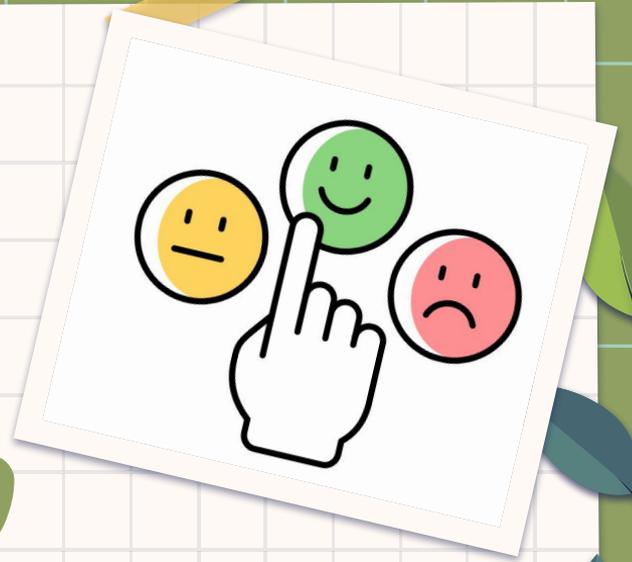


Teaching Self-Regulation

Brianne Colon, Bianca Esposito, Nicole Malatestinic
Stony Brook University, Occupational Therapy Students

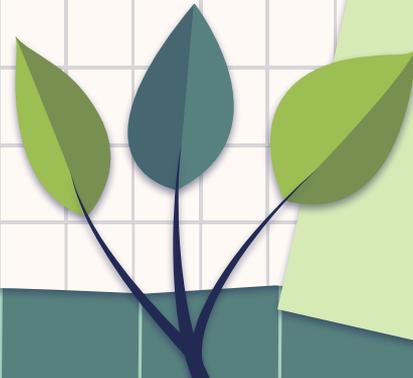


What is Self-Regulation?

The ability to adjust your level of alertness and emotion to meet the demands of the environment in a socially acceptable manner.

- Attain, maintain, and/or change energy levels
- Focus or shift attention & ignore distractions
- Monitor, evaluate, and modify emotions
- Understand and manage social interactions
- Connect with and care about what others are thinking/feeling in order to empathize and act accordingly

(Johnson, 2022)



Why Do We Need This?

Required for Attention and Ignoring Distractions

- Thinking and reflecting
- Delaying gratification
- Prioritizing, organizing, planning

Avoid Negative Behaviors

- Tolerate frustration
- Control over impulses

Task Participation

- Maintain/change energy levels to match task/situation
- Staying motivated

Lifestyle

- Higher academic level achievements
- Healthy lifestyle
- Decreased stress

Telltale Signs of Self-Regulation Difficulty

Behavioral indicators of children with a more significant regulatory disorder may be

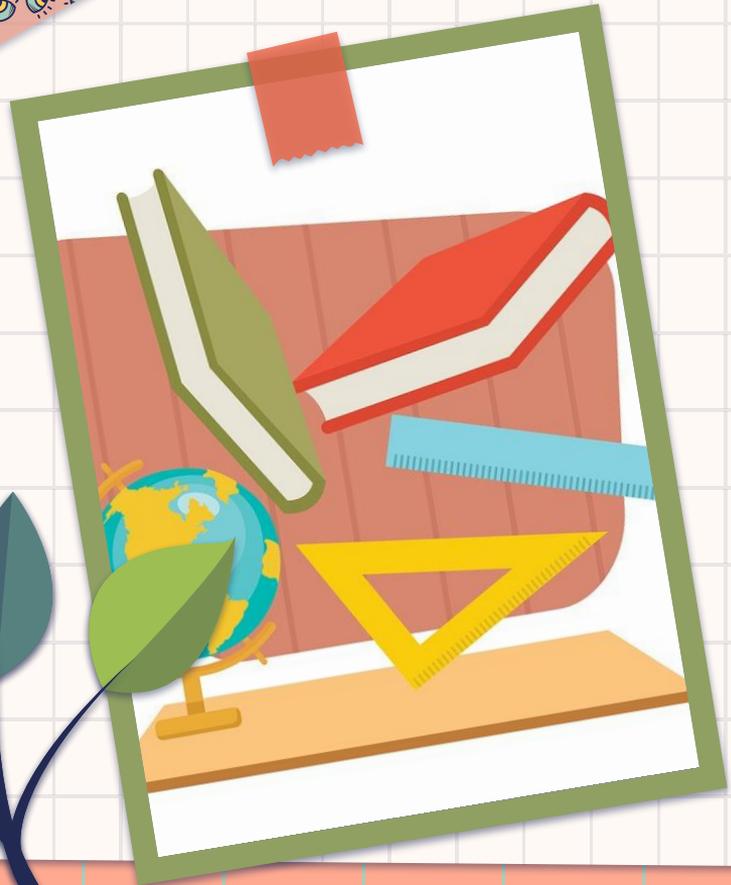
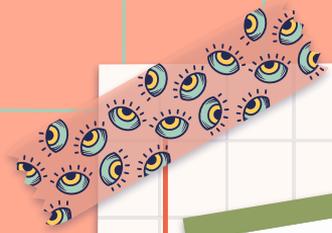
- Emotional ups and downs
- Irritability
- Difficulty with transitions or unexpected changes (unable to switch gears)
- Inattention
- Sleep problems
- Feeding problems
- Mood regulation problems
- Sensory processing problems





*Before we can understand attention,
arousal and behavior...*

It is best to start with the underlying
mechanisms of sensory processing and
how the nervous system functions.



01

Background Lesson:

How the Nervous System Functions

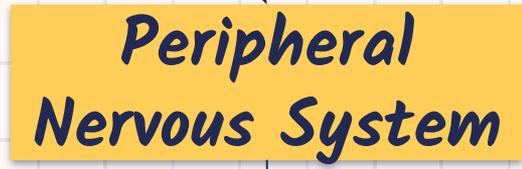




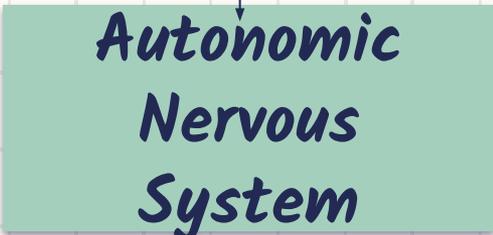
The Nervous System



Central Nervous System



Peripheral Nervous System



Autonomic Nervous System

How does it work?

Survival Center

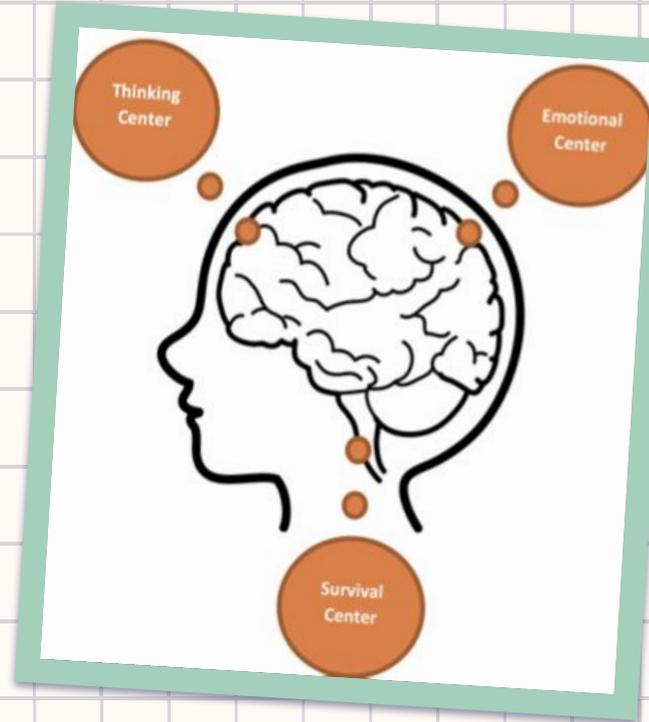
Infants rely on this center of their brain to engage in behaviors that sustain life, such as breathing and digestion.

Emotional Center

Toddlers/preschoolers begin to be able to use this center to communicate and express themselves through feelings.

Thinking Center

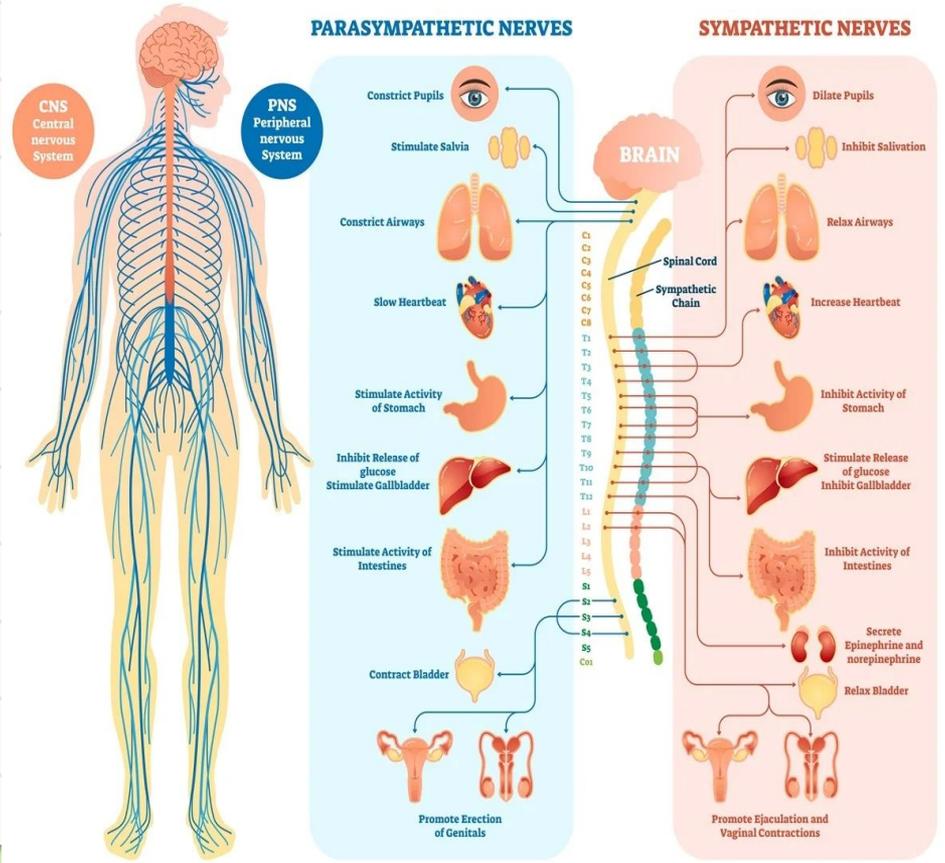
Children/adolescents begin to be able to use their “thinking center” to problem-solve, stop and think before acting and organize their behavior.

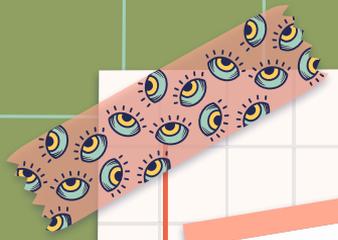


Fight or Flight

(Galinato, n.d.)

HUMAN NERVOUS SYSTEM

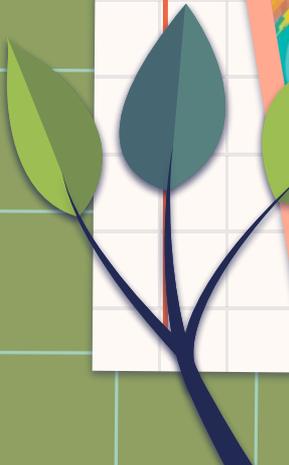




02

Background Lesson:

How the Sensory System Functions



Sensory Systems

THE SEVEN SENSORY SYSTEMS

PROPRIOCEPTION



VESTIBULAR



TACTILE



AUDITORY



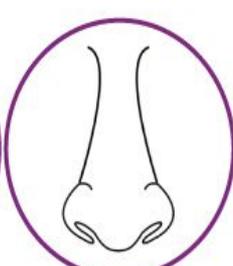
VISUAL

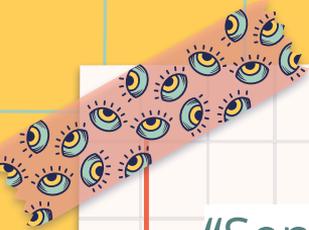


GUSTATORY



OLFACTORY





Sensory Integration

“Sensory integration is the organization of sensation for use.”

- used to explain the relationship between the brain and behavior

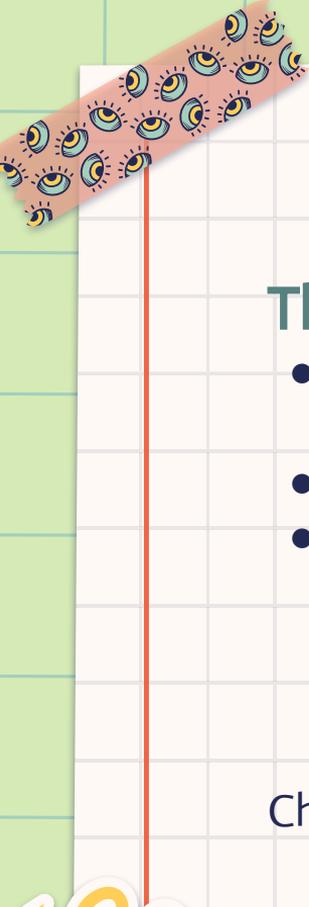
Our sensory systems provide key information to our brain from our environment.

- the brain processes and organizes the information
 - Then sends messages to the body for how to respond



(Ayers, 1979)





Sensory Systems and Arousal



The Vestibular System:

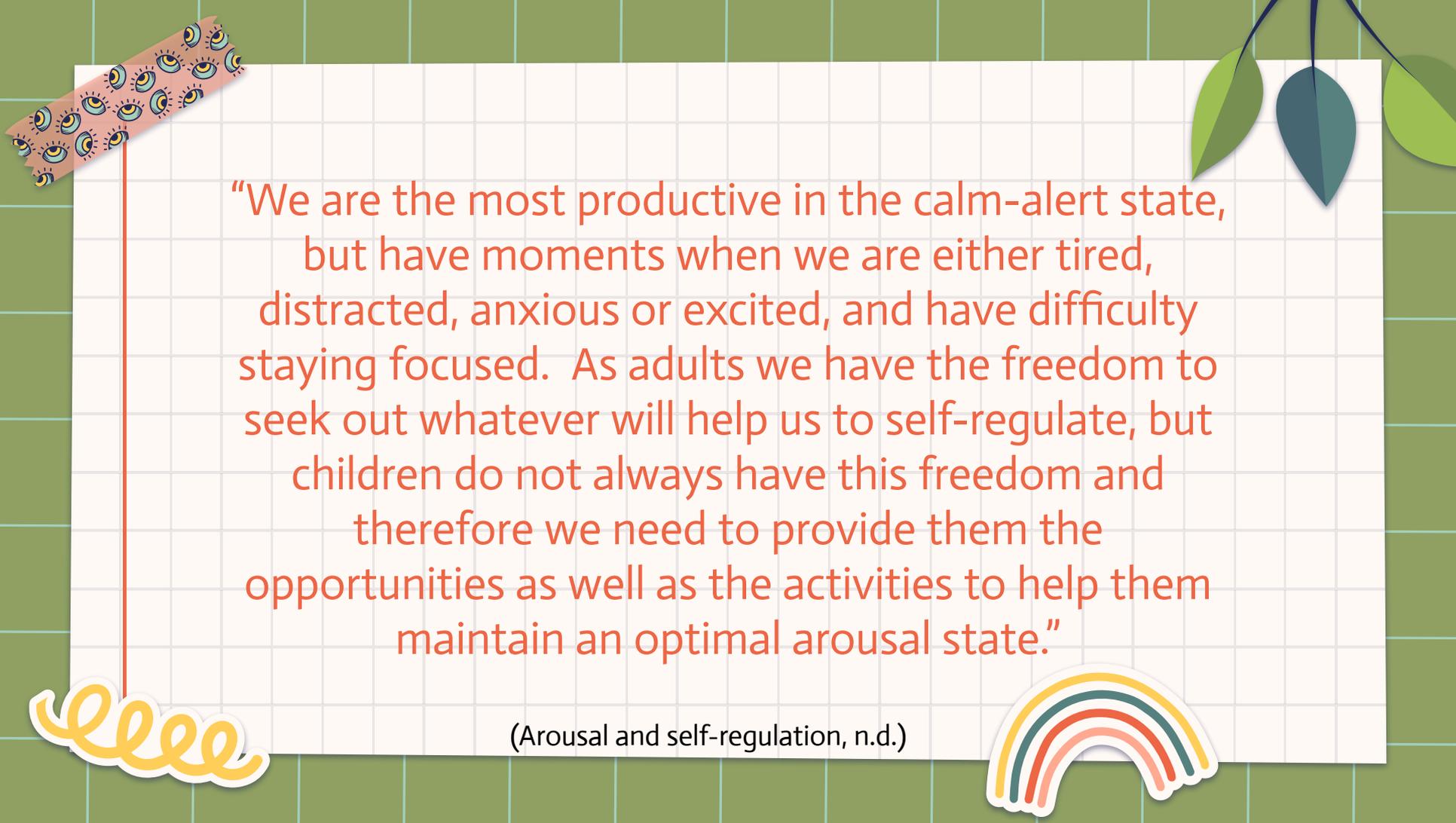
- Functions to control our posture and balance, head position, eye movements and influences muscle response
- A key organizing system for the body
- Can be targeted therapeutically to heighten arousal or calm down the body
 - Linear movement
 - Nonlinear, unpredictable movement

Children will seek out the vestibular input that organizes themselves.



(Getty, 2021)





“We are the most productive in the calm-alert state, but have moments when we are either tired, distracted, anxious or excited, and have difficulty staying focused. As adults we have the freedom to seek out whatever will help us to self-regulate, but children do not always have this freedom and therefore we need to provide them the opportunities as well as the activities to help them maintain an optimal arousal state.”

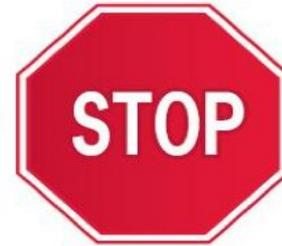
(Arousal and self-regulation, n.d.)



Programs as Resources

The Zones of Regulation

- A framework designed for preschool aged children through adulthood “to build awareness of their feelings/internal state and utilize a variety of tools and strategies for regulation, prosocial skills, self-care, and overall wellness”



(Kuypers, 2011)



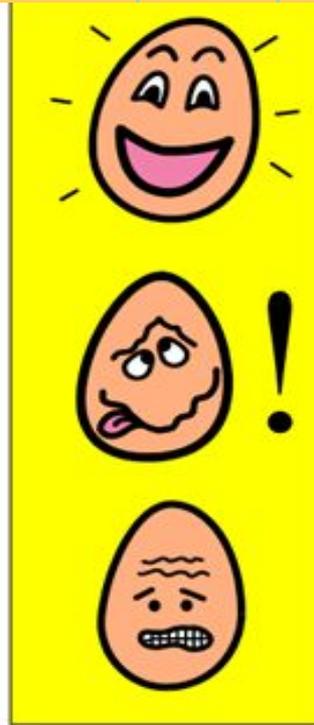
Blue Zone

sad tired
sick moving
tired slowly



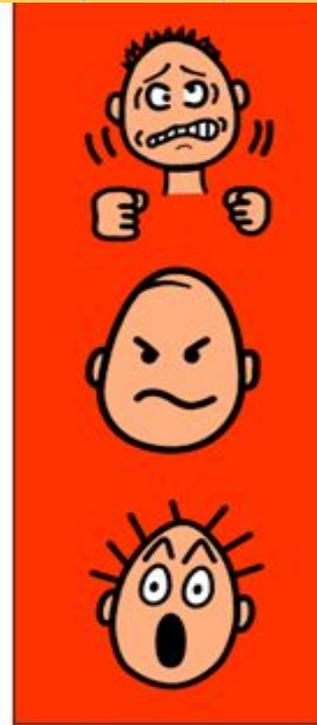
Green Zone

happy
calm
feeling ok
focused
ready to learn



Yellow Zone

frustrated
worried
silly/wiggly
excited
loss of some control



Red Zone

mad/angry
terrified
yelling/hitting
elated
out of control



Resources with The Zones

Tools to Try Card Decks

1 deck for kids 5-10
1 deck for tweens and
teens
Introducing over 50
regulation strategies

Storybook Set

For kids ages 5-11:
The Road to Regulation:
A Story about
Understanding Feelings
and Emotions

The Regulation Station:
Exploring Tools to Help
Manage Feelings and
Emotions

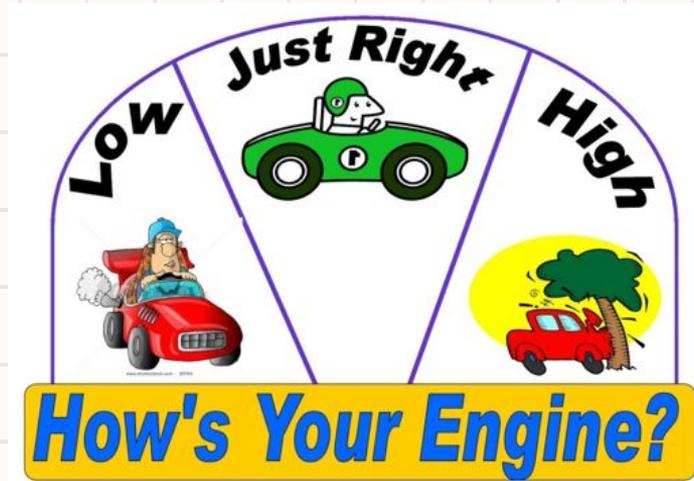
Apps

Zones of Regulation App
Exploring Emotions App

Offers exciting learning
opportunities around
Zones concepts,
rewards, and mini games

The Alert Program

“How Does Your Engine Run?”



“If your body is like a car engine, sometimes it runs on high, sometimes it runs on low, and sometimes it runs just right!”

(Williams & Shellenberger, 1990)

Resources with Alert Program



Take Five!

designed to support self-regulation in homes and schools, organized around the five ways to change how alert we feel

Test Drive!

Practical ideas and suggestions presented through songs; makes the concepts playful, yet still educational



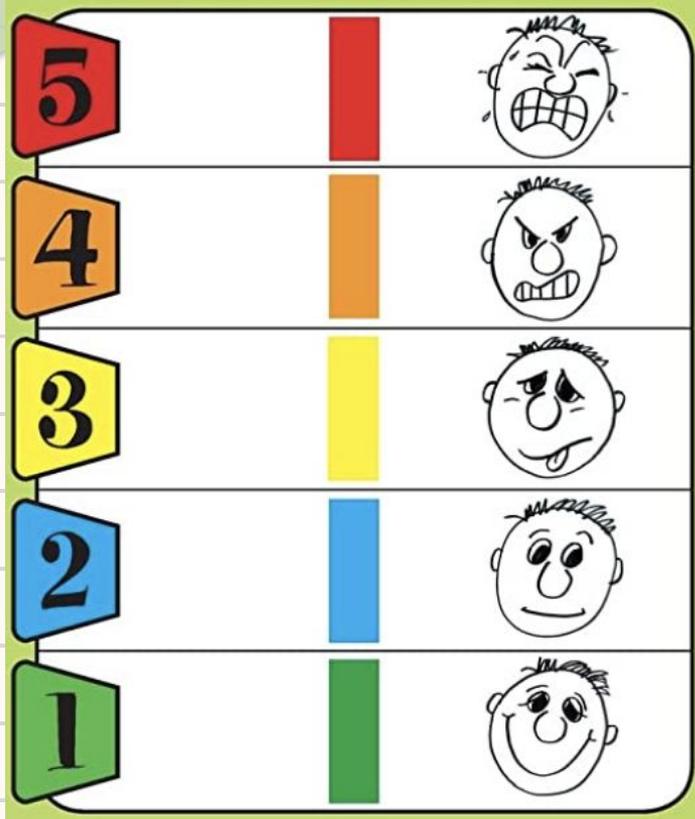
The Incredible 5-Point Scale

Developed to teach social and emotional concepts to children and adults who could use extra support through 5 point scales

5	I AM GOING TO EXPLODE!!!
4	I AM GETTING ANGRY
3	I AM A LITTLE NERVOUS
2	FEELING OK
1	CALM AND RELAXED

(Dunn Buron, n.d.)





Name: _____ My _____ Scale

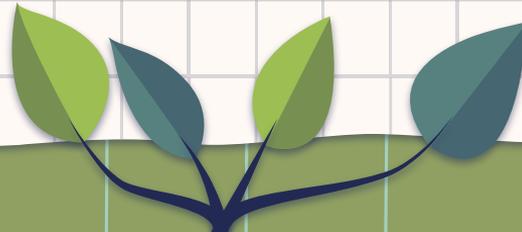
Rating	Looks/Sounds Like	Feels Like	I can try to
5			
4			
3			
2			
1			

Calming Sequences



"Practicing the calming sequence can help me stay in control.
It goes like this: Squeeze my hands and take a deep breath
Rub my head and rub my legs. Repeat 4 more times."

(Dunn Buron, n.d.)





First, I can squeeze my hands together.



Next, I can take three really slow, deep breaths.
Slow in - slow out,
slow in - slow out,
slow in - slow out.



Then I can sit down, rub my legs and close my eyes.
Now I feel more like a 3 or a 2.

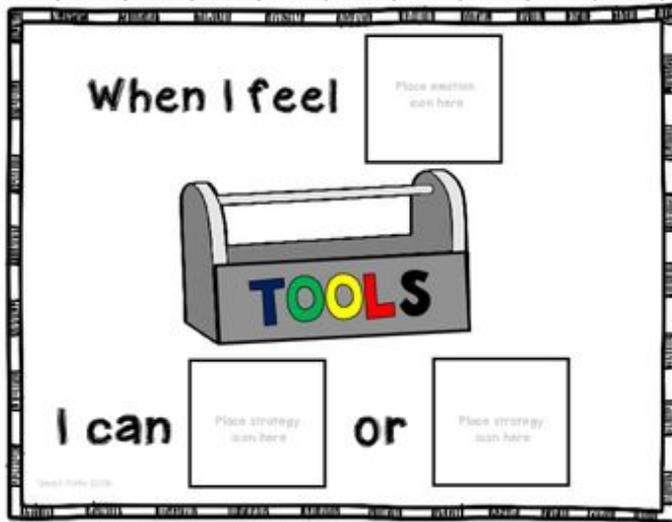


I can think about happy things, like my dog or my stuffed lion, or our family cabin in the summer. Now I am at a 1.

(Dunn Buron, n.d.)

The Emotional Toolbox

A concept where we need to equip ourselves with a collection of “tools” to use in situations where we need to deal with negative emotions



Physical
Tools

Relaxation
Tools

Social
Tools

Emotional
Toolbox

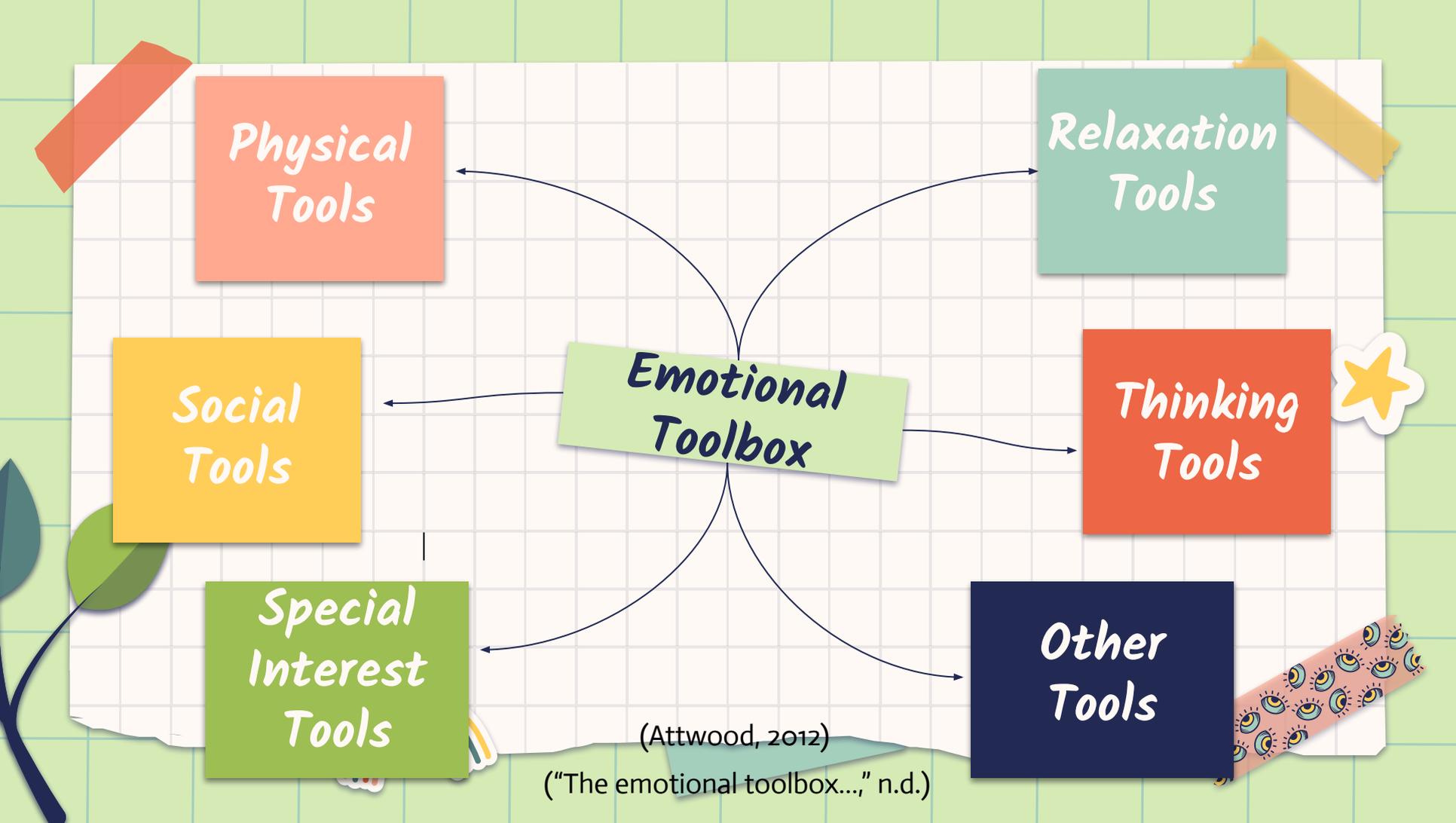
Thinking
Tools

Special
Interest
Tools

Other
Tools

(Attwood, 2012)

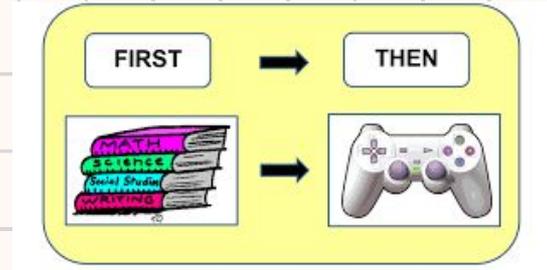
("The emotional toolbox..." n.d.)





Other Tools and Techniques

Transition Techniques



High Arousal Techniques

To aim for a Calm, Quiet Body and return to optimal state:

Heavy
Work/Deep
Pressure

Breathing
Techniques

Vestibular
Input

Take a
Break



Low Arousal Techniques

To increase arousal level to an optimal state:

Heavy
Work

Dance
Party

Vestibular
Input

Music



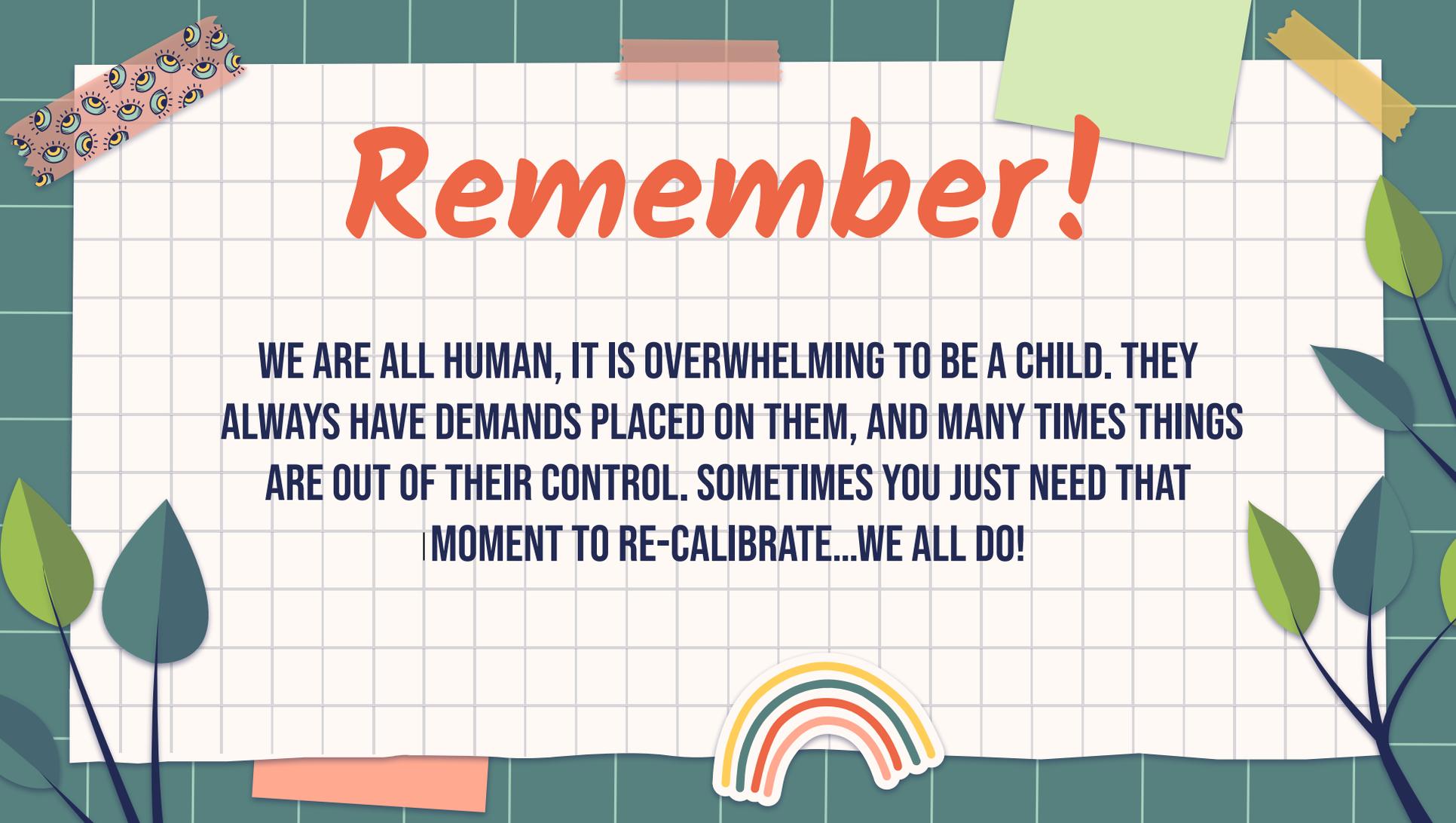
Environmental Considerations

- Children need supportive environments
- Consider the following:
 - Posting photographs of your family or characters they like on the walls
 - Lighting, color, room arrangement, and temperature
 - Be sure to provide different types of spaces such as private, quiet, personal, etc.
 - Child's personality, social life, and culture

("Self-Regulation..., n.d.)



Practice, Practice, Practice!



Remember!

WE ARE ALL HUMAN, IT IS OVERWHELMING TO BE A CHILD. THEY ALWAYS HAVE DEMANDS PLACED ON THEM, AND MANY TIMES THINGS ARE OUT OF THEIR CONTROL. SOMETIMES YOU JUST NEED THAT MOMENT TO RE-CALIBRATE...WE ALL DO!



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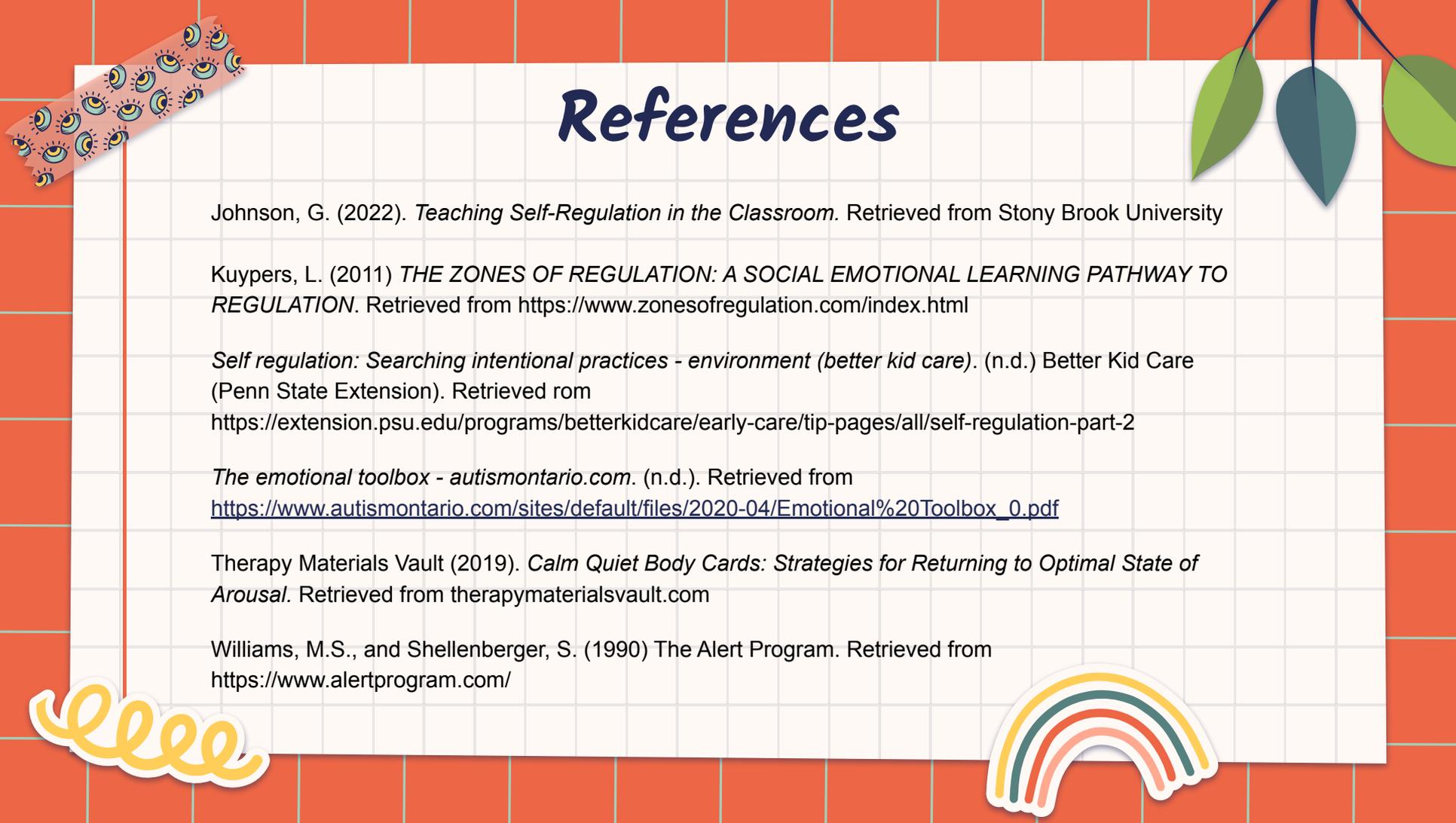
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Special thanks to SEPTA for giving us the opportunity to partner with you for our Capstone. Thank you to those we have been in communication with and for the parents who have completed our survey!

If you have any questions at this time, we would be happy to address them.

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