

Healthy MINDS Healthy NEIGHBORHOODS

Working together to strengthen our community!

Family Tools: Self-Regulation

The ability to manage my feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in my home, school, and community.

Steps to Social-Emotional Health:



Our Partners:

AEON Social Emotional Health
 The Center for Prevention of Abuse
 Children's Home Association of Illinois
 Children's Hospital of Illinois
 City of Peoria – Department of Police/Peoria
 Neighborhood Services
 FamilyCore
 Hult Center for Healthy Living
 Human Service Center

NAMI Tri-County Illinois
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 Peoria County Bright Futures
 Peoria Housing Authority
 Peoria Public Schools District 150
 Rogy's Learning Place
 Sharon Doubet, Illinois State University
 Tazewell-Woodford Head Start
 Tazwood Center for Wellness



Celebrate Healthy Families

Social-Emotional Tools are part of the Heart of Illinois United Way's Success By 6 and S³ Initiatives

Need Help?

*Call Heart of Illinois 2-1-1
Dial 211 or 309-999-4029
hoi211.org*

Additional Resources:

*heartmath.org
helpguide.org
parenttoolkit.com*



Family Tools: Self-Regulation

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Family Tools: Self-Regulation

*#1: How to Express
My Different Feelings*



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Self-Regulation

#1: How to Express My Different Feelings

Early Childhood

Model language to identify feelings. (i.e. *"What a big smile! You're happy!"* or *"Our car won't start. I feel frustrated. I better take some deep breaths to calm down."*)

Sing *If You're Happy and You Know It* with different feelings. (i.e. *"If you're happy and you know it - clap your hands!"* . . . *"If you're mad and you know it - use your words, I'm mad!"*)

Play *Name that Feeling* by making faces at each other and guessing what feeling is being expressed.

Read books and identify emotions while reading: *"What do you think the child is feeling?"* *"Why is the child feeling that way?"* *"Have you ever felt ___?"* *"What made you feel that way?"* *"What will happen next?"* or *"What should the child do?"*

Elementary

Model and discuss expression of different feelings. (i.e. *"You look worried,"* or *"Do you want to talk about it?"*)

Create a coloring book with your child and draw faces showing different emotions.

Encourage your children to tell others how they feel, including their friends and family members.

Point out feelings to your child in books you read together or during shows you watch. Ask your child questions like, *"Have you experienced those same emotions? Tell me more about that experience."*

Junior High/High School

Use reflective statements to help teens understand their feelings. (i.e. *"I see you are raising your voice and getting upset, you are feeling angry right now."*)

Pay attention to body language. Make sure your adult expressions and actions mirror a positive, active listening posture. (i.e. Keep open arms instead of crossed arms; keep voice calm; keep face non-judgmental.)

Encourage your teens to write about their feelings in a journal and talk to a friend or trusted adult.

Pay attention to the music, books, and television shows your teens like. Ask your teens if they have experienced those same emotions expressed in the writing or acting. Ask your teens to share the experience.

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#2: How to Deal with Stress and Stressful Situations



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Self-Regulation

#2: How to Deal with Stress and Stressful Situations

Early Childhood

Model strategies that help young children calm themselves in stressful situations. (i.e. *"I feel angry inside, my body is all tight, I think I will go for a walk."*)

While children are in a calm moment, talk about negative and positive behaviors. Call these "stop/go" behaviors. (i.e. *"Would asking to play with a toy be a 'go' or 'stop' behavior? Would grabbing a toy be a 'go' or 'stop' behavior?"*)

Give positive feedback and encouragement for "go" behaviors. (i.e. *"You are a friend when you share,"* or *"You are a real problem solver for . . ."*)

Create a "safe/quiet" space in which your child can go to relax or calm self. Items might include pillows, blankets, stuffed animals, books, calming picture cards, soft music, etc.

Elementary

Ask your children to talk about how they feel when they are upset. Many children feel stomachaches, headaches, or feel tired when experiencing stress.

Teach your children how to ask for help when they are feeling overwhelmed. Encourage them to tell a teacher or a parent if they need a break from an activity to calm down.

Help your children learn how to cope with stress by modeling coping skills. Teach them how to take deep breaths, count to ten, or use soothing toys to calm down.

Create a time each day to use a "calming routine." Dedicate that time to relaxation and calm activities, including reading, listening to soft music, or taking a walk with your child.

Junior High/High School

Encourage your teens to express what thoughts and feelings they have when they are feeling stressed or overwhelmed.

Prepare your teens for future stressful situations by discussing how they may handle problems as they occur.

Ask your teen what might help him/her feel better when feeling stressed. (i.e. Journal, exercise, listen to music, take a walk, play a game, etc.)

Seek help if your teen is experiencing ongoing stress and having difficulty coping with it. (i.e. Talk with family, friends, teachers, coaches, counselors, pastors, or other trusted adults.)

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Family Tools: Self-Regulation

*#3: How to Stay in Control
when I have Strong Feelings*



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Self-Regulation

#3: How to Stay in Control when I have Strong Feelings

Early Childhood	Elementary	Junior High/High School
<p>Model breathing to calm self. (i.e. Show children how to take deep belly breaths. Teach S.T.A.R.: <i>Stop, Take a deep breath And Relax!</i> Count to 3 when taking a deep breath.)</p>	<p>Model deep breathing for your child. Place your hand on your heart and take “belly breaths” (stomach moves outward with each inward breath.) Have your child practice breathing. Say, “<i>I am here with you,</i>” or “<i>We will get through this together,</i>” as they practice breathing.</p>	<p>Help your teens learn to identify the situations that cause them to feel “out of control” emotionally. It is easier to manage strong emotions when you can anticipate what will cause them.</p>
<p>Using a calm voice, tell your children that you can see they are feeling sad/mad/frustrated, etc.</p>	<p>Help your children identify coping skills they can use when they feel upset. For example, “<i>The last time you felt angry taking a walk helped you feel better. What would help you now?</i>”</p>	<p>Direct your teens to use their coping skills as soon as they begin to have strong feelings. (i.e. Exercise, listen to music, talk to a friend, etc.)</p>
<p>Get down at your child’s level, look your child in the eyes and calmly say, “<i>We will get through this. I am with you. I love you.</i>”</p>	<p>Create a quiet space for children to calm themselves. Children may help create the calm space with soft toys, music, journals, books, etc.</p>	<p>Encourage your teens to leave the situation in order to calm down. Periodically check in with your teens, asking questions like, “<i>Can we talk about what happened?</i>”</p>
<p>Create a “safe/quiet” space in which your child can go to relax or calm self. Items might include pillows, blankets, stuffed animals, books, calming picture cards, soft music, etc.</p>	<p>When your children are calm, help them talk about what caused their strong feelings. For example, “<i>I see you were feeling angry. Tell me about what made you angry.</i>”</p>	<p>Allow your teens space when they are feeling strong emotions. Tell your teens that you understand they need privacy and space, and that you are here if they want to talk.</p>

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Family Tools: Self-Regulation

#4: How to Maintain and Follow a Consistent Routine



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Self-Regulation

#4: How to Maintain and Follow a Consistent Routine

Early Childhood	Elementary	Junior High/High School
<p>Consistent routines provide comfort, continuity, and a sense of safety. Include young children in family meetings to talk about upcoming family plans/activities.</p>	<p>A structured routine helps your children know what to expect and what their responsibilities are. Have children help create a family calendar. Post the calendar where all family members can see it.</p>	<p>Explain the importance of following a schedule with your teens. Help them stay organized by putting their daily homework assignments, meetings, and practices into a planner.</p>
<p>Talk with your child about the plan for the start of each day. For example, <i>“Today we will go to school, go to the store, and visit Grandma!”</i> Practice talking about the routine daily.</p>	<p>Hold a family meeting each Sunday to plan ahead for the following week. Add activities to the family calendar. Post the calendar.</p>	<p>Encourage your teens to write family expectations into their planner. For example, times they need to babysit, join family meeting times, birthday dinners, etc.</p>
<p>Establish a regular bedtime and wake time. Schedule meals, activities, and chores.</p>	<p>Give positive feedback to your children for following a routine and completing tasks. (i.e. <i>“Thanks for getting ready for school on time. That was responsible. Let’s take extra time to play a game tonight.”</i>)</p>	<p>Help your teens learn how to prioritize. Explain what activities should come first before relaxation time, including homework, sports practices, work, etc.</p>
<p>Make a visual picture of the daily schedule. Refer to the visual schedule when the child needs a reminder. Ask your child what comes next.</p>	<p>As a family, establish house rules and include them as part of the daily routine (i.e. Homework before extra activities, reading instead of electronics before bed, lights out at 8:30.)</p>	<p>Choose a time to communicate with your teens about the schedule each day. By providing this structure, you will help your teen learn the importance of managing a consistent routine.</p>

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#5: How to Stay in the Moment



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Self-Regulation

#5: How to Stay in the Moment

Early Childhood

Staying “in the moment” with the child can help create connections and build relationships.

Be an active listener for your child. (i.e. Keep eye contact, repeat phrases, and give positive responses.)

Create and keep daily rituals. (i.e. Read a book at bedtime or sing a special song while driving in the car.)

Use art as a means to help your children learn about peace and beauty. Show them pictures of nature and say, “Isn’t this beautiful? It helps me feel calm and happy.”

Elementary

Pick one activity that you can do with your child every day and give it your full attention. (i.e. Read a book before bed, play a game, make dinner together, etc.)

Be an active listener when people in your family are talking. Model listening skills to your children by making eye contact. This lets them know they are valued.

Establish routines during the day that help the family stay connected and in the moment. (i.e. Share celebrations and challenges during a meal.)

Encourage your children to look at pictures of nature and beautiful art to help them calm down. Ask them to pretend they are at that beautiful place when they need to feel calm.

Junior High/High School

Give full attention when your teen wants to talk. Model active listening skills by putting down your phone, making eye contact, and nodding your head as you listen.

Help your teens learn how to be an active listener by giving them guidance in conversation. Tell them, *“I appreciate it when you make eye contact with me; it helps me feel like you’re hearing me.”*

Make time in your day to have face-to-face conversations with your teens about their day, how they are feeling, and what is on their mind.

Encourage your teens to decorate their room with art they find relaxing. It can be a picture of family, a beautiful flower, or a symbol that is special and unique to them.