

Suggested Accommodations for Students with DMDD in the Classroom:

Meeting the student's needs during times of dysregulation:

- Planned strategy to meet student's escape needs without requiring communication during periods of dysregulation
- Answer information-seeking questions without requiring polite tone during times of dysregulation
- Allow access to preferred staff or “go-to person” when having trouble with emotional or behavioral regulation
- Monitor/block access to items that could be dangerous (scissors, items that can be thrown, items with sharp points, etc.)
- Give student extended personal space
- During times of dysregulation when behaviors are escalated, remove other students from the classroom/environment if possible/safe to do so
- During times of dysregulation, only one person should speak to the child, using as few words as possible, with simple, one-step directions, using a calm tone of voice
- During times of dysregulation, unless imminent risk of danger to self or others is present without any other way to maintain safety (i.e., remove other students from the area, remove items from the area, allow child to go to other designated space for self-calming, etc.), do not touch the child

Sensory:

- Access to sensory tools/fidgets (i.e., tangle, therapy/thinking putty, fidget cube, flipping sequins, weighted lap pad/“snake”, Velcro strips on desk/in binder, etc.)
- Band on the bottom of desk to enable movement of feet/legs
- Access to noise canceling headphones (if loud noises are a problem)
- Alternate options/locations for times of day that are over-stimulating, i.e., quiet area for lunch, alternative for assemblies, etc.
- Access to flexible seating options (i.e., exercise ball, cushion on seat, wobble stool, etc.)
- Provide choice for where work can be completed (i.e., desk a or b; sit on floor or at desk; sit or stand, etc.)
- Opportunities for heavy work
- Opportunity for movement breaks (walk in hall, wall push-ups, wall sits, jumping, etc.)

Breaks:

- Non-contingent scheduled breaks every X minutes/mid-class/etc.
- Non-contingent breaks from the classroom environment at student request, up to X times per class period for self-regulation
- Run-to place for student to go to when she/he needs to escape the classroom/regulate
- Provide limited choice for break activities to meet student's needs; teach break procedures and expectations

Relational:

- Provide opportunities for high success activities (preferred activities, special jobs, etc.) during times of day wherein the child regularly demonstrates difficulty (i.e., lunchtime, dismissal, transitions, etc.)
- Staff should learn signs of difficulty and anticipate triggers to explosive episodes
- Discuss/correct student behaviors in private (and when in a regulated state)
- Provide genuine opportunities to restore rapport and restore the environment when regulated after explosive episodes (clean up room, apologize, fix broken items, etc.)
- Allow access to preferred staff or “go-to person” when having trouble with emotional or behavioral regulation
- Establish rapport with student; demonstrate genuine interest
- Provide specific genuine praise for demonstrating positive/expected behaviors

Schedule/Transitions:

- Provide and review visual daily schedule
- Keep schedule predictable
- Provide checklists for expectations during class
- When transitioning, allow child to transition before or after peers (this allows for fewer students in hallway, may help prevent peer conflicts)
- Advance notice of schedule changes when possible
- Directly teach and review expectations, routines, and procedures
- Consistent expectations across environments

Emotional Regulation/Coping skills:

- Direct instruction in emotional regulation strategies, social skills, emotional intelligence
- Modeling of emotional regulation strategies (i.e.- staff states, “I am feeling frustrated, I am going to take three deep breaths/take a minute at my desk/ask to continue this conversation later”)

- Involve student in problem solving
- Provide opportunities to role play
- Use of social stories
- Intersperse preferred and non-preferred tasks/activities
- Directly teach social interaction skills and expectations; monitor social interactions
- Directly teach physical and role boundaries

Seating:

- Strategic seating near source of instruction/where student is comfortable/near exit/away from distractions (identify need and seat accordingly)
- Give additional space between desks
- Allow for alternative seating options (cushion on seat, wobble stool, sit on floor, work while standing, etc.)

Assessments/Testing:

- Tests taken in a separate small group or individual location with time limits waived or extended
- The use of a word processor due to fine motor, visual motor deficits
- Standardized test answers written directly in the test booklet and transferred onto the answer sheet by teacher or assistant
- Allow oral presentation/response
- Allow use of manipulatives/calculator
- Avoid penalizing for spelling and grammar errors in testing unless spelling/grammar are being tested
- Allow test to be read to the student
- Allow test to be transcribed for the student
- Reduce choices for multiple choice questions
- Provide word banks
- Reduce or remove open-ended questions