

# Boone County Schools Mental Health Coalition: Self-Regulation



## What is Self-Regulation?



## Universal Skill Building Supports

Encourage your students to label their emotions as a way to understand their role in reacting to the environment/situations.

Discuss why people react in different ways and how these reactions are helpful or unhelpful.

Identify and share your own emotions, the emotions of characters in books, movies...etc. with your students.

Help your students identify what led to that emotion (trigger).

Identify and discuss physical reactions when they experience a particular emotion so they can become familiar with how their body responds (ex: anger = clenched jaw).

Create a ladder of emotions and label the difference between being a little upset and being very upset (example on back).

Identify, model, and role-play appropriate reactions to environment/situations.

## Selected Group Curriculum Supports

- ❖ Stop & Think
- ❖ Zones of Regulation
- ❖ 5 Point Scale
- ❖ Strong Start/Strong Kids

## Indicated Individual Supports

### 1. Goal

- Note specific behavior goal related to emotion regulation
  - ex: I will raise my hand when I have a question.
  - ex: I will keep my hands to myself.

### 2. Strategies

- Identify calming down techniques the student can do when feeling frustrated. Talk with your student about what they can do when calming down.
  - ex: deep breathing, coloring, fidgets
  - ex: incorporate a timer to help student anticipate going back to their desk

### 3. Check In

- Incorporate check in times throughout day to review goal progress
  - If student struggled to complete goal, ask them:
    - What happened?
    - How do you help yourself?
    - How can I help you?

### 4. Reflect

- Reflect on the day as a whole and reinforce student if they were able to meet their goal. To prep for the following day, ask:
  - What do you want to accomplish tomorrow?
  - How do you get there using your positive strategies?
  - What are you going to do if you get frustrated?
- Start fresh tomorrow!

## HOW BIG?

To help your student understand the severity of their concern, help them understand how “big” the problem is. For example:

- a little concern could be compared to a bird or a feather
- a medium concern could be compared to a sea turtle or a bucket of sand
- a large concern could be compared to an elephant or a cement truck

If a student is struggling with self-regulation, they may react to a bird-like concern as though it were an elephant-like concern. Helping your child identify how great the concern is can help them problem solve appropriately.

## PREVENTATIVE BREAKS

Preventative breaks can help students regulate their emotions. These breaks can be interspersed throughout the day and can include: bring a note down to the principal, fill up the teacher’s water bottle, read a book...etc. These breaks can be active or can take place in the classroom and are not dependent on student behavior. Incorporate a timer so student can anticipate when to go back to seat.

## CALM-DOWN BREAKS

Create a calm down space for your student. In this space, your student can practice coping strategies to help manage emotions. A timer can be helpful in the calm down space so the student can anticipate when they will be going back to their activity. Practice using the calm down space when the student is in a neutral mood; create expectations with the student of what it looks like to use the calm-down space.

# Individual Support Examples

## Example #1

This plan encourages the student to explain how they look/feel at each level of emotion. These are then connected to a **calm down strategy** in the right column. This plan helps create common language between student and teacher as well as expectations with how to manage/respond to varying emotions.

LEVEL		Examples: What It Looks/Feels Like; What I Do	Examples: My Strategies/Calm Down Strategies; What I Can Do Instead
5			
4			
3			
2			
1			

**Goal: I will stay in the classroom and be a learner.**

**Bonus Points: I will use my calming strategies to help me when I am upset.**

Schedule	Morning Meeting	Music	Writing	Literacy Center	Lunch	Recess	Art	Math	Pack and Stack
Goal Points									
Calming Strategy (circle when used)									

= Break

## Example #2

This plan incorporates two **preventative breaks** during the school day. You can place these breaks when you know it is an especially difficult time for your student. This plan also promotes **calm down strategies**- when your student practices a calm down strategy, you can circle the face. Your counselor is a great resource for how these calm down strategies and breaks can look. Make sure to connect this plan to a reinforcement system!

## Example #3

This plan incorporates two goals and three **teacher check-ins**. During these teacher check-ins, you can reflect on goal accomplishments by asking the student:

- What happened
- How do you help yourself?
- How can I help you?

Also, this plan is connected with a reward menu. When making a reward menu, talk with your student about what they'd like to earn and what is feasible in your classroom.

**Goal #1: Controlling my voice and body**

**Goal #2: I will start my task OR raise my hand to ask for help**

GOAL	Morning	Specials	Reading	Lunch Recess	End of Day
#1					
#2		✓		✓	✓

✓ =  
Teacher Check In

### Rewards!

2 stickers → (student choice)	8 → stickers (student choice)
4 stickers → (student choice)	10 → stickers (student choice)
6 stickers → (student choice)	

Information adapted from:

Child Mind Institute. (2017). *How can we help kids with self-regulation?*. Retrieved from <https://childmind.org/article/can-help-kids-self-regulation/>

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Lipsett, A. (2011). *Supporting emotional regulation in elementary school: Brain-based strategies and classroom interventions to promote self-regulation. Learning Landscapes, 5*. Retrieved from: <http://www.learninglandscapes.ca/images/documents/ll-no9/ablipsett.pdf>