



Parents Guide to: Zones of Regulation

St Anne's Primary School

At St Anne's, we use the Zones of Regulation as a way to teach and support our children to manage and regulate their emotions.



What is it?

The Zones of Regulation is an approach which supports children in **managing their feelings**.

By categorising the different ways we can feel and states of alertness, children can be supported to **identify** their own feelings and understand how their **feelings can then affect their behaviour**.

The **ZONES** of Regulation®

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



Why do we use it?

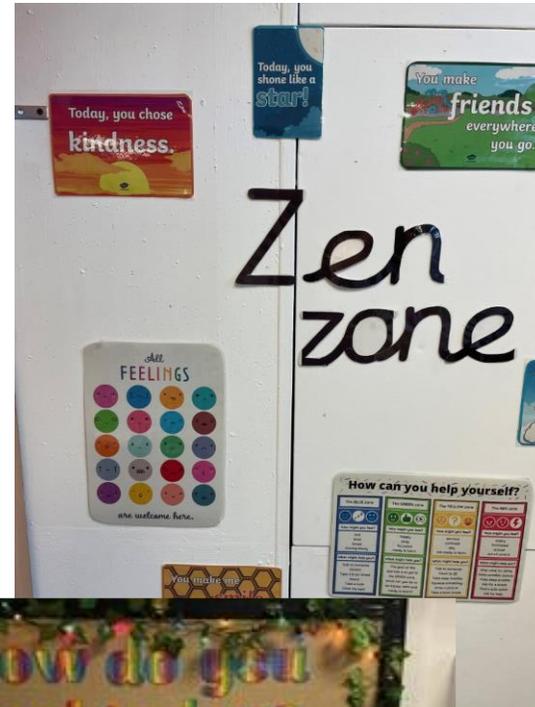
To teach our pupils:

- How to identify their feelings as well as read others' facial expressions
- Understand how their behaviours can influence others' thoughts, feelings and behaviours
- How to regulate their own feelings and in doing so, develop their own 'toolbox' of strategies to self-manage their thoughts and emotions.
- Problem solve and find positive solutions to different emotions

The ultimate goal is for independent regulation.



What does it look like in school and how do we use it?



Children are encouraged to talk about their feelings! By doing so, this will support their understanding and consolidate their learning further.

Our pupils can then decide whether to **check in** with their feelings through the school day.

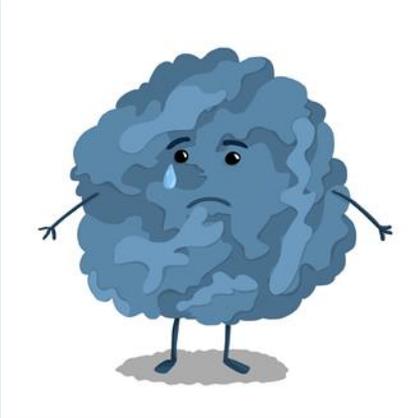
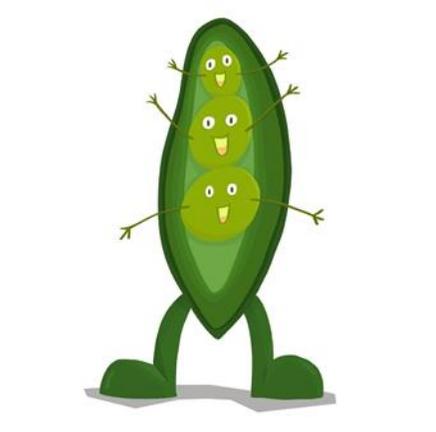
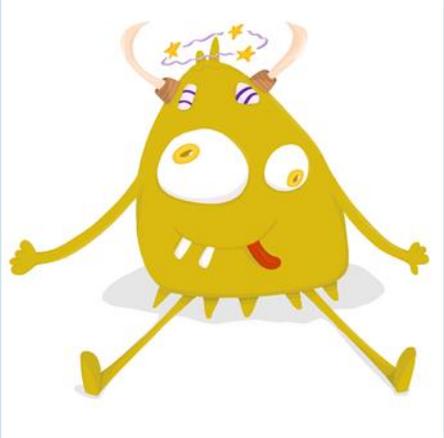
Our staff can support by reminding them of the **'tools'** they could use to help them navigate through their feelings.

Here are some examples:

- Talk to a trusted adult
- Belly breathing (deep breathing exercises)
- Finding a quiet space to calm down
- Drinking water
- Movement and/or sensory breaks
- Mindful sketching



The four zones:

Blue Zone	Green Zone	Yellow Zone	Red Zone
			





The **Blue Zone** is used to describe low states of alertness and down feelings such as when one feels **sad, tired, sick, or bored**.



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



The **Yellow Zone** is also used to describe a heightened state of alertness and elevated emotions, however one has more control when they are in the Yellow Zone. A person may be experiencing stress, frustration, anxiety, excitement, silliness, the wiggles, or nervousness when in the Yellow Zone.



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



Bert feels sad



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgRN-AytScE>



Dory in the green zone.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sB6W2VAx2J8>



Elf in the yellow zone

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6yYd6Pq7Ic&list=PLNtcYq0vdW0bE_Qc2fr-9zbngdax8rd7m



The Incredibles in the red zone!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3v196bt5kTU&list=PLex1ABIduQCnIXSJgLC4u0fLFVbJlleWm>



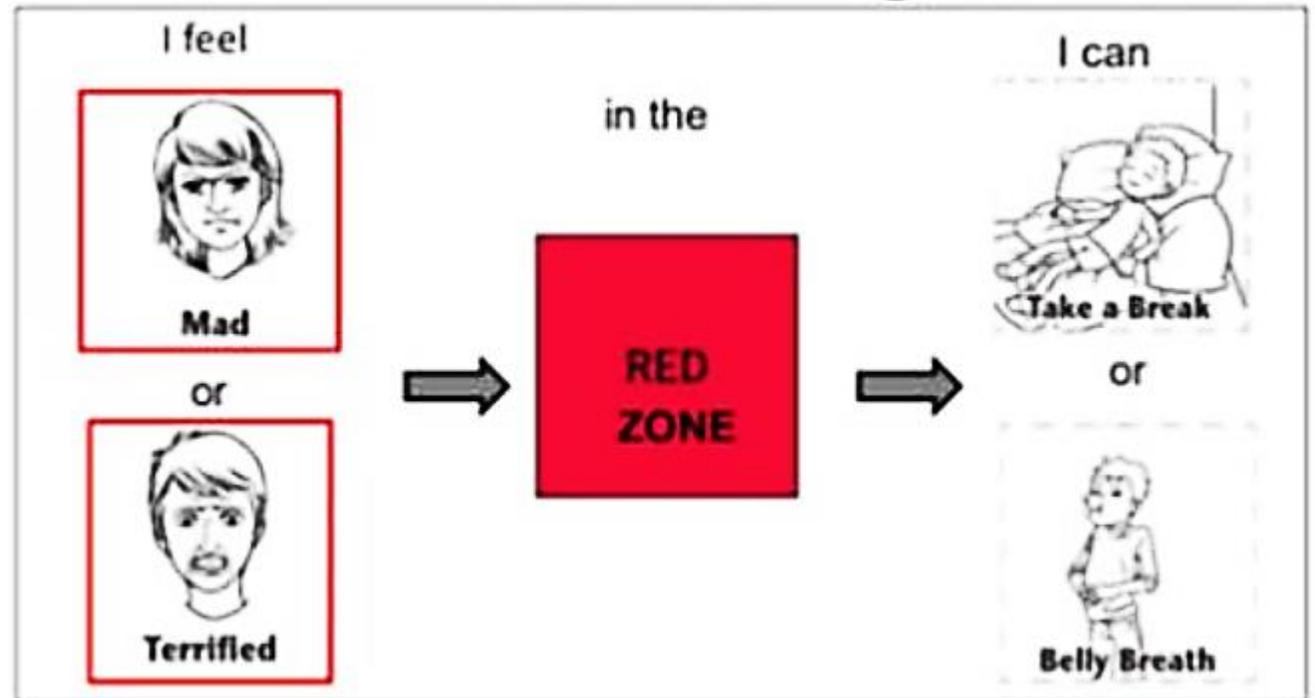
Worth remembering...the Red Zone is not a bad zone!

In fact, none of the zones are bad!

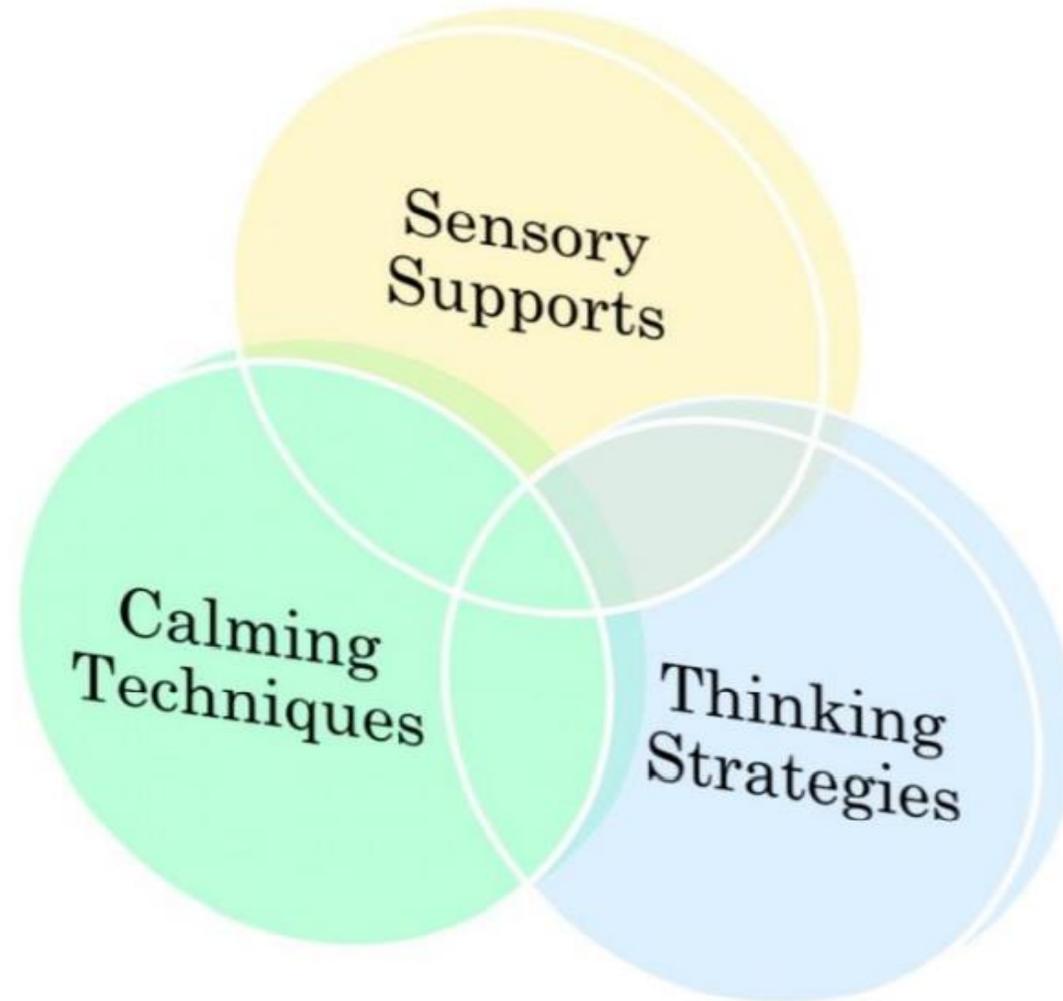
The feelings of anger, terror, devastation etc. are perfectly normal to feel but what matters is

how children learn to

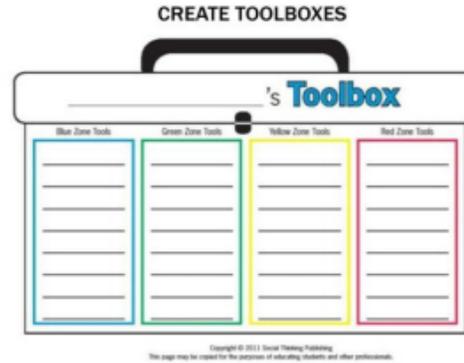
regulate and manage these strong feelings.



TOOLS FOR SELF-REGULATION



UNDERSTANDING ZONE TOOLS:



Blue Zone tools: help wake up our bodies, feel better and regain focus.

Green Zone tools: help us stay calm, focused and feeling good. These are often proactive strategies.

Yellow Zone tools: help us regain control and calm ourselves.

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

Pick 2/3 for each Zone (depends on child).



SENSORY STRATEGIES



SENSORY STRATEGIES:

- Bear Hug
- Swing/rock
- Go for a walk
- Wall push ups
- Sucking smoothie through straw
- Chewy foods (eg. thick slice of bread)
- Blow bubbles
- Classical music
- Roll on an exercise ball
- Trampoline
- Blanket roll



THESE ARE NOT A TREAT BUT A TOOL TO HELP THE CHILDREN FEEL REGULATED.

Which sensory supports do you use in daily life?



SENSORY TOOLS



Could you have a sensory box at home?



THINKING STRATEGIES

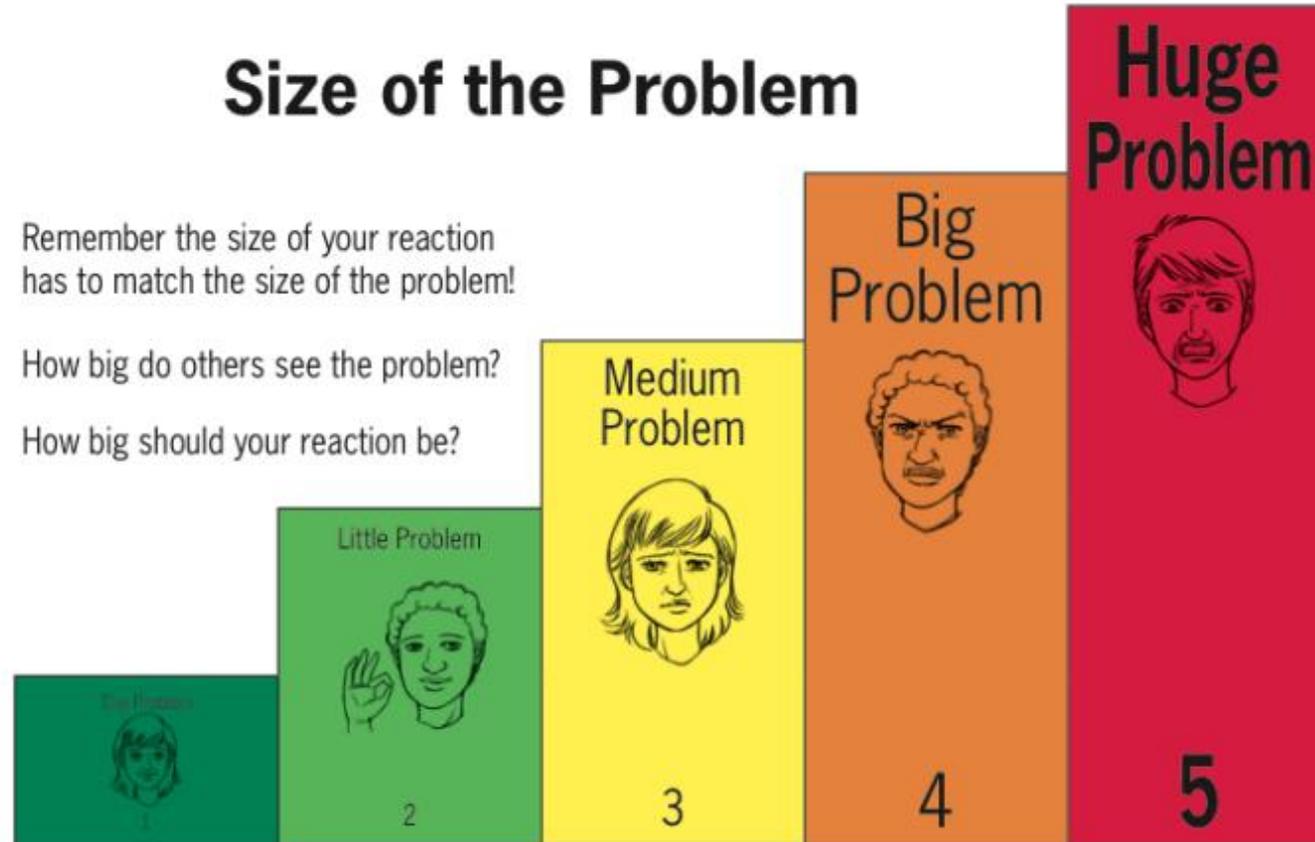


Size of the Problem

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?



-SIZE OF THE PROBLEM LEARNING STARTS IN YEAR 2.

-YEAR 3 – 6 EXPLORES EXPECTED AND UNEXPECTED REACTIONS... MAKE SURE YOU FREQUENTLY PRAISE YOUR CHILD FOR HAVING EXPECTED REACTIONS RATHER THAN JUST POINTING OUT THE UNEXPECTED.



WHAT CAN I SAY TO MYSELF?

INSTEAD OF... TRY THINKING....

I'M NOT GOOD AT THIS	-WHAT AM I MISSING?
I'M AWESOME AT THIS	-I'M ON THE RIGHT TRACK
I GIVE UP!	-I'LL USE SOME OF THE STRATEGIES I'VE LEARNED
THIS IS TOO HARD	-THIS MAY TAKE SOME TIME AND EFFORT
I CAN'T MAKE THIS ANY BETTER	-I CAN ALWAYS IMPROVE; I'LL KEEP TRYING
I CAN'T DO MATH	-I'M GOING TO TRAIN MY BRAIN IN MATH
I MADE A MISTAKE	-MISTAKES HELP ME IMPROVE
I'LL NEVER BE AS SMART AS HER	-I'M GOING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT SHE DOES AND TRY IT
IT'S GOOD ENOUGH	-IS THIS REALLY MY BEST WORK?

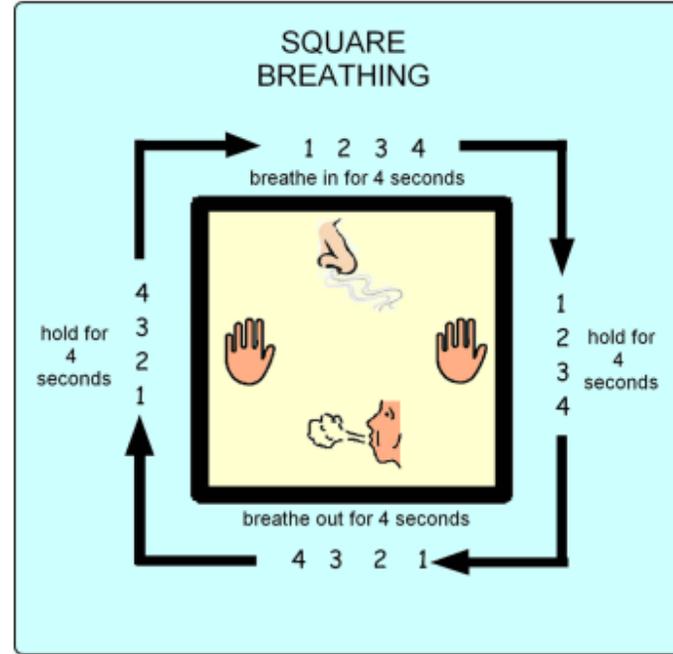
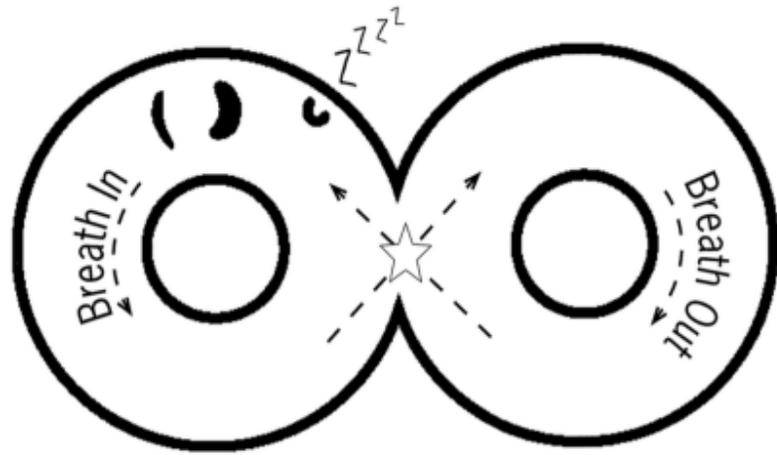
INNER COACH VS INNER CRITIC



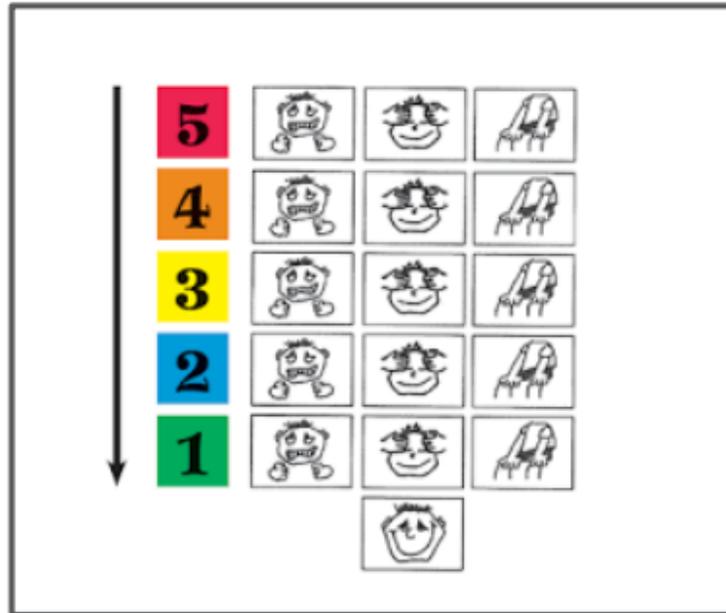
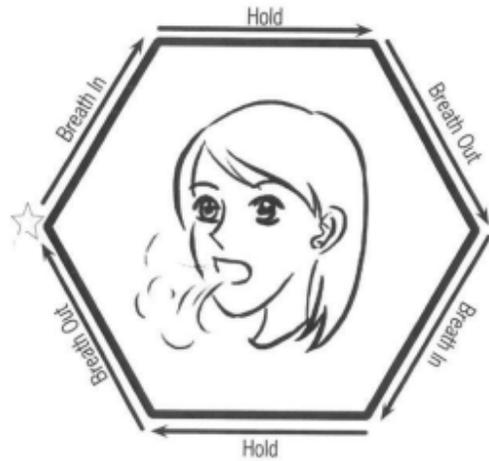
CALMING STRATEGIES



Lazy 8 Breathing

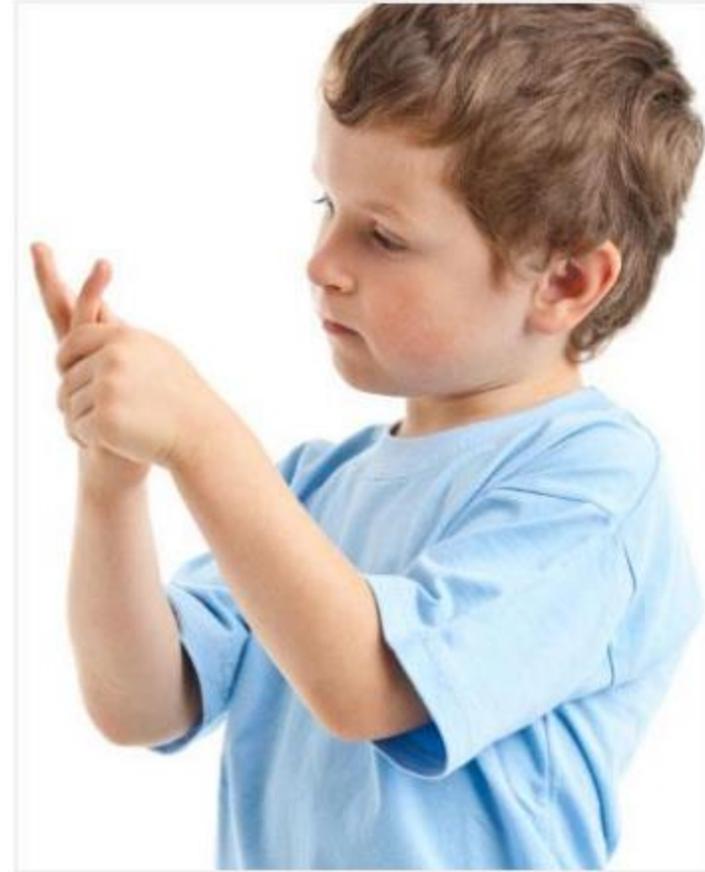


The Six Sides of Breathing



COUNTING

- **Forward and backward**
- **Count objects**
- **Count colours**
- **Count breaths**
- **Count pulse**



Use of Fit bit (relaxation and pulse tracking)



CALMING ACTIVITIES

Puzzles

Listen to Music

Draw/Paint

Origami

Play-Doh/clay

Read

Stack Rocks



ZONES OF REGULATION TOOLBOX

I'm in the...



bored

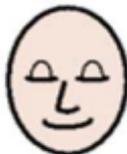
BLUE ZONE



sad

- Positive thinking (inner coach – “You can do this!”)
- Drink water
- Stretches
- Star jumps
- Run
- Eat something

GREEN ZONE



calm

- I feel:
- Happy
- Focused
- Calm
- Ready to learn



wiggly

YELLOW ZONE



anxious

- Positive thinking (inner coach – you can do this)
- Talk to an adult
- Think about the size of the problem – is it really that big?
- Distract yourself – hand books out, deliver a message
- Deep belly breaths
- Sit and count to 10/other breathing activities
- Standing push up against a wall



angry

RED ZONE

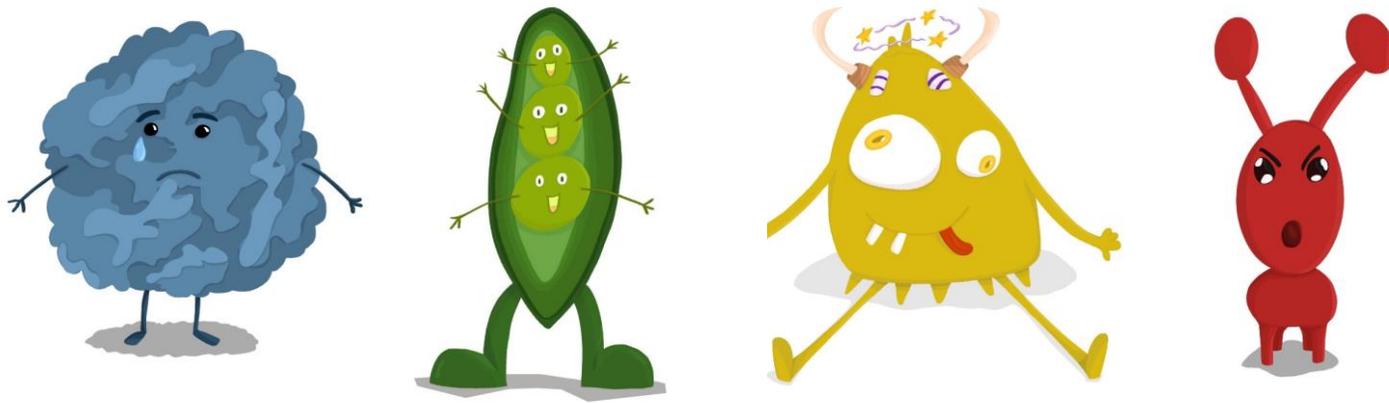


upset

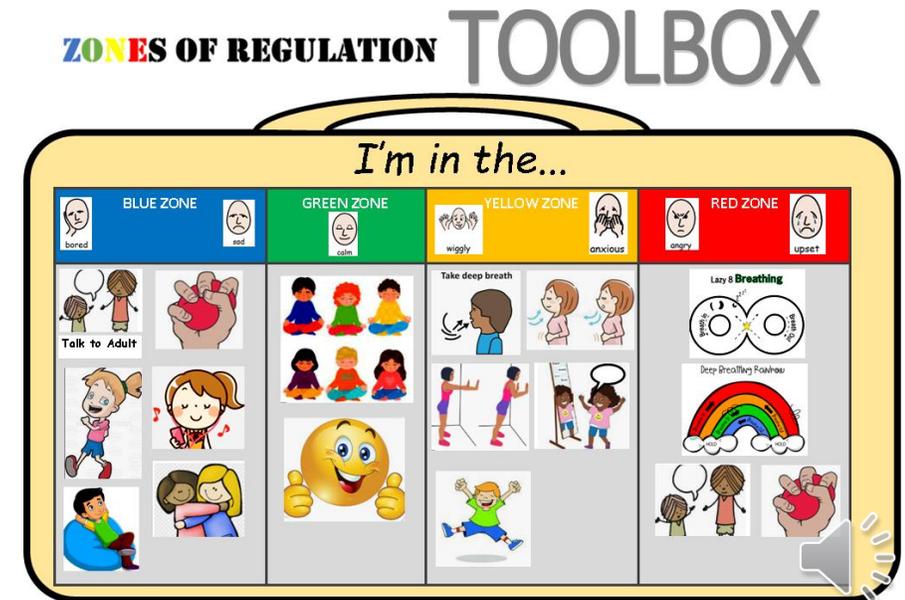
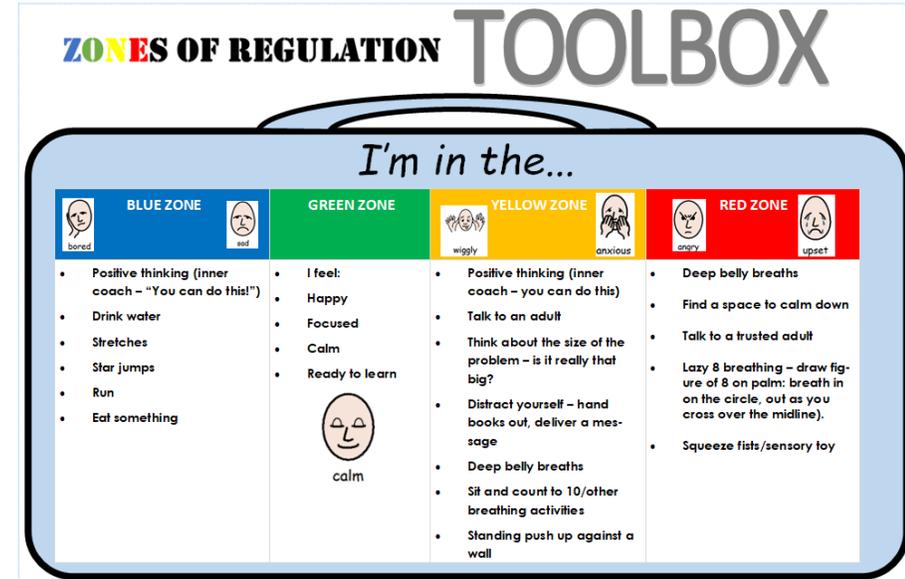
- Deep belly breaths
- Find a space to calm down
- Talk to a trusted adult
- Lazy 8 breathing – draw figure of 8 on palm: breath in on the circle, out as you cross over the midline).
- Squeeze fists/sensory toy



How can we use it at home?



1. Ask children 'how are you feeling?'/check in with their feelings.
2. Identify which zone they are in. 'Which zone are you in?'
3. Talk through strategies in their toolbox.



HOW CAN I SUPPORT THE ZONES OF REGULATION?

- **Identify your own feelings using Zones language in front of your child (e.g. “I’m frustrated, I am in the yellow zone”)**
- **Provide positive reinforcement when your child is in the Green Zone and if they make efforts to stay in the Green Zone. Eg. “I can see you are working really hard to stay in the Green Zone by...”**
- **Talk about what tool you will use to be in the appropriate Zone (e.g. “I’m going to go for a walk, I need to get to the green zone”)**
- **Label what zones your child is in throughout 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 in the rocking chair to get to the blue zone.”)**



PLAY GAMES

“Feelings Charades”

Take turns choosing emotions from a stack of cards or papers and act it out using only face and body clues. Guess each other’s emotion, discuss which zone it’s in and why. (Added challenge: Name a tool you could use when feeling that emotion).

“Name that feeling”

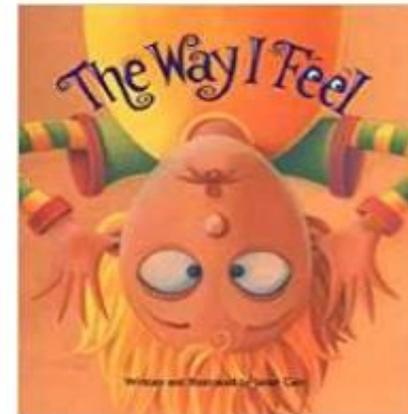
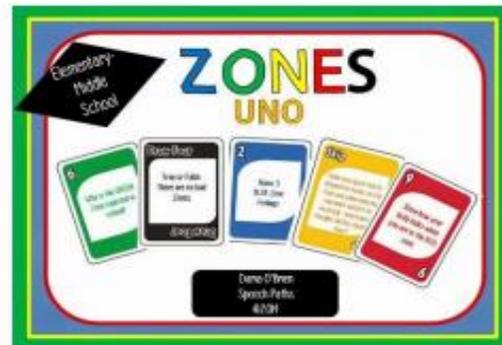
- People watch and guess the feelings/zones of others.
- Name the feelings of characters while watching a movie (and point out any strategies they use).

Read ‘The Way I Feel’

“Zones Uno”

Learn the song!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnI3GeTkMa4>



Common questions on the Zones of Regulation

Can my child be in more than one zone at the same time?

Yes. Your child may feel tired (**blue** zone) because they did not get enough sleep, and anxious (**yellow** zone) because they are worried about an activity at school. Listing more than one Zone reflects a good sense of personal feelings and alertness levels.



Common questions on the Zones of Regulation

Should children be punished for being in the **RED** zone?

It's best for children to experience the natural consequences of being in the RED zone. If a child's actions/choices hurt someone or destroys property, they need to repair the relationship and take responsibility for the mess they create. Once the child has calmed down, use the experience as a learning opportunity to process what the child would do differently next time.



Common questions on the Zones of Regulation

Can you look like one Zone on the outside and feel like you are in another Zone on the inside?

Yes! Many of us 'disguise' our Zone to match social expectations. We use the expression "put on a happy face" or mask the emotion so other people will have good thoughts about us. Parents often say that their children 'lose it' and go into the **RED** zone as soon as they get home. This is because children are increasing their awareness of their peers and expectations when in the classroom. They make every effort to 'keep it together' at school to stay in the **GREEN** zone. Home is where they feel safe to let it all out.



MORE INFORMATION ON THE **ZONES**

Zones of Regulation [Website](#)

Zones of Regulation Book and CD [Amazon](#)

Don't forget [Pinterest](#)

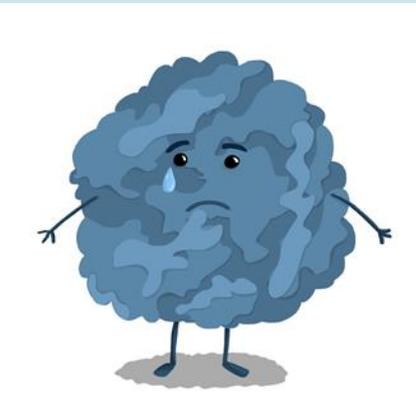


Thank you for watching our guide.
We hope it was useful.

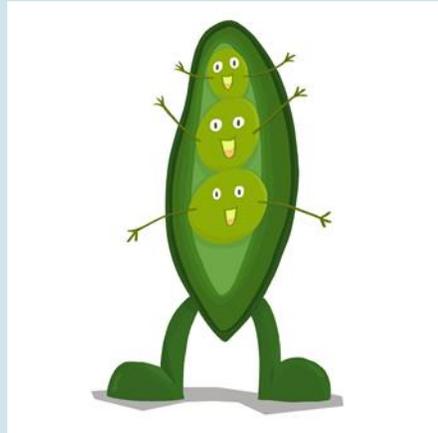
ZONES OF REGULATION

Choose your **zone**. How are you feeling?

Blue Zone



Green Zone



Yellow Zone



Red Zone

