Guidelines for Using the Emotional Regulation Action Plans

To successfully cope with stressful events, individuals need to learn the ability to inhibit some responses while employing other, more positive responses. Schools can be instrumental in helping students develop these skills and abilities in an effort to help them regulate their emotions and cope with events at school, home, and in the broader community.

We have created three developmentally appropriate plans for use at the Early Childhood through 2nd grade level, 3rd through 5th grade level, and middle and high school level. The plans are intended to be a collaborative document between school staff, parents, and the student and can be used with any student. They may prove particularly useful to students showing frequent behavior issues, office referrals and/or contact with student services staff. It can also be a useful re-entry step for students returning from a community-based facility.

Encouragement and validation throughout the process will be important as you move through this plan together. Finally, this is a fluid document that benefits from continuous monitoring and adjustments as a student grows in their skills and abilities.

Implementation Guidelines and Tips

— Develop this plan in collaboration with the student and their caregivers when the student is in a calm and emotionally regulated state

— When possible, the person with the best relationship with the student should take the lead on creating the plan with the student

— Honor the student’s perspective during development and implementation

— Encourage the student to identify helpful adults as part of their Support Team

— Secure releases, when appropriate, for identified support team members

— The entire support team need not be present during the development of the plan

— Ongoing communication between members of the support team, parents, and other school staff is important

— Review the plan monthly and when the student is experiencing an increase in emotional dysregulation

— Changes to the plan should be made as needed, as determined by the student and their support team

— For students with an IEP or 504 Plan, consider the need to reconvene the team if changes to the Behavior Intervention Plan are necessary as a result of this document
# My Emotional Regulation Plan

## Behavior concerns: These are behaviors I sometimes show, especially when I am stressed

- Losing my temper
- Fighting/hurting people
- Withdrawing
- Using alcohol or drugs
- Running away
- Injuring myself
- Feeling suicidal
- Threatening others
- Swearing
- Damaging property
- Throwing things
- Attempting suicide
- Withdrawing
- Feeling suicidal
- Threating others
- Swearing
- Damaging property
- Throwing things
- Attempting suicide
- Running away
- Injuring myself
- Feeling suicidal
- Threatening others
- Swearing
- Damaging property
- Throwing things
- Attempting suicide

Other: ___________________________

## Triggers: When these things happen, I am more likely to feel unsafe and upset

- Not being listened to
- Feeling pressured
- Feeling left out
- Feeling lonely
- Particular class/subject
- Particular time of day
- Not having a say
- Arguments

Other: ___________________________

## Warning signs: These are things other people may notice me doing if I begin to lose control

- Sweating
- Red face
- Acting hyper
- Being rude
- Singing/humming
- Breathing heavy
- Wringing hands
- Swearing
- Pacing
- Becoming very quiet
- Loud voice
- Bouncing legs
- Crying
- Hygiene issues
- Clenching teeth
- Rocking
- Squatting
- Damaging things
- Hurting myself
- Isolating/avoiding others

Other: ___________________________

## Possible ways to regulate my feelings: These are things that might help me calm down and keep myself safe when I’m feeling upset

- Time to myself
- Listening to music
- Singing softly
- Sitting with staff
- Pacing in private
- Talking with a support person
- Coloring, playing with clay
- Reading a book
- Run, fast walk, jumping jacks
- A cold splash of water
- Writing in a journal
- Punching a pillow
- Humor
- Push-ups, sit-ups
- Bouncing a ball
- Drawing
- Being around other people
- Hugging a stuffed animal
- Playing cards
- Talking to staff:
- Holding an ice cube
- Deep breathing
- Calling:
- Using the sensory room
- Speaking to my therapist
- Lying down
- Snapping a rubber band
- Using the gym
- Being in nature
- My designated safe space:
- Telling myself to relax
- Rocking or swinging
- Hearing hopeful messages
- Other: ___________________________

## Things that make it worse for me: These are things that do NOT help me calm down or stay safe

- Being alone
- Being around people
- Humor
- Not being listened to
- Peers teasing
- Being disrespected
- Loud tone of voice
- Being ignored
- Having staff support
- Talking to an adult
- Being touched
- Being reminded of the rules

Other: ___________________________
Action Plan:

When I notice these warning signs and triggers: ________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________ , I will _____________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________  to prevent a crisis from developing.

When staff notices _____________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________ , I would like them to help prevent a crisis by _______________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________ .

When I follow this plan, I will reward myself by:

Other ideas about what to do if a crisis develops:

Collaboration with Caregivers:
Reach out to the parents/caregivers and invite them answer the following questions:

What do you see as your child’s primary triggers and warning signs of distress?

What strategies can we use at home and school to increase your child’s ability to feel safe and calm down?

How can we work together better when your child is experiencing distress at school?

People on my support team:
Include: school teaching/admin/counseling/coaching staff, case manger, therapist, psychiatrist, social worker, family and friends

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