

Health-Promoting Spaces: Wellbeing, Inclusion, and Accessibility Summary

One-Page Reference Tool

Accessibility and Universal Design

Health-promoting spaces reduce barriers and support participation for all users. Accessible entrances, pathways, elevators, signage, furniture, and workspaces help ensure learning and work environments are usable, inclusive, and adaptable across diverse needs and abilities.

Inclusion, Belonging, and Cultural Safety

Supportive environments reflect and respect the diversity of the communities they serve. Inclusive imagery, all-gender washrooms, reflection or multifaith spaces, culturally meaningful representation, and engagement with diverse communities can help foster belonging and cultural safety.

Health, Wellbeing, and Restoration

Academic, clinical, and research environments should support rest, recovery, nourishment, and overall wellbeing. Access to rest spaces, lactation rooms, natural light, healthy food options, hydration, green spaces, and low-sensory environments can contribute to healthier and more sustainable work and learning experiences.

Physical and Psychological Safety

Health-promoting spaces support both physical safety and psychological wellbeing. Well-lit and navigable environments, emergency supports, private spaces for conversation or reflection, and trauma-informed approaches can help foster trust, respect, and psychological safety.

Supportive Learning, Clinical, and Organizational Cultures

Teaching, learning, research, and clinical environments should support collaboration, reflection, connection, and respectful interaction. Functional study and collaboration spaces, hybrid learning technology, debriefing areas, and supportive team environments contribute to healthier organizational cultures.

Sustainable and Adaptable Environments

Health-promoting spaces should support long-term environmental and organizational wellbeing. Flexible and multi-use spaces, sustainable infrastructure, energy-conscious practices, and adaptable design approaches can help institutions respond to evolving community and operational needs.