Children Are The Best Teachers

Giving Our Kids The Tools To Maximize Social Experiences With Peers and Siblings

Presented By
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Tonight's Objectives

- Realize why experiences that might seem like great social opportunities often turn out to be the most challenging for our kids.

- Learn strategies to build structure and motivation around social experiences so our kids benefit from them and learn great social skills.

Benefits of Peer and Sibling Experiences We May See From Our Perspective For Our Kids

Fun!

Interactive

Great Social Models

Something New

It Will Be a Great Outlet For My Child

Going In We Expect…….

And We Get……

As a Parent, It is Also Ok To Expect This…..

But This Often Happens……

How Our Kids Might Interpret The Same Experience

Unknown

Open Ended

Overstimulating

Requires Flexibility and Compromise

Unpredictable

Do Not Throw in The Towel Yet……..Help is On The Way

An Ounce of Prevention is
Worth a Pound of Cure
- Benjamin Franklin -

“A proactive approach is the most effective way to improve behavior & teach new skills.”

- Frank Locurto –
&
- Jackie Fonseca-Elias

Let’s Look At Each Of These Roadblocks and…..

- Review some proactive strategies to help our kids enter social experiences more confident and prepared.

- Look at how practice and planning can change the outcomes of these experiences for our kids.

Unpredictable & Unknown

Utilizing a proactive approach will help make the unpredictable and novel more predictable and familiar for your kids…..

- Visit the setting ahead of time with your child (take pictures)

- Create social stories to review any upcoming events along with strategies that will help your child navigate through them. (Carol Gray is a great resource)

- Engage in role play with your child to “practice” these scenarios, and how to strategize to achieve positive outcomes.

- Start out short and simple and build from there.

Social Stories Are Helpful Tools!

Resource

Carol Gray

Carol Gray is a Consultant to Children, Adolescents, and Adults with Autism, providing support via workshops and presentations, information, referral, resources, and direct services for individuals with autism, their families, and professionals who work on their behalf. Carol is best known for the development of Social Stories, a well-respected evidence-based practice used worldwide with people with autism of all ages. She is an internationally sought-after keynote and seminar speaker, and has completed over 1,100 presentations.

Open-Ended & Overstimulating

- **Providing a higher level of structure going in, along with identifying coping tools with your child, ahead of time, are effective "proactive" strategies for social situations.**
- Help your child create a schedule of the activities and expectations of the upcoming social experience.
- Attach a simple reinforcement system to this schedule to help your child monitor behavior
- Work with your child's school and private providers to determine tools to help them cope better while engaged in social experiences, and strategies for appropriately seeking out help or temporary escape if the situation becomes too much for them to handle.

Schedules and Checklists Help Our Kids, and Us, Navigate Social Experiences More Effectively.

Tips for Hosting a Stellar Play Date

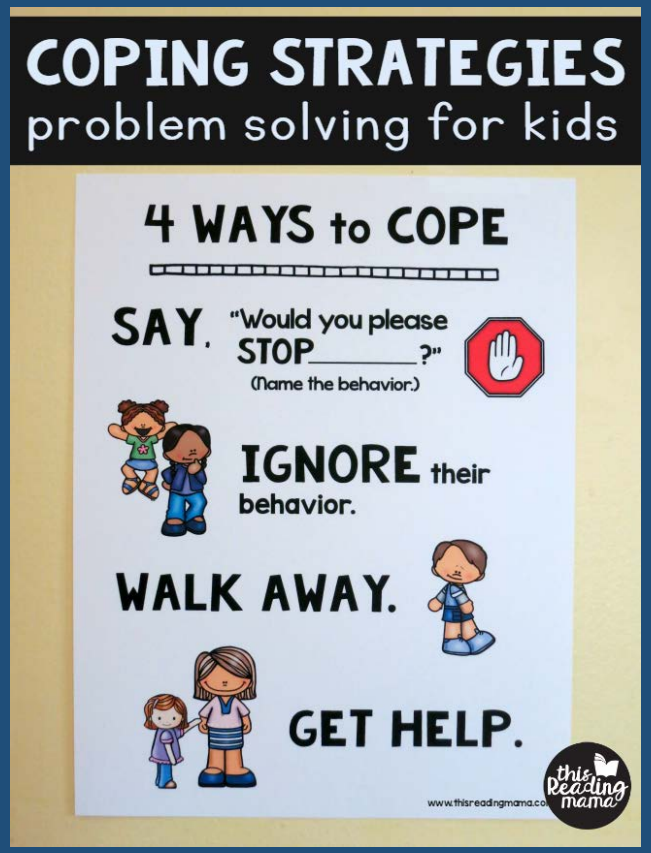
1. Have a clear start & end time.
2. Plan a schedule for how you want the play date to go.
3. Prep your child.
4. Prep your house.
5. Discuss house rules & expectations at the start of the play date.

http://thankyouhoneyblog.com

Schedule for Playtime with Noah

- ☐ Show Noah your new Transformers
- ☐ Noah's choice of what to play with
- ☐ Puppet craft
- ☐ Say goodbye to your friend. We will see him again on another day! ☺

Coping Tools and Strategies Will Help Empower Your Children



Reinforcement Systems Will Help Your Child Identify and Engage in Positive Behaviors

Social Flexibility and Compromise

- Kids often get “stuck” when things don’t go their way and when expectations or outcomes suddenly change.

- Deficit areas usually include:

1. Perspective Taking - “An understanding of other people's mental states” (their thoughts, feelings, desires, motivations, intentions). https://jillkuzma.wordpress.com/perspective-taking-skills/

2. Self-Monitoring and Regulation - A personality trait that refers to an ability to regulate behavior to accommodate social situations. (Mark Snyder)

Social Flexibility and Compromise

- Visual tools work great to help kids learn that outcomes don't always match others' intentions and there is often more than one way to reach a goal.
- Create these with your kids, if possible, and practice them (Role playing is a great way to do this).
- Here is an example of a visual tool focused on helping a child learn to compromise during a play activity with a peer or sibling.

There are going to be blocks at the party. Blocks are your favorite activity!

→

Other kids like blocks too. They are probably going to be playing with blocks also. They may want to build something else.

→

This is OK! If you tell them their idea is cool and ask to help, you are being a good friend and will likely make the other person happy!

→

Let your friend know that after you are done helping her build what she wants, you would like her help to build something you like!

→

If she says "yes" let her know she is being a good friend too. If she says "no" take a deep breath, walk away and find another friend to play with

Social Flexibility and Compromise

- Self monitoring and regulation can be tough for all of us!

- There are tools out there geared toward helping our kids:

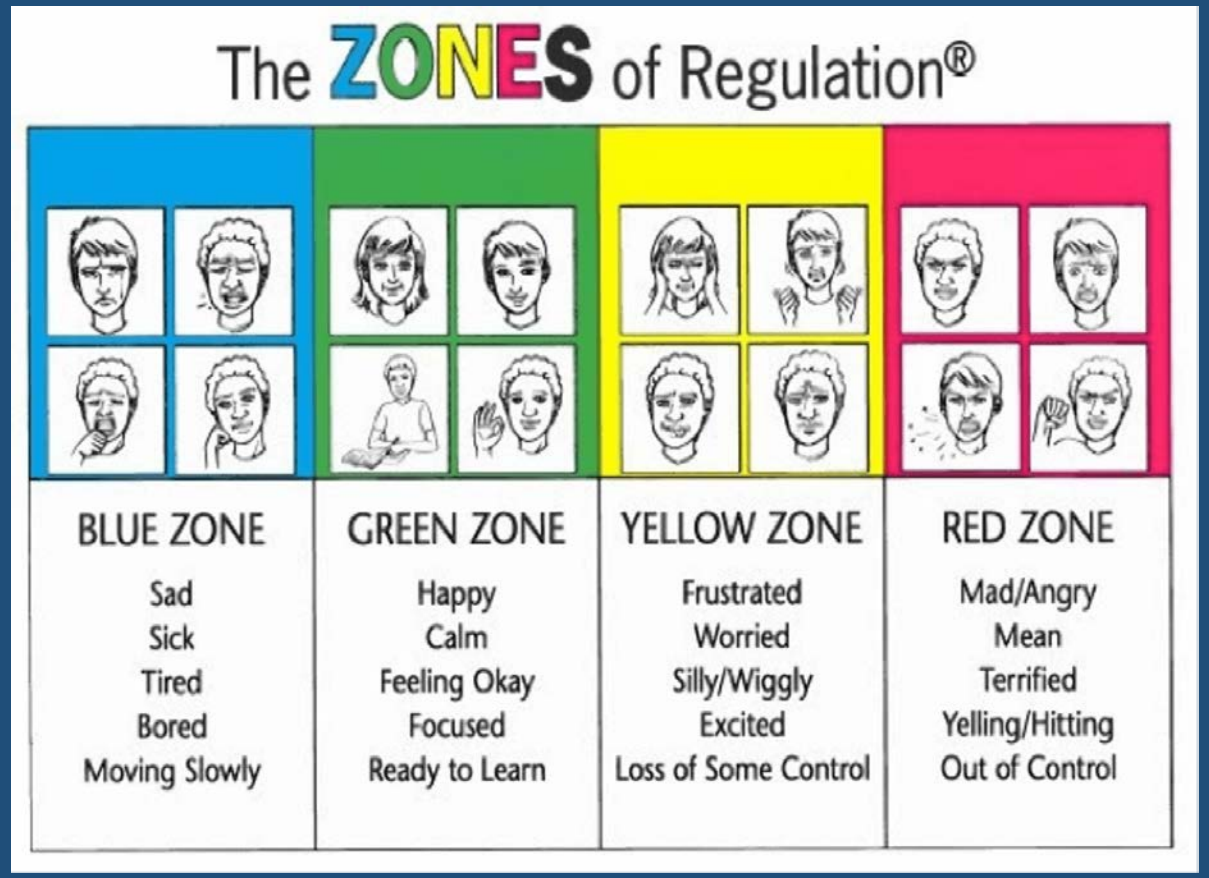
- - Identify where they are emotionally
- - Use strategies to help themselves regain control

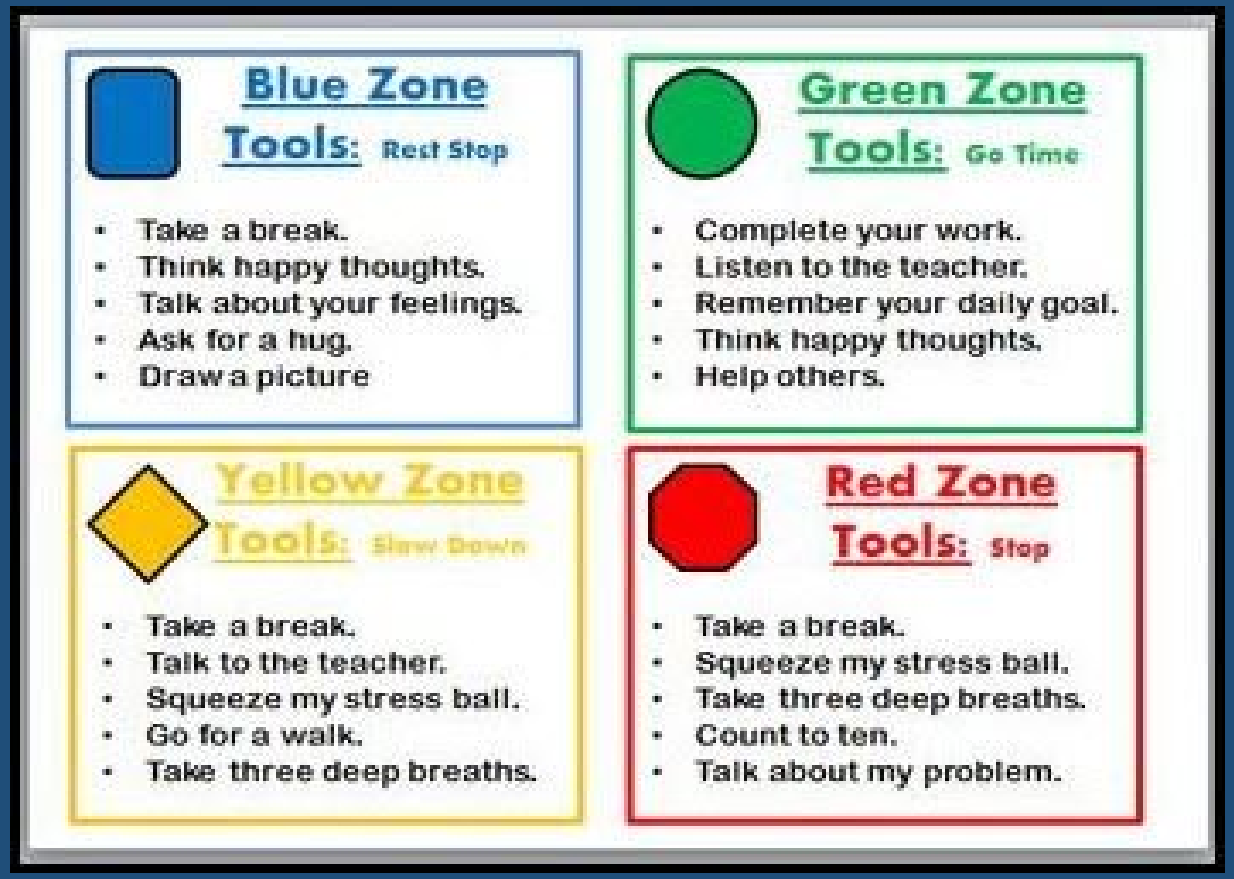
- Let's take a closer look at a real good one!

The ZONES of Regulation®

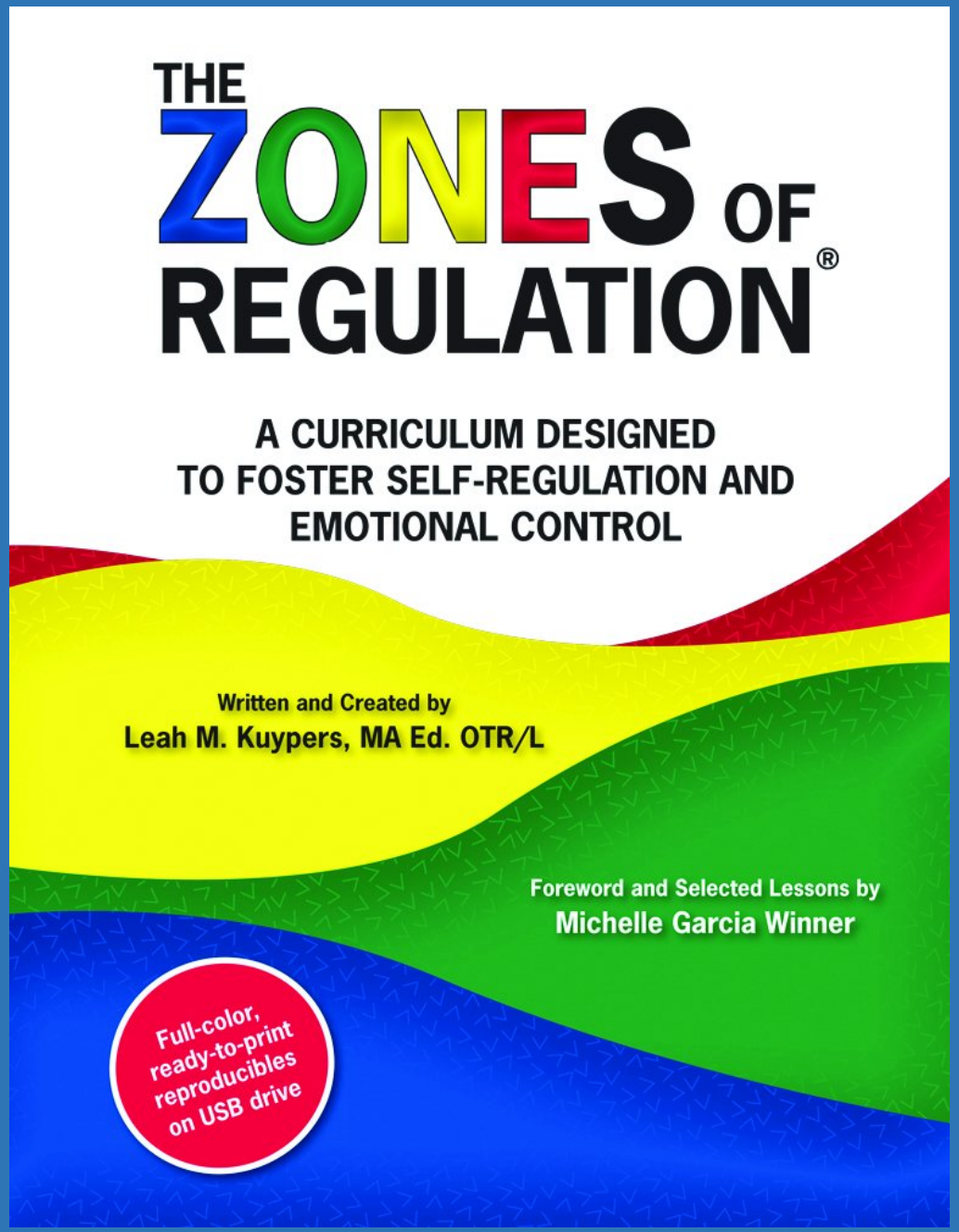
Helps kids identify what emotional state or "zone" they are in.

Provides them with a "toolbox" of strategies to help them regain regulation of behavior.





Resource


THE ZONES OF REGULATION®
A CURRICULUM DESIGNED TO FOSTER SELF-REGULATION AND EMOTIONAL CONTROL
Written and Created by
Leah M. Kuypers, MA Ed. OTR/L
Foreword and Selected Lessons by
Michelle Garcia Winner
Full-color, ready-to-print reproducibles on USB drive

THE MAIN EVENT

Some Strategies to Put All This Great "Prep-Work" Into Action

- **Before the Social Experience**
- If possible, take a short trip to the setting ahead of time
- If you created a social story for your child, review it.
- Review any schedules and reinforcement systems created.
- Review coping and communication tools your child can use if needed.

Some Strategies to Put All This Great "Prep-Work" Into Action

- Going in, attend to your child's "subtle" signs of threshold being met.
- Tolerance should be something that is built up, not continually exceeded.
- Facilitate functional communication in your child

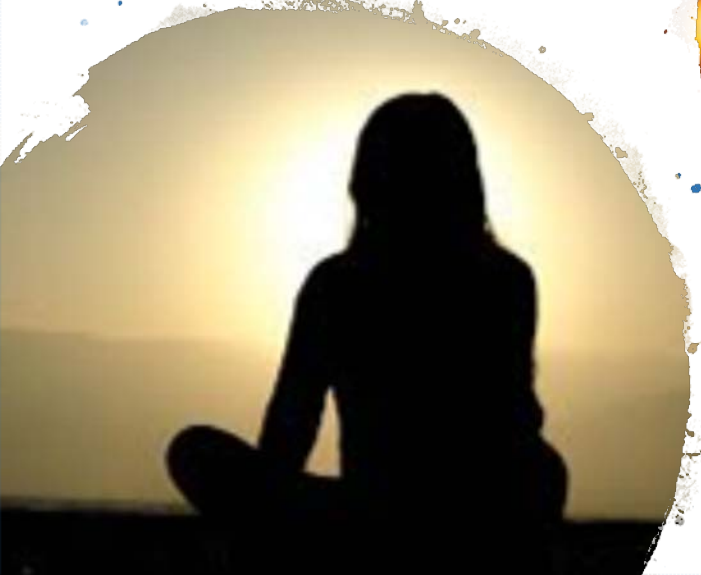
- Start out with durations well within your child's capacity and work up from there
- Reinforce your child for all efforts to engage in, be flexible with, communicate in and tolerate the many challenges of these experiences.

The Benefits For Your Child

- Through proactive teaching, planning and preparation, your child will develop “tools” to get the most out of experiences with peers and siblings.

- Kids are more motivating than we are.

- If fully available, confident and motivated, these opportunities will provide them with the chance to learn positive social behavior, communication skills, and practice in the areas of coping and self-regulation.



Recommendations For Parents

- You happily give your all for your kids every minute of every day.
- It is easily to forget about yourself.
- Being a parent, although wonderful, can be draining.
- Give yourself the chance to slow down, recharge, and do something you enjoy; even if it is just for a few minutes each day.
- Remember, in order for you to be at your best for others, you must be at your best for you too!!

Thank You!