



Emotional Regulation in the Classroom

Emotion Regulation refers to how we manage our emotions and our efforts to control what emotions we feel, when we feel them, and how we experience and express them.

In response to this item, "I can deal with being told no," students indicated:

Not at all true of me: 4% A little true of me: 16% Pretty much true of me: 44% Very much true of me: 36%

Relaxation Techniques

Teach students relaxation techniques that they can use when they feel overwhelmed by an emotion to help them calm down. Some examples include:

- Counting by threes or counting down from 10
- Breathing in while lifting arms
- Massaging hands between the thumb and pointer finger

Breathing deeply in and out. On the inhale, saying, "re," and on the exhale, saying, "lax."



Emotion regulation is important inside and outside of the classroom.

Studies show that students with good emotion regulation skills:

- Have better social skills
- Are more resilient to stress and adversity
- Perform better in school
- Are less at risk for mental health symptoms
- Are less likely to be bullies or victims of bullies

Emotion regulation helps teachers, too.

Studies have found that teachers with better emotional regulation abilities experience more positive emotions, greater job satisfaction, and a greater sense of personal accomplishment.

Mindfulness

Use guided mindfulness meditations or curricula to help students become more aware and accepting of emotions. Mindfulness can increase students' attention skills and ability to cope with stress.

Expressive Writing

Promote successful coping by allowing students to process emotionally-laden events by giving them opportunities to express their emotions about difficult experiences through structured writing activities.

Social Emotional Learning

Talk to students about emotions. Teach them to identify and understand their own and others' emotions. Explicitly teach problem-solving strategies, appropriate expression of emotions, and ways to de-escalate emotional responses. This can be incorporated within a literacy curriculum. Ask questions about how the characters are feeling, why they are feeling those emotions, and how they can cope.

Resources

[Mass. Gen. Hospital—Emotion Regulation Curriculum](#)
[SESA: Emotion Regulation Curriculum](#)
[NASP: Teaching Young Children Self-Regulation Skills](#)
[PATHS Program](#)
[Mindfulness Exercises](#)