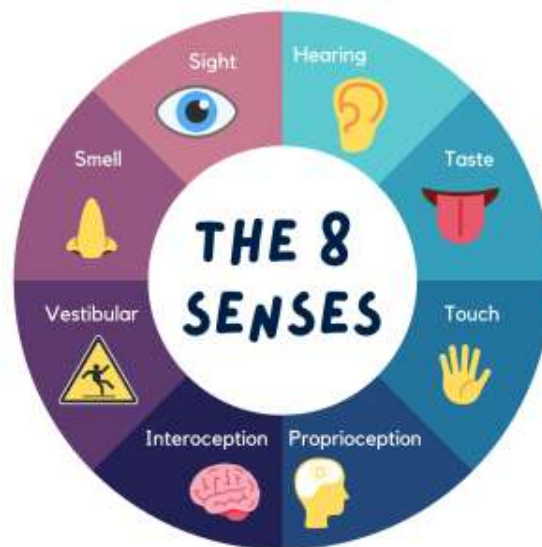




# Sensory Regulation

Elizabeth Stockwell – Outreach Teacher

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# The Vestibular Sense

The sense that detects movement through sensory receptors in the inner ear.



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# The Proprioceptive Sense

Proprioception is the **body awareness sense**. It helps with:

Knowing where our body parts are



Scratching an itch and knowing where to scratch without looking



Touching hands to feet, also known as "finding your feet"

Understanding how much force to use



Using a pencil with the proper amount of force



Holding a delicate item without breaking it

Coordination between body parts and senses



Riding a bike and coordinating the movements to stay on track



Using hand-eye coordination to catch a ball



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# The Interceptive Sense

## What is Interception?

Interception is the **internal sense**. It helps with:

Understanding our body's needs



Recognizing feelings of hunger



During potty training, knowing when to use the bathroom

Knowing how to appropriately address needs



Sensing pain and looking for ways to relieve it



Scratching an itch with the proper amount of force

Regulating emotions and controlling behavior



Feeling sensations of anxiety and calming self



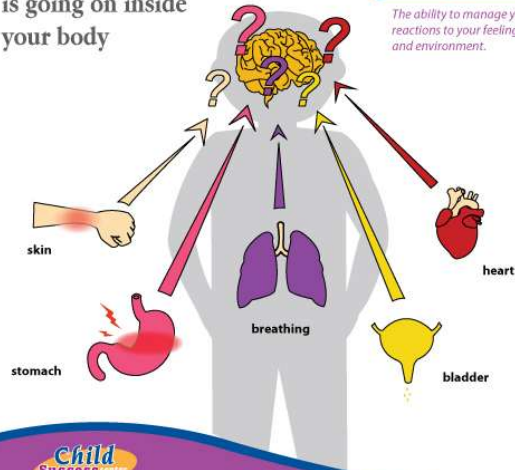
Avoiding temper tantrums by meeting basic needs

## INTEROCEPTION

*the 8th SENSE* that helps you *feel* what is going on inside your body

## Self-regulation

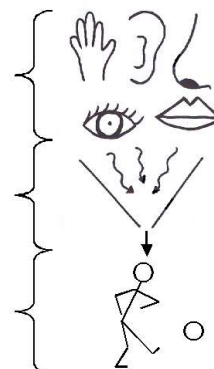
*The ability to manage your reactions to your feelings and environment.*



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# Sensory Processing

1. The body receives sensation.
2. The brain works out what it is.
3. Message sent to respond.



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## Sensory Sensitivities

Hypersensitivity	Hyposensitivity <small>TACA</small>
Heightened sensitivity to input	Seeks out sensory input
<b>AVOIDS:</b>	<b>SEEKS:</b>
Loud Noises	Jumping
Crowded spaces	Tight squeezes or hugs
Smells	Loud, repetitive noises
Bright or flashing lights	Swinging or crashing into objects
Textures of clothes or food	Lack of pain response

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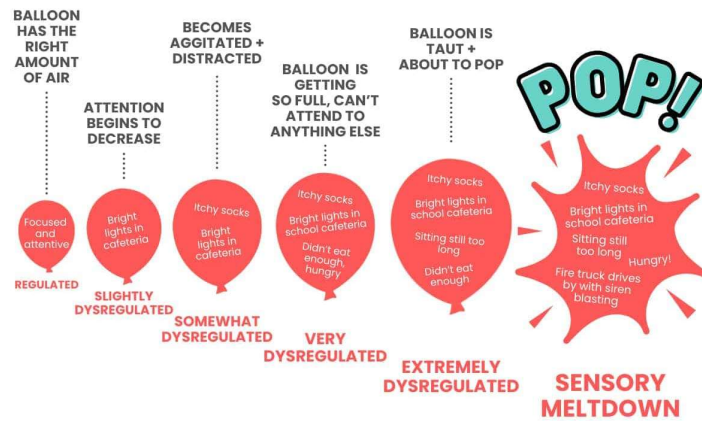
## Sensory Dysregulation

Sensory dysregulation occurs when the body's sensory processing system struggles to manage and respond to sensory stimuli effectively.



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When dysregulation begins and is left unchecked it will get bigger, which makes it more difficult to regulate. This can lead to “meltdowns”.



@YourKidsTable

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## Why is sensory regulation important?

Sensory regulation is fundamental to all other forms of self-regulation. Without sensory regulation,



- Our ability to manage and regulate our emotions is reduced.



- Our capacity to regulate our actions and behaviour is hindered.



- Regulating our focus, attention and executive functioning becomes difficult.

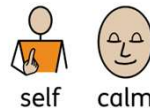
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## Sensory Regulation

- Co-regulation is the ability to regulate emotions and behaviours, manage stress (internal or external), and return to a calm state, with the support and direction of a connecting person



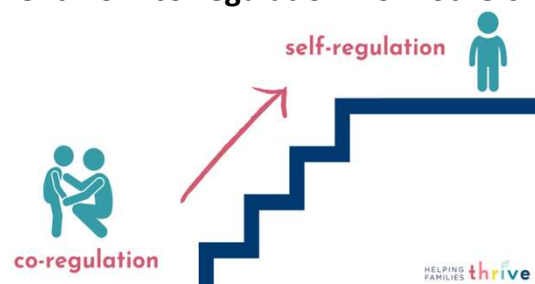
- Self-regulation is the ability to
  - recognise, manage, and respond to our own emotions
  - monitor and control our thoughts, feelings and behaviours
  - use personal strategies to return to a calm state



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## Sensory Regulation

- Self-regulation skills develop through interactions with others; children first learn to regulate with support from others and then they become gradually more able to use these tools independently as they experience them.
- **Even as adults we can still benefit from co-regulation from others when we become overwhelmed!**

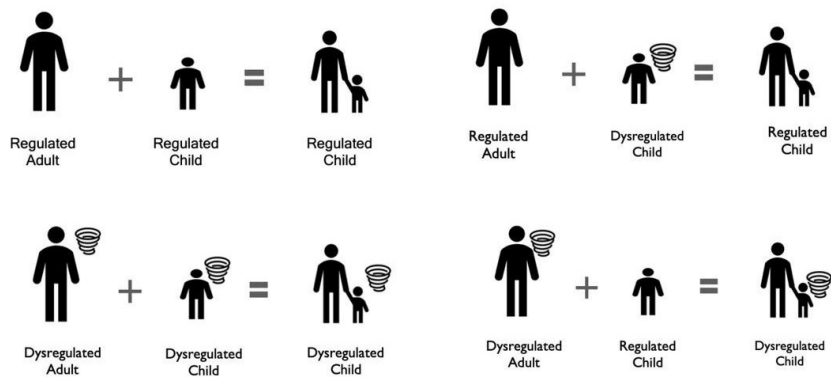


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# Co-regulation

The importance of regulated adults...



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## Ways to co-regulate with your child



my  
therapy  
services

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**Think sensory** – think about their sensory needs and have a plan to tackle overstimulating environments.

### SENSORY CHECKLIST

Visual/Sight		✓ Tick where appropriate
Visual Seeking	Visual Avoiding	
Looks for bright/flashing lights	Overly sensitive to bright lights (may complain or close eyes)	
Strips lining up items in rows or by colour	Easily distracted by bright displays	
Enjoys playing with toys that spin	Finds busy/rooms challenging	
Loves to play with shiny objects	Seeks out dark spaces	
Appears to enjoy games which involve bumping and crashing different toys	Often rubs eyes when focusing on work	
Stands too close to interactive whiteboard/screens	Avoids eye contact with others	

#### How to support:

Allow the child to play with visually stimulating equipment (such as a torch). Ensure this time is carefully managed and structured.

#### How to support:

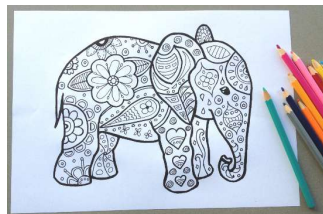
Schedule regular visual breaks into their day. Use a blackout tent (if possible) or create a bespoke low-stimulating area for them to use.

Touch/Tactile	
Tactile Seeking	Tactile Avoiding
Enjoys touching everything	Dislikes being touched unexpectedly
May not recognise when they have been touched (unless forcefully)	Avoids having their hair brushed
Enjoys when they have dirty hands/clothing	Dislikes being close to others (lining up)
Seeks sensory input	Sensitive to certain textures of clothing or fabric



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Allow some down-time after school



## Energy Accounting



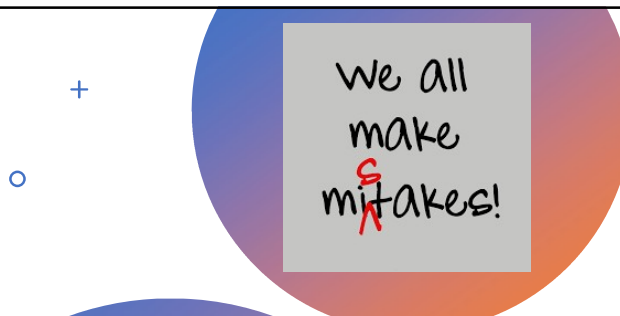
Too much energy out and not enough in is bad. It leads to overload, and exhaustion.



Balancing your energy using energy accounting is good. It leads to feeling regulated, calm and happy.

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Model Emotions

Show children that it is normal to feel different emotions – the key bit is how we deal with them and get back to calm.


Model specific regulation strategies, then encourage them to use them too.

- You can practise when calm!


GREEN ZONE	BLUE ZONE
 Happy Calm Focused Ready	 Sick Tired Sad Moving Slowly
YELLOW ZONE	RED ZONE
 Excited Worried Wiggly Silly	 Mad Angry Upset Violent Disgusted

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## Regulating Activities




Jump, run, roll on the trampoline




Snuggle up in a weighted blanket




Get involved in outdoor play



Listen to Music to block extended noise



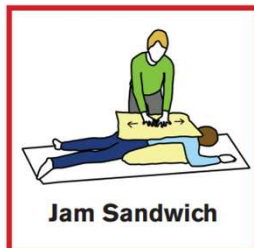
Rewind and relax in a bath



Do some Yoga for muscle relaxing

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## Regulating Movements



Lay on a pillow belly facing down. Get your teacher to put another pillow on your back and squeeze you gently.



Pull and release at least 10 times then take a break.



Get on the floor belly down and ask your teacher to roll a big stability ball over you.



Place hands palms down on each side of chair seat under your legs. Straighten arms to lift yourself off the chair. Repeat 10 times.

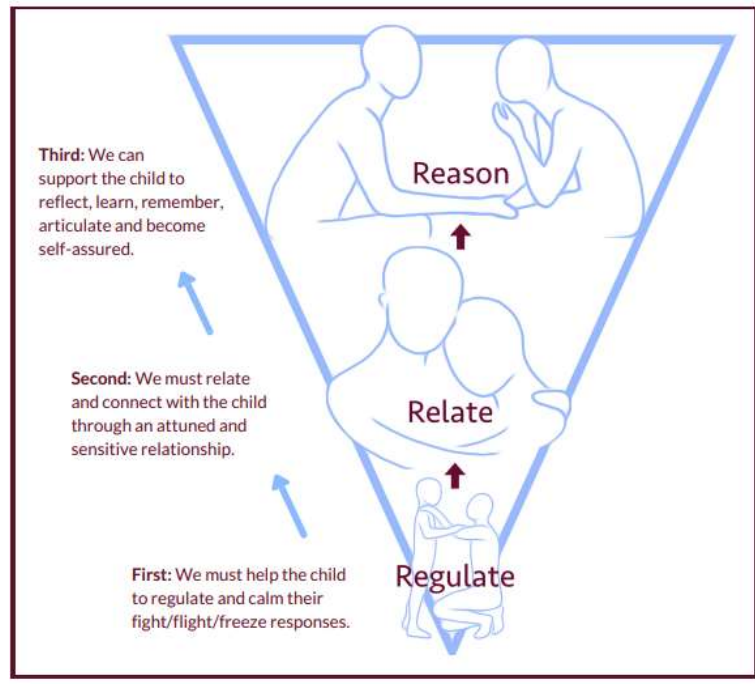
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## Heavy Work



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## Managing Meltdowns



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## Look after yourself

YOU'LL HAVE  
GOOD DAYS,  
BAD DAYS,  
OVERWHELMING DAYS,  
TOO TIRED DAYS,  
I'M AWESOME DAYS,  
I CAN'T GO ON DAYS.  
AND EVERY DAY YOU'LL  
STILL SHOW UP.



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## Don't be afraid to ask for support

- Surrey Branch of the National Autistic Society: [www.nassurreybranch.org](http://www.nassurreybranch.org)
- BRAAIN (Be ready ADHD ASD Information Network): [www.braain.co.uk](http://www.braain.co.uk)
- APPEER (Support for autistic girls): <https://www.appeer.org.uk/>
- Send Advice Surrey: <https://www.sendadvice.surrey.org.uk/>
- Family Voice Surrey: <https://www.familyvoicesurrey.org/>
- Autism Outreach for Schools: <https://www.autismoutreachforschools.uk/>
- Mindworks: <https://www.mindworks-surrey.org/>
- YMCA East Surrey: <https://www.ymcaeastsurrey.org.uk/>

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Find help sheets, FAQs, videos  
and more at:

[www.autismoutreachforschools.uk](http://www.autismoutreachforschools.uk)



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