

Regulation

(When saying 'Calm Down' doesn't work)

The first thing to do to help your child calm down and regulate their emotions is the most difficult part... regulating your own. A 20 second pause can be the difference between responding and reacting, but it is not a strategy which comes naturally when we are busy and trying to get through the days routines.

Try your best to model self-regulation and be calm and responsive when your child is struggling to manage their emotions.

A.C.T.

Acknowledge your child's feelings. This helps your child feel understood.

- "You look sad because its homework time"
- "I think you are disappointed that he would not play with you"
- "You're frustrated as you really want your tablet for more screen time "
- "You're angry because you wish you could have sweets before dinner."

Communicate the limit.

- "It's ok to be disappointed but it is time to do homework now "
- "Its ok to be frustrated/mad/angry but it is not OK to hit "
- "It's ok to be annoyed but tablet time has finished now "
- "I know you are sad the day is over, but it is time for bed now"

Target an alternative or Teach.

• Once you Acknowledge and Communicate you can target an alternative by using controlled choices or first and then or when appropriate teach by discussing what your child should do in each situation next time.



Phrases for co-regulation:

- Its ok to be disappointed. I have enough calm to share with you.
- You're upset, I understand.
- I'm here for you.
- Let me know when you're ready.
- This is hard for you, I want to help you.
- When I feel angry it helps if I take some deep breaths like this...
- I love you, you are safe.

Action for co-regulations (Be a calm influence during an emotional storm):

- Hold them while they cry.
- Belly breathing.
- Candle/bubble blowing.
- Invite them to rock or snuggle with you.
- Change of scenery.
- Angry/shake it off dance.
- Count backwards.
- Dinosaur roar.
- Play I spy.

Model regulation:

- I'm feeling frustrated that the dishwasher isn't working. I'm squeezing my fist and taking deep breaths to help my body'.
- I'm feeling sad that we haven't seen grandma in a while. I'm going to write in my diary'.
- I'm feeling overwhelmed. I'm going to pause and take space for a few minutes to calm my body'.
- Sometimes when I feel upset it helps if I go for a walk. Do you want to come for a walk with me?
- Sometimes I just need to have a good cry. Do you just need to cry right now?