

Participating in Assemblies

Situational Stressor

Triggers:

- Student has difficulty with changes in daily routine.
- Student is sensitive to elevated noise level.
- Student is sensitive to large crowds.
- Student feels like people are watching or looking at them when they enter the environment or walk in front of others.
- Student is uncomfortable with the unpredictability of the assembly.



Thinking Strategies:

Student Positive Affirmations

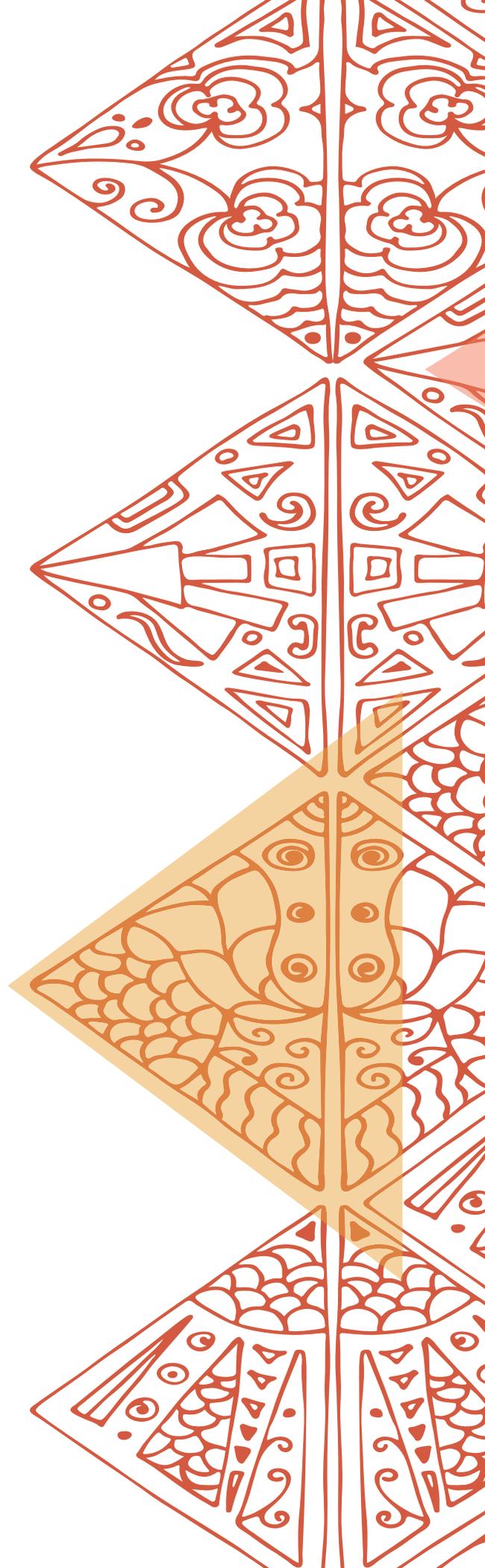
- I take responsibilities for my actions.
- I will do my best.
- Today, I can.

Positive Adult Response

- Believe you can and you're halfway there.
– Teddy Roosevelt (4)

Activities:

- Student Shout Out Box – Students write positive statements and compliments about each other or themselves. They write the name of the person getting the compliment, but they don't sign their own name. Then the teacher puts the compliments on a bulletin board or reads them to the class at the end of the day. (30)
- Hang Loose – Use the name of this movement pose as a thinking strategy prior to attending an assembly. "Hang loose and let it all go."





Focusing & Calming Strategies:

- Mind in a Jar - How to make: Use a snow globe or make your own by filling a water bottle. Fill three fourths full with water. Add glycerin almost to the top. Add 4 drops of liquid soap. Add glitter. Put lid on tightly and shake. How to use: Pass while waiting for assembly to start. “Shake the bottle. Watch the sparkles spinning and rushing around. This is your worried or upset mind. Set the bottle down, and breathe in and out slowly. Watch the glitter as it settles to the bottom. This is your mind calming down.” (21)

Movement Poses & Breathing: Prior to attending the assembly have students participate in the following movement strategies. (See Appendix C)

- Contented Cat
- Calm Down Dog
- Tranquil Turtle
- Balloon Breathing



Sensory Strategies:

Activities

- Hand Presses – Press hands together hard so that fingers are flat against each other. Hold 3 to 5 seconds. Then release.
- Neck Rolls – Make circles with your nose. When circling up, breathe in good intentions of (calm, relaxed, peace). When circling down, breathe out stress, tension, worry.

Teaching Moment

Anxiety can contribute to sensory over responsiveness. This may cause a student to become overwhelmed by sights, sounds, taste, smells, textures, and movement. They may engage in behaviors such as hyper-vigilance, continuously scanning the environment, inattention, excessive movement and outbursts. (23)

Developed by: Alisa Deininger, OTR/L, Sarah Kolic, OTR/L & Denise Young, COTA/L (2016) for Every Moment Counts: Promoting Mental Health Throughout the Day. All of the Calm Moments Cards and supporting materials are free and downloadable in the Embedded Programs tab at www.everymomentcounts.org

