

A Guide to The Zones of Regulation

ZONES OF REGULATION!

Blue	Green	Yellow	Red
			
Sick Sad Tired Bored Moving Slowly	Happy Calm Good to Go Focused Ready to Learn	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Anxious Excited	Mad/Angry Mean Yelling/Hitting Out of Control I Need Time and Space

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At Pike Fold Primary we believe it is essential to help your child understand their emotions, that it is OK to feel angry, be worried or scared and help them find ways to help themselves manage those uncomfortable feelings and self-soothe. This will also help them with their self-esteem and resilience. As a result we are introducing The Zones of Regulation to all our children from Nursery – Year 6.

What is The Zones of Regulation?

The Zones of Regulation is a framework used to teach skills in the area of self-regulation. Self-regulation can go by many names, such as “self-control”, “self-management” and “impulse control”. It is defined as the best state of alertness of both the body and emotions for the specific situation.

Some of the aims of The Zones of Regulation:

- To help children recognise when they are in the different Zones and how to change to stay in the Zone they are in.
- To gain an increased vocabulary of emotional terms so that they can explain how they are feeling.
- To gain insight into events that might make them move into the different Zones e.g. disagreement with a friend, a certain subject being taught or a fire drill.

- To help children understand that emotions, sensory experiences, physiological needs (e.g. hunger/lack of sleep) and environment can influence which Zone they are in.
- To develop problem-solving skills.
- To identify a range of different calming and alerting strategies/tools that support them. Tools identified may be personalised sensory supports (e.g. use of putty at key times), calming techniques or thinking strategies.

The Zones can be likened to traffic lights:

Green: you are 'good to go'

Yellow: slow down or take warning

Red: stop and regain control

Blue: rest area where you pull over when you're tired and need to recharge



Who is The Zones of Regulation for?

We need to teach ALL of our children good coping and regulation strategies so that they can help themselves when they experience emotions such as anxiety or stress. Teaching children these tools at a young age will support them in later life.

How will my child learn about the Zones?

The Zones of Regulation programme is advocated internationally. It will be introduced in discrete sessions and the Zones language will be used as part of daily school life.

We will be focussing on different emotions on a weekly basis to expand the children's vocabulary and during our weekly lessons, the children will explore calming techniques, thinking strategies, and sensory supports so they will have a toolbox of methods to use to move between zones.

There are posters in every room (a copy can be found in this booklet) and each day the children will be 'checking-in' with their emotions and identifying which zone they are in. Some children prefer not to use the 'Zone language' but label the emotions directly – this is fine and encouraged!

Children also learn that their feelings and emotions can lead to expected and unexpected behaviours and that those behaviours can have an impact on the children and adults around them. If you are in the red zone and yelling at your friend it is unlikely that your friend will be in the green zone.

Once children understand the concept of the zones they will they explore ways to help regulate themselves with the support of sensory devices and calming techniques.

How can you help your child use The Zones of Regulation?

- Identify your own feelings using Zones language in front of your child e.g. “I’m frustrated, I think I am in the Yellow Zone.”
- Talk about what tool you will use to be in the appropriate Zone e.g. “I need to take deep breaths to get back to the Green Zone.”
- At times wonder which Zone your child is in. Or discuss, which Zone a character in a film/book might be in e.g. “You look sleepy, are you in the Blue Zone?”
- Engaging a child in discussion around Zones when they are in the Red Zone is unlikely to be effective. You need to discuss strategies when they are calm and regulated.
- Teach your child which tools they can use e.g. “It’s time for bed, lets read a book together to get to the Blue Zone”
- Put up and reference the Zones visuals and tools in your home.
- Praise/encourage your child to share which Zone they might be in.

It is important to note that everyone experiences all of the Zones – the Red and Yellow Zones are not the ‘bad’ or ‘naughty’ Zones. All of the Zones are expected at one time or another.

What zone am I in?



sad



tired



bored



calm



happy



ok



upset



frustrated



silly



angry



mad



out of control

Use tools to get in the green zone



drink water



count to 10



take deep breaths



tense and release



do wall push ups



use fidgets



draw



write



talk to an adult



ask to take a break



ask to take a walk



do stretches



use ear defenders



think of a calm place



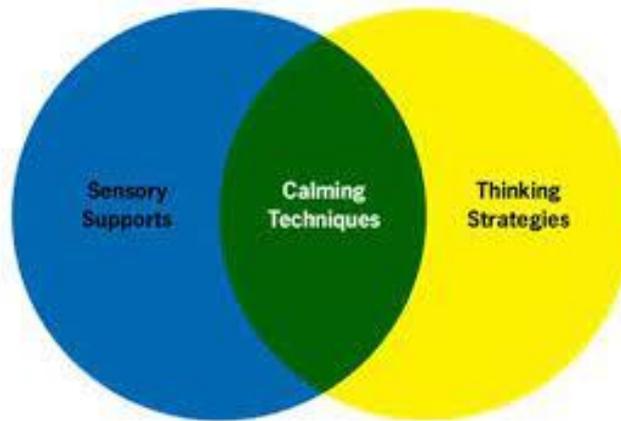
lift something



self talk

Zones of Regulation Strategy Toolbox ideas

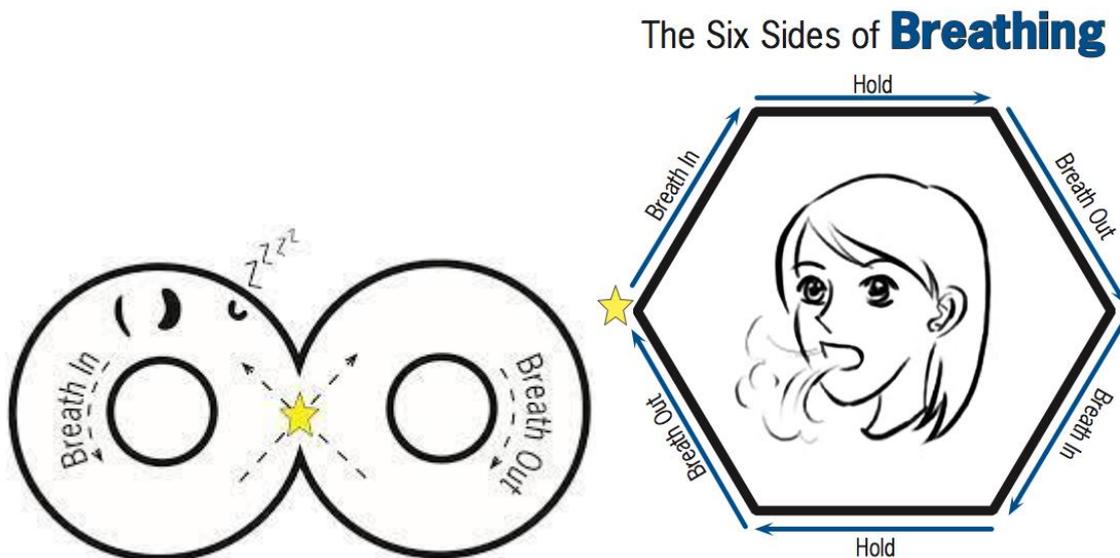
Once the children can identify their emotions they then need to learn tools to help them regulate.



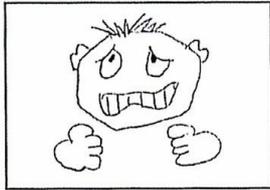
Sensory supports



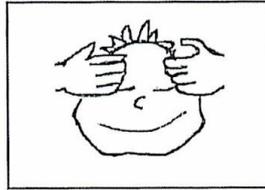
Calming techniques



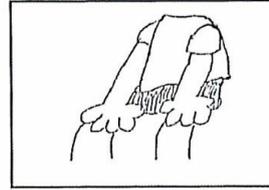
Calming Sequence



Breathe



Close your Eyes



Rub your legs

Think of your Happy Place

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?

