HANDOUT:

How to prepare space supporting diverse needs?

Preparing a space according to the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) benefits all students, not only neurodivergent, by reducing distractions and anxiety.

Here are key tips for trainers and teachers on physical space adjustments which may help reduce overstimulation and provide options for regulation:

- Sensory-friendly Lighting:
  - Prioritize natural light and use adjustable or dimmer switches.
  - Avoid harsh fluorescent lights or cover them with calming, diffused filters.
  - Use soft, indirect lamps or LED lighting for a calmer atmosphere.
- Acoustic and noise control:
  - Minimize background noise by using carpets, acoustic panels, or soft furnishings.
  - Provide noise-cancelling headphones as an available tool for students.
  - Designate a self-regulation space: quiet or calm-down zone with soft seating, weighted blankets, and sensory tools (fidgets, stress balls).
- Organization and visual clutter:
  - Ventilate the room thoroughly before the training.
  - Minimize visual clutter on walls and surfaces to reduce distraction.
  - Use clear, labelled storage (bins, totes, color-coded folders).
  - Use neutral colour palettes on large surfaces.
- Flexible seating and movement:
  - Offer a variety of seating options like wobble stools, stability balls, standing desks, or soft seating. Let students choose what best supports their focus.
  - Allow students to use sensory supports (fidget toys, chew necklaces) and to move or stand if it helps them focus. Verbally welcome the use of these tools.

All WIN resources are licensed under CC BY 4.0 LEGAL CODE Attribution 4.0 International

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.
Project number: 2024-1-CY01-KA220-ADU-000248901

Co-funded by the European Union

If possible, the trainers should arrive at the training location in advance to familiarize themselves with the space (whether it can be adapted to neuroatypical needs) and check the technical aspects (projector, sound system, room setup).

All WIN resources are licensed under CC BY 4.0 LEGAL CODE Attribution 4.0 International

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.
Project number: 2024-1-CY01-KA220-ADU-000248901

Co-funded by the European Union