



A Parents' Guide to The Zones of Regulation

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

Self-regulation can go by many names such as 'self-control', 'impulse management' and 'self-management'. Self-regulation is best described as the best state of alertness for a situation. For example, when your child takes part in a sports game, they would need to have a higher state of alertness than when, for example, they were working in a library.

From time to time, all of us (including adults) find it hard to manage strong feelings such as worry, anger, restlessness, fear or tiredness, and this stops us from getting on with our day effectively. Children who feel these emotions often find it hard to learn and concentrate in school. The Zones of Regulation aims to teach children strategies to help them cope with these feelings so they can get back to feeling calm and ready to learn. These coping strategies are called 'self-regulation'.

What Zone Are You In?			
Blue	Green	Yellow	Red
			
Sick Sad Tired Bored Moving Slowly	Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	Mad/Angry Mean Yelling/Hitting Disgusted Out of Control

At Thornlie Primary School, we are using the Zones of Regulation throughout the whole school. We want to teach **all** of our children good coping and regulation strategies so they can help themselves when they experience anxiety and stress. In the classroom, sometimes children panic when faced with a tricky learning problem or challenge. By teaching them how to cope with these feelings might make them better at tackling learning challenges and build better resilience so they don't give up so easily when faced with difficulty.

We want children to grow into successful teenagers then adults. Teaching the children at a young age about managing their feelings will support them in later life so that they don't turn to negative coping strategies which affect their mental and physical wellbeing.

We aim to help children to:

- Recognise when they are in the different Zones and learn how to change or stay in the Zone they are in.
- Increase their emotional vocabulary so they can explain how they are feeling.
- Recognise when other people are in different Zones, thus developing better empathy.
- Develop an insight into what might make them move into the different Zones.
- Understand that emotions, sensory experiences such as lack of sleep or hunger and their environment might influence which Zone they are in.
- Develop problem-solving skills and resilience.
- Identify a range of calming and alerting strategies that support them (known as their personal 'toolkit').

What are the different Zones?

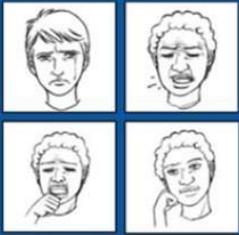
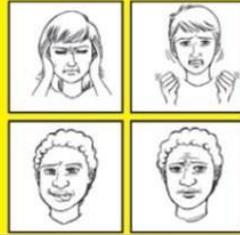
Blue Zone: low level of arousal; not ready to learn; feels sad, sick, tired, bored, moving slowly.

Green Zone: calm state of alertness; optimal level to learn; feels happy, calm, feeling okay, focused.

Yellow Zone: heightened state of alertness; elevated emotions; has some control; feels frustrated, worried, silly/wiggly, excited, loss of some control.

Red Zone: heightened state of alertness and intense emotions; not an optimal level for learning; out of control; feels mad/angry, terrified, yelling/hitting, elated, out of control.

The ZONES of Regulation®

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

We will teach the children that everyone experiences all of the Zones. The Red and Yellow zones are not 'bad' or 'naughty' Zones. All of the Zones are expected at one time or another. We will show them that the Blue Zone, for example, is helpful when you are trying to fall asleep.

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

- 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 four deep breathes to get me back to the Green Zone")
- Engage your child in discussion around Zones when they are in the Red Zone is unlikely to be effective. You need to be discussing the different Zones and tools they can use when they are more regulated / calm.
- Regular Check-ins. "How are you feeling now?" and "How can you get back to Green?"
- Put up and reference the Zones visuals and tools in your home.
- Praise and encourage your child when they share which Zone they are in.

Blue Zone <i>Feeling sad, tired, bored and moving slowly</i>	Green Zone <i>Feeling happy, calm, ok focussed and ready to get to work</i>	Yellow Zone <i>Feeling frustrated, worried, agitated or excited in an unhelpful way</i>	Red Zone <i>Feeling angry, terrified, acutely stressed</i>
Talk to someone	Tackle difficult tasks	Use positive self-talk	Take deep, calming breaths
Prepare some healthy food that will have the right nutrients to get you back on track	Make the most of the time to get through your to do list	Put all those things you need to do in your diary to bring order, including self-care	Do something physical that dissipates the adrenaline – gym or High Intensity Interval Training
Grab a cuppa on the couch and take some time out	See the friend or relative you've been meaning to, but haven't got around to	Make lists to get things out of your head onto paper	Talk to someone unconnected and rehearse a conversation with the person that is the source of your frustration
Read a book or watch a film	Work, but don't push yourself too hard!	Do some yoga or go swimming	Write down your feelings
Get outside in the fresh air	Try new things	Talk to someone	Count to 10
Speak to your therapist/coach	Write in a journal	Get outside for a walk – get grounded	Have a hug
Do some yoga or other gentle stretching	Be positive and help others	Meditate or do mindfulness exercises	Do something a bit different / creative
Wait it out and don't beat yourself up – everyone needs some down time	Get some exercise	Take a shower	Remind yourself of all the things that you are grateful for