

5 ways to support regulation skills

While we want children to be able to self-regulate, this is a skill that has to be learnt. Here are some ways to help children develop these skills.



Role model self-regulation

By verbalising your self-regulation skills it will help children learn how to do this for themselves. Stating facts like "I'm ok, nothing bad is happening, it was just a noise" shows children how to calm themselves down with self-talk based on facts instead of emotions.



Show children different techniques

By introducing children to different techniques such as breath work, naming items, using fidget toys, doing big movements, retreating, asking for help, physical contact etc. all help children to find what works for them. Different children will gravitate towards their own preferences.



Respond to children's needs

By being responsive to children's needs and noticing when they need help it will show them that they deserve support and calm relationships. This can be through holding and comforting young children, recognising and responding to cues, listening to children and respecting children's preferences and needs.



Develop secure attachments with children

The stronger your relationships with children are the more supported they will feel. When children have predictable and consistent relationships it allows them to feel more secure in new situations that could otherwise overwhelm the child. You also will know their needs more through your relationships.



Help families understand techniques

Some families may not understand the importance of self-regulation and how they can support this, particularly anxious families. By sharing these techniques, and what you have found works, with the families, you can support them to help regulate with their children.