

CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL REGULATION (PART 1):

Strategies for Teachers, Caregivers, and Others

Many children struggle with emotional regulation, especially during times of prolonged or heightened stress. Teachers, caregivers, and other supportive adults can practice emotional regulation tactics with children regularly. This may be beneficial for children to recognize when they are, or are beginning to feel, dysregulated so they can form habits to support returning to their window of tolerance.

Teachers

- Educating children on the concept of “flipping your lid” may support them to identify and regulate their emotions.
- Supporting children to learn a host of grounding exercises to draw from when they are feeling dysregulated.
- Supporting children to build relationships, get socially engaged, and share feelings.
- Providing clarity of expectations and balancing responsibilities with less intense tasks to reduce overwhelming emotions.

Caregivers

- Organizing and scheduling child-led play breaks as often as possible.
- Practicing positive attention when children are attempting to self-regulate.
- Supporting children to recognize their unmet biological needs, such as feeling hungry or tired, which can affect their regulation.
- Trying to avoid telling children to calm down. Instead, try using comforting phrases, such as “I’m here with you”; “you are safe”; “let’s take some deep breaths together”.

All Supportive Adults

- Supporting children in finding or creating a quiet and safe cool-down space - physically or metaphorically.
- Providing children with fidget/soft toys, Playdough, and other 'calming' objects
- Structuring predictable activities to foster a sense of safety through routine.
- Taking care of a living thing together, such as a plant or an animal.
- Practicing gratitude and supporting children to positively reframe their mindset.

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