Back to School
Being Proactive: Alternative Seating Options

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As you transition back to school, I thought it may be helpful to remember that there are many great articles for Educational Programming on the IRCA website and a great Visual Supports page.

Remember to prime students using a narrative for the routine of going back to school and for any expectations in their classroom. See below: "I am going to a new school" PDF for a sample of a generic narrative. If time permits, consider using actual photographs of school, staff, classrooms, routines, and include student information.

Example of a photograph of a school from a child’s social narrative.

Also, remember to have their visual schedules, structure, and tools in place prior to arrival! Using visual organization in the classroom will benefit students with autism, students who learn visually, and students with learning differences. Consider sensory needs and communication needs within your classroom and touch base with your school therapists for classroom-wide and student-specific strategies that will optimize learning.

Sensory Strategy: Alternative Seating Options

A simple sensory strategy for the week: Alternative Seating Options. Many students struggle to know where their bodies are in space or with sitting still for longer periods of time. They also can make a lot of noise transitioning in and out of chairs. Providing a variety of seating available in the classroom helps students self-regulate. Remember to also check chair size and desk size for each student for ergonomics.
Here are a few options. Work with your building OT on developing these types of sensory strategies within classrooms in your buildings.

Wedge Cushion: allows excess movement within an extra chair. Tactile (touch), proprioceptive (muscles & joints), and vestibular (movement) input.

Quiet Chairs: provides extra input when pushing the chair and quiets the squeaks!

Stability Balls: provide extra movement during seated activities. Maintains arousal.

Theraband®: provides some extra proprioception to feet and legs and reduces “kicking”.
Bean Bag Chair: Calming and organizing input for reading and seated independent work. Can also be helpful in the chill out/calming safe area of your classrooms.

Cube Chair: provides organizing input and boundaries for early learners. There are more mature options available for older students.

Rocker or Glider: Provides linear movement during or between learning activities, which is calming. Provide cushions and weight when students rock aggressively.

There are many other options and ways to modify seating based on individual student needs for sensory input. These are just some ideas to get you started! 😊  - KJ

I am going to a new school.

I will be going to a new school.

My bus will pick me up at home and take me to school.

An adult at the school will show me where to go and where my room is. I will meet my new teacher.

I will have a new classroom. I will have new students in my classroom.

My new teacher will have a schedule so I will know where to go and what to do.

My new school is going to be a lot of fun and a great place to learn new things.