



Now, it is your turn! Try to accommodate conditionals when writing!

The Wellness and Counselling team is proposing the idea of inviting volunteers to bring therapy dogs to provide emotional support for students in need during the semester. As the representative of the team, please write a letter to the principal to advocate for the proposal.

Dear Principal,

I hope this message finds you well. On behalf of the Wellness and Counselling team, I would like to propose inviting volunteers to bring therapy dogs to our school mid-semester. This initiative can make mental health service more approachable and accessible to students.

Therapy dogs provide a wonderful opportunity for students to unwind and relax, which is essential for reducing stress and managing anxiety. School days can be demanding, with lectures and assessments consuming most of our waking hours. While we can easily recharge our physical bodies during lunch breaks and recesses, its mental counterpart is often neglected. Having therapy dogs on campus could tend to the need for emotional rejuvenation. By simply interacting with and petting these gentle animals, students can mentally withdraw from their hectic schedule and feel calmer, happier and supported. ~~I am certain that this will have a positive effect on our school environment.~~ If we can arrange scheduled therapy dog visits, especially before exam season when students might feel overwhelmed, it helps foster a healthy school environment that promotes both academic success and mental well-being.

There is also great reason to believe that school counselling sessions will be more effective

if therapy dogs are present. No matter if it is reaching out for or receiving counselling, a lot of students have reflected that this initial step is an incredibly intimidating experience. They are deterred by the idea that they will need to speak to a professional, who is also a stranger to them, one-on-one for help. The knowing that a cuddly and friendly animal will be by their side, however, might just alter students' entire perception of the situation. Instead of expecting a cold and stuffy office, they feel welcomed, safe and reassured with a trained animal providing emotional support. The benefits of therapy dogs do not end at the door of the counselling room either. There are many studies that suggest therapy dogs offer a sense of companionship that fosters open and honest communication, which, needless to say, is the key to unloading emotional baggage. Therefore, I believe introducing therapy dogs to our school can help boost participation and better engagement during counselling sessions, maximising the use of our school's mental health services.

*I'm telling you, supporting students' mental health is essential!
That is the only way that they can excel at school.*

I know, from first-hand experience, that students can perform at their best only when their mental health is well taken care of. Therefore, therapy dogs, which show great potential, either with or without professional assistance, to provide emotional support for students in need, is an effective and meaningful way of cultivating a supportive learning atmosphere.

Thank you for considering this proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Wong