

Zones of Regulation Parent Guide

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


What is the Zones of Regulation?

The Zones of Regulation aims to teach children and young people how to recognise and regulate their emotions. It gives them the tools to be able to consciously regulate their actions, which in turn leads to increased control and problem solving abilities.

The Zones of Regulation helps children and young people to:

- Recognise when themselves and others are in different zones
- Understand what factors may influence their emotions (tiredness, exams, hunger, sensory experiences)
- Develop tools & strategies to help them manage their feelings in everyday situations
- Develop problem solving skills and resilience
- Understand how their behaviours influence themselves and those around them

What are the different Zones?




Red

- Heightened state of alertness and intense emotions
- Not an optimal level for learning;
- Out of control; feels angry, terrified, elated,



Yellow

- Heightened state of alertness
- Elevated emotions; has some control.
- Feels frustrated, worried, silly/wiggly, excited, loss of some control.



Green

- Calm state of alertness
- Optimal level to learn;
- Feels happy, calm, feeling okay, focused.



Blue

- Low level of arousal
- Not ready to learn
- Feels sad, sick, tired, bored, moving slowly.

IMPORTANT!

There is NO bad zone. Everyone experiences all of the Zones at different times and in different circumstances. What's important is understanding when we are in a zone and how to manage the behaviours a zone may cause. For example, "It's OK to be angry but it is not OK to hit..."

How to support the Zones at home

Identify and label your feelings

Use zones language to discuss how you are feeling. For example, "I am in the blue zone right now because I'm tired"



Label

Label what zones you child may be in throughout the day. "You look sleepy, are you in the blue zone?"

Give advice

Teach your child which tools they can use. E.g., "It's time for bed. Let's read a book together in the comfy chair to get you in the Blue Zone."



Visuals

Post and reference the Zones visuals and tools in your home. Point to these when discussing emotions.



Reflect

If your child is in the red zone, allow them to calm down before discussing the event with them. Once they have calmed, use the experience as a learning opportunity to discuss strategies they could use next time they are in a similar situation.

How are you feeling?

Check-in

Check-in with your child regularly. "How are you feeling now?" "How can you get back to Green?"

Show

Share how their behaviour is affecting your Zone. For example, if they are in the Green Zone, you could comment that their behaviour is also helping you feel happy / go into the Green Zone.



Self-regulation tools



It's important to talk openly with your child about how they can regulate their emotions. To do so, suggest different regulation tools and try them out with your child. Talk about how these self-regulation tools make you and your child feel. I.e.. "Listening to calm music made my body relax". Use the techniques below to encourage your child to use self-regulation tools throughout the day.



Choice Board

Use visual choice boards with your child to help them choose regulation tools you have tried with them. I.e. "I'm feeling wiggly... I need to do 5 star jumps"/ "I'm feeling sad... I need to listen to my favourite song".

Calm Box

Create a calm box. The box can contain visual instructions of calming activities, such as deep breathing, counting to ten. It can also contain calming objects, such as sensory toys and fidget tools. Encourage your child to use the box when they are in the yellow/red zone



Kind Words and Actions

Have an 'Acts of Kindness' poster on the fridge to encourage your child to be kind to themselves and others. Encouraging kindness will help children stay in the green zone and develop empathy.