
Fostering Self-Management Skills using Zones of Regulation and Sensory Strategies

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Autism Experience

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Write your name 5 times with your non dominant hand.

The Autism Experience Debrief and Information

Repetition is useless if the brain is not effectively processing sensory information.

Sensory processing problems can mask all kinds of underlying abilities.

Autism can be explained in many ways but all ways acknowledge a strong sensory component. Many people with autism who can tell us what it is like describe:

Touch from another human can be excruciating

“Tidal waves of stimulation” ie overpowering smells, distorted sights

Sounds that hurt their ears, tastes too strong to tolerate

Being so overwhelmed by the defect in the sensory system that all you want to do is withdraw because it hurts.

“It’s hard to understand what someone is saying when you have to constantly interrupt your listening to translate the words”

The world is like an FM radio station that is not exactly tuned into the station.

Ready

Engage and Respond

Catch on-“Get It”

Stay with the Flow of Events

ADAPT to Situational Changes

Experience Challenge as OK

Interact Freely

Be Spontaneous

Feel Safe, Comfortable-Free of pain and confusion

Feel in control, Not Overwhelmed

Not Ready

Brain Preoccupied (Pain, Confusion, Overwhelmed)

Can't Process the Meaning of what is happening.

The experience doesn't make sense or is too restricted/hypervigilant

React rather than adapt

At the mercy of stimuli

Information for learning/exploring is disregarded by the brain that is biased to protection and comfort

How we got here...

Three years ago we participated as a school staff in a training done by Laura Barker.

The most critical information we learned was...

Ready State: Which is the time when the “main map of me” is sufficiently able to become the consistent, steady, ongoing reference for determining what in my experience is RELEVANT TO ME.

As that determination gets cleaner and more efficient OUR BRAINS filtering mechanisms become better able to restrict what gets passed along for more processing so that we can easily keep up with what is happening. We're less likely to become overwhelmed because the load being processed is manageable.

Sensory Strategies in the MOCI Classroom

If input is provided or incorporated into as many doses as possible throughout the “flow of the day” the brain can then handle the consistent stresses associated with sensory processing problems in daily life events.

Occupational Therapy Group Sessions

MaryBeth comes in every other Monday for 30-45 minutes. MaryBeth uses this time to focus on teaching and reviewing more intensively 2-3 sensory strategies. This time gives students an opportunity to practice each strategy. It also helps with fidelity as classroom staff review proper protocol for implementation.

Let's participate together in one of our sessions.

What Sensory Strategies Look Like in Our Classroom

Name

Learning Target: (What we are learning): Learning ways to get us to the green zone or ready to learn/work.

Arm Hugs	
Shoulder Squeezes	
Bubble Wrap	
Wall Pushes	
Exercise Band	
Ear Massage	
Finger Squeezes	

Sensory Strategies

Learning Target: (What we are learning) Ways to help refocus after a morning of work. Name _____

Arm Hugs	LK
Wall Pushes	FA
Finger Squeezes	CCP
Hug Chair	PP
Exercise Band	PP
Ear Massage	Q
Lotion	

Sensory Items and Strategies



Other Sensory Opportunities Within Our School

Temple Grandin's Squeeze Machine



The "Hug" Chair



Zones of Regulation: The Basics

The Zones is a systematic, cognitive behavioral approach used to teach self-regulation by categorizing all the different ways we feel and states of alertness we experience into four concrete colored zones. The Zones framework provides strategies to teach students to become more aware of and independent in controlling their emotions and impulses, manage their sensory needs, and improve their ability to problem solve conflicts.

By addressing underlying deficits in emotional and sensory regulation, executive functioning, and social cognition, the framework is designed to help move students toward independent regulation.

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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 behavior, 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 more 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. © 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017&2018 Leah Kuypers, Kuypers Consulting, Inc.

Zones Comparison



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.

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What It Looks Like... Sensory Strategies

Each morning we begin the day with sensory strategies.

Here's what it looks like.

We have 2-4 other sensory strategy sessions throughout the flow of the day to give students the opportunity to use a strategy to help them regulate their emotions.

What It Looks Like... Check Ins

As part of our class meeting each morning we check in with students to see what zone they are in and how they are feeling.

Take a look...

We follow this with a group mindfulness session. This session helps students who are not in the green zone to regulate and hopefully get closer to the green zone.

Student Teacher Project

This past semester my student teacher did her evidence based project on Zone of Regulation and Students with Moderate Cognitive Impairments.

She chose 4 students to participate in her project who would receive specialized instruction and progress monitoring.

The project targeted the students ability to identify emotions and the ability to express how they are feeling to increase their self regulation and ultimately independence.

Student Teacher Project

Students were given 15 pictures of building staff portraying a different emotion and each emotion in written form. The goal was for them to be able to match with 80% accuracy after 8 weeks. She also worked on having students match emotions to the zone on a worksheet. The goal was 80% accuracy.

A combination of systematic and direct instruction was used.





1-2 Whole group lessons/ week, 1-2 one-on-one or small group sessions/week and 1 day of assessment.

Student Teacher Project





A variety of materials were used for instruction and assessment

- Smartboard lessons
- Emotions flashcards
- Zones of Regulation matching game
- Emotion Identification matching game
- Assessment Sheets





blue zone

 Sad	 Sick
 Hurt	 Bored





green zone

 Happy	 Calm
 Ready to Learn	 Good Listener

yellow zone

 Silly	 Annoyed
 Overwhelmed	 Frustrated

red zone


 Aggressive	 Angry
 Mad	 Yelling

Feeling Okay

Frustrated

Happy

Sad





Green Zone

Yellow Zone

Blue Zone

Red Zone

Evaluation of Effectiveness

Students did not make the goal of the 80% but showed marked improvements. She also worked on having The goal was 80% accuracy.

Goal 1: In 8 weeks when given 15 picture cards of building staff portraying a different emotion and each emotion in written form, students will match them with 80% accuracy. The average for student accuracy was 60%.

Goal 2: In 8 weeks the students match emotions to the correct zone on a worksheet with 80% accuracy. The average for student accuracy was 46%.

Had we had more time we believe they would have progressed even further.

Presentors

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