

The **ZONES** of Regulation®

The Zones of Regulation is one framework that can be used to support regulation. Many schools have implemented this to support understanding the emotions felt in different energy states or 'zones', which this programme links to a specific colour. This programme looks at how to move between zones and what sensory motor strategies to use from the individuals toolbox when dysregulated. The visuals within this guide can be used at your discretion.

What it is:

- A proactive, skills-based approach
- A simple, common language to understand, talk about and teach regulation
- A consistent, metacognitive pathway to follow for regulation
- A systematic framework with a developmental sequence of lessons
- Meant to be adapted for your learners and setting

What it isn't:

- A behaviour approach
- A discipline model, punitive in nature
- A scripted curriculum with different lessons for each age/ grade level
- Only about teaching the 4 Zones and feelings associated with them

Important to remember:

- This is not a 'one size fits all' and is not suitable for all pupils, especially if they have complex language and/ or communication needs.



Please refer to the Zones of Regulation website for resources and further information:

[Self-Regulation Curriculum | The Zones of Regulation](#)

The Zones of Regulation framework is separated into 4 coloured zones which relates to emotions.

See table below with descriptions:

Blue Zone

Sad, sick, tired, bored, fed up, low, hurt, depressed,
exhausted, shy

Yellow Zone

Worried, anxious, nervous, excited, irritable, silly,
overwhelmed, frustrated, annoyed, embarrassed,
jealous, upset, scared, confused

Green Zone

Calm, alert, relaxed, OK, happy, ready to learn, content,
hopeful, comfortable, proud, grateful, focused

















Red Zone

Angry, enraged, petrified, wild, terrified, manic,
overjoyed, furious, devastated, panicked, out of
control, elated

In our school we use the charts below where each zone has a picture that corresponds with an emotion felt in this zone. Neurodivergent individuals may find it difficult to identify specific emotions and how they feel, as they may not have good interoception and be unable to interpret the body signals associated with each emotion. They may also not have the language ability to name the emotion.

Note: In this case a Speech and Language Therapist would be best placed to advise on bespoke resources for the pupil, as the colour zones may not have any meaning for them.

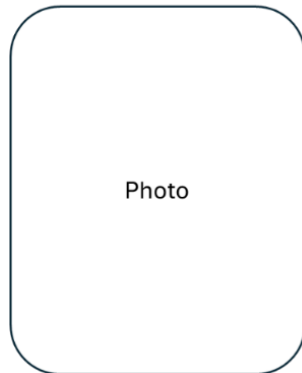
The ZONES of Regulation®

 sad	 bored	 happy	 ok	 worried	 frustrated	 scared	 angry
 tired	 poorly	 calm	 ready to learn	 silly	 excited	 hitting	 yelling
Blue Zone		Green Zone		Yellow Zone		Red Zone	





My Zones Check-in



I am

I am in the Zone

Important Points:

- There is no bad zone.
- We move through all the different zones throughout the day, at different times and depending on the circumstances.
- We can learn to recognise what zones we are in and know what we can do to move ourselves back towards the green zone, which is optimal for learning.

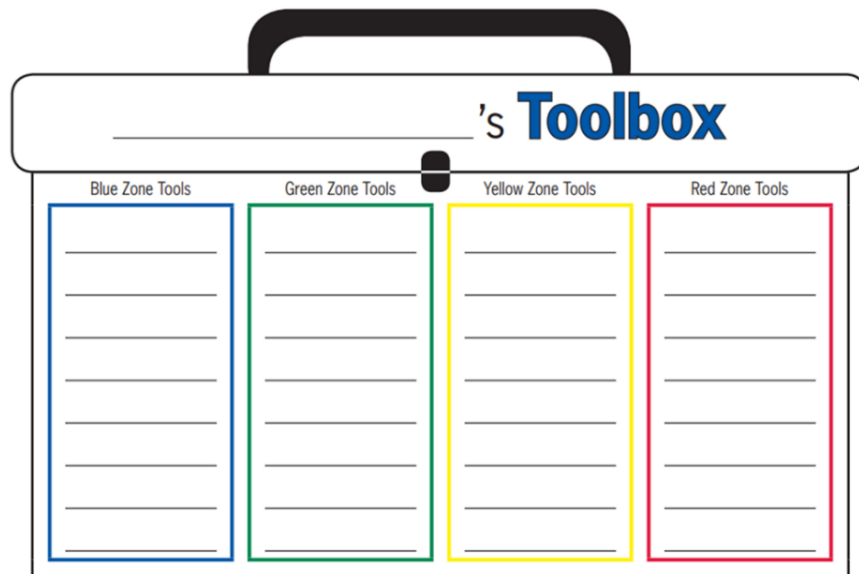
What zones are you in?

- We don't want to change the way an individual feels, we want to assist them to understand how they are feeling and have the option to change their energy state to match the demands of the activity.
- We can work with the individual to recognise the emotion in themselves, what it feels like and looks like.
- What they need to do to shift 'zones' so that their arousal level is appropriate for the task at hand.
- How can we do that? What tools do we have?

Zones of regulation Toolbox

The toolbox below is a resource to support you to support an individual with regulation with strategies to use when in a particular zone:

The activity below could support building a personalised regulation toolbox:



_____ 's **Toolbox**

Blue Zone Tools	Green Zone Tools	Yellow Zone Tools	Red Zone Tools
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Which **ZONE** Would I Be In?

All of the zone colors are okay. There are times when you will be in different zones. Think about times that you expect you would be in the Blue, Green, Yellow, or Red Zone.

I experience all the Zones!

Times I may be in the BLUE ZONE...	Times I may be in the GREEN ZONE...
Times I may be in the YELLOW ZONE...	Times I may be in the RED ZONE...

Tools to support regulation:

We all use strategies and tools to support our regulation, either to calm or energise or to support focus. The Zones of Regulation gives some examples of sensory and motor strategies, as well as cognitive strategies and plans to support regulation. This needs to be explored with an individual, as everyone will have their own unique profile.

Sensory strategies

Sensory strategies can assist with self-regulation, as they can have a calming or alerting effect on the autonomic nervous system. Explore sensory tools with the individual and see what works for them as every sensory system has different needs.

Different types of movement and sensory input can have either a soothing (calming) or alerting (stimulating) effect on the nervous system. Understanding these effects helps in selecting appropriate strategies to support regulation.

Calming Examples

These activities typically promote calm and help the body settle:

- Rhythmic, repetitive movements (e.g., swinging or slow walking)
- Rocking (in a chair or gently back and forth)
- Heavy work and resisted activities
- Pushing hands together or giving a self-hug
- A side hug from a trusted individual

- Music with predictable, steady rhythms
- 6 sides of breathing/ Lazy 8 breathing
- Predictable timetable, schedules, and routines
- Calming sequence & nurturing rituals
- Swinging on the nest swing
- Whole body stretches

Alerting Examples

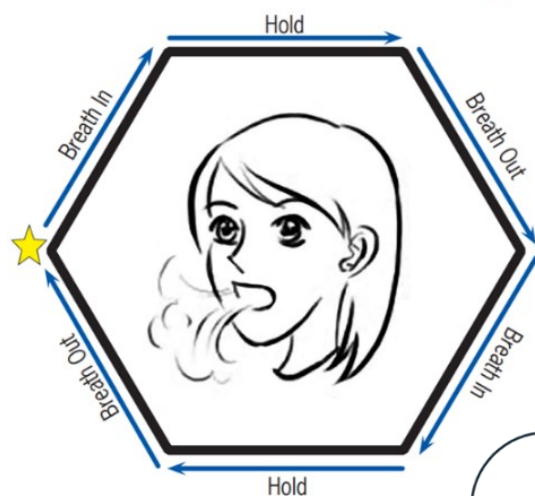
These activities typically increase energy and arousal levels:

- Fast, irregular, or random movements (e.g., spinning, running between cones)
- Jumping or bouncing activities
- Light touch
- Unexpected, loud, or varied auditory input

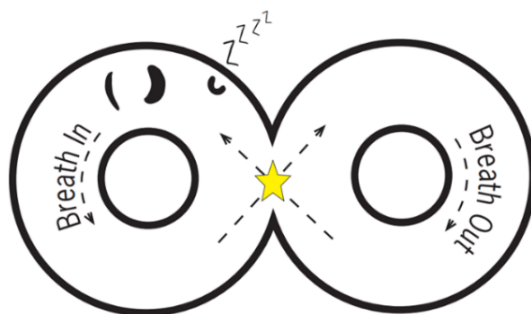
- Clapping
- Bouncing a ball
- Star jumps/ jumping jacks
- Kicking a football

Below are some visual resources:

The Six Sides of **Breathing**

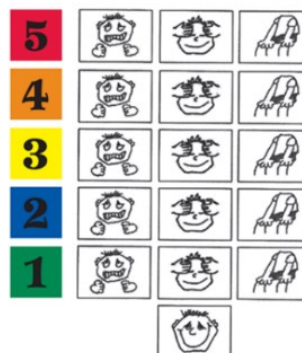


Lazy 8 **Breathing**



Calming Sequence

- Squeeze your hand
- Close your eyes
- Rub your head
- Rub your knees
- Repeat five times





5 4 3 2 1


SLOW DOWN & CALM DOWN

FIRST- TAKE 3 SLOW BELLY BREATHS!

5 List 5 things you can SEE 

4 List 4 things you can FEEL 





3 List 3 things you can HEAR 

2 List 2 things you can SMELL 

1 List something you like to TASTE 

Whole body stretches

Try a few new yoga poses each day, this could be carried out during form time. Whole body stretches/ Yoga can support with developing core strength, body awareness, balance and regulation. It provides proprioceptive and vestibular input through weight bearing positions, which is calming and organising for sensory systems. Keep it fun!

	<p>Low tree with hands at the heart pose</p>		<p>Breath out and push down with your hands</p>
	<p>Breath in and pull hands up</p>		<p>Triangle pose</p>

Try these to encourage generalisation and incorporation of zones of regulation into daily life:

- Wonder aloud – “I’m feeling... so I’m in the ... zone”
- Use Zone or Regulation resources in other environments.
- Adapt Zone or Regulation resources to interest an individual likes such as superheroes or Disney characters.
- Use Zone of Regulation when circumstances come up.
- Ensure Zone of Regulation tools are easily accessible.

Please note: If you have any questions about the resources or whether this framework is suitable for a particular student, please reach out to your school clinical team.