."

Snack Station

Materials

- Water
- Cups
- Healthy Snacks

Setup & Tips

- Visit the [Healthier Generation Store with Amazon Business](#) for a one-stop-shop of Smart Snack compliant foods and beverages.

PRINTABLE INSTRUCTION CARD



Snack Station

Healthy food and plenty of water can go a long way in helping curb hunger and boost your mood.

Take what you need to nourish your body and mind.

Exercise Station

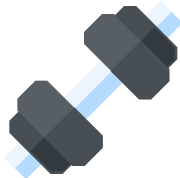
Materials

- Exercise cards or popsicle stick jar with exercises listed
- Yoga mats
- Resistance bands
- Small weights

Setup & Tips

- Don't have exercise equipment on hand? Try soliciting donations on your school or district's social media page or talk to your physical education department.
- Check out Healthier Generation's [printable fitness break cards](#) for equipment-free ways to get moving.
- Display exercise cards or write movement ideas on popsicle sticks and place in a jar.

PRINTABLE INSTRUCTION CARD



Exercise Station

Movement can help us re-center and re-charge. Try out the exercises that make sense for you. Do them alone or with your favorite workout buddies! Even a few minutes of movement can get you out of your head and back to center.

Nap Station

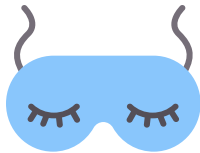
Materials

- “Cell Phone Free Zone” sign
- Timer
- “Do Not Disturb” signs
- Ear plugs
- Comfortable pillows or chairs
- Yoga mats

Setup & Tips

- Set up a place for staff to leave their phone, such as a basket or cubby.
- Create a comfy space with appropriate seating that allows staff to relax/recline.
- Visit Healthier Generation’s [Sleep Smarter. Perform Better.](#) digital resource center for more tips on boosting quality sleep.

PRINTABLE INSTRUCTION CARD



Nap Station

Sometimes all we need is a few minutes of shut eye.

Turn your phone off and put it away (our biggest distractor from sleep), set your timer and get comfortable. If you’d like, use ear plugs or place a ‘do not disturb’ sign near you to let folks know you’re resting.

Meditation Station

Materials

- Quick meditation card deck ([buy](#) or create)
- Chairs
- Timer
- Floor pillows and/or yoga mats

Setup & Tips

- Provide a meditation deck to guide staff.
- Designate a space where staff can comfortably sit or lie down.

PRINTABLE INSTRUCTION CARD



Meditation Station

Sometimes a few ‘mindfulness minutes’ is just what we need to reset. Find a comfortable seat, use the resources available and don’t forget to set a timer.

Creative Station

Materials

- Coloring pages
- Colored pencils
- Crayons
- Play-Doh or Legos
- Other crafts or creative items

Setup & Tips

- Provide a table with space for materials and staff to create individually or together.

PRINTABLE INSTRUCTION CARD



Creative Station

Creating is fun but it can also help us find focus and re-energize! Use the materials provided to create something that is meaningful to you. Do this on your own or collaborate and create together.

Reflection Station

Materials

- Journal prompt cards
- Pens and pencils
- Blank paper

Setup & Tips

- Designate a table where people can write and reflect on the following prompts (or their own topics):
 - What are you grateful for today? How can you express this gratitude to others?
 - What is something that feels challenging right now? Who can you ask for help?
 - What are three goals you would like to achieve this year? Why are these goals important to you?

PRINTABLE INSTRUCTION CARD



Reflection Station

Taking time to pause and reflect can help us better understand a situation and allow us to view things from a new or different perspective. Use the prompts if you'd like, and spend some time writing or reflecting on something that has been occupying your thoughts.

Conversation Station

Materials

- Conversation card deck
- Chairs or space to converse

Setup & Tips

- Place chairs in a circle or designate places to sit with conversation cards nearby.
- Utilize [Sanford Harmony's Quick Connection Cards](#) for conversation ideas.

PRINTABLE INSTRUCTION CARD



Conversation Station

Tired of small talk? Try out these conversation starters to get to know your colleagues and build meaningful connections.

“Let’s Get Together” Station

Materials

- Sign-up sheets
- Place to post upcoming events

Setup & Tips

- Post upcoming event flyers and/or postcards on a wall or desk.
- Include a sign-up sheet for group outings, potlucks, etc. Use Healthier Generation’s printable [healthy potluck sign-up sheet](#).
- Periodically hold an ‘event election,’ where staff can vote for a preferred outing.

PRINTABLE INSTRUCTION CARD



“Let’s Get Together” Station

Let’s get together! Post anything from exercise classes to community events and invite others to attend.

“Take What You Need, Give What You Can” Station

Materials

- Blank wall
- Wall sign
- Post-it Notes or paper and tape
- Pens or markers

Setup & Tips

- Create a sign that says, “Take what you need, give what you can.”
- Post instruction card.
- Get your wall started by adding a few quotes, notes of gratitude and small actions that staff can take with them. Need inspiration? Check out this school’s [example](#).

PRINTABLE INSTRUCTION CARD



“Take What You Need, Give What You Can” Wall

Some days we need a few words of encouragement; other days we’re able to provide support to others. Depending on your capacity, take a note or add a note that you find helpful or meaningful.

Appreciation Station

Materials

- Desk or table
- Notecards
- Pens/pencils
- Stickers
- Staff list (with photos)

Setup & Tips

- Set up a desk or table with all the materials.
- In order to reach all staff members, rotate departments each month. For example, December is 'Custodial Staff' month. Staff can still appreciate teammates or coworkers, but this encourages gratitude toward those that may not receive it often.

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Appreciation Station

Making time to celebrate and appreciate each other is vital to our personal and collective well-being.

Take a moment to write a note of gratitude to a colleague.

Place it in their mailbox or deliver it directly to them!

Our “Why” Wall

Materials

- Wall sign
- Post-it Notes or paper
- Tape
- Pens or markers

Setup & Tips

- Create a wall sign.
- Reserve space for folks to post their good moments from the day.

PRINTABLE INSTRUCTION CARD



Our “Why” Wall

We all have those overwhelming days (or weeks or months) that have us questioning why we are in this work. Take some time to share your reminders of why you are here – from a kind interaction with a parent to an ‘aha!’ moment with a student, and everything in between. Highlighting these moments can help bring us back to our purpose.

“Things I Want You to Know” Box

Materials

- Box or jar with place to insert paper
- Paper and pens

Setup & Tips

- Display the box or jar next to paper and pens.

PRINTABLE INSTRUCTION CARD



“Things I Want You to Know” Box

We all have different needs, and it can be a challenge to get our needs met at work. Use this box to share the things that you need to thrive at school. Your leadership/well-being team will use these to help create policies and practices to boost the collective well-being of your school.



Resilience in School Environments (RISE) — presented in partnership by Kaiser Permanente and the Alliance for a Healthier Generation — is a national initiative that provides teachers and school staff with skills and resources to support student mental health and to better tend to their own emotional needs.

Through engagement with RISE, schools, teachers and educators will learn how to better manage emotions, recognize strengths and weaknesses, and rise above adversity.

For more tips on improving staff-well being, visit
HealthierGeneration.org/RISE