

Zones of Emotional Regulation

The zones of emotional regulation is a simple tool to help kids recognise and identify emotions, within themselves and in the people around them. Emotions are grouped into different coloured zones - green, yellow, blue and red - based on the way the different emotions make our bodies feel.



The zones can be used a bit like traffic lights:

- When you're in the **green zone**, you are in a good, comfortable space; you are 'good to go'.
- When you're in **yellow**, you should take care or caution.
- The **red zone** means it's time to stop.
- Being in the **blue zone** is when your energy is lower - this can either mean you go here to rest, or you re-energise to get out of this zone.

When using this chart (full size available on the next page) with kids it's important to stress that it's good and normal to feel all the colours sometimes, but that we mainly want to try and be in the green zone. Why? Because being in the green zone means we're calm and comfortable, and that's when the best learning can happen.

Back to the Green Zone

Working with kids to find their way back to the green zone can be a useful way of helping children identify their own strategies for regulating their emotions. What works for some kids might not work for others. For example, having a run around in the yard might be good for some, while for others having some quiet time working on a solo task might be what works best for others. For some, doing some drumming might work while others might get back to green by drawing or doing craft.

Think about those activities that your kids' naturally gravitate towards and talk about these activities as something they can do to help themselves get back to green. It might be that you have a handful of things that your kids' can do, or just one. Either way, it is essential that these activities are valued and seen as important by you and your kids'.

You can find a 'Getting Back to the Green Zone' activity list to stick up somewhere on the next pages!



The Zones of Emotional Regulation



Getting Back to the Green Zone

Take 3 deep breaths



Dance



Lions breath - make a roar sound on your out breath



Snake breath - make a loud 's' sound as you breathe out



Make or listen to music



Play with toys



Squeeze your hand into a fist and release



Sing all conversations rather than talk



Do some Art or craft activities



Play with water



Nicely asking for a back-scratch



Running



Dig in the sandpit



Share a hug with someone



Spending some quiet time outside



Put together a sensory box - it could contain a stress ball, putty, fidget spinners, aromatherapy sprays, breathing ball or a favourite snuggly toy

