

Emotion Regulation - Transcript, Citations and Reference Articles

So, What is Emotion Regulation?

Emotion/al regulation is basically controlling our emotional responses to stimuli (Heyworth, 2024). Stimuli basically means anything that causes an emotional response. That could be our environment, interactions with others, even our expectations about things that might happen. There's a lot of things that can be a trigger for emotional responses!

Emotion coaching?

Understanding emotions or 'emotional intelligence' is learned and often the first teachers are a child's parents/carers (Steed & Duncan, 2024). Parents/carers can help their children to learn this emotional intelligence by using emotion coaching. Basically, this means helping your kids to tune into their emotions by naming them, noticing when they happen and working out together, how to handle them. On the webpage, there is an excellent article that takes you through exactly how to practice emotion coaching (Miller, Giller, Samar et al., 2024).

Some parents worry that emotion coaching means that everything revolves around the child and that they will not learn boundaries. In fact, emotion coaching is about validating your child's emotions while sticking to agreed boundaries. Because boundaries are about knowing and understanding our own needs and then also respecting and understanding the needs of others (Jacobson, 2024). It's tricky to learn, but that is where emotion coaching comes in. Parents/carers can role model noticing their own feelings and also reflect what they know about others' feelings. "I'm so frustrated by this traffic jam! But I know that everyone else is stuck too - honking my horn won't help". They can also validate children's feelings but set boundaries around responses. "I can see that you are feeling really angry but it's not OK to hit". There is another great article that gives more information about how we can do positive parenting that helps children to process their emotions in a healthy way (Eanes, n.d.)

Benefits of good emotional regulation

Research shows that children who are socially and emotionally competent are more confident, communicate well, have good relationships and are more likely to try and persist at challenging activities (AIHW, 2022). So emotional regulation is an important building block for other areas of life.

Developmental milestones

We also know that some children find emotion regulation more challenging than others and neurodivergent children can have particular difficulty. Most children will begin to develop some 'self-regulation' skills around 3 but this process continues on into adulthood. When we see children with significant struggles with self regulation, some concerted effort to support these children early, leads to better outcomes for all areas of development. On our webpage you can find a link to the Pathways website (Pathways, n.d.) which outlines

developmental milestones for children at different ages and it can be helpful to read through these and notice areas where your child may be having challenges.

What do we do?

In our sessions with children and families we will look at strategies for emotion recognition and emotion coaching. We will also look at the triggers or reinforcers for emotion regulation challenges. What stimuli are particular triggers for your child's dysregulation? Or is there a response to dysregulation that is inadvertently reinforcing the behaviour? Parents/carers can observe and note behaviours over a period of time to see if any patterns emerge.

Another intervention that has been shown to be effective in improving emotional regulation, is teaching children to notice the body signals that they are receiving, that tell them about their emotions. This is called Interoception. Research has shown that as children become more aware of their body signals, their emotion regulation also improves (Mahler, Hample, Jones et al., 2022). This is probably because children are able to notice that they are becoming upset or uncomfortable before they lose control. The good news is that interoception can be learned! As part of our sessions we often work on learning new interoceptive skills that then assist children to regulate their emotions. These skills can then be worked on everyday in naturalistic settings, at home and school.

References

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<https://www.gottman.com/blog/positive-parenting-accept-feelings-limit-actions/>

Heyworth, M. (2024). *Emotional Regulation, Part One: What is it and Why is it so Hard?* Reframing Autism.
<https://reframingautism.org.au/emotional-regulation-part-one-what-is-it-and-why-is-it-so-hard/>

Jacobson, R. (2024) *Teaching kids about boundaries: Why empathy and self-awareness play a major role*. Child Mind Institute.
<https://childmind.org/article/teaching-kids-boundaries-empathy/>

Mahler, K., Hample, K., Jones, C., Sensenig, J., Thomasco, P. & Hilton, C. (2022). Impact of an Interoception-Based Program on Emotion Regulation in Autistic Children. *Occupational Therapy International*. doi:<https://www.hindawi.com/journals/oti/2022/9328967/>

Miller, C., Giller, L., Samar, S., & Cooperman, A. (2024). *How to help children calm down*. Child Mind Institute.
<https://childmind.org/article/how-to-help-children-calm-down/>

Pathways (n.d). Topics of development: Social - emotional.
<https://pathways.org/topics-of-development/social-emotional/>

Steed, A. & Duncan, S. F. (2024). *Emotion coaching: Helping parents bring out the best in their kids*. Relationships Australia, NSW.

<https://www.relationshipsnsw.org.au/blog/emotion-coaching-for-parents/>

Resources to read and try:

| Article | Link | Why is it helpful? |
|--|---|---|
| How to help children calm down | https://childmind.org/article/how-to-help-children-calm-down/ | Great article on strategies for helping children to be regulated. There is a long article, short article and video options. |
| Emotion Coaching: Helping parents bring out the best in their kids. | https://www.relationshipsnsw.org.au/blog/emotion-coaching-for-parents/ | Great article to assist parents to understand and use emotion coaching. |
| Teaching kids about boundaries: Why empathy and self-awareness play a major role | https://childmind.org/article/teaching-kids-boundaries-empathy/ | Positive parenting does not mean no boundaries! |
| Positive Parenting: Accept feelings, limit actions. | https://www.gottman.com/blog/positive-parenting-accept-feelings-limit-actions/ | Putting positive parenting into practice. |
| Topics of Development: Social/emotional | https://pathways.org/topics-of-development/social-emotional/ | Developmental milestones. |
| Triple P - Positive Parenting Program | https://www.triplep-parenting.net.au/au/free-parenting-courses/triple-p-online-under-12/?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCOjwsaqzBhDdARIsAK2gqnfNXfVeMg0mj2xSsZFBj4l3S4wlGRLc8PJaIquQfWM7xe63KqVJlfUaAmlpEALw_wcB | Free Parenting Program provided by the Australian government - based on positive parenting principles. Available online to all parents of children under 12 years. |

| Children's Books About Emotions | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| Title | Author | YouTube link |
| Handling disappointment and difficult things | | |
| Tricky's Bad Day | Alison Lester | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-g9g3jOz0P4 |
| Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day | Judith Viorst/Ray Cruz | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hukeHQah4U |
| The Barefoot King | Andrew Jordan Nance/Olivia Holden | A story about being frustrated. |
| Tilda Tries Again | Tom Percival | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xP6oYA2kbPY |
| Being angry/Bad mood | | |
| Fergal is Fuming | Robert Starling | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5agqe4ECjE |
| Ravi's Roar | Tom Percival | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Gs9D4SMCds |
| The Bad Mood | Moritz Petz/Amelie Jackowski | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bHy3_Pu5kGM |
| The Very Cranky Bear | Nick Bland | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v7rn2SqX4Ok |
| Worry | | |
| The Worrysaurus | Rachel Bright/Chris Chatterton | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WklyyxNKAL0 |
| Ruby's Worry | Tom Percival | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8F6R0IAXqA |
| Jetty Jumping | Andrea Rowe/Hannah Sommerville | |
| The Koala Who Could | Rachel Bright/Jim Field | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VcdVsRfUbjk |
| Empathy/understanding and being respectful of others | | |
| We Don't Eat Our Classmates | Ryan T Higgins | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kct1nSTnoXs |
| The Gecko and the Echo | Rachel Bright/Jim Field | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9R4gn7RV0g8 |

Positive Parenting Resources

Triple P Parenting Course - Free online

https://www.triplep-parenting.net.au/au/free-parenting-courses/triple-p-online-under-12/?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjwsaqzBhDdARIsAK2gqnfNXfVeMg0mj2xSsZFBj4I3S4wIGRLc8PJaIquQfWM7xe63KqVlJfUaAmlpEALw_wcB

Positive Parenting Isn't Permissive Parenting

<https://drsarahbren.com/53-positive-parenting-isnt-permissive-parenting-how-to-integrate-effective-discipline-that-prioritizes-emotional-and-mental-health-with-sarah-r-moore/>

Positive Parenting

<https://www.positiveparentingconnection.net/positive-parenting-punishing-misbehavior-doesnt-have-to-be-the-answer/>

Reframing Self Care: The positive Power of Looking After Yourself

<https://www.triplep-parenting.net.au/au/articles-and-news/post/tired-parents-the-positive-power-of-looking-after-yourself/>

Positive Parenting Accepts Feelings and Limits Actions

<https://www.gottman.com/blog/positive-parenting-accept-feelings-limit-actions/>

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