



# EMOTIONAL REGULATION

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## WHAT IS EMOTIONAL REGULATION?

Emotional regulation refers to the process where individuals influence which emotions they have. This includes when they have them, how they are experienced and how they are expressed. Learning how to regulate emotions allows for children to manage their emotions. This is a key aspect of child development.

## IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL REGULATION.

Having a strong ability to regulate emotions allows for enhancement of long term well being, improve performance in school, enrich personal relationships, and improve overall health.

## WHAT IS DYSREGULATION?

Emotional dysregulation refers to emotional responses that are poorly regulated, and do not lie within the accepted range of emotive response.

## WHAT IS CO-REGULATION?

Co-regulation is created through warm and responsive interactions that provide the support, coaching, and modelling children need to understand, express, and modulate their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours.

Over time, co-regulation allows the child's brain to develop and build capacity to enable self regulation independently. Co-regulation can be incorporated into daily life, through tasks, activities, and games with the child.

## WHAT IS SELF REGULATION?

Self regulation is the ability to manage your own emotions and behaviours.

## WHAT IS P.A.C.E?

P.A.C.E is a way of thinking, feeling, communicating and behaving that aims to make the child feel safe. Dan Hughes created this model to emphasise the four personal qualities (P.A.C.E) which allow adults to support children's development in their own self awareness. Over time the child will gain those tools to better regulate their own emotions.

- P - Playful

Playful is about creating a light atmosphere when you communicate. For example, light tone of voice. Playful is about having fun and expressing joy.

- A - Acceptance

Acceptance is about actively communicating with the child that you accept them and their thoughts, wishes, urges and motives.

- C - Curiosity

Curiosity, without judgement, is how we help children become aware of their inner life, and reflect upon the reasons for their behaviour.

- E - Empathy

Empathy lets the child feel the adults compassion for him/her. Being empathic means actively showing the child that their inner life is important to the adult.



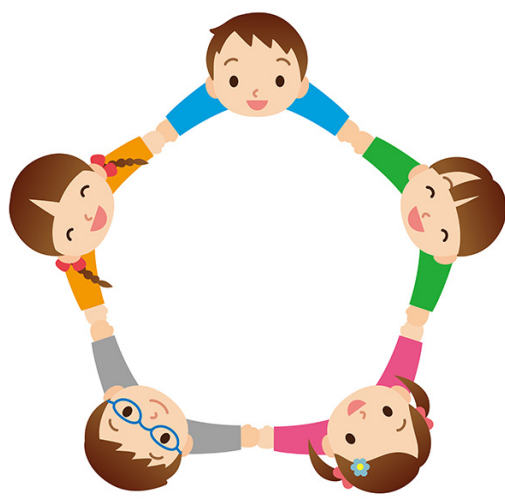
# ACTIVITIES TO ESTABLISH EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Engaging in regulation activities helps to encourage your child's capacity to self-regulate. Evidence shows that children who can regulate their emotions also know how to express them in a socially acceptable manner, perform better in school, and have better social relationships.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

### Keep these aspects in mind when helping to regulate emotions...

- Be consistent
- Have a routine
- Reward good/ positive behaviour
- Don't punish undesirable behaviour.
- Look for non-verbal cues
- Make time for fun
- Pay attention to sensitivities



### Activities need to be:

- **Relational** - engaged with a caring and safe adult. This can include activities such as cooking, cleaning and other life skills.
- **Relevant** - breaking down tasks; this means providing simple, concrete instructions, explaining what to do, and using visual aids.
- **Repetitive and patterned** - Movements such as rocking, jumping, walking and running.
- **Rewarding** - this will also build the context of the relationship with the adult. An activity to ensure this could be going for a drive or a milkshake.
- **Rhythmic** - activities that involve repetitive sustained rhythm. For example, walking, drumming, jumping, gently brushing hair.

## Examples of activities:

### Feather Blowing.

Blow a feather between yourself and your child, each taking turns to use a consistent slow breath to move the feather. This encourages calm and focus.

### Jumping.

Jumping, rocking or swinging (or any repetitive physical activity), is an amazing way to get a lot of energy out and soothe the brain. This can allow for a sense of calm in the nervous system, improve attention, arousal levels and body awareness.

**Other games/activities** which help regulate emotions and develop the ability to control behaviour include:

- Simon Says
- Freeze Dance
- Musical Chairs
- Regular story time - same story
- Unconditional positive regard
- Rocking
- Water play
- Swinging
- Spinning
- Floating

