

# EMOTIONAL REGULATION FOR KIDS

AGES: TODDLERS & UP  
(Good for the whole family)

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# CHECKING IN WITH MYSELF

01

What emotions am I feeling? What color zone am I in?



02

What does it feel like?



03

What sensations am I feeling in my body?



04

How can I regulate myself?



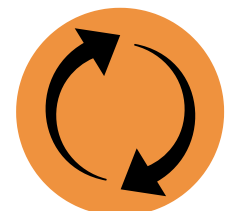
05

What do I need?



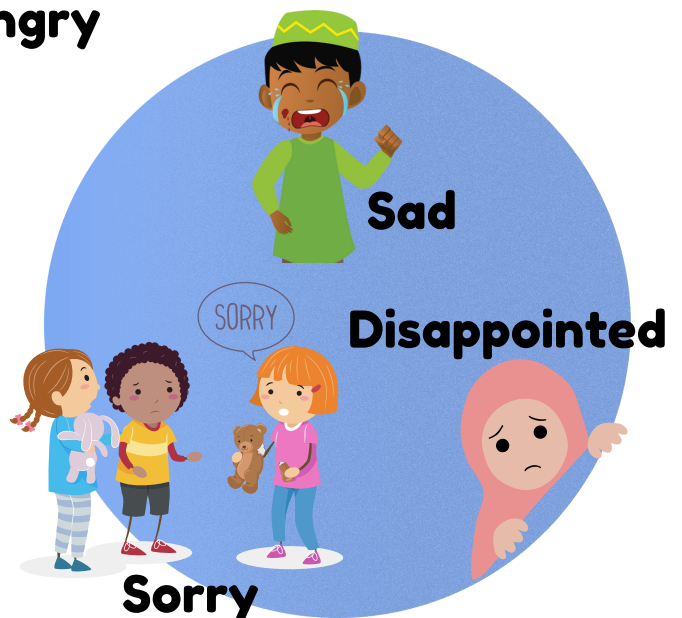
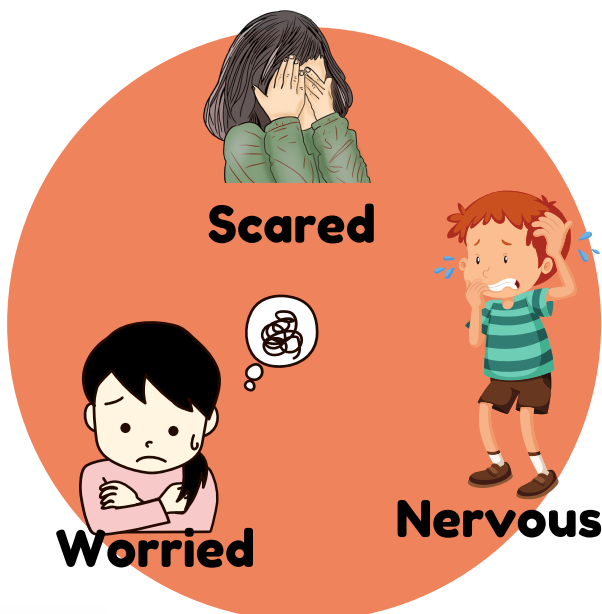
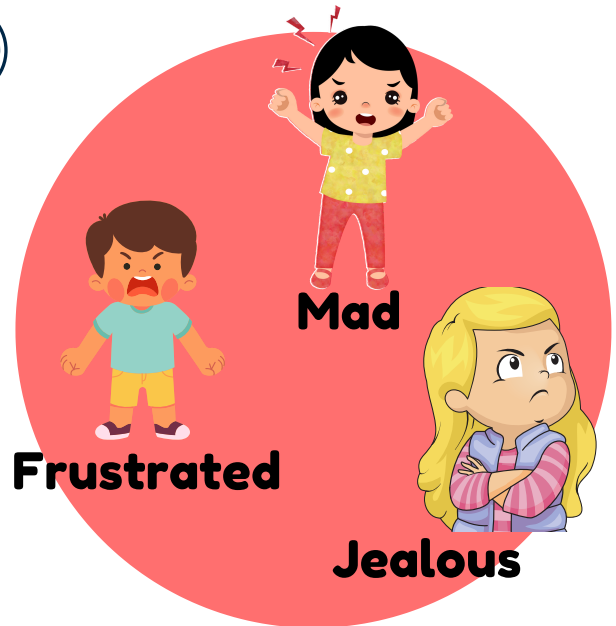
06

Check back in. Am I feeling regulated and ready to play and learn?

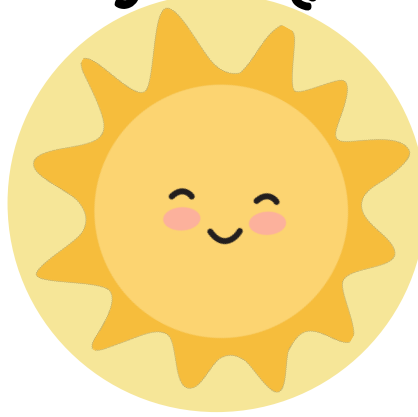


# WHAT AM I FEELING?

What color zone am I in?



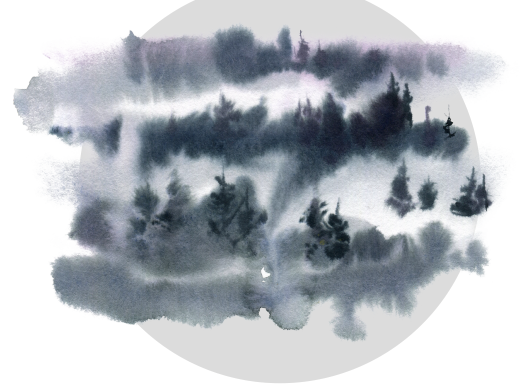
**sunshine**



**Calm waters**



**Foggy**



## **WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE?**

**A rain cloud**



**A storm**



**An erupting volcano**





**Shakey**



**Pain**



**Tight**



# WHAT SENSATIONS AM I FEELING IN MY BODY?



**Itchy**



**Hot/Sweaty**



**Dizzy**



**Butterflies in my belly**



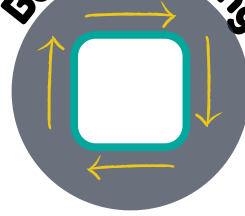
It's ok to cry



Deep Breaths



Box Breathing



Draw how I'm feeling



Butterfly Hug



Ask for a hug



Shaking



# HOW CAN I REGULATE MYSELF?

Tense and Relax



Dance



Talk about my feelings



Squeeze a pillow



Count to 5



Sound Release



Hug a stuffed animal



Connection



Comforting



Connect with a friend



Relax



Alone Time



Play



Silliness/Laughter



# WHAT DO I NEED?



To feel helpful



To feel challenged



Physical Activity



Sensory Stimulation



Drink Water



Go to sleep



Eat a snack



# AFFIRMATIONS



I am lovable



I am enough



All feelings are safe  
and welcome with me



I can do hard things

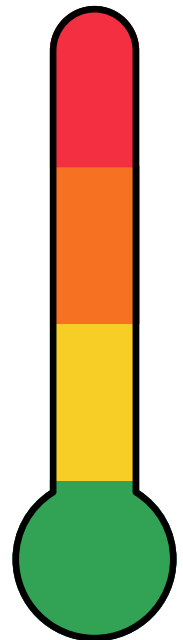


I can use my imagination  
to find solutions to  
my problems

# How to Use These Posters

This poster series is designed to be used with children from roughly one year old (whenever they start experiencing big emotions) and older to build emotional intelligence, body awareness, and healthy emotional regulation skills. All children are different and develop at their own pace, so let your child's developmental pace be your guide in how you use these. These Posters are also an excellent resource for nonverbal children who are developmentally capable of identifying their emotions and perhaps even their needs but haven't yet developed a way to communicate using their voice or sign language. They also happen to be an excellent resource for parents who are new to emotional regulation.

Remember that these posters may not be accessible to your child while they are highly escalated. Take a look at this thermometer – When your child's emotional expression is in the green, yellow, and maybe the lower end of the orange zones on the thermometer, they're more likely to be able to utilize these posters while experiencing the emotion. However, if your child is on the higher end of the orange zone or in the red, they're not going to be able to focus on these posters. Their brain is in full survival mode – all emotion – which means that the logical part of their brain is not going to be online, and therefore they will be unable to focus on or comprehend anything you're pointing to on the posters. In these instances, the best thing we can do is to stay regulated ourselves and to keep them and others safe.



Once they have de-escalated a bit and are further down on the thermometer, you can use the posters to talk about what they had just been experiencing and choose a regulation technique to help them release any residual emotional energy still being held in their body. Providing the opportunity to release residual emotional energy can be very valuable in helping your child move on from challenging emotions more quickly, and the reflection process will help them build their emotional intelligence over time.

It's also highly recommended that you practice these regulation techniques with your child regularly, even when they're calm, and make it fun! This will help your child get more comfortable with the techniques and make it more likely that your child will take you up on your offers to utilize the techniques when they're experiencing challenging emotions. Understand that regulation does not mean to suppress emotions, and these posters are not meant to stop your child from

from crying or expressing their emotions. The goal is to bring awareness to your child, give you clarity on what they're experiencing, and to feel, express, and release emotions in a healthy way.

We have provided a key to guide your children and you through the steps that may be appropriate in identifying your child's feelings and needs. In some situations, it may be appropriate to skip through some steps. For example, if your child identifies that they're hungry on Page 1 - "What Am I Feeling?", it would make sense to only utilize Page 3 - "What Sensations Am I Feeling in My Body?" to build body awareness, and Page 5 - "What Do I Need?" Use the key as a guide, but do not feel like you must utilize each page of the collection in every situation.

## **Developmental Ages 1-2:**

At this stage of development, your primary goal is to help your child begin to recognize and name their emotions. For example, you may say, "It seems like you're feeling disappointed right now," or "I can see you're frustrated." Point to the images on the poster that matches the emotion your child appears to be feeling. Identifying the emotion while pointing to the image will help your child connect that particular feeling and its name so that, eventually, they will be able to tell you what they're feeling themselves.

When applicable, you can also point to any potential body sensations that you observe in your child. If you notice their face is red, you may point to "hot/sweaty," or if you can see them clenching their fists or jaw, you may point to "tight." This will help your child begin to connect their body sensations with the emotions they're feeling, nurturing their innate body awareness. Keep in mind that, at this age, your child is not yet capable of self-regulating. They're relying on your ability to coregulate with them, which essentially refers to your ability to regulate yourself. As you regulate your nervous system, their nervous system mirrors yours, leading them to absorb your calm.

## **Developmental Ages 2-3:**

At this stage of development, your child may be capable of identifying their feelings some or all of the time. Even if your child is speaking or signing to communicate now, it is helpful to have your child point out what they are feeling on Page 1 - "What Am I Feeling?" because it cuts down on miscommunication and allows your child a visual to help connect with their feelings.

Your child may be ready to start noticing body sensations now, and if you haven't already started practicing the regulation techniques with them every day or a few times a week, now is the time to introduce that practice. Some children may be ready to identify their underlying needs at this stage, also.

### **Developmental Ages 3-4:**

Your child is now more ready to identify underlying needs, is getting better at identifying their body sensations and emotions and is possibly ready to start using the analogies on Page 2 – “What Does It Feel Like?” to process and express their feelings.

### **Developmental Ages 4-5:**

Your child is likely ready to utilize the entire collection of posters if they haven't been already.





BEGIN BY  
SHAKING  
YOUR HANDS



THEN MOVE INTO  
SHAKING YOUR  
WHOLE BODY

## SHAKING

## Regulation Techniques

Instruction Cards



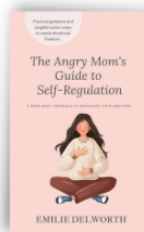
CROSS YOUR ARMS  
ACROSS YOUR  
CHEST



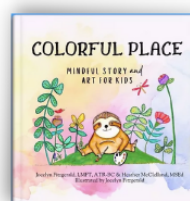
FLUTTER YOUR  
FINGERS  
AGAINST YOUR  
CHEST/SHOULDERS  
LIKE THE WINGS OF  
A BUTTERFLY

## BUTTERFLY HUG

CHECK OUT THESE OTHER RESOURCES  
FOR PARENTS AND KIDS



AVAILABLE  
ON  
AMAZON.COM



[WWW.THE-PEACEFUL-MOTHER.COM](http://WWW.THE-PEACEFUL-MOTHER.COM)

[WWW.BREATHARTCALM.COM](http://WWW.BREATHARTCALM.COM)



SMELL FLOWER  
FOR COUNT OF 4



HOLD BREATH  
FOR COUNT OF 4



BLOW BUBBLES  
FOR COUNT OF 4



HOLD BREATH  
FOR COUNT OF 4

## BOX BREATHING



GROWL, HUM, SING, SILLY SOUNDS, YELL  
\*YELL OUTSIDE OR INTO A PILLOW

## SOUND RELEASE



SMELL THE  
FLOWER



BLOW THE  
BUBBLES

## DEEP BREATHS

### OPTION 1



SQUEEZE YOUR  
MUSCLES LIKE  
YOU'RE  
FLEXING THEM.



THEN RELAX  
YOUR BODY  
AND BREATHE

### OPTION 2



PARENTS/CAREGIVERS,  
INVITE YOUR CHILD TO  
PUSH THEIR HANDS  
AGAINST YOURS, THEN  
RELAX

## TENSE & RELAX