



Sarah Hill
Sensory Integration Lead



Laura Diedrick
Highly Specialist Independent
Speech and Language Therapist



Alison Cobb
Communication Support Worker



Emotional Regulation Newsletter

School Approach

SALT and Sensory OT are working together, to embed emotional regulation strategies across the school. Part of this approach is focusing on the environment, to enable students to communicate as effectively as possible. We achieve this by making the environment and ourselves as predictable, consistent and visual as possible, to support our students' communication. We are also ensuring that students have access to appropriate equipment and strategies that will help with their emotional regulation, for example weighted products to provide deep pressure input which is calming.

Co Regulation

This is for students who are able to communicate what is happening around them in their immediate environment. For example, naming things in the environment or in pictures; boy playing ball when describing a photo of a boy playing catch.

Co-regulation happens first. Children from birth to 7 are learning the skills of co-regulation, but can take longer or may always need co regulation support.

Reliant on consistent adult who can self regulate themselves and stay calm. Not react negatively to an individual who is struggling to self regulate.

Adult needs to be 'tuned' into student's behaviour. This means the adult needs to proactively put strategies in place to help keep the child regulated. For example, when the child is getting silly, take the child for a walk / use a gym ball or remove from situation.

Self-Regulation

This is for students who can use their language to talk about events that are not in the here and now. For example, talking about their weekend news, or talking about what is going to happen next. Students would be able to use their language to explain how someone is feeling and start to give reasons as to why.

Explicit teaching opportunities **when the child is calm**. For example, when you are cross, it is ok to hit your pillows but it is not ok to hit a person.



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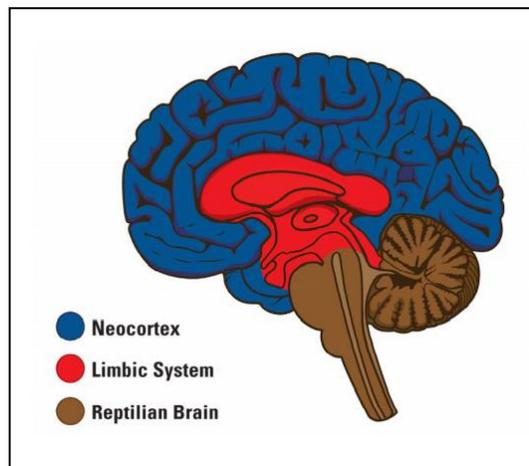
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What is emotional regulation?

Emotional regulation is the ability to express your emotions in a socially acceptable way. It includes, recognising your triggers, which enables us to link it to the way it makes our body feel. Therefore we can take action to regulate ourselves. By being calm, we can focus, attend, engage in activities and interact with others. Individuals who learn to manage their emotions find it easier to relate to others, form relationships and engage in positive social interactions.

<u>Trigger</u>	<u>Emotion</u>	<u>Behaviour / Action</u>
Loud noises 	Pain – hurts my ears	Wear ear defenders to reduce noise or run away or avoid situation.
Lavender 	Happy – I find it calming Pain – Results in a headache. Unpleasant – reminds me of old ladies.	Want to smell it or use at bed time to aid sleeping. Avoid where possible. Individual may become agitated or distressed if the smell is in a room.

How our emotions affect our thinking and reasoning



Blue Brain: Thinking, self awareness and controlled responses are dominant. This is the area of the brain that can inhibit the limbic and brain stem. Eg: We can inhibit needing the toilet for a certain amount of time, before the brain stem (brown brain) takes over and we have to go to the toilet.

Red Brain: Controls our emotions, behaviour, motivation and forms memories. When the limbic system is dominant, it reacts on impulse. The emotional part that can run away with fears and anxious thoughts. It assesses for threats and controls our reflex responses. Eg: Touch a hot pan and hand

instinctively moves without thinking. We cannot process language when our red brain is dominant.

Brown Brain: The brain stem controls unconscious parts of the body to keep us alive. Eg: Heart rate, hunger, toilet and blinking. When this area of the brain is triggered, our survival mechanism is dominant. This is shown as the fight, flight or freeze response. We cannot process language when our brown brain is dominant.

- Use simple language if necessary and give **extra processing time**
- Do **NOT** try to get your child to use speech to communicate when in crisis. Eg: Do not say 'Use your words.' (See red and brown brain)
- Keep your language to a **minimum**. Do **NOT** attempt to negotiate or reason when your child is in crisis or an escalated state (meaning that they are not calm) and do **NOT** talk when your child is in crisis.
- Be aware of the cues you are giving with your body, face and voice
- Use visual resources to support your child to regulate



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