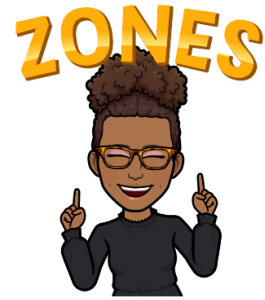


# the ZONES of REGULATION

*an overview for parents*



This handout covers a brief explanation of what Leah Kuypers' "The Zones of Regulation" are, how they're taught to children, and how you can begin using the concepts in your own home. At school, we've been teaching the Zones through the counselor's daily SEL warm-ups and a Zones of Regulation guidance lesson from Mrs. Thompson.



*The Zone Colors* The Zones of Regulation uses four colors to help children self-identify how they're feeling and categorize it based on color.

It helps children better understand their emotions, sensory needs, and thinking patterns. They learn different strategies to help them cope and manage their emotions based on which color zone they're in.

Additionally, the Zones of Regulation helps kids recognize their own triggers, learn to read facial expressions, develop problem-solving skills, and become more attuned to how their actions affect other people (Kuypers, L.M, 2011).

*The Green Zone* is used to describe when you're in a calm state of alertness. Being in the green zone means you are calm, focused, happy, or ready to learn. This is predominantly the state you *want* your child to be in. It's also the state most needed in the classroom in order to learn.

*The Yellow Zone* describes when you have a heightened sense of alertness. This isn't always a bad thing, and you typically still have some control when you're in the yellow zone. Being in the yellow means you may feel frustrated, anxious or nervous. But, it could also mean you're feeling excited, silly, or hyper – which is okay in the right situations.

*The Red Zone* describes an extremely heightened state of intense emotions. When a person reaches the red zone, they're no longer about to control their emotions or reactions. This

is the zone kids are in during meltdowns. Being in the red zone means you're feeling anger, rage, terror, or complete devastation and feel out of control.

*The Blue Zone* on the other hand, is used when a person is feeling *low states of alertness or arousal*. When you're in the blue zone, you may be feeling down – sad, sick, tired, or bored. You're still in control, as you are in the yellow zone, but with low energy emotions.

*Getting Back to The Green Zone:* Along with being able to identify the zones and know what zone he is in, your child also needs to know strategies to help him get back to the green zone. Practicing co-regulation and self-regulation strategies while your child is in the green zone will help him learn the best ways to get back there during times of feeling stressed, frustrated, sad, etc.

*The Importance of Recognizing Emotions:* It's so, SO important for children to learn how to recognize their own emotions but many parents may overlook the fact that their child *is* struggling with this skill.\

THE  
**ZONES**  
of regulation

sad bored tired sick	calm happy focused ready to learn
excited silly frustrated nervous hyper	out of control anger rage terror

*Think about this:* Let's say your child recognizes she's angry because whenever she gets mad, her heart races. So – she feels her heart race, and the result is an angry outburst. Red zone.

BUT – Fear ALSO causes our heart to race. If your child *isn't able* to recognize the other sensations that happen when he's both afraid and angry, then he'll react angrily when he's actually scared – and he won't understand what's happening or how to regulate that emotion.

The Zones of Regulation can help teach children all of the physiological sensations they feel in response to different emotions. When kids fully understand what they're feeling, they can make sense of, and regulate their emotions much better.