



# Counselor's Corner

## ZONES OF REGULATION



by [Tina Nightingale](#) on January, 5, 2018

Your child will participate in a new curriculum called Zones of Regulation. The goal of the curriculum is to teach children about self-regulation and how to strengthen their self-regulation skills. Self-regulation can go by many names, such as self-control, self-management, and impulse control. Self-regulation is an essential skill in life, and in all learning environments. Children who can regulate their own emotion and attention are better ready to learn and thrive.

**Blue Zone**—when your body is running slowly, such as when you are tired, sick, sad or bored.

**Green Zone**—when you are ready “good to go.” You feel happy, calm and focused.

**Yellow Zone**—when you feel your engine running high, such as when you are frustrated, overwhelmed, silly, wiggly, excited, worried, anxious, or surprised.

**Red Zone**—is when you have “flipped your lid.” You have extreme feelings such as terror, uncontrolled anger, aggression, or elation.

In the first half of the curriculum, children learn about how their emotions and attention are connected, and then how to recognize emotions and attention in themselves and classmates. They learn that they move through their Zones throughout the day, and that they can improve their control over their Zones through practice.

In the second half of the curriculum, Zones of Regulation teaches about tools for changing from one Zone to another, and encourages each child to build a repertoire of tools. The goal of the curriculum is for children to gradually become more able to call upon their toolkit, rather than needing adults to regulate them.

It is very important to know that none of the Zones is “bad” or “naughty.” All of the Zones are expected at one time or another. As the curriculum progresses, children will practice identifying what Zone is expected, and how to change Zones to better match their levels of alertness and emotions to their situation.

If you use the Zones of Regulation vocabulary at home, please use neutral language. For example, “I notice you are in the Blue Zone. What is your plan for moving to the Green Zone?” Or “The Yellow Zone is great for the playground, but right now we are getting ready for dinner. Can you tell me what Zone would be a better match for getting ready for dinner?” “You are in the Red Zone. It is hard to solve problems when you are in the Red Zone. Do you need help getting calmer, so you can be in the Yellow or the Green Zone?”