

MHST South

Brain & Emotions

Coffee Morning



Aims



1

Emotions

2

Brain

3

Emotional
Regulation

4

Signposting

Icebreaker

What emotions
do you think
children find
the hardest to
manage?



happy



scared



tired



surprised



angry



cry



shy



confused



sad



proud



excited



silly



disappointed



sick



loving



nervous



disgusted



jealous

Understanding Emotions

What are emotions communicating to us?



happy



scared



angry



sad



tired

How Do We Show Emotion



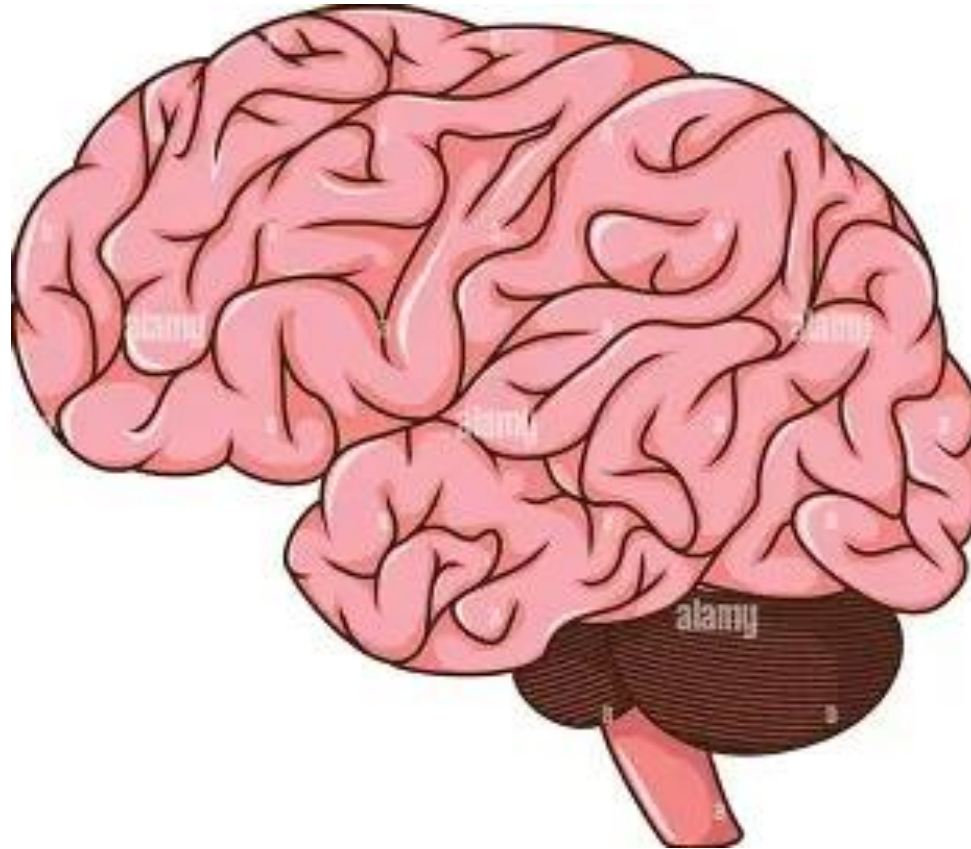
Prefrontal Cortex Thinking Brain (Wise Owl)

- Reasoning
- Impulse control
- Long-term Planning

Fully develops in mid 20s



The Brain



Limbic System – Amygdala Emotion Brain (Guard Dog)

- Brains centre for emotions, emotional behaviour and motivation
- Fight/flight/freeze response

Intense Emotions



Flipping Your Lid



**Guard Dog - Survival
Brain**



**Hard to think
and problem-
solve**

**Act first and
think
afterwards**



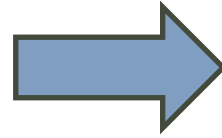
Emotions Drive Behaviour

Emotion regulation difficulties manifest in different ways depending on the child, but can include:

- Becoming withdrawn, isolated, not engaging
- Sad, tearful, cries a lot
- Worried, panic attacks, and fears
- Strong over-reactions, anger
- Problems focusing, concentrating or over activity
- Aggressive or disruptive behaviour, getting into fights
- Refusing to go to school

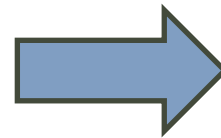


Responding to Behaviour



Behaviour – we see and respond to this

If we are only responding to behaviour, it may not change anything



Thoughts and Feelings – driving the behaviour. We don't usually see or respond to this

If we ask about the thoughts and feelings which led to behaviour, it will more likely change behaviour

Emotional Regulation

Emotional regulation means noticing our emotions, understanding what message they are trying to give, and responding appropriately

It is not emotional suppression



UNDERSTAND



Response

Emotional Regulation Importance

Improved emotion regulation leads to benefits in all areas of a child's life:



Better relationships



Pay more attention,
work harder and
achieve positive
education outcomes



Better able to resolve
conflicts with their
peers



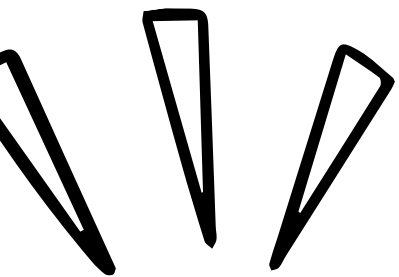
Show lower levels of
physiological stress



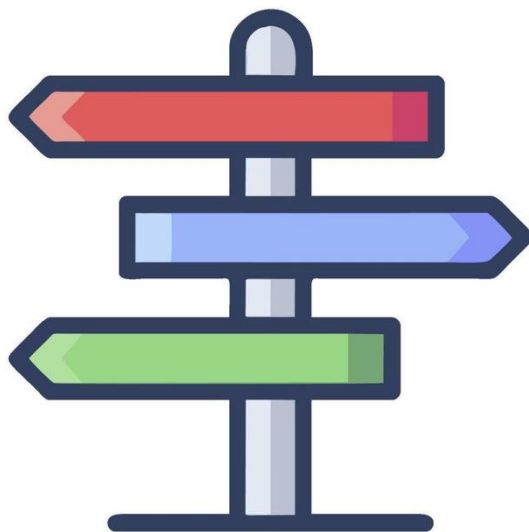
Better behaved (less
likely to have
behavioural
problems)



More caring and
considerate towards
others



Strategies



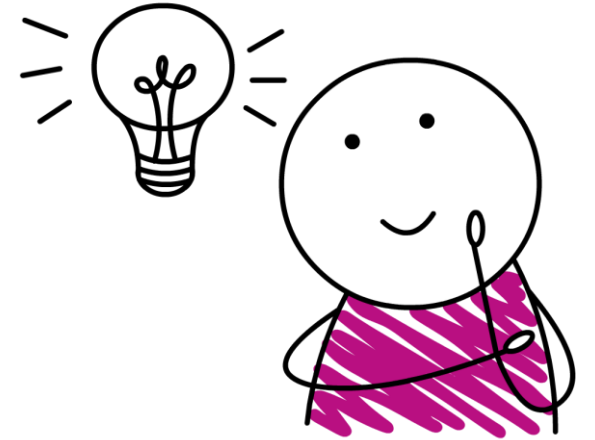
Labelling Emotions

- Knowing about feelings helps children understand themselves, the situation they are in, and whether they need to do something to manage the feeling.
- Talk about emotions at home. Normalise and **model** it. Make it part of the everyday. Ask questions related to feelings:
 - *I felt frustrated at work today so I went for a walk at lunch time and felt much better.*
 - *How did you feel when we were late for school?*
 - *In this story how do you think the character felt about X happening?*
 - *Did you sleep well last night?*

How can we Respond?

- **Validate, normalise and identify their feelings. Reflect on what you see:**

- *I can see that you are very worried.*
- *I would feel very angry if that happened to me.*
- *I can understand why you are feeling sad.*
- *I think most people would feel worried if that happened to them.*



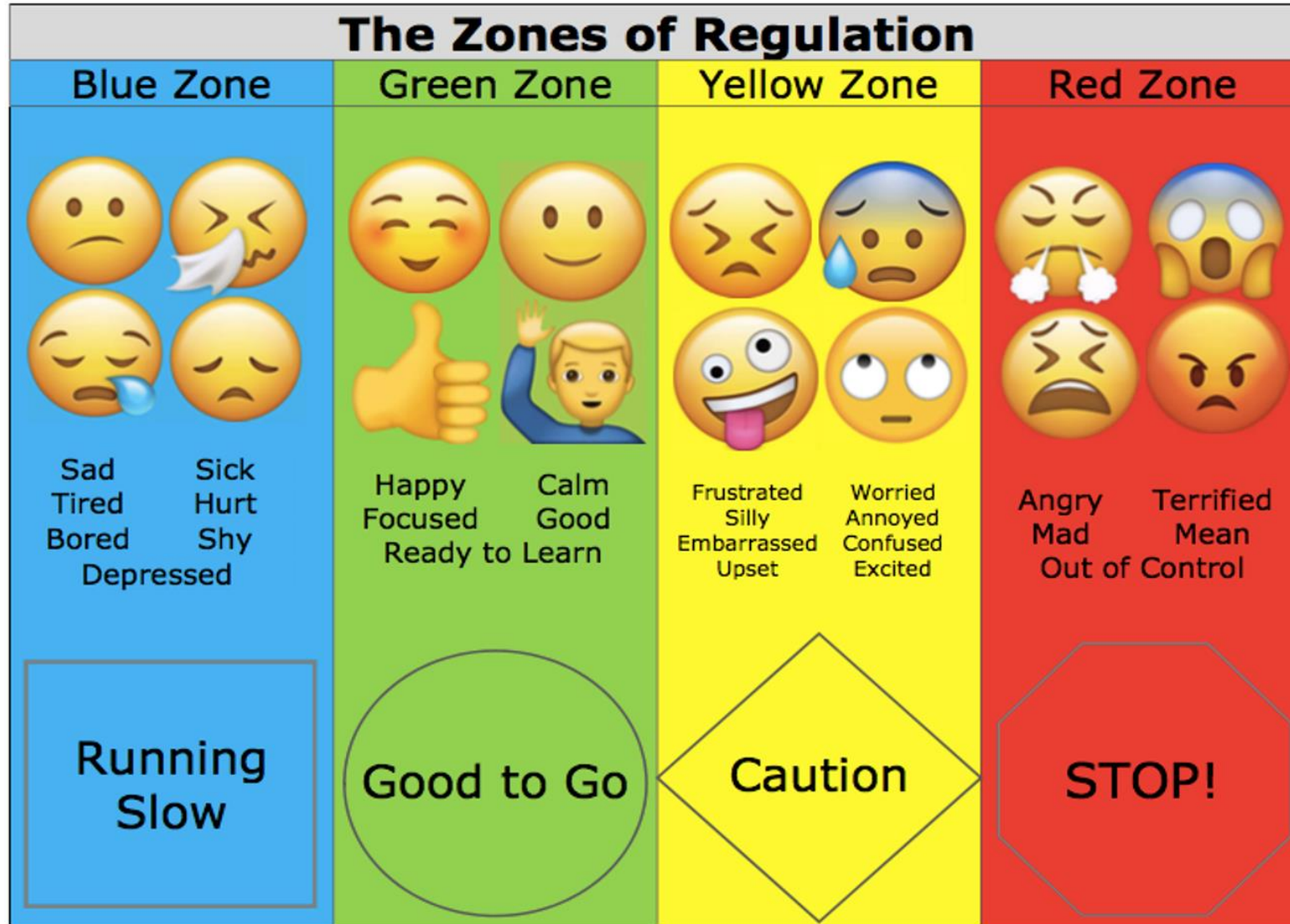
- **Give them time to reconnect their thinking brain:**

- *It's hard to think things through when we are upset, so we need to figure this out when you are feeling less upset.*

- **Create a sense of collaboration:**

- *What do you think we should do next?*

Zones of Regulation



Surf The Wave Of Emotion!



IT'S
OKAY



IT'LL
PASS



I'M
OKAY.

Strategies – Calm Down

GROUNDING TECHNIQUES FOR THE SENSES

5

THINGS YOU CAN SEE



4

THINGS YOU CAN TOUCH



3

THINGS YOU CAN HEAR



2

THINGS YOU CAN SMELL



1

THINGS YOU CAN TASTE



Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Forehead:

Tighten forehead muscles by raising eyebrows. Hold for 5 seconds, then release.

Mouth & Cheeks:

Smile widely to tense mouth and cheeks. Hold for 5 seconds, then release.

Arms:

Extend arms out, locking elbows to tense triceps. Hold for 5 seconds, then release.

Legs:

Press knees together to tense thighs. Hold for 5 seconds, then release.

Eyes:

Squint eyelids tightly shut to tense eye muscles. Hold for 5 seconds, then release.

Shoulders:

Lift shoulders up towards ears. Hold for 5 seconds, then release.

Fists:

Clench fists tightly without straining. Hold for 5 seconds, then release.

Feet:

Curl toes under to tense feet. Hold for 5 seconds, then release.



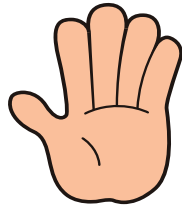
Strategies – Calm Down Space



PAUSE BEFORE REACTING!



Hand breathing

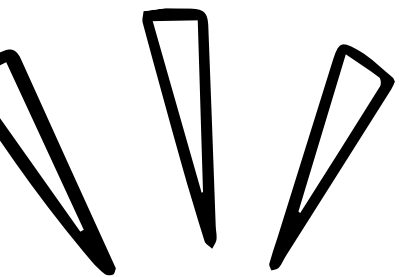


Trace your hand with your finger.
Breathe in for 3 as you move up a
finger,
breathe out for 3 as you move
down.
Repeat.

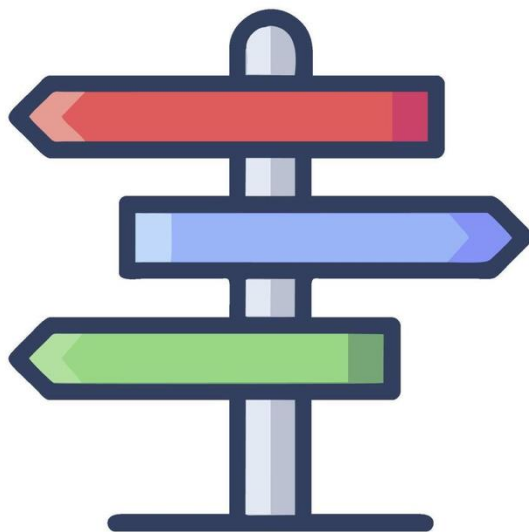
Flower and Candle breathing



Imagine a flower in front of you
Smell the flower
Imagine a candle in front of you
Blow the candle out
Repeat.



Signposting



Mental Health Support



The Sandbox
Age 10-25



The Mix
Age 13-25

**Signpost Creative
Therapies**
Age 5-18

Signpost
We're here for **young people**



Safe Space
Age 11-19



**With Youth
Online**
Age 5-18

**Be Body
Positive**



NHS Building a positive relationship
with food and your body

Autism and Neurodivergence



Autism Central
Resources, coaching
and support

ADD-vance
The ADHD and Autism Trust

Angels
Support Meetings
and 1-1 service



ADD-Vance
Resources, coaching,
training, & workshops



Families in Focus
Parenting Courses



Space
Support groups, workshops,
activities for children, helpline

Parental Support



Families First
Age under 18



Just Talk
Advice for parents
and carers



**ChatHealth
ParentLine**
Age 5-19



HABS
Empowering Children,
Families and Communities

Thank you for listening

