How to Support Your Child with Self-Regulation

What is Self-Regulation?

Manage Emotions + Manage Behavior = Self-Regulation

Skill Building at Home

For successful skill building, be sure to practice these skills when your child is calm.

Identify

• Help your child learn about different emotions through pictures— you can create a visual chart with cutouts from a magazine with the emotion written beneath the cutouts. These images could be expressions, colors, events, numbers, or you can use pictures of your child.
  • ex: A sunset picture could mean calm (see reverse side for more examples).

Choose a Strategy

• Help your child know and recognize their emotions to help them cope in a healthy way. Make a coping plan with your child (see reverse side for more examples):
  • Safe People: who can your child talk to when feeling upset?
  • Safe Places: where can your child go when feeling upset?
  • Safe Activities: what can your child do when feeling upset?
  • Reinforce use of this plan to encourage skills.

Reflect

• When talking with your child about impulsive behavior use a calm voice:
  • What happened?
  • How do you help yourself?
  • How can I help you?

Next Steps

• Once you have reflected with your child, make a plan for the following day:
  • What goals do you want to accomplish?
  • How can you handle your emotions?
  • What are we going to do if we get frustrated again?
  • Start fresh next time!

Information adapted from:
Create Your Own

This “ladder” uses football, numbers, and colors to help the child identify their emotions and state how “big” the emotion is.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>How am I feeling?</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>“Penalty Flag”</td>
<td>I need to go to my bedroom and be left alone now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>“Tackle”</td>
<td>I need a break and will take a short walk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>“Timeout!”</td>
<td>I need to get a drink of water and then ask for help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>“Pass to the End Zone”</td>
<td>Great Job! Keep it up!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>“Touchdown!”</td>
<td>Great job! Keep it up!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When you and your child are just starting this plan, make sure to practice it when your child is in a calm mood. It can be helpful if you role-play this plan:

- Parent/Guardian acts as the child and displays emotions in each of the areas.
- Child guesses which emotion displayed and then explains why they think it is that emotion.
- Parent/Guardian provides feedback to their child and then discusses proper strategy.

If your child is at a 4 or 5, do not “Reflect” and process “Next Steps” until the child is back at a 1 or 2.

App Ideas for Breaks

- Take a Break
- Colorfy
- Color Therapy
- Stop, Breathe & Think

Questions? Please contact your school counselor or your Boone County Schools Mental Health Regional Coordinator for additional information.