

Building Out Bullying

Built Environment Checklist for School Staff



A checklist to assist school staff in designing their school built environment to reduce bullying behaviour and promote student wellbeing

Maximising visibility

- Locate toilets and common areas centrally in schools to increase accessibility.
- Provide adequate escape routes in confined spaces.
- Incorporate large windows into classrooms, particularly overlooking outdoor areas.
- Include clear pathways and adequate signage to support wayfinding.
- Include glass viewing panels in classroom doors.
- Ensure indoor and outdoor spaces contain adequate lighting. Consider sensor lighting to detect motion.
- Include shatterproof mirrors (e.g., polycarbonate) in hidden corners or blind spots.
- Clear windows of visual obstructions, such as student work or posters.
- Maintain trees and vegetation.
- Encourage passive supervision of students by locating students' break-time seating near staff rooms or common areas.
- Provide supervisory staff with distinctive clothing.

Optimising comfort

- Regulate noise, temperature, lighting, and ventilation to reduce irritability.
- Distribute locker areas throughout the school to reduce crowding.
- Avoid queues and crowding in canteens and other common areas. Staggering recess and lunch breaks may assist with crowd control.
- Provide break-time equipment and activities to counteract boredom.
- Provide diverse break-time spaces to reflect students' different interests (e.g., sporting ovals, performance spaces, libraries).
- Provide diverse seating, equipment (e.g., balls, paints, puzzles), and activities that enable positive peer interactions.

Improving social-emotional competencies

- Consult students, staff, and parents when designing environments that cater to their daily lives and needs.
- Encourage staff to engage with students during break times to build trust and rapport.
- Provide collaborative workspaces for students and teachers.
- Include moveable furniture in classrooms and outdoor areas to encourage peer interaction.
- Use signage to create positive behavioural expectations (e.g., study area, quiet room)
- Create quiet spaces for reflection within classrooms and throughout the school.
- Remove graffiti and maintain school grounds and equipment to reflect a positive school culture.
- Use similar colours and materials throughout the school to foster a sense of identity and community.
- Create a welcoming front office to strengthen cultural safety.
- Provide access to sex-segregated and all-gender toilets where possible.
- Provide access to books and resources that reflect the lives and experiences of a broad range of students.
- Represent students' different religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds via diverse teaching staff.
- Display student work (e.g., artwork) to increase sense of community and belonging.
- Provide teachers with manuals explaining classroom design and function.
- Support built environment interventions by implementing school-based antibullying programs that are revised regularly.

For more information:

<https://www.telethonkids.org.au/projects/building-out-bullying/>

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