

INGREDIENTS TO HEALTHY LEARNING



The term 'Sick Building Syndrome' (SBS) is a term used to describe how structural design can inhibit concentration and general wellbeing. SBS can impact individual performance in various environments including corporate, hospitality and education. Whilst structural factors like ventilation and heating systems can influence SBS, design elements like acoustics and visual aesthetics also play an important role in creating a healthy learning environment. It's no secret that a high quality learning environment is essential for student

development and effective teaching, particularly for younger students. Three key areas of focus should include acoustics, colour and comfort.

Industry renowned acoustic consultant and Chairman of The Sound Agency, Julian Treasure, brings forward some remarkable insights as to how sound affects us. Firstly, Treasure explains that ambience and atmosphere can affect a person on a physiological, psychological, behavioural and cognitive level. Sound sub-consciously impacts general mood and mental wellbeing without us even realising it.

Secondly, Treasure discusses how acoustic wellbeing is influenced by surrounding interference. Communication is based upon the transmission, receiving and interpretation of a frequency that occurs when we speak, however interpretation is largely dependent on the surrounding environment. The term reverberation refers to the process when sound travels, it is deflected across surfaces (particularly hard surfaces) and gradually distorts and decays. This means the children at the back of a classroom that has a lot of hard surfaces will potentially have a

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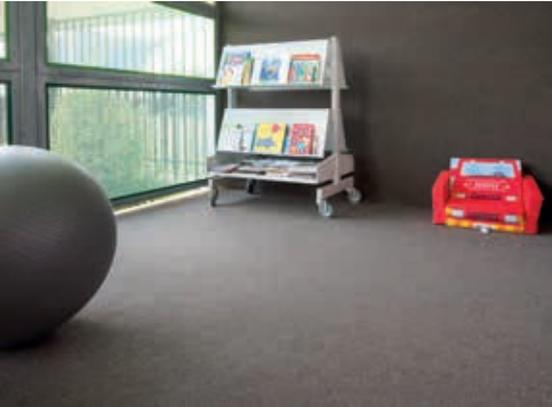


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promotes a calming atmosphere, triggers subconscious thoughts of the outdoors and aides with concentration.

As with all indoor and outdoor education areas, high-throughfare and extreme weather are important considerations. It is amazing how ripped or frayed carpet not only creates occupational health and safety issues, but can also impact on student's subconscious wellbeing as well as their general school pride. Therefore, school project briefs require flooring solutions to be high quality, durable, enhance safety as well as being aesthetically pleasing.

Sick Building Syndrome cannot be cured through one solution, but it can be attenuated through a number of simple design remedies. It is amazing how some updates to the acoustics and flooring of a classroom can promote a vibrant and inclusive learning environment that helps students achieve their full potential.

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harder time understanding the teacher. Further to this, poor acoustics can also onset the Lombard effect where speakers increase their volume when speaking in loud environments in order to enhance the audibility of their voice. This means the general environment gets louder as students try to talk over each other.

Colour is another potential remedy to some of the symptoms of Sick Building Syndrome. It's amazing how a splash of colour can change the dynamics of a learning environment. Colour affects us on both a sensory and repository level. For example, the colour light blue has not only been proven to reduce eye strain, but also

My parents used to say.....

1. What's the magic word?
2. Has the cat got your tongue?
3. If you tell fibs your nose will grow.
4. Don't care was made to care.
5. If you don't stop crying, I'll give you something to cry about.
6. Because I said so.
7. Wait and see.
8. Ask your father.
9. No sweets unless you finish your dinner.
10. If someone asked you to jump off a cliff would you?
11. I've told you a thousand times.
12. What did your last slave die of?
13. You will have someone's eye out with that.
14. It'll all end in tears.
15. Then you will just have to want.
16. Close the door – you weren't born in a tent.
17. Don't sit too close to the telly – you will get square eyes.
18. There is no such words as can't.
19. Who is "she"? The cat's mother?
20. Don't make that face. If the wind changes you'll stay like it.

Is it time for someone to do a PhD Thesis on these?

Does your school have a S.M.I.L.E?

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As part of our ongoing support of ACPA and its members, Nolan Carpets are providing a free, no obligation assessment of your schools' floorcoverings and classroom acoustics. This visit will be complimented with a report and recommendations if applicable.

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