

Help Zone Manual

The Help Zone program is designed to provide a structured approach that teaches social/emotional skills and strategies through matched intervention/prevention. The goal is to develop positive behaviors and foster school engagement that assist in keeping students in school while addressing the many challenges our students face. The intention of the Help Zone is to assist students to:

- **Regroup** using support and self-control
- **Reflect** on feelings, choices, and behaviors
- **Repair** any damages their choices may have caused
- **Reconnect** to their academic program as quickly as possible

The Help Zone

Benefits of a Help Zone	What a Help Zone is NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help Zone data will help to determine patterns and recidivism• Reduce the number of In-School Suspensions and Long Term Suspensions• Positive team and relationship building with the school and students• Working collaboratively and inclusively• All parties involved being heard• Involvement and Accountability• Enhance problem solving skills• Increase instructional time• Help students build their Emotional IQ through understanding and articulating their feelings• Support facilitation of reengagement from suspension meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Isolation• ISS or Punishment• Negative• Blame/Shame• Substitute for classroom discipline• Replacement for our professionals• For test accommodations or work make-up depending on student needs• An all day intervention

How are students referred?

Students may be referred to the Help Zone by staff members or through self-referral.

For a **staff referral**, the staff member contacts the Help Zone to ensure they are prepared to receive the student. Next the referring staff member and the Help Zone staff will determine the best way to get the student safely to the Help Zone (picked up, escorted, sent with a pass).

Student self-referral could come through a request, or through the student showing up directly to the Help Zone. If a student makes a request, the staff member should assess the situation and attempt to de-escalate/address the student's need. If that is unsuccessful, the staff member can follow the procedure for a **staff referral** (above). If a student shows up to the Help Zone without a staff referral, the first priority of the staff will

be to ensure that the student is safe and supported. The Help Zone staff will contact the student's teacher to let them know where the student is and will collaborate on what steps should be taken.

What happens in the Help Zone?

- Student arrival time and exit time will be documented on the sign in sheet
- Help Zone staff will work to de-escalate student if necessary
- Regroup -Reflect - Repair - Reconnect
- Help Zone staff will work with the student using restorative questions and affective statements to process feelings and develop an action plan
- Help Zone staff will record an "outcome" to the visit
- Elementary and Middle school: Help Zone staff will contact the teacher to get a temperature check. If all parties are ready to repair harm, the Help Zone staff will walk the student to the classroom Help Zone staff will offer to facilitate a brief restorative conversation in the hallway or offer to watch the class so the teacher and student can have a private conversation in the hallway.
- High School: Help Zone staff will call or walk to return the student to the classroom to inform teacher student is returning.

What practices lead to success for students, schools and the Help Zone?

- Having a widespread and clear understanding of the function and procedures of the Help Zone
- Developing a strong connection between Help Zone staff and school staff (especially mental health personnel and SSOs)
- Having a dedicated space for the Help Zone, providing keys when necessary
- Including Help Zone Staff in school-wide communications, events, meetings, and professional learning opportunities- building based offerings and events will be prioritized to support Help Zone staff embedded in the school culture
- Ensuring the Help Zone staff have access to RCSD internet/ email/ printing
- Establishing a point person for the Help Zone staff to contact and check in with regularly
- Assigning a morning and afternoon post for the Help Zone staff
- Creating procedures for the Help Zone staff to call out when they will be absent
- Providing the Help Zone staff with a student roster (including ID numbers) for data collection and accurate records
- Including Help Zone staff on the school's SEL and MTSS teams- help zone data is very useful for MTSS
- Help Zone staff should attend all school meetings, professional learning and community events
- Allow time for Help Zone staff to share quarterly data with your school faculty and staff
- Help Zone staff will work in partnership with the building's assigned RocRestorative staff to embed them in the school culture and support restorative practices

Establishing the Help Zone/ Onboarding New Staff

- Set up connection meeting with HZ staff, principal, CFY or Gandhi supervisor and RocRestorative team member
- Priorities- establishing space, introducing to staff in the building, tour of the building, discuss needs of the building/priorities, procedure to support students/staff, lunch or breakfast coverage?, visibility in the building, signage, etc.
- How do you want the help zone to work in this building?
- What are your hopes for this support to enhance your school?

- Who in the building is a connection for the HZ person to have? Who would they be working closely with or are doing similar work?
- Space related issues- sharing space- how will that work?
- RCSD Building supervisor will submit monthly google form validating CFY/Gandhi position was filled

Frequently Asked Questions

What if a student refuses to go to the Help Zone?

Students will not be forced to go to the Help Zone. If a student refuses, other support staff (Social Worker, Counselor, Psychologist) may be asked to provide assistance.

What if a student uses the Help Zone to avoid going to class?

If there appears to be a pattern to a student's use of the Help Zone, staff will review the data and collaborate on a plan of action. This might include exploring the topic with the student, alerting school staff (including administrators), and closely monitoring the student's use of the Help Zone. Help Zone and school staff may take proactive steps to address the underlying issues before they become a problem.

How long can a student remain in the Help Zone?

The goal is to get the student back to their academic program as quickly as possible while addressing the issue that caused the disruption. The time this takes will vary from student to student and with each situation.

Can Help Zone Staff have lunchroom duties?

One of the primary goals for the Help Zone is to provide a safe place for students with an adult they can connect with. It is not appropriate for Help Zone staff to be assigned to any lunch periods since that would leave the actual Help Zone unattended most of the day.

Can a student go from ISS to the Help Zone?

At the discretion of the supervising administrator, students may be allowed to go from ISS to the Help Zone if they are struggling. This is not a replacement for ISS, but rather, in alignment with the purpose of the Help Zone, a temporary intervention to assist a student with de-escalation and return to their program.

Does the Help Zone staff share the data they collect?

One of the most important functions of the Help Zone is to monitor who is using the service, when, and how often. This can give the school insight into potential student issues that may be impacting their learning and success in school. This data can be helpful when developing intervention plans for students. Help Zone Staff will regularly share data with the school administrator or their school based supervisor.

How should students return to class?

The goal of the Help Zone is to minimize loss of instruction time for students. Because the student gets focused attention from the Help Zone staff, they may have more time and opportunity to return to baseline than the teacher or the rest of the class. This can sometimes feel like the student is returning to class before other people are ready to receive them. Communication with the adult the student is returning to is absolutely necessary to promote a repair to the relationship.

As difficult as this might be, it is crucial for both the social-emotional health of the student and their academic success that every attempt is made to welcome that student back. One of the ways this can be done is with a "warm hand off". The Help Zone staff walks the student back to class and alerts the teacher. The Help Zone staff informs the teacher that the student is back to baseline and is ready to return. This does NOT mean that

all harm has been repaired. That can be handled at a future time. The Help Zone staff may offer to watch the class for a moment while the teacher and student have a brief conversation.

What training do the CFY Help Zone staff receive?

They are trained in boundaries, navigating school cultures, self harm, disordered eating, deescalation techniques, self care, effects of addiction, mandated reporting, navigating language barriers, domestic violence, equity, cultural responsiveness, mental health, chemical dependency, CPR, restorative practices, therapeutic crisis intervention, zones of regulation, suicide prevention, social media professionalism and navigating student social media.

What do I do if I have a professional conflict with my help zone staff?

First step is to contact your building supervisor to share the conflict and develop an action plan. If that is not successful, the building supervisor will contact the CFY supervisor (assigned by building) and the RocRestorative supervisor, Kevin Baldwin to take further steps. The CFY supervisor will notify Associate Director of School Based Services (Eric Eagan) . The building supervisor will notify the Director of School Culture and Climate (Jess Nordquist). See organizational chart for clarification.

RCSD Staff and Faculty Recommended Reengagement Steps

Procedure to re-engage students back into the classroom when they have been in the help zone for a restorative conversation after they have been removed from the classroom due to some harm they have committed. In this scenario, a restorative conference with the teacher has not taken place yet.

There are few messages our students receive as strong as “you cannot be in this classroom right now.” The first interaction a student has when returning to the classroom, no matter how brief their time away, should be one that demonstrates the adult’s (and classroom community’s) commitment to assisting the student in rejoining the classroom community.

Please welcome students back into the classroom after a break/refocus/suspension using the following protocol.

Re-engagement steps:

1. Welcome the student back enthusiastically.

- “It is so great to have you back in class today.”
- “I missed you! Our classroom just isn’t the same without you in it.”
- “I am so happy to have you back in our community.”

2. In a personal conversation with the student away from earshot of the other students, inform the student how you have been affected by the incident.

- “I felt really angry today when you cussed at me.”
- “I was confused about what happened today.”
- “Your outburst made it difficult for me and the rest of the class to get back to work?”

3. Ask the student how they have been affected by the incident.

- “Can you tell me what made you angry?”
- “What happened that triggered you?”
- “How did my actions or the actions of others make you feel unsafe?”

4. Ask the student if there is anything they need from you in order to make things right.

- “Is there anything you need from me to stay on track for the rest of the day?”
- “Is there anything I should know before we get you back to your learning?”
- “What can I do to make coming back into the classroom easier?”

5. Let the student know if there is anything you need from them in order to make things right.

- “Would you mind changing seats while we get you resettled?”
- “Can you commit to upholding our classroom values?”
- “There is still a bit of a mess from the papers thrown earlier. Would you be able to pick those up before heading to your seat?”

6. Give the student a concrete next step to rejoin the classroom community.

- “While you were out, we started our math lesson. Take out your workbook and turn to page 38. I will check in with you in five minutes to see if you are caught up.”
- “I’m going to need someone to help me pass out materials for the next activity. Will you be my helper?”
- “We just started working on a small group project. Why don’t you go join Table 4? I’ll come check in with you in five minutes to make sure you are caught up.”

Organizational Chart to support RCSD Help Zones

