

Emotional Regulation Chart

The Emotional Regulation Chart is a valuable tool for helping children recognize and manage their emotions, whether in the classroom or at home.

Blue zone	Green zone	Yellow zone	Red zone
			
What can I do?	What can I do?	What can I do?	What can I do?
Rest <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take a break• Ask for help• Talk to someone• Jump up and down 5x• I can also _____?	Go <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Think happy thoughts• Finish my work• Help others• Share ideas• I can also _____?	Slow down <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take deep breaths• Talk to someone• Go for a short walk• Count to 10• I can also _____?	Stop <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take a time out• Run a lap• Squeeze a stress ball• Count to 10• I can also _____?

This chart categorizes emotions into four zones, each representing different feelings, emotions, and body sensations. These zones are designed to help children recognize and manage their emotions effectively:

Blue zone: low energy or discomfort

The blue zone represents feelings and sensations associated with sadness, fatigue, illness, or physical pain. Children in this zone may feel withdrawn, unmotivated, or physically unwell. It's a state of low energy where they might struggle to engage in daily activities.

Suggested strategies include taking a break to rest or recharge, seeking comfort by talking to someone or asking for help, and engaging in calming activities like listening to soothing music or cuddling with a soft blanket.

Green zone: optimal state for learning and interaction

The green zone reflects a state of emotional balance and focus. It includes feelings like happiness, calmness, focus, and controlled excitement. In this zone, children are engaged, attentive, and able to function effectively in school, at home, or during play.

Strategies to maintain this state include continuing tasks such as completing schoolwork or chores, offering to help others stay productive, and celebrating positive emotions by sharing them with friends or family.

Yellow zone: caution or unease

The yellow zone is a transitional state that signals heightened emotions like surprise, confusion, worry, nervousness, or uncontrolled excitement. In this zone, children may feel on edge or overwhelmed, which could lead to a loss of focus or control if not addressed.

Strategies to manage emotions in the yellow zone include taking deep breaths to regain a sense of calm, stepping away from the situation for a short walk or break, and talking through the source of unease to gain clarity or reassurance.

Red zone: intense emotions

The red zone represents intense emotions such as anger, rage, fear, or frustration. Children in this zone may feel overwhelmed and lose control of their behavior or reactions.

To manage these intense emotions, suggested strategies include releasing energy through safe physical activity like running a lap, taking a timeout in a calming space, or using grounding techniques such as counting slowly or holding onto a comforting object.

Guided questions

Encourage the child to identify their emotions by asking guiding questions, such as:

- "What are you feeling right now?"
- "Does your body feel tired, calm, or tense?"
- "Are you happy, upset, or something else?"
- "What happened that might have made you feel this way?"
- "Do you feel like you need a break or want to talk about it?"
- "Which color zone matches how you feel?"

Once the child identifies their feelings and the corresponding zone, encourage them to use the suggested strategies to regulate their emotions. Reinforce the idea that all emotions are valid, and the focus is on finding constructive ways to manage them.