

The Zones of Regulation

The Treehouse @ Blessed Sacrament

Rationale

Self-regulation is something everyone continually works on. We all encounter trying circumstances that test our limits from time to time. If we are able to recognise when we are becoming less regulated, we are able to do something about it to feel better and get ourselves to a better place. This comes naturally for some, but for others it is a skill that needs to be taught and practised. This is the goal of The Zones of Regulation. By addressing underlying deficits in emotional and sensory regulation, executive functions, and social cognition, the curriculum is designed to help move students toward independent regulation. The Zones of Regulation incorporates Social Thinking® concepts and numerous visuals to teach students to identify their feelings/level of alertness, understand how their behaviour impacts those around them, and learn what tools they can use to manage their feelings and states. At the Treehouse @ Blessed Sacrament, we have implemented the Zones of Regulation across the provision as a strategy to assist our students in developing skills to maintain and improve their mental and social well-being.

What are the Zones of Regulation?

The Zones of Regulation is a systematic, cognitive behaviour approach used to teach self-regulation by categorising all the different ways we feel and states of alertness we experience into four concrete zones. The Zones of Regulation curriculum provides strategies to teach students to become more aware of, and independent in controlling their emotions and impulses, managing their sensory needs, and improving their ability to problem solve conflicts. Visuals will be used across both classes to support the children in identifying and managing their feelings.

The Four Zones: Our Feelings & States Determine Our Zone

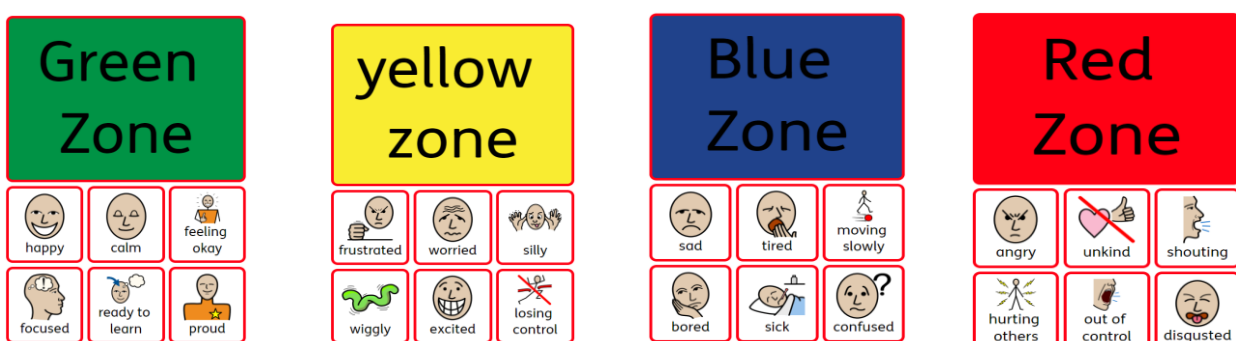
The Red Zone is used to describe extremely heightened states of alertness and intense emotions. A person may be elated or experiencing anger, rage, explosive behaviour, devastation, or terror when in the Red Zone.

The Yellow Zone is also used to describe a heightened state of alertness and elevated emotions; however, one has some control when they are in the Yellow Zone. A person may be experiencing stress, frustration, anxiety, excitement, silliness, the wiggles, or nervousness when in the Yellow Zone.

The Green Zone is used to describe a calm state of alertness. A person may be described as happy, focused, content, or ready to learn when in the Green Zone. This is the zone where optimal learning occurs.

The Blue Zone is used to describe low states of alertness and down feelings, such as when one feels sad, tired, sick, or bored.

Examples of visuals that will be used in the Enhanced Provisions to support Zones of Regulation:



Visual Representation of the Four Zones

The Zones can be compared to traffic signs. When given a green light or in the Green Zone, one is “good to go”. A yellow sign means be aware or take caution, which applies to the Yellow Zone. A red light or stop sign means stop, and when one is the Red Zone, this often is the case. The Blue Zone can be compared to the rest area signs where one goes to rest or re-energize. All of the zones are expected at one time or another, but the curriculum focuses on teaching students how to manage their Zone based on the environment and people around them. It is ok to have red zone feelings, but the correct ‘expected’ strategies need to be chosen (eg ask for help, take a breath, time out) not the red unexpected behaviours (eg hitting, screaming, swearing). Examples of how the Zones are displayed throughout the provision can be found below.

How to implement the Zone of Regulation

Starts with teaching the difference between feelings and behaviours in all zones

Teaching expected and unexpected behaviours in all zones

Develop tool box strategies for all zones

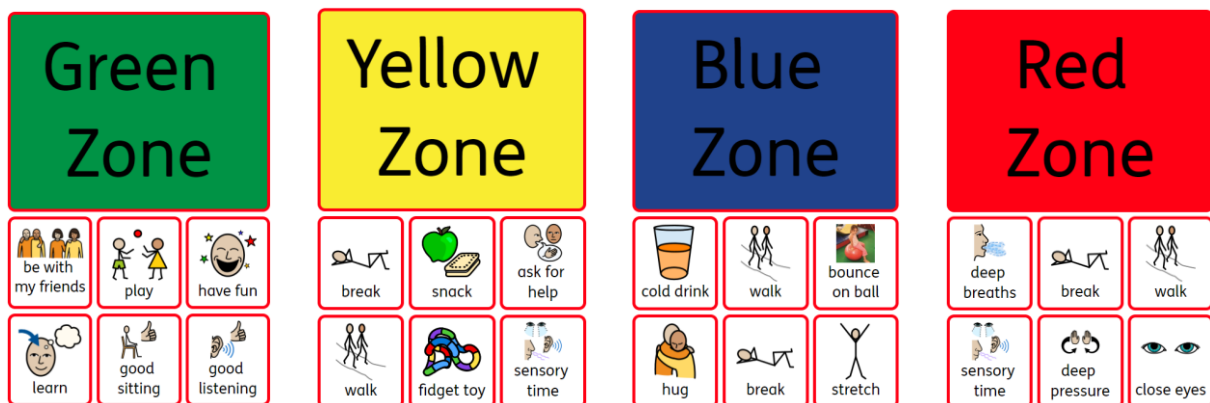
Implement self-monitoring tools, tracking tools for teachers, and a system for monitoring progress towards the development of self-regulation skills

Strategies

At the Treehouse, teachers are expected to teach a series of lessons to students on the Zones of Regulation. These lessons will be highly adapted to ensure they are appropriate for all learners. There are many strategies we can teach our students to help them self-regulate. The following are a few examples from the program. Students should be able to select up from 3-5 strategies from their toolbox they can use to regulate their emotions.

Size of the problem Breathing strategies (lazy 8 & 6 sided breathing) Chill out area in the classroom Checking In- bookmarks/coloured zones Have a break Jump, bounce Take a walk Squeeze object Count to 5 or 10 Social stories Listen to music Change activity

Examples of visuals to support emotional regulation:



Resources

The Zones of Regulation has a resource book and all staff have access to this. All resources have also been placed on the shared drive in the folder 'Zones of Regulation'. Posters are to be displayed within each classroom and teachers must implement a method that students can use to communicate the zone they are in at any given time. For example, displays and communication boards.


Common Language

At the Treehouse, we will use common language of the Zones, in identifying our feelings and students will be able to select from learnt strategies to assist them if needing to transition to a different zone.

IEPs and Behaviour Support Plans

The Zones of Regulation can be used to set targets for students with self-regulation issues when writing IEPs. The Zones of Regulation can be used to support children achieve targets set out in their EHCP. If children are continually displaying behaviours associated with the red zone, it may be deemed appropriate to create a behaviour support plan. The behaviour support plan will use the Zones of Regulation to show how the children present when in the different zones and the best strategies that the child and adults can use to support the learner back to the green zone.

*****example anonymised behaviour support plan:**

Behaviour support plan					Any medical conditions to be considered before using Team Teach:		
	Name:		Date:		Team Teach Holds	Try	avoid
	Class:		Agreed by:				
Zone	Green	Blue	Yellow	Red	Gather and Guide	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
My behaviour	Focused Engaged in activities Participating in lessons	Starting to disengage from lessons, reluctant to answer questions/participate in lessons	Shouting out Fidgeting Getting up out of seat	Ripping up work Ignoring staff instructions/ requests Slamming door Leaving classroom	Friendly escort	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
					Single elbow		
					Figure of four		
					1-person double elbow		
Potential triggers		Not understanding set activity	Low self-esteem/lack of confidence avoidance	Feeling embarrassed Not understanding task/activity Task avoidance	2-person double elbow	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I am trying to communicate	I'm feeling calm and ready to learn	I feel confused	I'm frustrated	I'm angry	2-person Single elbow in seated		
					Bite release		
You can help me to regulate by:	Continue to engage and involve me in activities	Reassurance from staff that help is available	Remind me to use my fidget toy/ blue tac. Remind me that I can take a quick break	Physical intervention (Team Teach) maybe needed - I may need to be taken/moved away from main classroom to a quieter space where I can have some time to myself	Grab release		
					Spit response/ caring C		
					Hair pull release		
					Half-shield		