

# THE **ZONES** OF REGULATION®

A CURRICULUM DESIGNED  
TO FOSTER SELF-REGULATION AND  
EMOTIONAL CONTROL

Credits to Leah Kuypers, 2011: The Zones of Regulation®, a curriculum designed to foster self-regulation and emotional control.

## An overview for parents

## October 2023





**AIMS:**

- Overview of self-regulation
- Understanding The Zones of Regulation®
- Overview of self-regulation tools including:
  - Calming Strategies
  - Thinking strategies
  - Sensory strategies

**Why is self-regulation important?**

“Life is 10% what happens to us and 90% of how we react to it.”

Charles Swindoll

**Typically, if children can self-regulate, they become teenagers who can self-regulate.**



**A person who can self-regulate is able to:**

- Remain calm and organised in a stressful situation.
- Cheer themselves up after they have experienced disappointment.
- Know when they are feeling overloaded and make appropriate adjustments.
- Understands when it is appropriate to behave in different ways e.g. when to cheer, when to be quiet.

**What are the Zones of Regulation®?**

The Zones of Regulation® is a programme designed by an occupational therapist (Leah Kuypers, 2011). The programme teaches children about self-regulation by categorising all the different ways we feel and the different states of alertness we experience into four coloured zones.

The programme also provides a range of strategies that allow children to become more aware of and independent in regulating their emotions.



**An overview for parents**



The **ZONES** of  
Regulation®

**Zones of Regulation® teaches children:**

- Vocabulary to describe the different ways they feel.
- How to recognise their own emotions.
- To consider what emotions other people are feeling.
- To understand why they may be feeling a certain emotion.
- To understand how others may react to their behaviour.
- Strategies to help them to regulate their behaviour independently.

**Why do we teach the Zones of Regulation®?**

- Provide a common, non-judgemental language to discuss emotions.
- It is understood by everyone.
- It teaches healthy coping and regulation strategies.

An overview for parents

The **ZONES** of Regulation®

## The **ZONES** of Regulation®

			
<p><b>BLUE ZONE</b></p> <p>Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly</p>	<p><b>GREEN ZONE</b></p> <p>Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn</p>	<p><b>YELLOW ZONE</b></p> <p>Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control</p>	<p><b>RED ZONE</b></p> <p>Mad/Angry Mean Terrified Yelling/Hitting Out of Control</p>



The **BLUE Zone** is used to describe low states of alertness and down feelings e.g. sad, tired, sick, bored.

The **GREEN Zone** is used to describe a calm state of alertness. This is the zone where optimal learning occurs. A person may be described as happy, focussed, content or ready to learn in this zone.

The **Yellow Zone** is used to describe a heightened state of alertness and elevated emotions. Someone in this zone is normally still in control. In this zone, a person may be experiencing stress, frustration, anxiety, excitement, silliness or nervousness.

The **Red Zone** is used to describe extremely heightened states of alertness and intense emotions. In the Red Zone, a person may be elated or experiencing anger, rage, devastation or terror.





When children understand what Zone they are in, they can begin to use tools to help them. Through the Zones of Regulation® programme, each child creates a toolkit, where they have selected strategies to help them in each zone.

**Blue Zone tools:** wake up their bodies, help them feel better, help them to regain focus.

**Green Zone tools:** help them to stay calm, focussed and feeling good.

**Yellow Zone tools:** help them to regain control and calm themselves down.

**Red Zone tools:** help them to stay safe and start to calm down.

**Tools for self-regulation include sensory supports, calming techniques and thinking strategies.**

## An overview for parents

## The ZONES of Regulation®

### Sensory strategies include:

- Going for a walk
- Wall push ups
- Rolling on an exercise ball
- Using a blanket/ weighted blanket
- Playing with play-dough
- Jumping
- Running
- Having a hug
- Throwing a ball against a wall
- Playing with a fidget toy

Children may have a sensory box at school to help them to regulate.

Could you have a sensory box at home for your child?





# An overview for parents

# The ZONES of Regulation®

Thinking strategies include:

- Inner coach
- Size of the problem

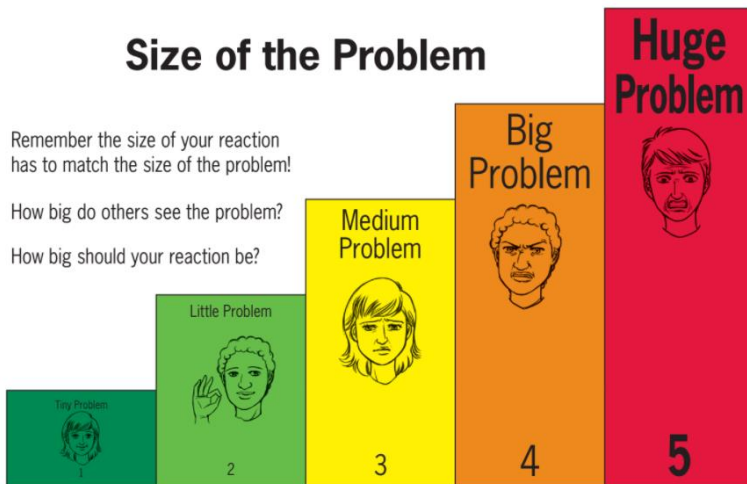
The ZONES of Regulation™ Reproducible W

## Size of the Problem

Remember the size of your reaction has to match the size of the problem!

How big do others see the problem?

How big should your reaction be?



Visual adapted by Leah Kuypers, Donna Brittain and Jill Kuzma for The Zones of Regulation™ from the original work of Werner's Think Social! (2005), pages 44-45, www.socialthinking.com, and Buron and Curtis' The Incredible 5-Point Scale (2003), www.5pointscale.com

© 2011 Think Social Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.  
From The Zones of Regulation™ by Leah M. Kuypers • Available at www.socialthinking.com

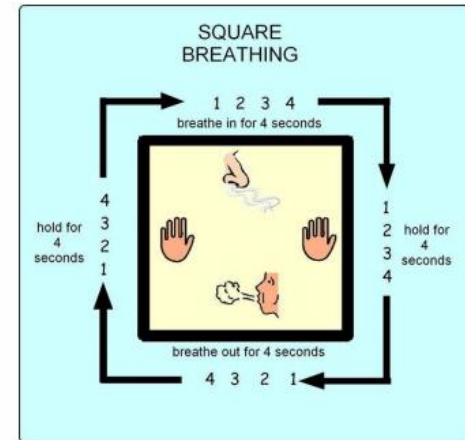
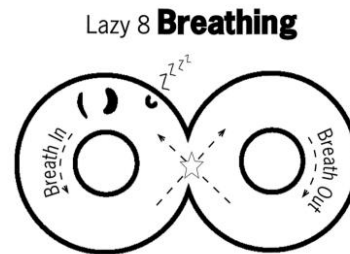
INSTEAD OF.....	TRY THINKING....
I'm not good at this	What am I missing?
I give up	I'll use a different strategy
It's good enough	Is this really my best work?
I can't make this any better	I can always improve
This is too hard	This may take some time
I made a mistake	Mistakes help me to learn
I just can't do this	I am going to train my brain
I'll never be that smart	I will learn how to do this
Plan A didn't work	There's always Plan B
My friend can do it	I will learn from them

# An overview for parents

# The ZONES of Regulation®

## Calming strategies include:

- Breathing exercises
- Calming activities
- Visualisation

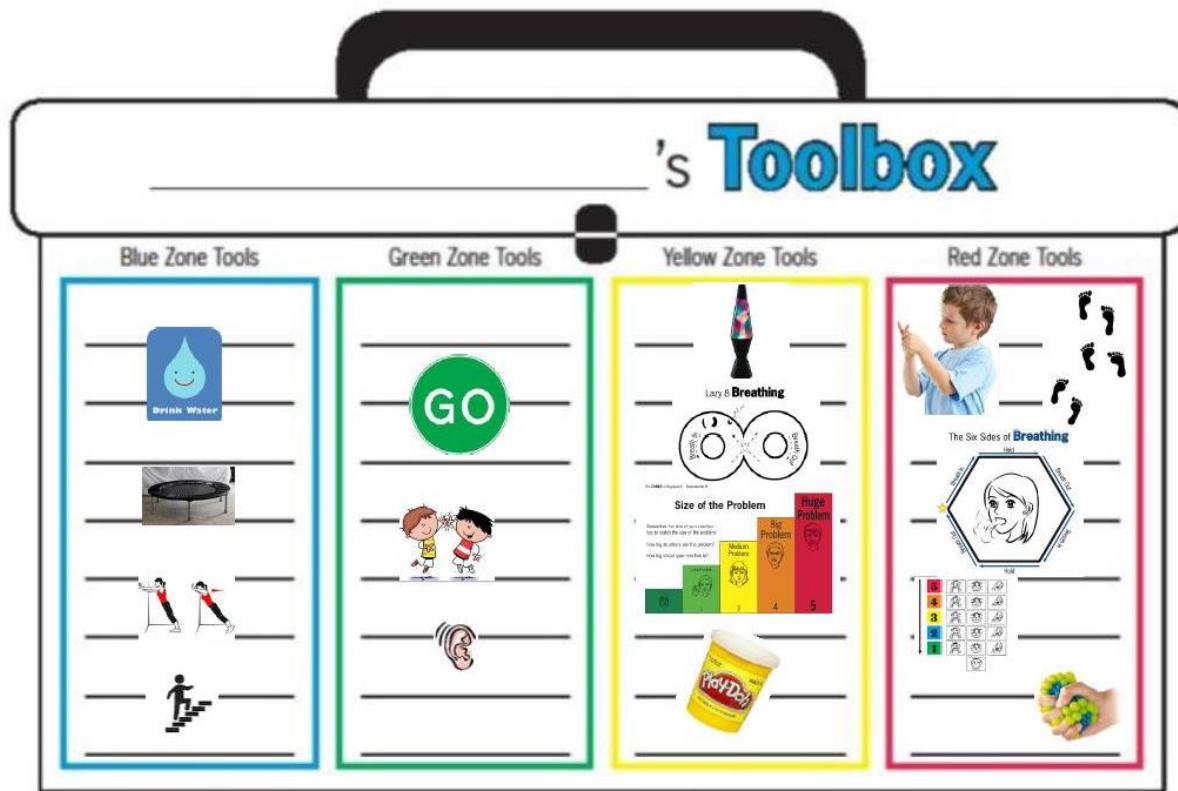


- ★ Name 5 things you see, 4 things you hear, 3 things you smell, 2 things you can touch, 1 thing you taste
- ★ Crossing your arms across your chest and alternating tapping each shoulder
- ★ Reorientation: My name is..., I am in..., today is..., the season is..., the weather is..., I am wearing...
- ★ Singing a song
- ★ Visualise yourself doing something you enjoy, step by step (e.g. playing on Roblox)
- ★ Pick a colour (any colour) and try to find as many things of that colour around the room



An overview for parents

The **ZONES** of Regulation®





**An overview for parents**

The **ZONES** of  
Regulation®

- There is no 'bad' Zone.
- Everyone experiences all of the Zones at different times and in different circumstances.
- We can't change the way children feel BUT we can help them to manage their emotions. "It's okay to be angry ...."
- You can be in more than one Zone and one time.



### How can I use the Zones of Regulation® at home?

- Model using the language e.g. “I am frustrated. I am in the Yellow Zone.”
- Provide positive reinforcement e.g. “I can see you are working really hard to stay in the Green Zone.”
- Talk about what tool you are using e.g. “I need to get in the Green Zone. I am going to go for a walk.”
- Label your child’s zones through the day e.g. “You look sleepy. Are you in the Blue Zone?”
- Teach your child which Zones tools they can use e.g. “It’s time for bed. Let’s read a book together to get into the Blue Zone.”



**For more information:**

**Zones of Regulation® website:** <https://www.zonesofregulation.com/index.html>

**Zones of Regulation® book:** <https://www.zonesofregulation.com/book.html>

**YOUTUBE:**

[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=zones+of+regulation](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=zones+of+regulation)

**There are also lot of free resources to download on Pinterest**