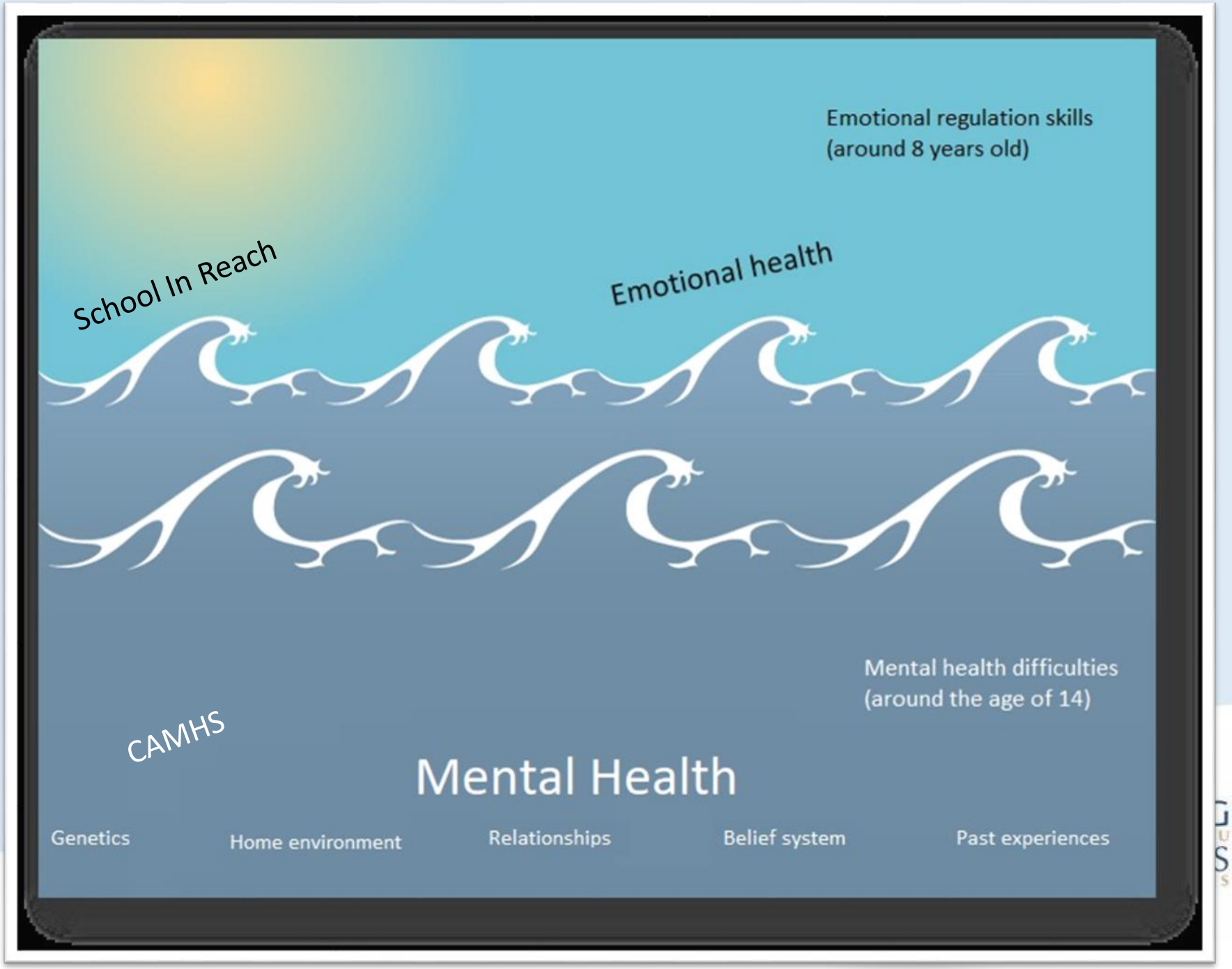
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Emotional Regulation



Today's workshop will:



Explore how parents/carers can support children with their emotions

Offer practical strategies to try out at home



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The Development of Emotions



Noticing emotions – birth to 1 years

- Babies are born with primitive emotions such as happiness, anger and fear
- Rely on caregiver to have their needs met.

Expressing emotions – age 2-3

- Toddlers experiment with expressing emotions in new ways.
- This is a complex time emotions can result in extreme expressions
- Toddlers show how they are feeling by their behaviours.

Sharma & Cockerill (2021)



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The Development of Emotions



Managing emotions - age 3-5

- Emergence of independence
- Start to learn about their own and others' emotions.
- Start to learn how to cope with social situations:
- Sharing, listening, playing together.

Talking about emotions - age 5-7

- Children can talk more easily about how they are feeling and more able to take on board advice and techniques to help them.
- Children may find it hard to implement these techniques and may resort to aggression when upset.

Sharma & Cockerill (2021)



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The Development of Emotions



Understanding more complex emotions – age 7-11

- Children can describe situations affecting their emotions
- Children understand that we can sometimes feel a range of emotions about a single situation
- They understand and find it easier to express complex emotions such as pride, guilt and shame.

Sharma & Cockerill (2021)

We would not normally expect a child to self-regulate until **at least** aged 8 *(Sharma & Cockerill, 2021)*

Emotional regulation is the greatest influence on psychological wellbeing *(Shenfield, 2016)*

Wellbeing is the greatest influence on academic and career success *(Brookes, 2014, for Public Health England)*



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Emotions



Emotions help us navigate and understand all situations

Emotions produce chemicals and signals across the brain and the body's nervous system which cause physical sensations *Ekman (2004)*

This mobilises us to action, e.g..

1) *Socialising*
   Dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin: laughing, feeling safe, relaxed when with loved ones

2) *Avoiding harm*
   Adrenaline, cortisol: a loud noise so we jump/run so seek connection

3) *Motivation*
   Dopamine, adrenaline, cortisol: energised, agitated or even worried so practice spellings before a spelling test

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Emotions



If we are not aware of our emotions, then they can take over and result in:



shut down



avoidance



anger

Which is when we do or say things that we don't really mean!

Learning **how** & **why** we experience emotions helps us **understand the world around us…**

learning how to manage emotions helps us **navigate the world around us.**

Lewis (2010)

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Building Emotional Awareness
Label the emotion





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1
IDENTIFY
YOUR
EMOTIONS



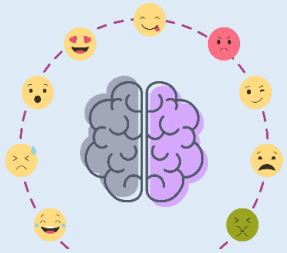
Externalising Emotions

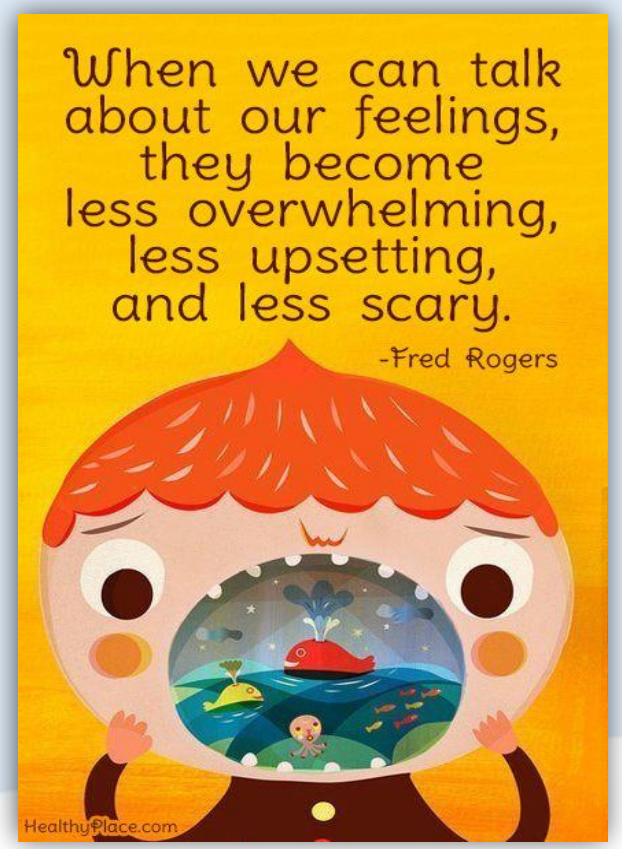


Studies have shown that **recognising** and **naming** an emotion reduces the effect that emotion has on the body, which in turn allows us to manage that emotion. *Bryson & Siegel (2012)*









Connection (with the emotion)
before correction (of the behaviour)

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What am I feeling? Check-in



What Zone Are You In?

Blue	Green	Yellow	Red
			
Sick Sad Tired Bored Moving Slowly	Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	Mad/Angry Mean Yelling/Hitting Disgusted Out of Control







There are **27** categories of human emotions

(Cowen & Keltner, 2017)

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THE ZONES OF REGULATION: A SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING PATHWAY TO REGULATION - Welcome



Everyday Emotions



Using opportunities for conversations about emotions builds a child's ability to recognise, name and manage their own emotions

Which emotion do you think the person is experiencing?







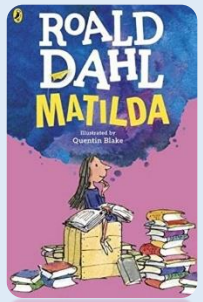


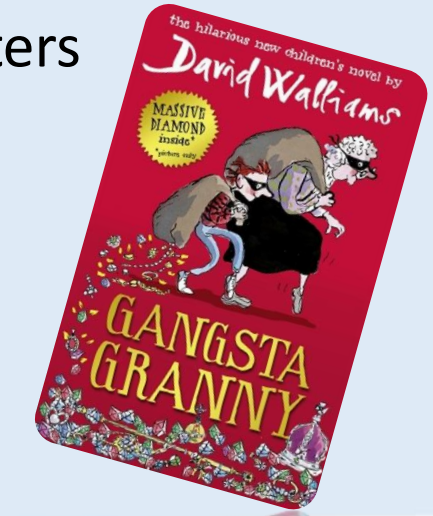




Chat about emotions that book and TV characters feel











Heath, Smith, & Young (2017)

Name it to Tame it

Young children feel strong emotions and struggle to express this with words. We can support them by naming the emotion they're feeling, e.g.:

Alegre (2011); Petrides et al. (2016)

'It sounds like you **might be** feeling **angry**?'

'I **imagine** that you're feeling **annoyed**?'

'I **wonder** if you're **worried**?

'I can see that this **might be** making you feel **frustrated?**'

Hughes, & Golding (2012)

We can walk beside them through these feelings – acknowledging and normalising all emotions while building a trusting relationship.

Reflecting on that fact that we as adult's often need this before any advice or problem solving.

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Building Emotional Awareness





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Emotions and the Body



Sometimes emotions are **overwhelming** or **confusing**.

Not understanding **how** we experience **emotions** or **why** we are feeling that way can be disorientating and impact **behaviour**

*e.g., **worries** can cause: **agitation**, an upset stomach, and a racing heart; if we do not know that these feelings signal "worried" then we can mistake it for feeling **physically sick!***

*If we feel **physically sick** then we might **avoid** situations that cause these symptoms.*

*If we are feeling **agitated** then we might **run** away, **physically hit** or **scream** and **shout**.*

All without knowing that we are feeling worried; what we are worried about; or what worry feels like … not sick, not anger issues

Ekman (2004)

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Emotions and the Body

Our ultimate goal is to control our emotions more than they control us.



When we experience intense emotions – ***both positive and negative*** – our brain and body sends us signals that prepares to respond.

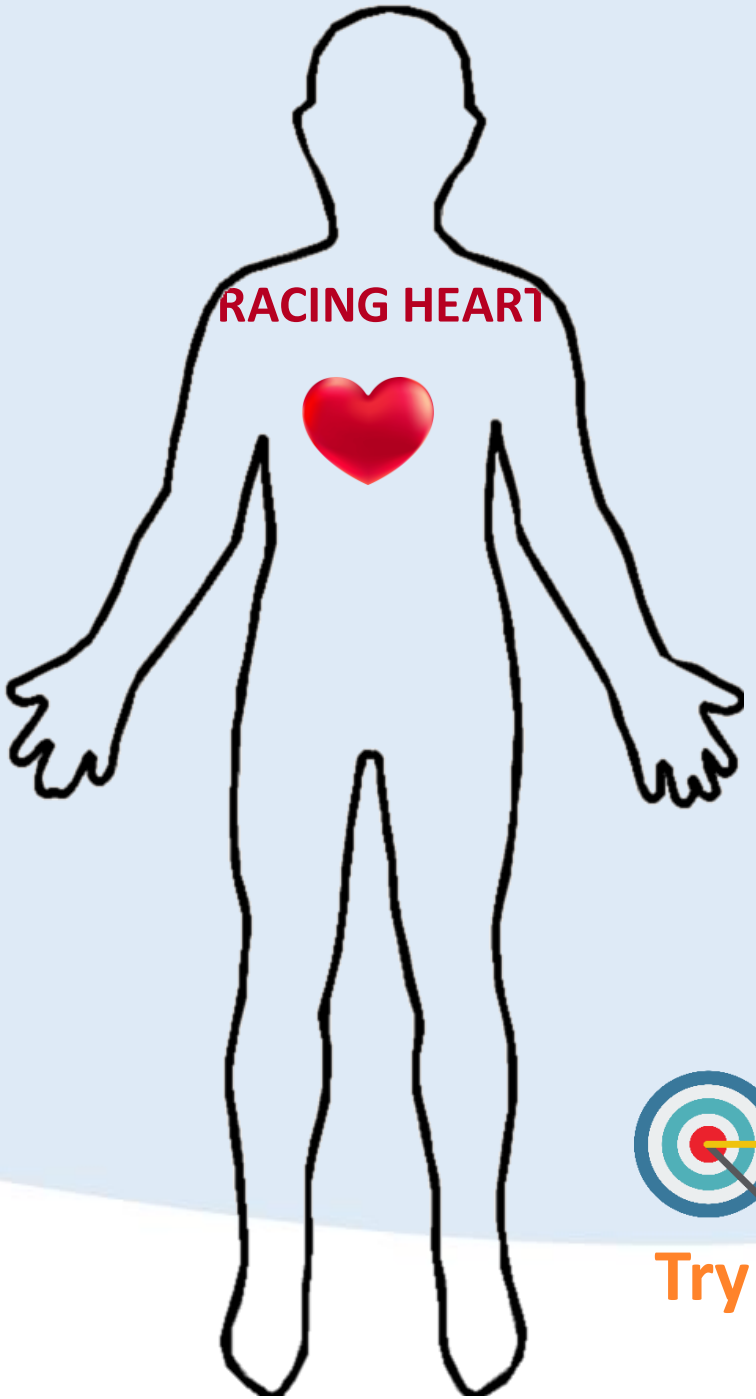
The first step of **emotional regulation** is noticing these sensations within our body and responding in a way that manages these sensations.

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Body Map





Label the body on your sheet with some **physical symptoms** of strong emotions.

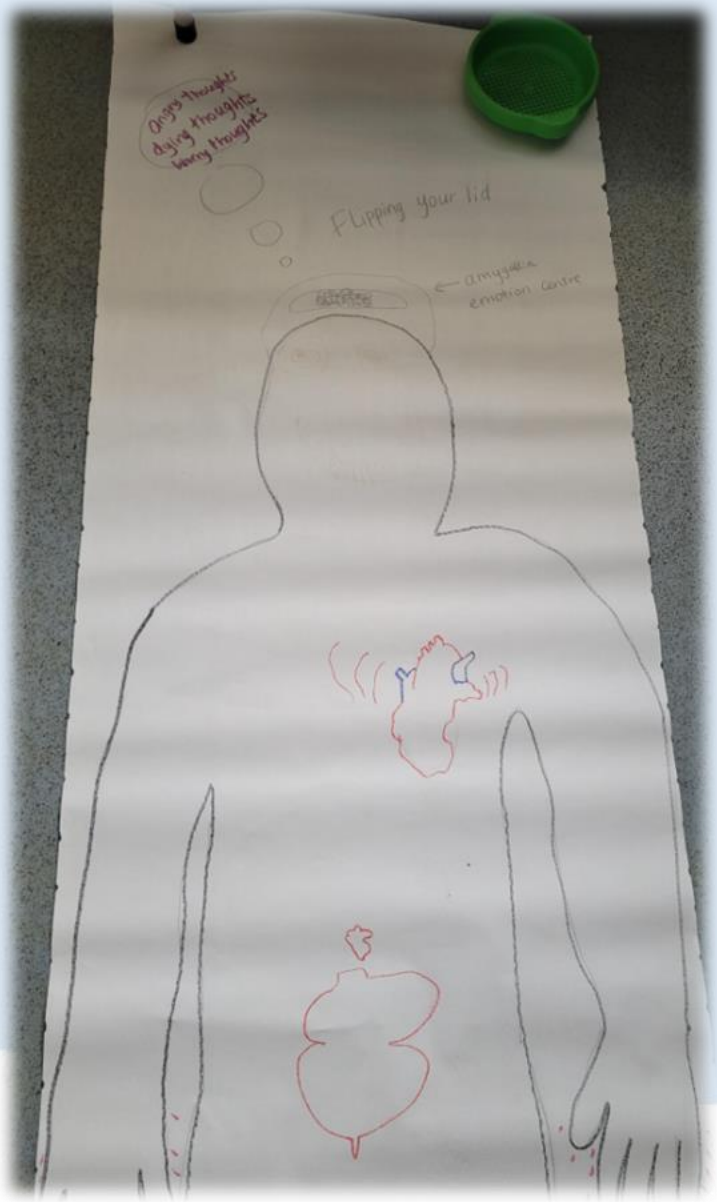
e.g. anger, anxiety, frustration

This might look different for everyone!

Try to label at least 5 things…

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Creating Awareness



Increased awareness of the signs of big emotions.

Help children to identify when they happen and in what order.

Putting strategies in place early will help them to manage their emotions before they take over their body.





Damasio (1999)
Guendelman, Medeiros, Rampes (2017)

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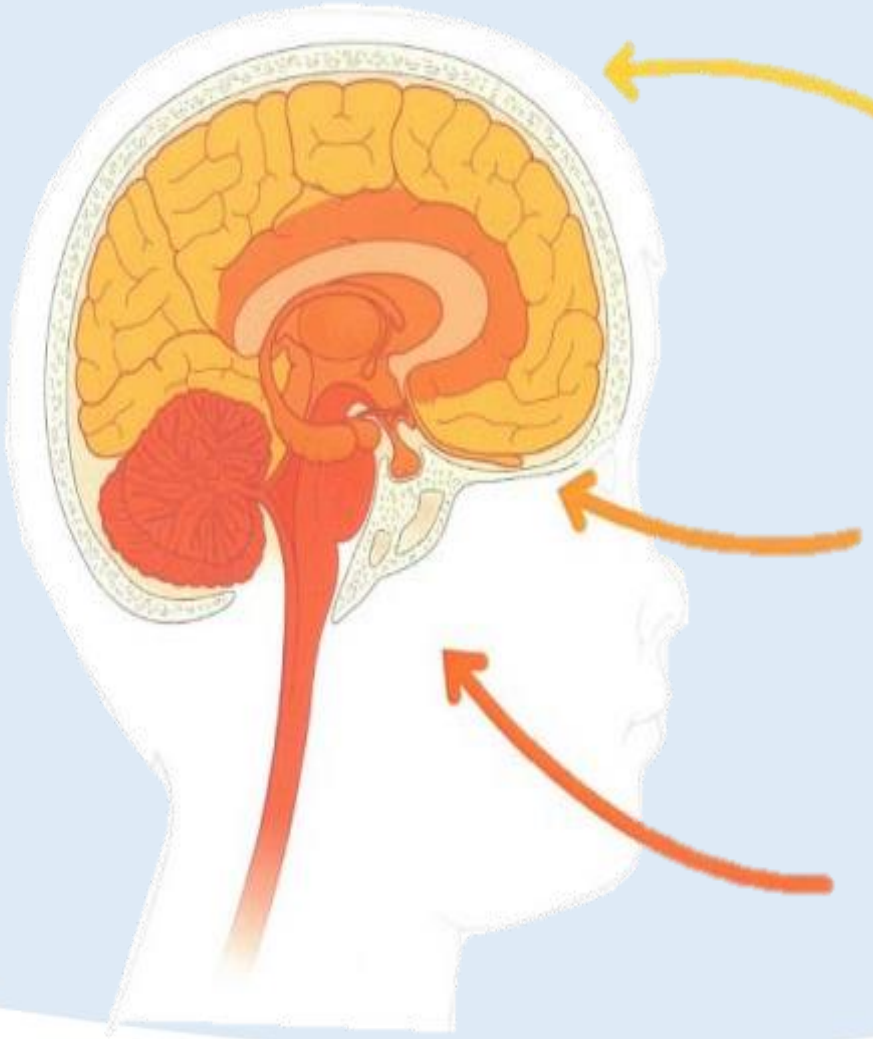
Emotional regulation, basic neuroscience and connecting with the emotional brain





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Neuroscience of emotion



Cortex
Cognitive brain

Limbic System
Emotional brain

Brain stem
Instinctual brain

CORTEX (cognitive / thinking / human brain)

- ***Inaccessible during heightened emotions***

LIMBIC SYSTEM (emotional/monkey brain)

- ***Triggers release of stress or feel-good hormones.***

BRAIN STEM (instinctual/lizard brain)

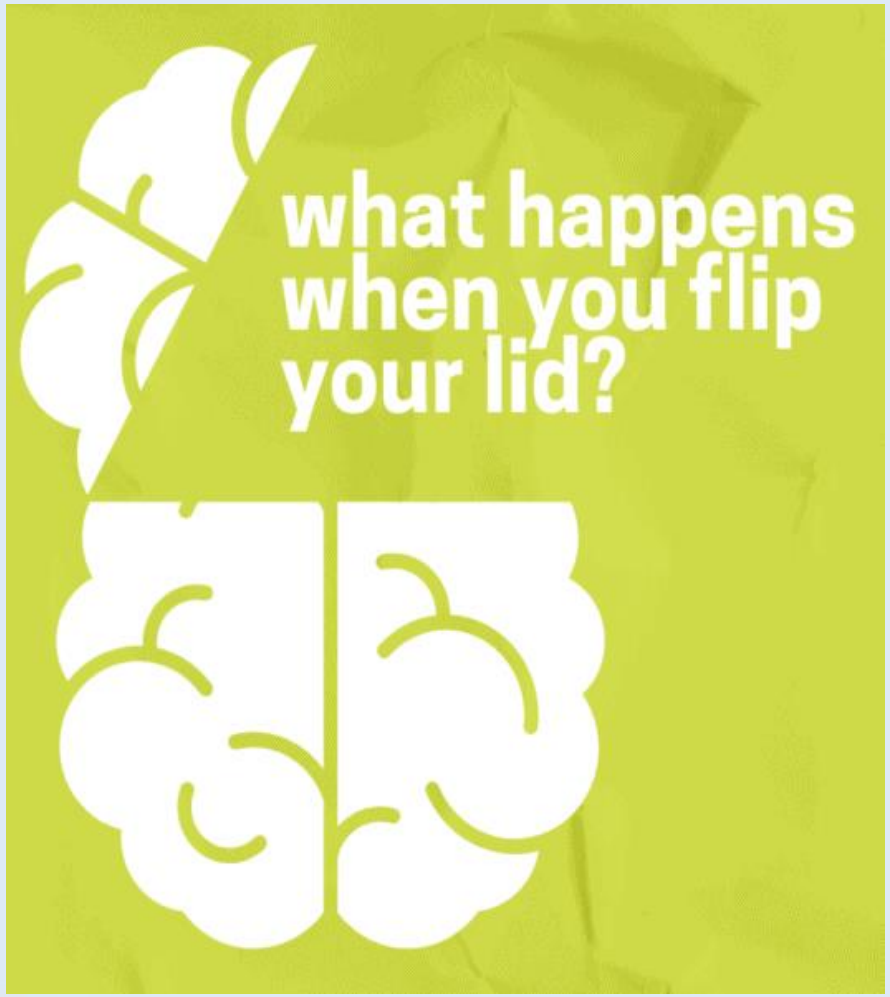
- ***Survival: fight, flight or freeze***

Lifted and adapted from Thrive Approach

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Neuroscience of emotion - Flipping your lid



CORTEX / THINKING BRAIN IS NOT ACCESSABLE



- The brain and body are in survival mode
  - The body is ready to fight, run or hide so:
- Inability to think logically or make sense of thoughts
- Reduced ability to: recall memories; or retain and store information (create new memories)
- Unable to solve emotional or social problems
- Lose of impulse control – lashing out, physically or verbally
- Unable to put language to thoughts and communicate with others
- Unable to consider other people's thoughts, feelings and situation.

Siegel & Bryson (2011)

To help a child who has flipped their lid we can

lend them our thinking brain *(if we remain calm)*

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Emotional Regulation – The 3 R's

REASON

Cortical / thinking / human brain

Then: We can support the child to reflect, learn, remember, articulate and become self-assured.

RELATE

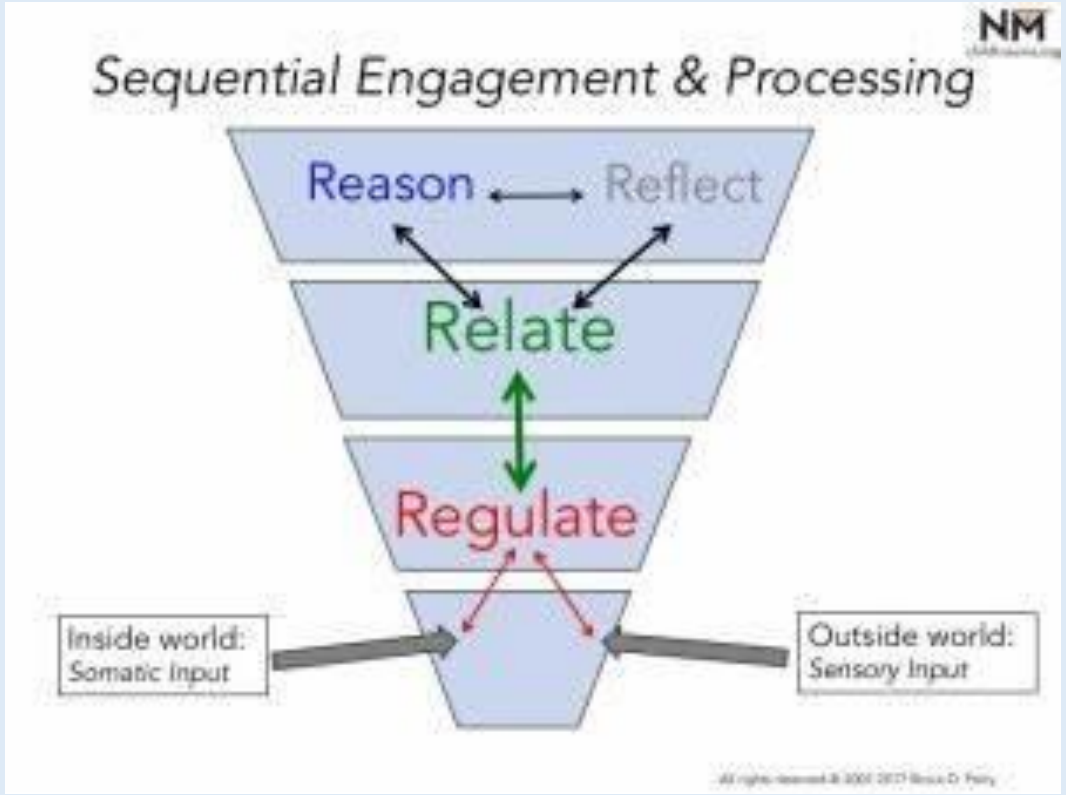
limbic / emotional brain

Next: We must relate and connect with the child through an attuned and sensitive relationship.

REGULATE

Brainstem / survival brain

First: We must help the child to regulate and calm their fight/flight/freeze responses.





Bruce Perry (2022)

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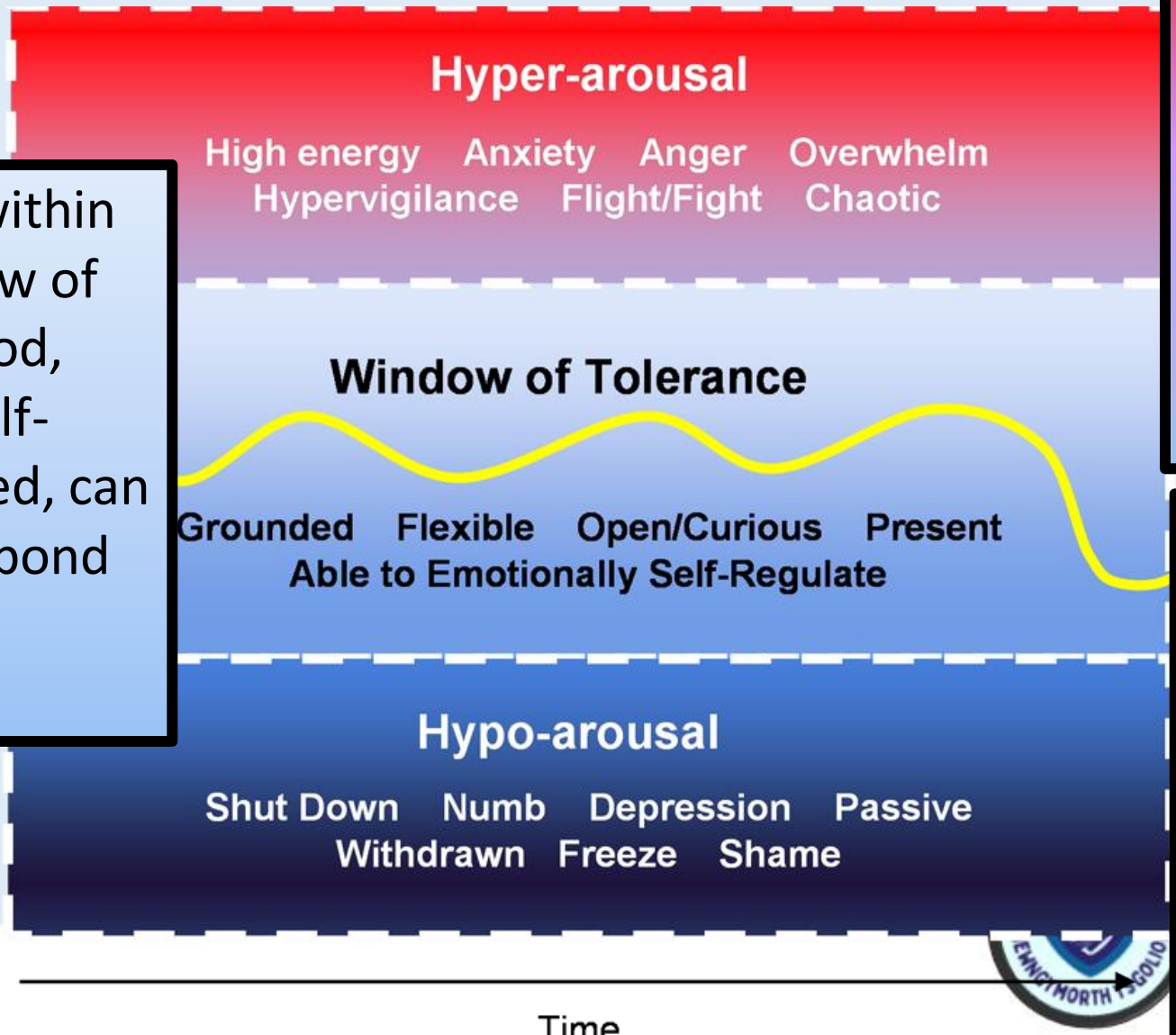
Emotional Regulation and the Window of Tolerance





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Emotional Regulation



When a child is above their window of tolerance they may appear agitated, conflict often arises, they may disengage, seem anxious, distressed or angry. They can no longer effectively process information.

Children working within their brain's window of tolerance show good, age-appropriate self-control, are engaged, can problem solve, respond to instructions and appear calm.

When a child is below their window of tolerance they may disengage, refuse to respond or move, seem sleepy, not respond verbally or seem to 'shut down'.

(Dan Siegel, 1999)

Fight, Flight or Freeze

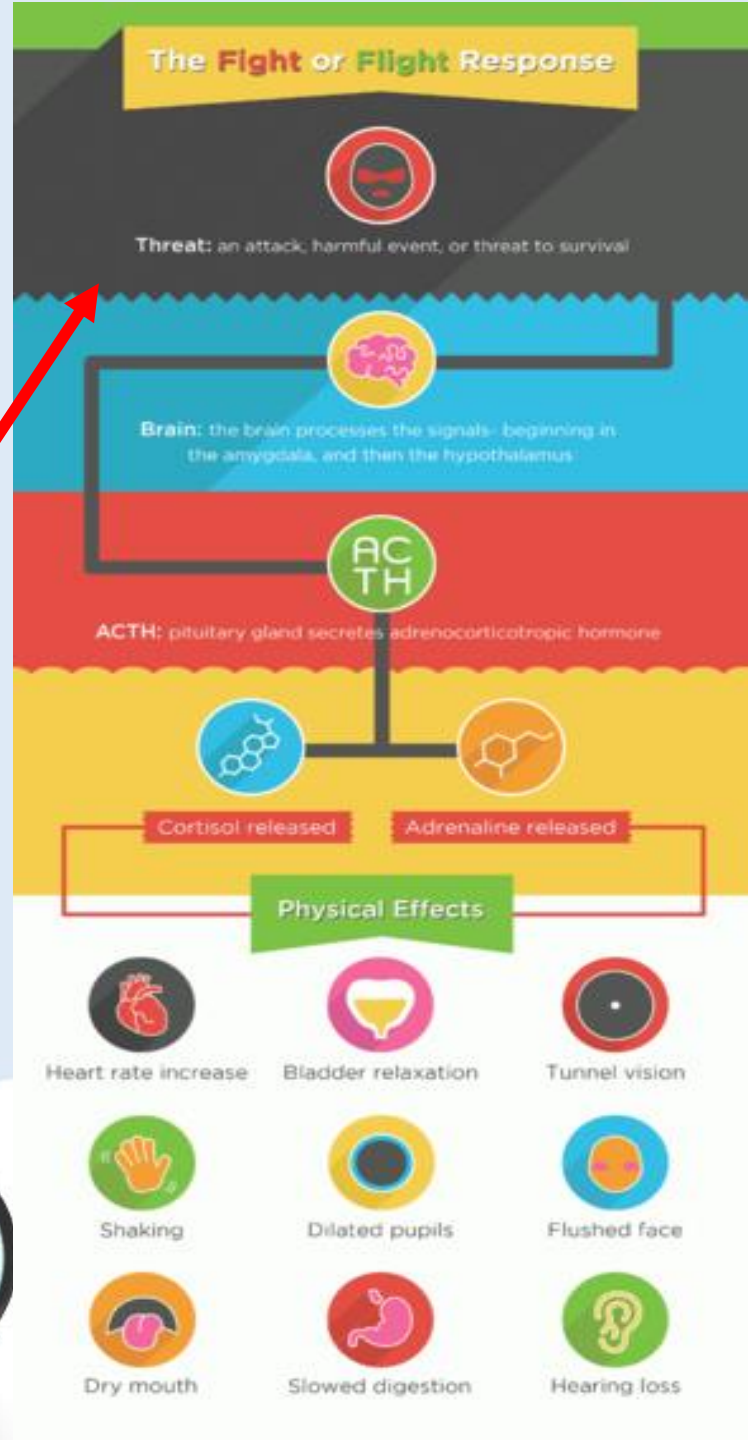
Initially, this is an unconscious process; triggered by stress and is often **not** within a child's control.

The amygdala (Caveman brain) sends signals to the nervous system and triggers all of the physical responses.

In Todays Society

Our Brain perceives "Acute stress" or 'threat' as possibly..

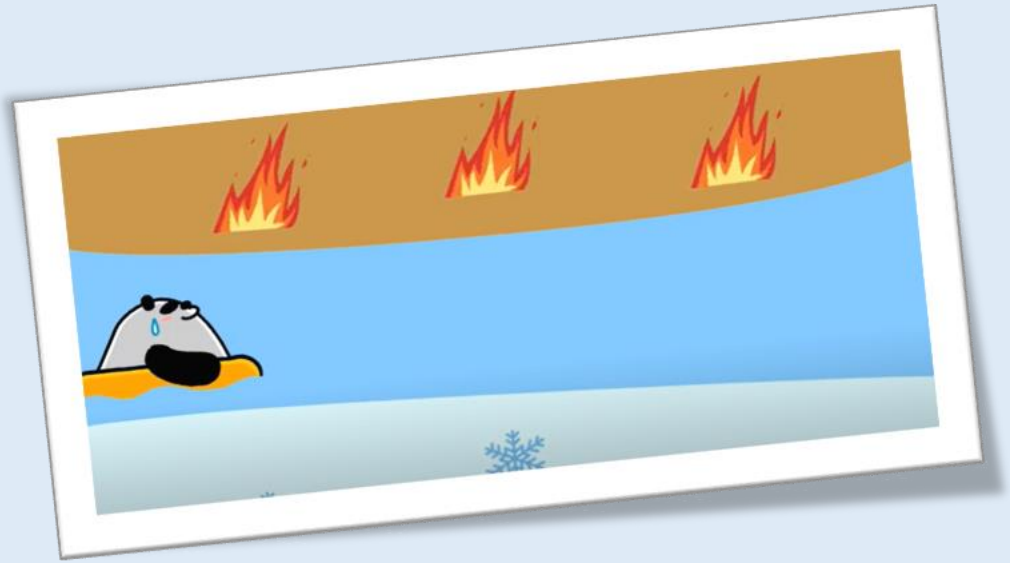
- being asked to share,
- bedtime,
- change,
- not having cake for breakfast… etc



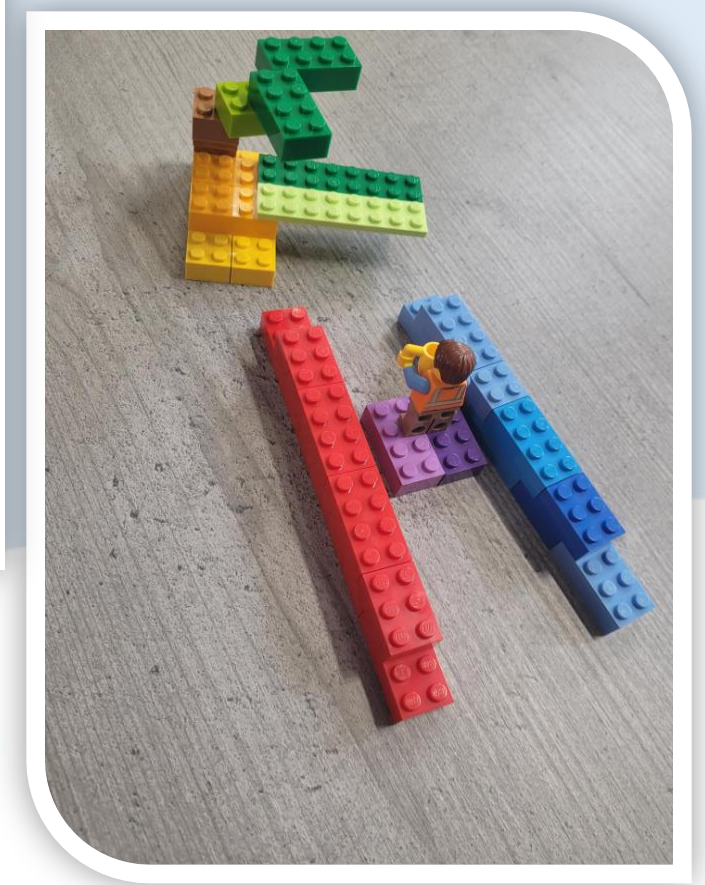
Zeigler-Hill, V., & Shackelford, T. K. (2020)

Window of Tolerance

www.bing.com/videos/riverview/relatedvideo?q=the+window+of+tolerance+reimagined&mid=3927DF129C17BF823E4C3927DF129C17BF823E4C&FORM=VIRE







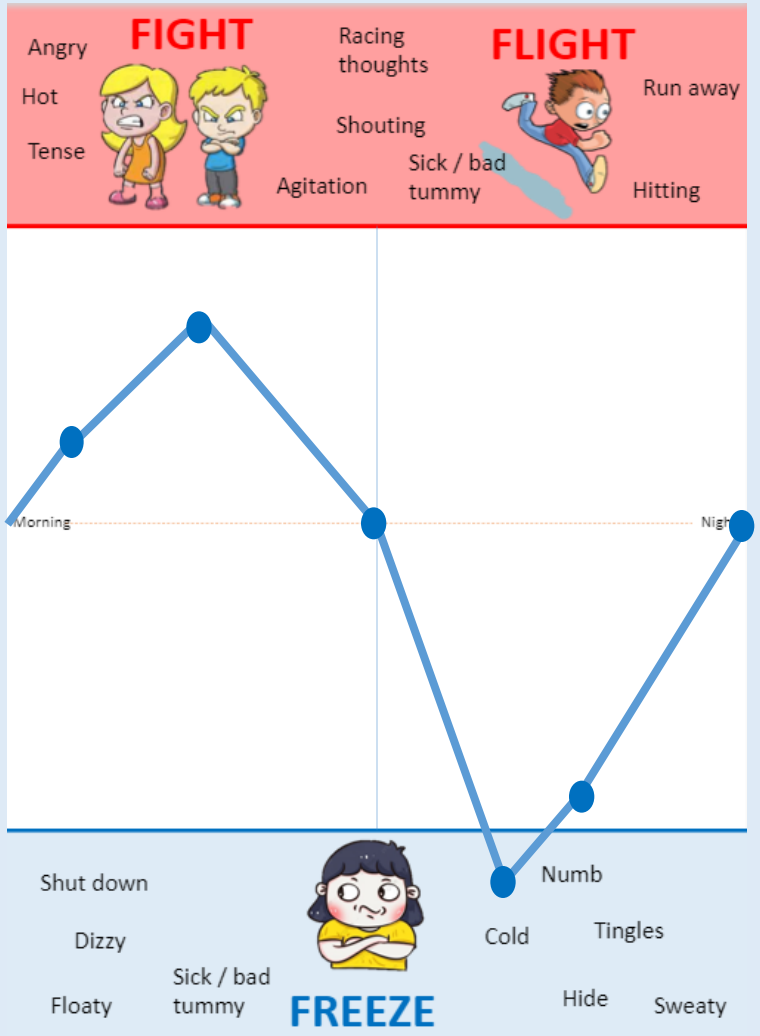
[Window of Tolerance Reimagined - YouTube]

Window of Tolerance



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Window of Tolerance Task



Think of a worry filled / stressful day

Morning
Afternoon
Evening

Plot this on your window of tolerance sheet

Think: how does my thoughts and body respond to these events?

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Emotional Flooding





When we wake up, most of our cups already have something in them.

Throughout the day, emotions, events, tasks and physical need fill our cup. For some children this happens slowly, for others seemingly ‘simple’ events can cause the cup to fill up quickly.

Eventually, the cup will overflow if we do not do things to empty our cup along the way.



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Window of Tolerance

Improving children's understanding of their fight, flight and freeze response can help **increase** *(widen)* their window of tolerance.

Increasing window of tolerance will enable children to spend less time in **survival mode** and more time being able to learn, play and connect *(Brodovsky and Kiernan, 2017).*

When children are able to recognise these survival responses, we can help them to take steps to **regulate their emotions** and move back into the window *(Siegel, 2020).*

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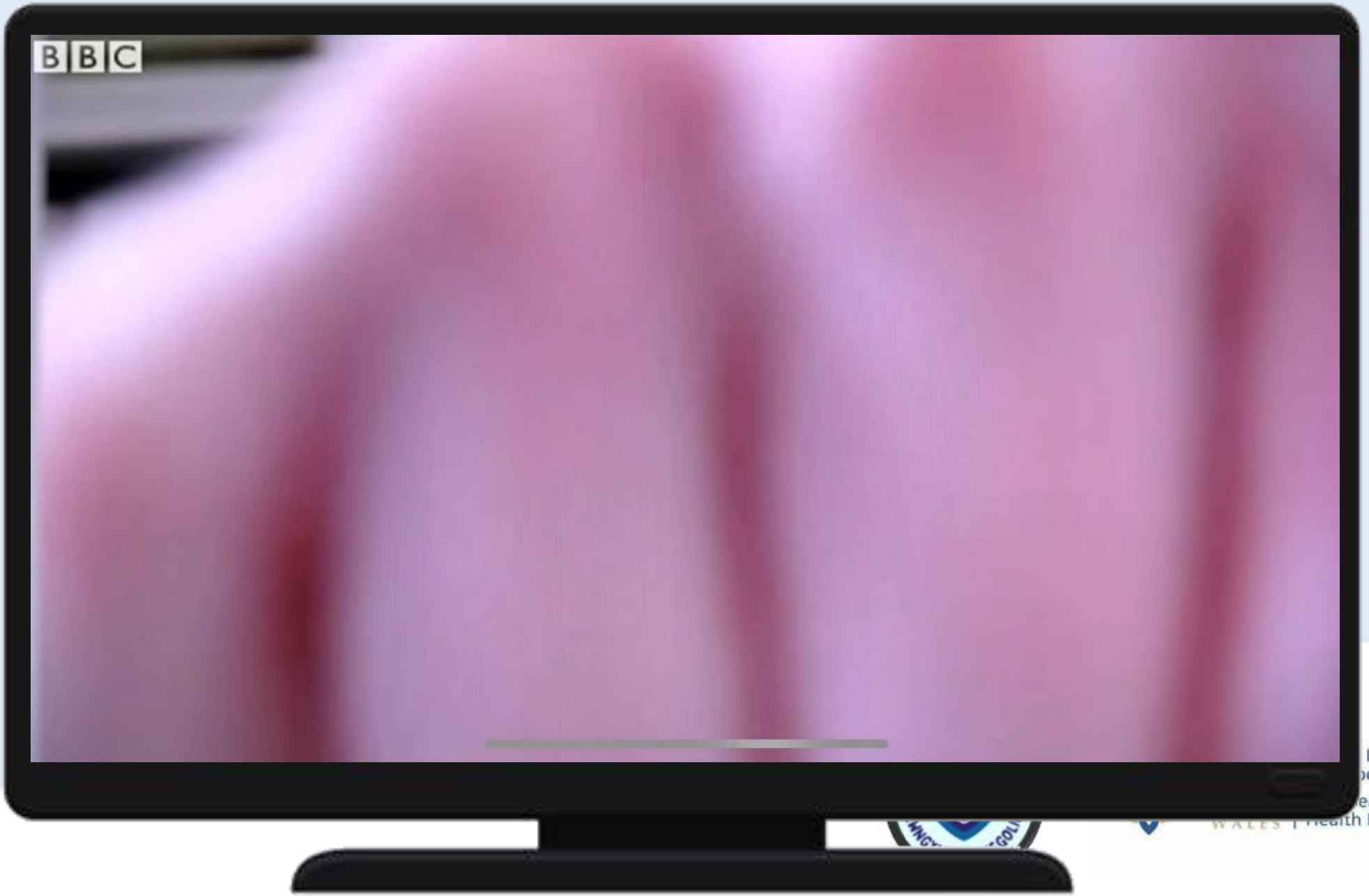
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Fight, flight and freeze and emotional regulation





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Fight, Flight and Freeze

Our brains can make mistake and think that everyday things, like school, tests and seeing friends, need an emotional response!
This is called Faulty Neuroception

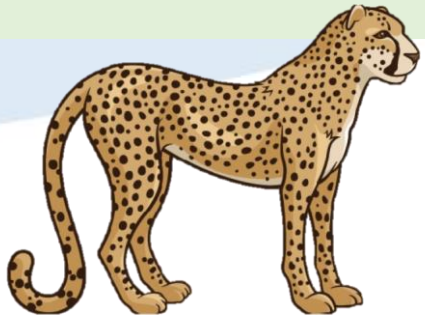
Fight

Feeling hot
Agitated
Easily annoyed / angry
Lashing out verbally & physically



Flight

Hot
Agitated
Wanting to leave
Needing a release
Feeling like running away

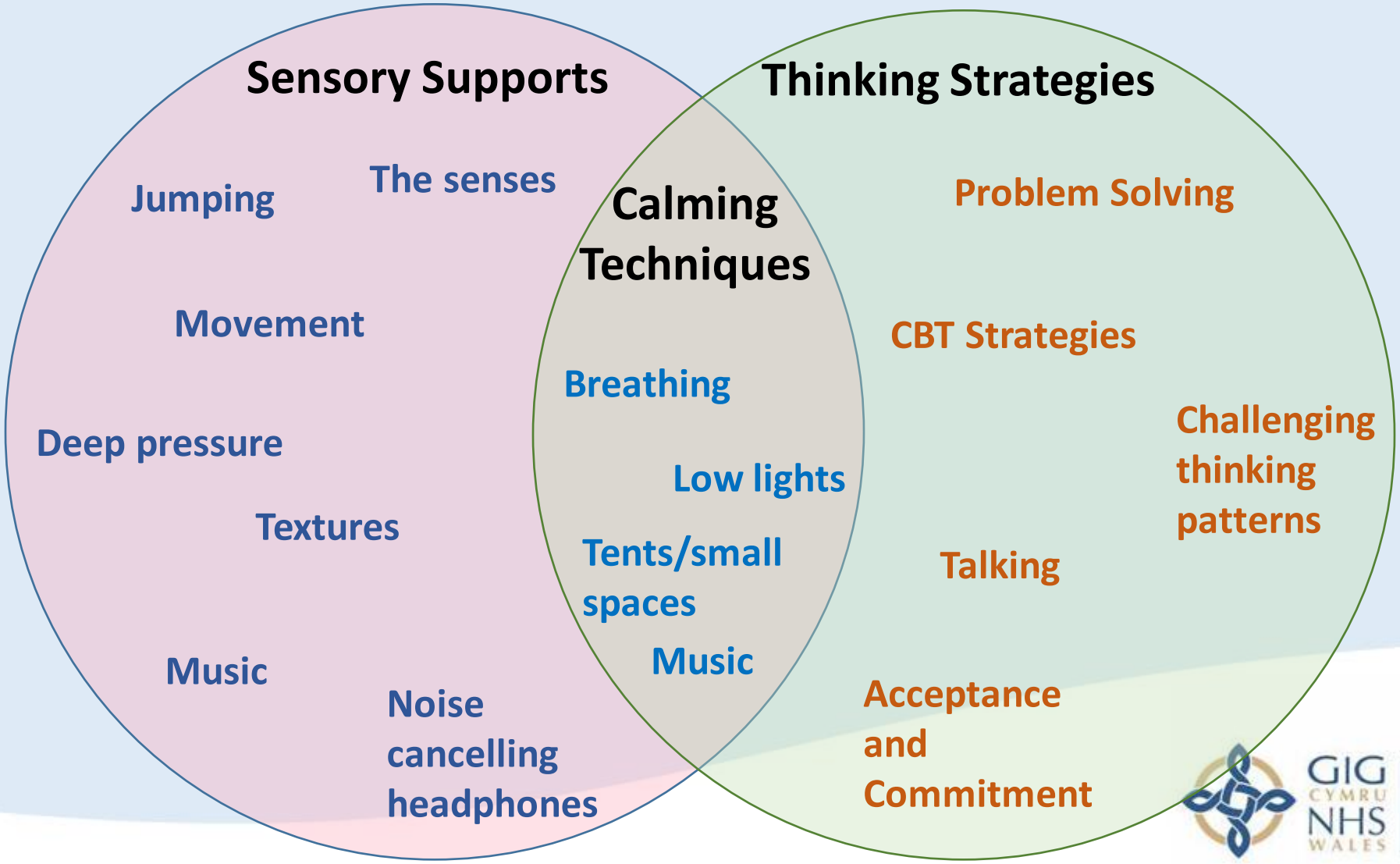


Freeze

Wanting to hide
Stuck / frozen
Dizzy / dreamy
Losing your words

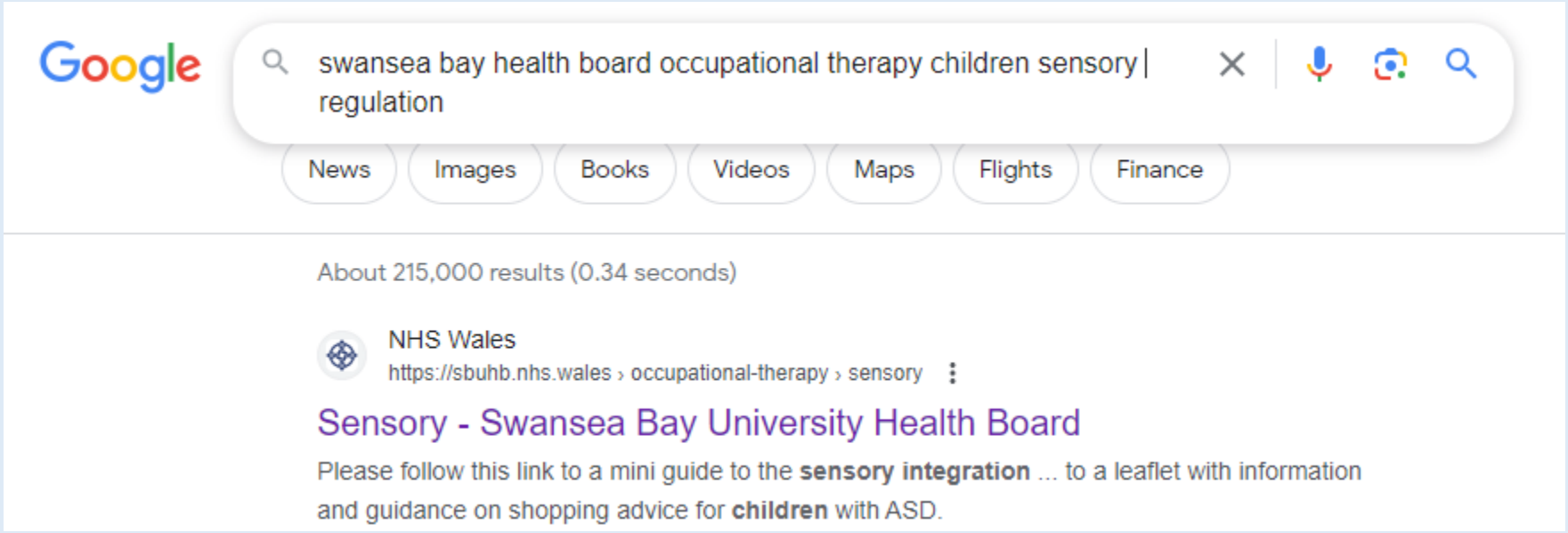


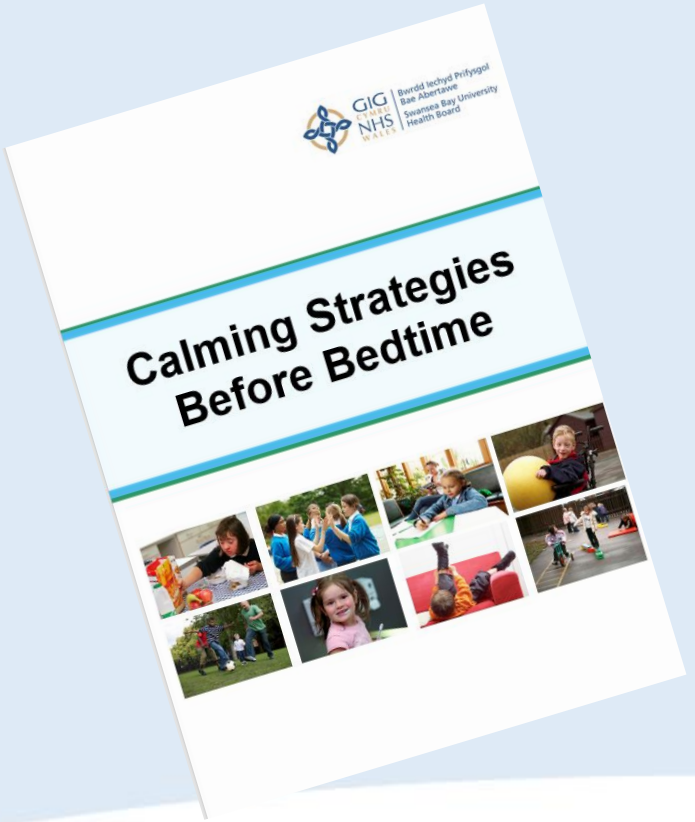
How can you help children to regulate



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How can you help children to regulate





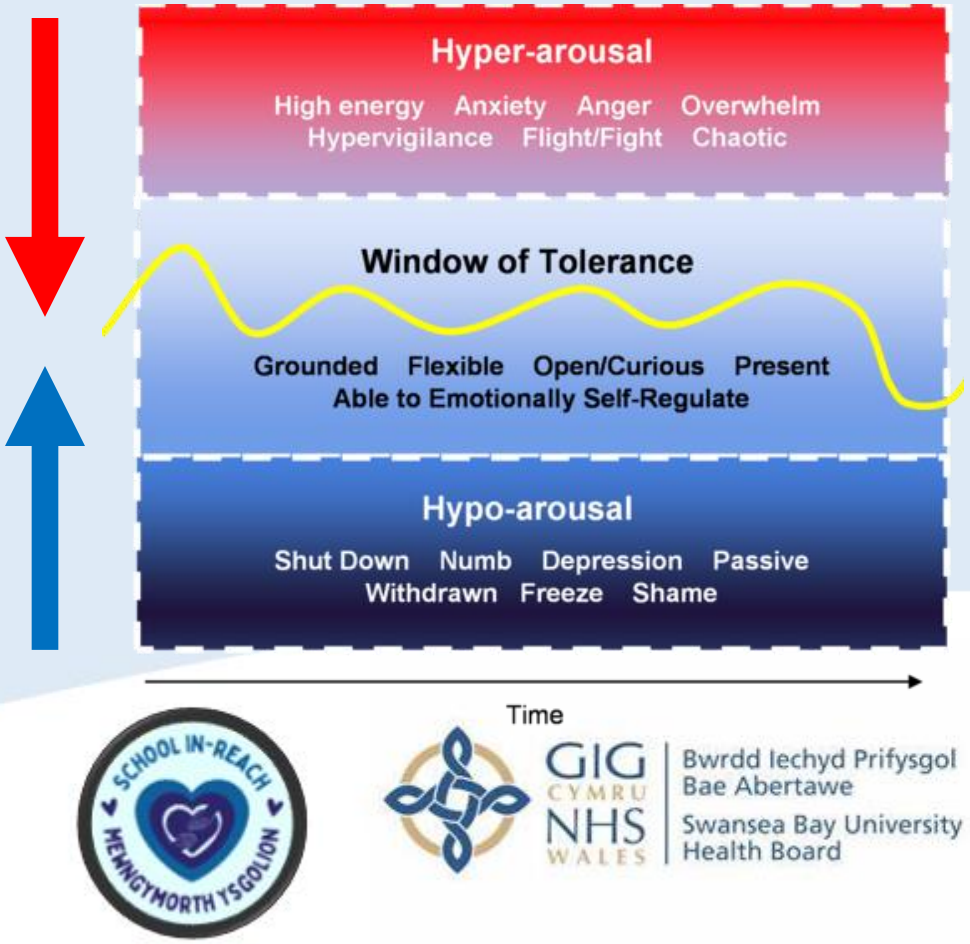
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How can you help children to regulate?

Be active

Allowing children and adults to be physically active:

- **Lowers** psychological arousal into the window of tolerance during **fight and flight**
- **Raises psychological** arousal into the window of tolerance during **freeze**
- Improves: attention, emotional regulation and working and long term memory



Horwood (2009)

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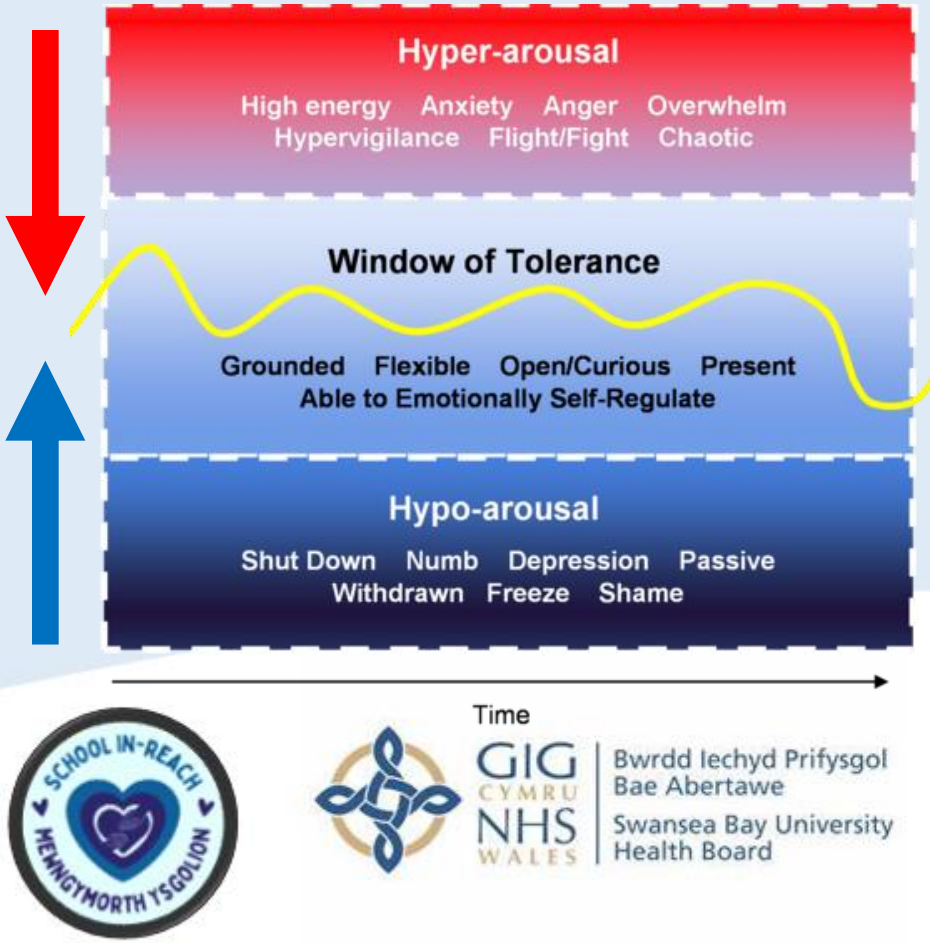
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How can you help children to regulate?

Emotionally sooth into the window of tolerance:

- Deep breathing
- Using our senses: 5 4 3 2 1
- Connecting with trusted adult or friends
- Walking / nature / mindfulness
- Weighted objects / deep muscle pressure / containment
- Dark sensory spaces
- Drawing
- Sorting task / tidying / easy to predict
- Space to be alone
- Colouring / drawing
- Watch a video
- Reading

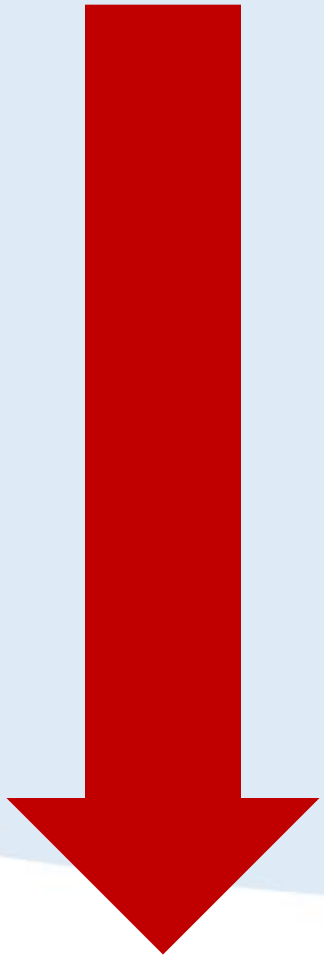
Horwood (2009)



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So how can we bring someone down when they are hyper-aroused?



Meet the child side-on

Eye contact can help but do not insist on it

Model a desired emotional state - calm, clear and concise

Repeat and reinforce

Acknowledge and validate

Movement – gross motor movement (running, heavy lifting)

Mindfulness, grounding, time out and breathing

Tactical ignoring / praising the positives.

Horwood (2009)

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Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Sit or lie somewhere that you are comfortable.

Tense your feet by curling your toes…like you're digging your toes into the sand at the beach.

1…2…3…4…Relax and take a deep breath in and out.

Tense your legs by pulling your toes up…like a puppet with its strings being pulled.

1…2…3…4…Relax and take a deep breath in and out.

Tense your stomach…and imagine that a puppy was going to step on your stomach.

1…2…3…4…Relax and take a deep breath in and out.

Tense your hands by making fists…like you're trying to squeeze all the juice out of a lemon.

1…2…3…4…Relax and take a deep breath in and out.

Tense your arms…like you're showing off your muscles.

1…2…3…4…Relax and take a deep breath in and out.

Tense your shoulders by pulling them up…and imagine that you're a turtle going into its shell.

1…2…3…4…Relax and take a deep breath in and out.

Tense your face by scrunching it up as much as you can.

1…2…3…4…Relax and take a deep breath in and out.

Repeat as needed

YouTube

SCAN ME!

SOUNDCLOUD

SCAN ME!

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How can we bring someone up out of hypo-arousal?



Meet the child side-on

Eye contact can help but do not insist on it

Model a desired emotional state - calm, clear and concise

Acknowledge and validate

Movement – stretching, walking, helping

Retreat to comfort – space, hooded jumper, etc.

Often need an external stimulus

Awareness of the environment.

Horwood (2009)

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Fight, Flight and Freeze Regulation



We first need to **calm the mind and body** *before* we then **manage emotions** or **solve problems**

One of the simplest ways to regulate a stress response is to **breath**



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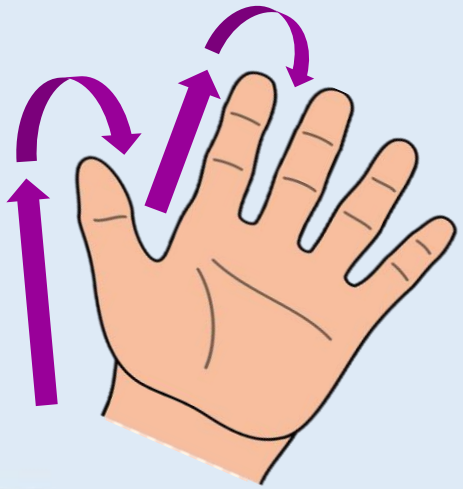
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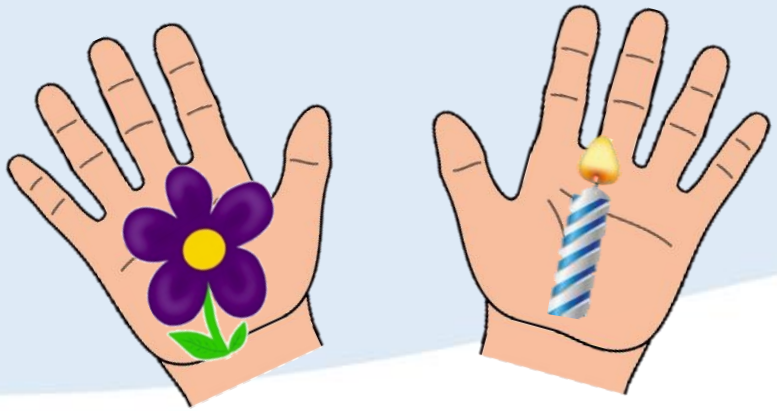
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Breathing

As part of the physiological stress response, the heart races to get oxygen to the body which triggers **shallow, upper chest breathing**.

Controlled breathing is good step to calm the nervous system. *Porges (2011); Huberman et. al (2023)*







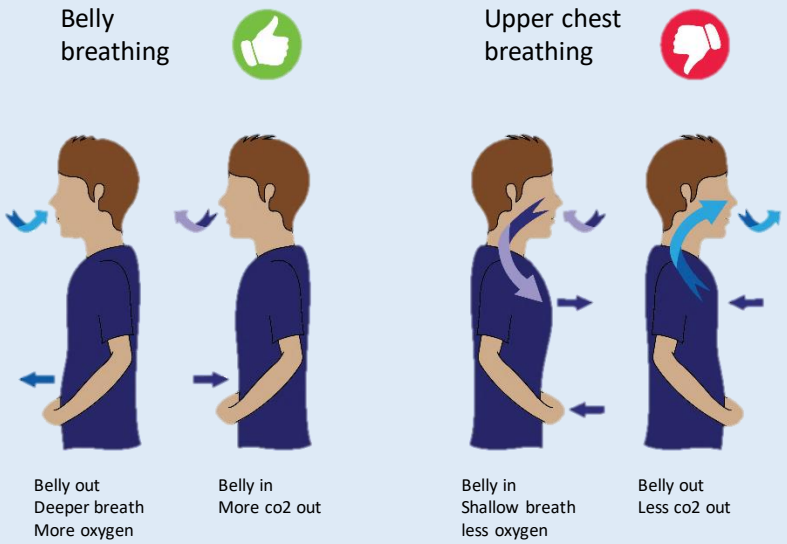


Practice, practice, practice

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Breathing



Belly breathing

This technique involves ***pushing the belly out while inhaling*** *(nose; for adults, 7seconds)*

Then, ***pulling the belly in while exhaling*** *(mouth; for adults, 11 seconds)*

Two minuets belly breathing can calm the body.

Porges (2011)

Cyclic sighing

Two quick inhalations (nose), followed by a single slow and long exhalation (mouth).

Five minuets will calm the body.

Huberman et. al (2023)



Practice, practice, practice

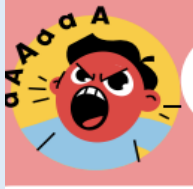
Bringing yourself out of the red zone



Exercise: Focus all your angry energy on exercise, go for a run, lift weights, dance. Get your body moving

Communicate: Sometimes we need to get our thoughts and feelings out in. But try and do this with a calm, trusted person





Shouting into a pillow or duvet (so no one hears you!)

Tense and relax your muscles, to feel more in control of your body





Take a break: stop and think or walk away before responding with anger

Breathe: slow your breathing down, breathe in for 3 counts, and out for 4 counts





Put headphones in and listen to music, preferably calm music

How to bring yourself back from the blue zone

Get your body moving, dance to some lively music or go for a run





Do something that makes you laugh: listen to a podcast, watch a funny film

Tell someone what is making you feel down and see how they can help





Have a cold shower, wake your body up and get your blood pumping

Listen to music and focus on the lyrics rather than the thoughts in your head





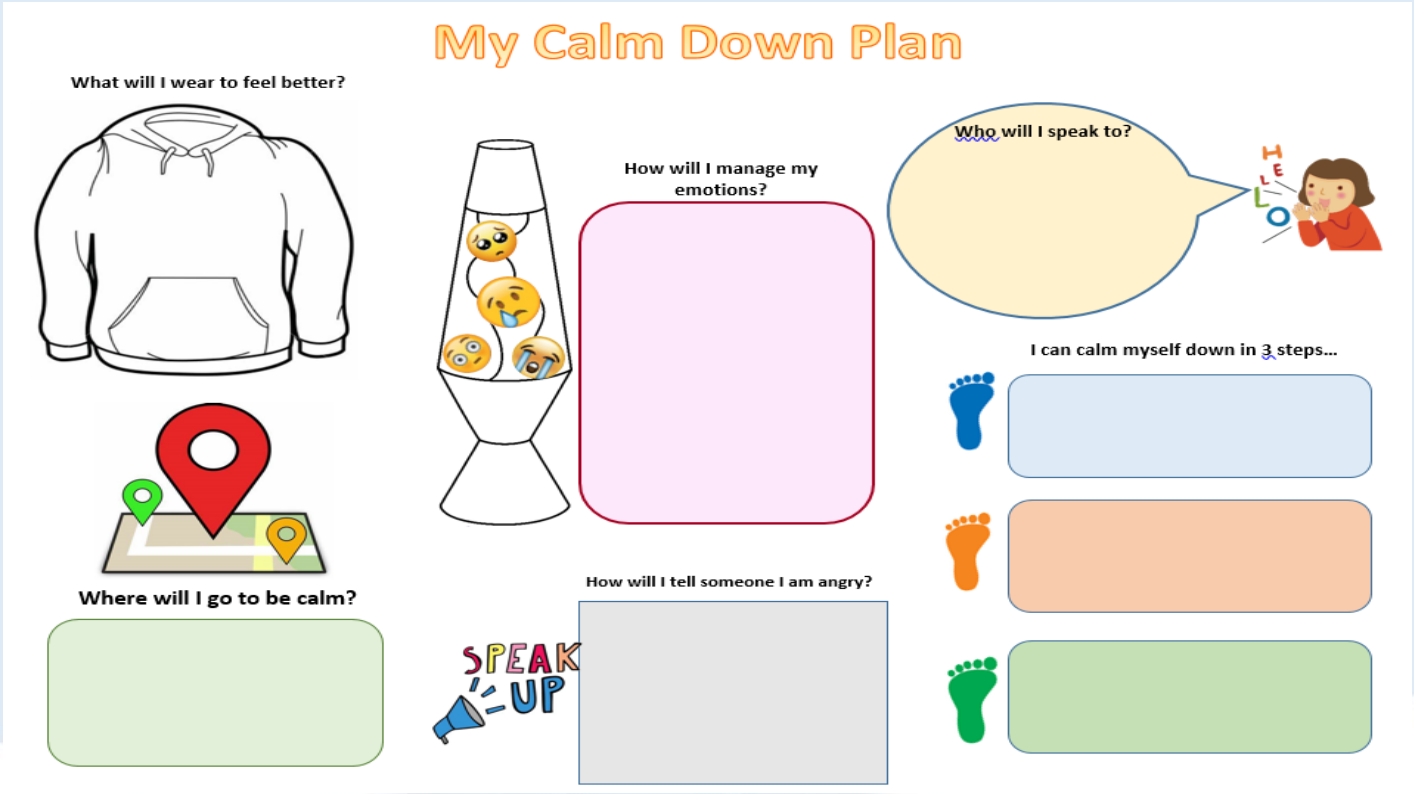
Have a cry, sometimes we need to get our emotions out before we start to feel better!

How can you help children to regulate?

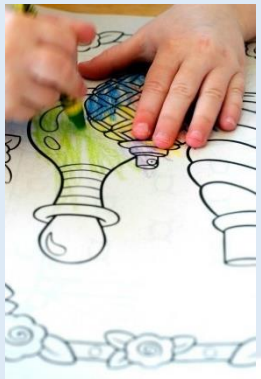
Action plan!

The thinking brain is not available when a child is emotionally unregulated

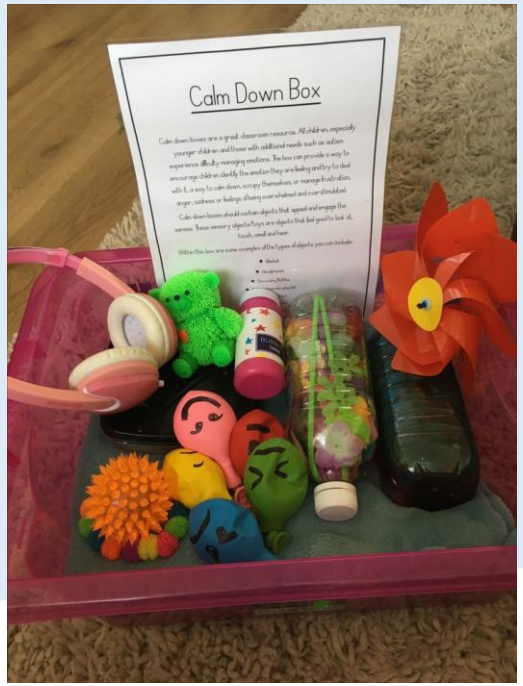
It can be helpful to produce a plan and collect resources that are easily viewable and attainable during a “melt down”











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Over To You – Complete the worksheet

Regulation Strategies - Ideas

Movement	Calming
Objects	Mental stimulation
Other	

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Thank You

Remember:

Parenting is difficult

The “perfect parent” does not exist

Babies need 70% of their needs met

Children need 30% of their needs met

Tronick (1989)

We offer session 2:

Co-regulation

Challenging / accepting negative thoughts

Modelling and modifying behaviour

Over the next week try:

- Connect with the emotion beneath behaviour: Label the emotion
- Explore how *yours and your child(ren)’s* body responds to emotion
- Consider patterns in emotions and behaviour: Triggers; hyper or hypo response
- Consider how to adapt the environment to allow your child to regulate

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Parent/Carer & School Questionnaire

We would be grateful for your comments about the service you have received from School In Reach.

Thank you.

School In-reach: Service Interaction Feedback 2023-24



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Resources

What Zone Are You In?

Blue	Green	Yellow	Red
			
Sick Sad Tired Bored Moving Slowly	Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	Mad/Angry Mean Yelling/Hitting Disgusted Out of Control



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FIGHT

Angry

Hot

Tense



Racing thoughts

Shouting

Agitation

Sick / bad tummy

FLIGHT

Run away



Hitting

Morning

Night

Shut down

Dizzy

Floaty

Sick / bad tummy



FREEZE

Numb

Cold

Tingles

Hide

Sweaty

Regulation Strategies - Ideas

Movement

Calming

Objects

Mental stimulation

Other





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