



SCHOOL NURSE DISCUSSION GUIDE

Understand and Teaching Coping and Relaxation Techniques

This discussion guide supports school nurses in reflecting on and discussing how to develop and encourage coping and relaxing strategies in students—either in a group setting or for individual reflection. Facilitators may choose the questions most relevant to their group.

■ Icebreaker Questions

- When you're feeling anxious or overwhelmed, what techniques do you use to calm yourself down?

■ Breathing and Grounding Techniques

- How could you use props like pinwheels or stuffed animals to make breathing practice fun or relatable?
- What are some discreet ways students can use strategies like Take 5 or Box Breathing in class?
- How do you explain grounding techniques to students so they feel empowered to use them?

■ Distraction, Visualization, and Body Awareness Techniques

- What role does distraction play in managing feelings—and when is it helpful?
- Which distraction techniques (like naming objects or alphabet games) might work well in a school setting?
- How might the Door Method visualization help with transitions like calming down before sleep or refocusing in class?
- What language would you use to guide a student through a discreet body scan or tension release activity?

■ Age-Appropriate Adaptations

- How do you adapt coping strategies for younger children versus teens?
- What might help younger students engage in these practices in a playful way?
- How do you approach coping skills with teens who may feel resistant or skeptical?

■ Building Coping Routines

- What are some creative ways to incorporate coping practice into students' daily routines, even when they're calm?
- What visual aids or tools (like posters, calm-down kits, or videos) have you found useful for teaching coping?
- How confident do you feel in guiding a student through a relaxation strategy? What would help increase that confidence?
- How can we remind students (and ourselves) that coping skills are tools, not quick fixes?

■ Conclusion

- If a student told you they were feeling overwhelmed, which strategy would you reach for first—and why?
- What is one thing you'll do differently after viewing the module or participating in today's discussion?