

A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO THE ZONES OF REGULATION

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

THE ZONES OF REGULATION®

EXPLORING EMOTIONS



The Zones of Regulation is an internationally renowned intervention which helps children to manage difficult emotions, known as '*self-regulation*'.

Self-regulation is best described as the best state of alertness for a situation. Or the ability to maintain a well-regulated emotional state to cope with everyday stress. This means we are most available for learning and interacting.

Newcastle
City

Everyone (including adults) will experience times when they find it hard to manage strong feelings such as worry, anger, restlessness, fear or tiredness. This can stop us getting on with our day effectively. Children will similarly find it hard to learn and concentrate at school.

The Zones of Regulation aims to teach children strategies to help them identify their emotions and cope with these feelings so they can get back to feeling calm and ready to learn. These coping strategies are called '*self-regulation*'.

In Newcastle, we want to teach all children effective coping and regulation strategies so they can help themselves when they experience anxiety and stress.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT ZONES?

The ZONES of Regulation™

			
BLUE ZONE Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	GREEN ZONE Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Relaxed	YELLOW ZONE Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	RED ZONE Mad/Angry Terrified Elated/Ecstatic Devastated Out of Control

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From The Zones of Regulation™ by Leah M. Kuypers • Available at www.socialthinking.com

Using Zones of Regulation as a framework we aim to help children to:

- Recognise when they are in different zones.
- Learn how to change or stay in their Zone.
- Increase their emotional vocabulary so they can express how they are feeling.
- Recognise when other people are in different Zones.
- Develop stronger empathy skills.
- Understand what might make them move into different zones.
- Be aware that emotions, sensory experiences (e.g. hunger) and their environment might influence their Zone.
- Develop problem solving and resilience skills.

There are four coloured Zones to categorise states of alertness and emotional states:



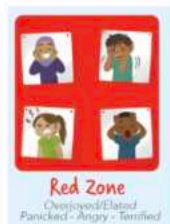
The Blue Zone is used to describe low states of alertness such as feeling sad, tired, sick or bored (the body/ brain is moving sluggishly).



The Green Zone is used to describe a regulated state of alertness such as feeling calm, happy or focused. This Zone is generally needed for school work, being social and being ready to learn. It shows control.



The Yellow Zone is used to describe a heightened state of alertness, but with some control, such as when experiencing stress, frustration, anxiety, silliness, nervousness or confusion. They may find themselves being fidgety, squirmy or sensory seeking. They are starting to lose control.



The Red Zone is used to describe extremely heightened states of alertness or very intense feelings such as anger, explosive behaviour, panic, terror or elation. They are often not in control of their body.



You can remember the Zones by using a traffic light system:

Blue - rest area where you pull over to have a rest and recharge.

Green - good to go.

Yellow - caution, slow down.

Red - stop and regain control.

“TO HANDLE YOURSELF, USE YOUR HEAD.” ***ELEANOR ROOSEVELT***

MIDDLE AND SECONDARY SCHOOL

(12- 18 YEARS OLD)

Strategies and ideas geared towards ages 12-18:

The Big Why?

- Connect self-awareness and self-management strategies to a learner’s personal goals for their future.

Visuals

- Adapt Zones visuals to be relevant to age, interests and respect identities.
- Encourage students to make their own visuals using role models as inspiration.



Made on wordart.com

Broader Vocabulary

- Teach students a broader emotional vocabulary to equip them with the relevant language.
- Scale emotions within Zones to demonstrate the effectiveness of language.
- Encourage student self-expression of emotions through art, music, multimedia, writing or even poetry.

Check-in Systems and Safe Spaces

- Use of discreet check-in systems that do not force students to check-in.
- Integrate technology to create and record ‘My Zones Check-in’ using a Google Form or Microsoft Forms.
- De-escalation spaces to allow students to leave stressful situations and interactions so they can process their emotions and then return to learning.

PRIMARY SCHOOL (5 - 12 YEARS OLD)

Strategies and ideas geared towards ages 5-12:

Children's Literature

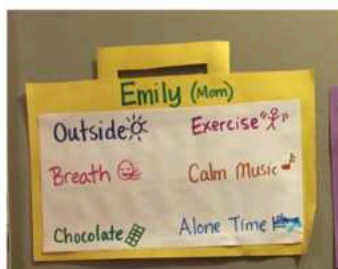
- The use of books to introduce and reinforce concepts from The Zones of Regulation (for examples: https://www.zonesofregulation.com/uploads/3/4/1/7/34178767/the_zones_book_nook.pdf)

Adaptation

- Using simple or relevant language that are related to the tools and strategies so they are relatable to the young person.
- Connect with home to form continuity and promote strategies whilst out of school.

Toolboxes

- Establish calming tools and strategies that the children identify themselves to refer to when they need to regulate.



Check-in Systems

- Whole class visual check-in systems for children to monitor their emotions.



EARLY YEARS

(4+ YEARS OLD)

Strategies and ideas geared towards ages 4+:

Paired Emotions

- Pair emotions to 2-3 per Zone, adding slowly more emotions if students demonstrate understanding.

Facial Expressions

- Spend time on identifying facial expressions and body language associated with each Zone.

Reinforce

- Reinforcement and repetition essential to help embed Zones over time.
 - Use books, songs or videos to reinforce Zones concepts over time.

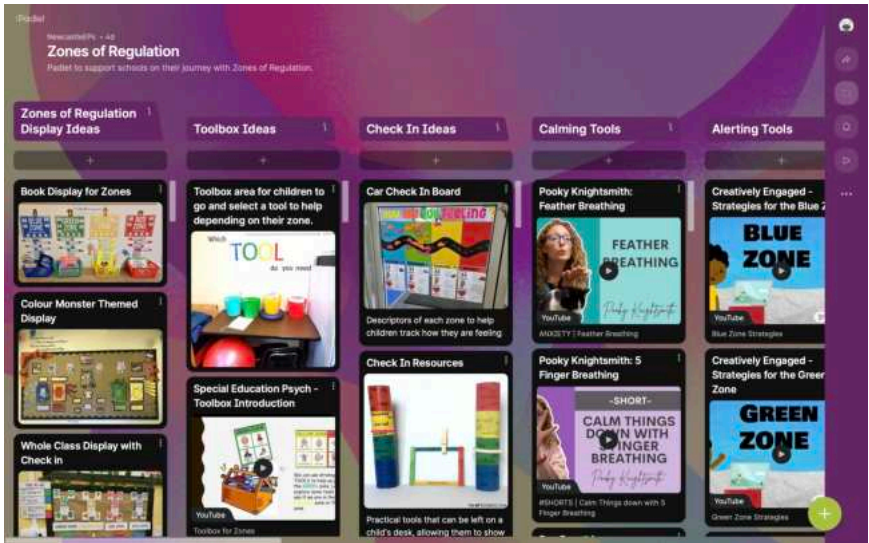


Modeling and Co-regulation

- Frequently model the Zones by checking in with your own Zone and model regulation strategies.
- Use co-regulation initially to cue students to use regulation tools and assist them in their use.



USEFUL LINKS



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