

Able to calm with support

Having positive relationships support children with their wellbeing and ability to self-regulate. Adults that are responsive to children's signals and respond consistently help children to feel safe and loved. Children need adults to co-regulate with them before they are able to self-regulate their emotions.

Children learn in an environment where there are warm and trusting relationships. Emotional wellbeing is at the core of successful learning, when adults respect children's feelings and support children to manage their own emotions they are supporting all development and learning.

Typical development

3 to 4 year olds will be learning to:	Talk with others to solve conflict
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How can practitioners support children to calm?

- Be emotionally available to children when they need someone to co-regulate their emotions.
- Have spaces that are calm, where you can go to support co regulation.
- Do you provide children with clear boundaries so that they understand what is expected of them? (e.g. golden rules)
- Ensure your setting offers a communication friendly environment.
- Do you use your outdoor area for space to 'run it off' or for deep breathing and distraction to the overwhelming situation?
- Within your setting do you support children to resolve conflict, by modelling? (Avoid using 'Why?' questions, try "What happened?")
- Consider asking curious questions to parents to find out about how the child is at home and if there are any changes or challenges that may impact on them.

Activity ideas/resources

- Use books and resources that show emotions being expressed.
- Model your own feelings and emotions 'I'm feeling sad...'
- Use clear language to set out developmentally appropriate boundaries – a Total Communication approach can help with use of visuals to help convey message.
- Use a calm space with soft furnishings (cushions and blankets) where adults can model sitting or lying down breathing, doing an action that calms with the child like covering themselves in the blanket and closing their eyes.
- Use language to model how to request an object and take turns with another child.
- Use 'I wonder how.... is feeling' statements to support a child to understand emotions in context.
- To share ideas with parents on emotions so parents can support at home.

Useful links

<https://www.annafreud.org/early-years/early-years-in-mind/common-difficulties/>

<https://www.pacey.org.uk/training-and-qualifications/other-relevant-training/minded/>

Mindfulness activities for kids (can be adapted for early years) [PowerPoint Presentation \(alderhey.nhs.uk\)](http://www.alderhey.nhs.uk/)

<https://www.ghll.org.uk/>