

Tips for Teachers

5 Actions to Improve Indoor Air Quality in the Classroom



Levels of indoor air pollution are often two to five times higher than outdoor levels. Half of all students and school employees spend their school days breathing in air polluted with chemicals, mold, viruses, radon, and more. These pollutants contribute to poor indoor air quality (IAQ) which can negatively impact health, learning, and overall wellbeing.

Teachers can take steps to improve the quality of the air in the classroom.

Five Simple Actions

Avoid This

Do This

1 Keep Vents Clear

Vents should be kept clear to ensure proper air circulation and ventilation. Air circulation is crucial for maintaining good indoor air quality, preventing the spread of airborne illnesses, and supporting student health and cognitive performance.



2 Reduce Clutter

Reducing classroom clutter does more than lower stress and open mental space. Reducing clutter in the classroom improves the teachers' lines of vision and also eliminates places for dust to settle or pests to hide. Less dust and fewer pests means fewer allergens in the classroom.



3 Reduce Cloth Items

Fabric furniture, rugs, stuffed animals and other fabric items can attract and store dust, dust mites, and other particles which can worsen asthma symptoms. These items are also more difficult to clean or disinfect regularly.



4 Go Fragrance-Free

Scents and fragrances found in room sprays, air fresheners, scented markers, essential oils, and scented cleaning supplies are a toxic mix of chemicals, which we breathe in and absorb through our skin. It is estimated that one in five people in the U.S. is negatively affected by exposure to fragrances. Scents and fragrances are also a common asthma trigger.



5 Rethink Classroom Pets

Animals with fur or feathers can trigger allergy and asthma attacks and should not be in the classroom. Consider replacing the animal with a classroom fish or reptile.



Lastly, be sure to report any IAQ issues and maintenance problems occurring in classrooms immediately to your school's facilities manager.



Learn more about how indoor air quality in schools impacts health, productivity and learning at Lung.org/CASC.



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