

# Emotional Regulation Support Checklist

Simple steps to help your child.

## First, Ground Yourself

Before you can effectively support your child, it's essential to ensure you're in a calm and regulated state.

- Take three deep breaths
- Remind yourself this is a moment, not forever
- Engage your senses: Notice 5 things you see, 4 you can touch, 3 you can hear, 2 you can smell, 1 you can taste.
- Release tension in your body (neck, shoulders, jaw) and soften your face

## Create Safety in the Environment

Ensure the physical space is conducive to de-escalation. Remove anything that could cause harm or further agitation.

- Speak softly and move slowly.
- Remove triggering objects from view.
- Provide a safe, quiet space if possible.
- Reduce sensory input (lower lights, reduce noise).

## Support the Body First

Focus on physiological regulation, as emotional regulation follows suit.

- Offer a drink of water or a healthy snack.
- Suggest a calming activity like squeezing a stress ball or playing with playdough.
- Encourage slow, deep breaths (model it yourself!).
- Provide a weighted blanket or a hug (if welcome).

## Connect Before You Correct

Prioritize connection and empathy before addressing any behavioral issues. Show your child you're there for them.

- Validate their feelings: "I can see you're really upset."
- Offer comfort: "I'm here for you."
- Use a calm, gentle tone of voice.
- Avoid lecturing or criticizing.

## Offer Co-Regulation Options

Help your child regulate their emotions by providing external support and modeling healthy coping mechanisms.

- Read a book together.
- Listen to calming music.
- Go for a walk in nature.
- Engage in a quiet, shared activity like drawing or building with blocks.

## When They're Ready, Add Gentle Problem-Solving

Once your child is calmer, you can gently guide them through understanding and addressing the situation.

- Ask open-ended questions: "What happened?" "How did that make you feel?"
- Help them identify their feelings.
- Brainstorm solutions together.
- Focus on learning, not punishment.

## After the Storm

Continue to support your child even after the emotional outburst has subsided. Reiterate your love and support.

- Offer reassurance: "I love you, and I'm here for you."
- Reflect on what happened and how they handled it.
- Celebrate their efforts to regulate.
- Plan for future challenges: "What can we do differently next time?"

## Daily Regulation Foundations

Promote consistent emotional well-being through proactive strategies.

- Establish a predictable routine.
- Ensure adequate sleep.
- Provide opportunities for physical activity.
- Teach and model healthy coping skills.
- Encourage open communication about feelings.
- Practice mindfulness and relaxation techniques together.

## Summary

This checklist provides a comprehensive guide to supporting your child's emotional regulation. Remember to prioritize your own well-being, create a safe environment, and focus on connection and understanding. By implementing these strategies, you can help your child develop the skills they need to navigate their emotions effectively.