



*Partnering with preschools
to support children in their
journey from early childhood
to kindergarten and beyond.*

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What is emotional regulation and how to help children learn self-regulation

- Emotional **self-regulation** is the ability to calm yourself down when you're upset and cheer yourself up when you're down.
- Emotional expression is a child's increasing ability to be aware of their feelings, express a range of feelings in constructive rather than impulsive or hurtful ways, and solve conflicts collaboratively.
- **Emotional development** = emergence of **emotional expression** + how emotions are **regulated**
- A **child** with **self-regulatory** skills is able to focus his attention, control his emotions and manage his thinking, behavior and feelings in order to interact pro socially with others, achieve goals, and engage in independent learning.
- The greatest factor in a happy and successful life is emotional intelligence (EQ)
- **Emotional dysregulation** = behavioral lack of control.
- Self-regulation is related to brain maturation however It's never too early to begin working on EQ
- **Temperament** plays a part in **self-regulation**. Some children have more innate self-control and are naturally more calm, while others are more high strung and difficult to soothe.
- **Reactivity** – there are individual differences in threshold and intensity of emotional experience.
- Some toddlers and preschoolers require support in developing coping skills.

Ways to help develop self-regulation skills

- Provide a structured and predictable daily routine and schedule
- Change the environment by eliminating distractions (music playing, dim the light) and provide a soothing object when you sense a child is becoming upset.
- Role play with children how to act or what to say in certain situations.
- Teach and talk about feelings.
- Teach mindfulness and relaxation skills. Teach children to deep breathe.
- Review classroom rules and expectations regularly.
- Allow children to let off steam by creating a quiet corner with a small tent or pile of pillows.
- Encourage pretend play scenarios among preschoolers.
- Stay calm and firm in your voice and actions even when a child is out of control.
- Anticipate transitions and provide ample warning to the child. Use picture schedules or a timer to warn of transitions.
- Re-direct inappropriate words or actions when needed.
- Pair children with limited self-regulatory skills with children who have good self-regulatory skills as peer models.

In the moment

- Let children express emotions on their timeline
- Validate their emotions without moving the boundary
- Encourage them to tap into a coping strategy
- After everyone is calm we can problem solve

Books to read

- Nanette's Baguette – Mo Willems
- Waiting is Not Easy – Mo Willems
- The Most Magnificent Thing – Ashley Spires
- Argle Fox – Marie Letourneau
- Remy the Rhino Learns Patience – Andy McGuire
- Alexander and the Terrible Horrible No Good Very Bad Day - Judith Voist
- Even Super Heroes Have Bad Days – Shelly Becker
- In My Heart – Jo Witek
- Shy Charles – Rosemary Wells
- If You're Happy and You Know It – E. Cray or David Carter
- If You Mad and You Know It – E. Cray
- Wemberly Worried – Kevin Henkes
- Tamara Feels Worried – Carol Kusche
- Sometimes I'm Bombaloo – Rachel Vail
- Big Feelings: a book filled with emotions – Kristin Varner
- Jared's Cool-Out Space – Jane Nelson & Ashlee Wilkin