

# HOW DO SELF-REGULATION AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING SKILLS AFFECT ACADEMIC ABILITIES?

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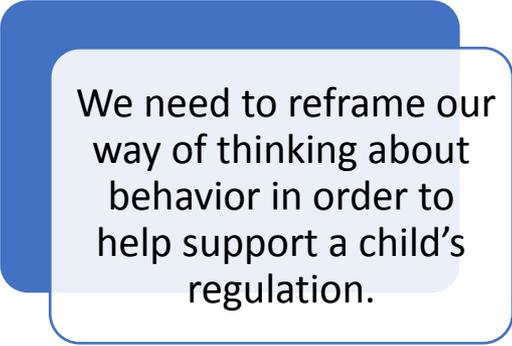
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# Regulation is the Foundation for Development



Regulation is the Cornerstone Across a Range of Disciplines.



We need to reframe our way of thinking about behavior in order to help support a child's regulation.



Self-regulation is the foundation of Executive Function skills

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# Self-Regulation Is...



Being calm, alert, and available. Process begins in infancy and expands throughout lifespan as one becomes more competent.



“the ability to demonstrate adaptive, functional, and socially appropriate responses to internal and environmental demands.” -STAR Center



“How we respond to stress” -Dr. Stuart Shanker

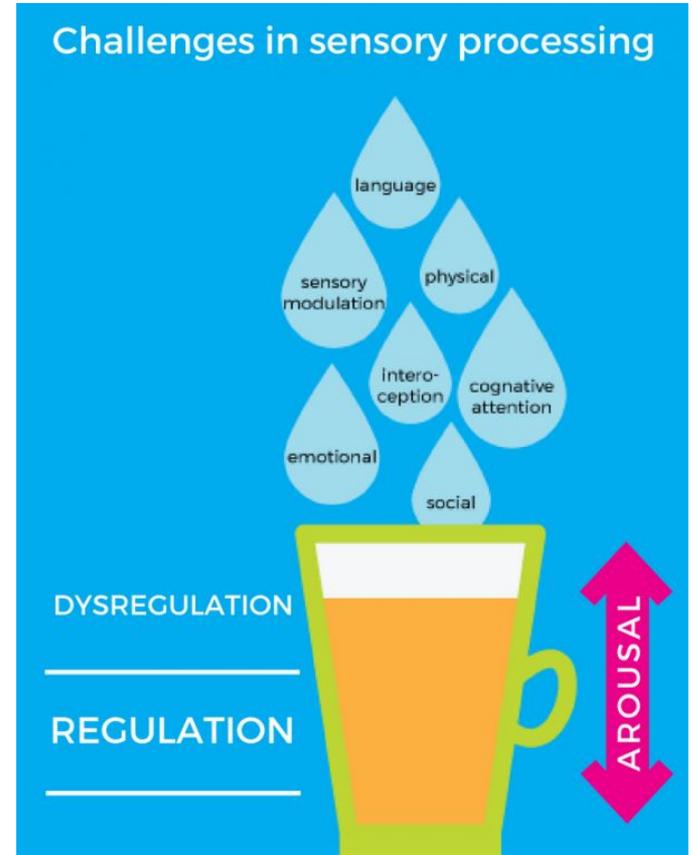
# Keeping the balance in our cup

“Cup” contains sensory input; attentional, cognitive, and motor demands; and basic biological needs

We need all of the “bubbles” in the cup to function

The “balance” in the cup is constantly changing

What happens when one bubble gets too big and fills the cup?



# Executive Function

- The Development of Executive Functioning Skills begins with Self-Regulation
- Self-Regulation is essential for task execution
  - Impulse Control
  - Delayed Gratification
  - Ability to monitor behavior, emotions, and thoughts according to the demands of the situation





- Executive Functioning skills are necessary for success in school and later career success
- Executive Functioning include a person's ability to self-regulate, plan, organize, shift, execute and manage time as well as the ability to "see" the future or perform a mental dress rehearsal
- The brain's CEO and all of it's managers
- Children with ADHD, sensory processing disorder and diagnosed learning disabilities often demonstrate difficulties with executive functioning

A large orange circle is centered on the right side of the slide. Inside the circle, the text "Executive Function Skills" is written in white. A smaller blue circle is located at the bottom right edge of the orange circle.

## Executive Function Skills

In  
other  
words:

EF skills are your  
ability to:

- task plan
- task execute
- self monitor



Develop  
Non-Verbal  
Working  
Memory for  
Goal  
Directed  
Future  
thinking

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Gestures

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Show and Tell me your Plan

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What will it look like?

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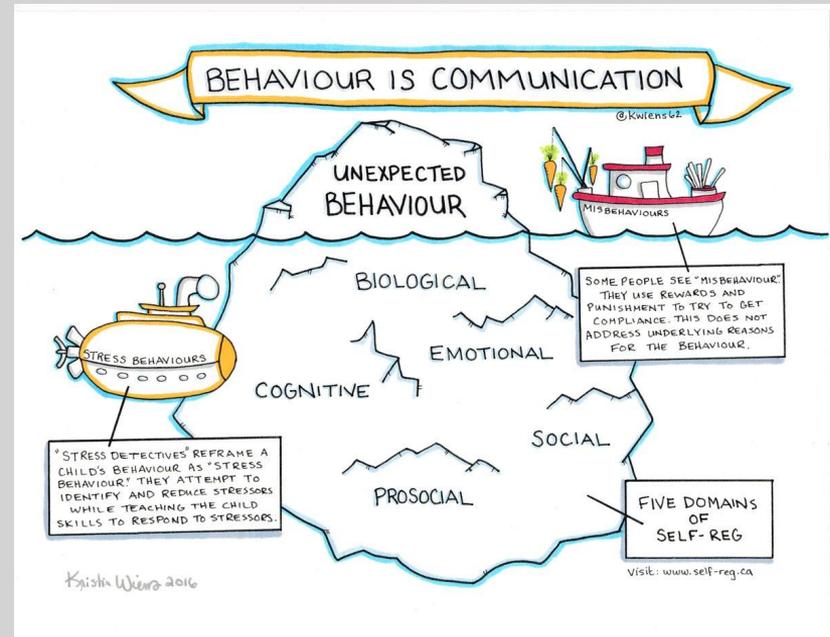
Tell me your plan to match the picture?  
(same but different)

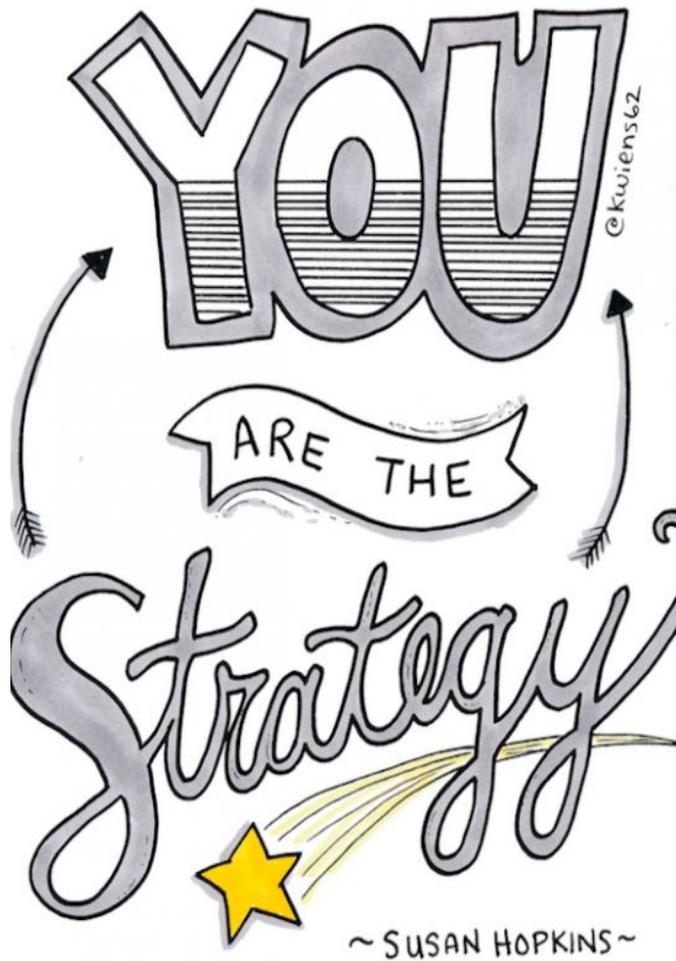
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How far into the future can you see?

# Dysregulation

- There is a function/dysfunction continuum.
- Dysregulation does not always look like undesirable behaviors
- Iceberg analogy – Behaviors that we observe are above the surface. What's going on below the surface?
- Stress responses and sensory processing happens below the surface.





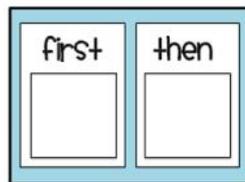
## Ways to Promote Successful & Well-Regulated Kids

- This requires a paradigm shift and reframing behaviors.
  - Behaviors are not “good” or “bad.”
  - Behaviors are reactions to physiological states.
- Become a detective!
- Ask questions that help solve regulatory issues.
  - What does this behavior tell me about the child’s state?

# Environmental Supports & Strategies for Success:

## *Visual Supports*

- Visuals help kids see what's coming next and provide predictability
- Create predictable schedules/consistent routines
- Give choices, if possible, to provide control
- Use visual timers to help with regulation during transitions



# Working Clock

- Show the Sweep of time
- From seeing time to planning time
- “We want to make the invisibility of time visible”- Sarah Ward



# Planning Backwards

Get Ready

What materials will I need?

Do

What do I need to do to match done picture?

Done

What will it look like?

Get Done

# Use Visualizing Language

“Show and tell me your plan”

“How do you see it  
happening?”

If we tell a child the “plan”  
then the question becomes  
“Whose brain is in charge?”

# Zones

- Creating zones in the classroom/home is important for students
- Students then can Pre-imagine what Space they are going to next
- 90% of the time task planning happens in a different space from where you execute the plan
- For older students talk about getting rid of the “clutter”- physical and digital





# Environmental Supports & Strategies for Success:

## ***Calm Down Corner***

- Create a Calm-Down Corner/Take-A-Break Spot in the Classroom or at Home
  - Beanbags
  - Books
  - Include a Calm Down Toolbox with headphones, fidgets, calm down jar, etc.
- Create individual Calm-Down spaces for students who need them





# Sensory Strategies to Support Self-Regulation

- Create a Sensory Lifestyle (STAR Institute) & NOT a sensory diet that matches your child's unique profile.
- Sensory needs are not static and can change often.
- Be aware of your own individual specific profile as a co-regulator.
- Create visuals/idea bank to provide ideas that will support a child's specific profile to attain/maintain regulation. Preschoolers feel empowered when given a choice.



# Resources

## Books:

- Beyond Behaviors by Mona Delahooke, PhD
- Brain Body Parenting by Mona Delahooke, PhD
- Self-Reg: How to Help Your Child (and You) Break the Stress Cycle and Successfully Engage with Life by Dr. Stuart Shanker

## DIR Floortime

Interdisciplinary Council on Developmental and Learning:  
<http://www.icdl.com>

## Dr. Mona Delahooke's Website

- [www.monadelahooke.com](http://www.monadelahooke.com)

## Dr. Stuart Shanker's Website

- <https://Self-reg.ca>

## Executive Function Resources

- Sarah Ward, Speech-Language Pathologist and EF coach, [www.efpractice.com](http://www.efpractice.com)
- Seth Perler, EF Coach, [www.sethperler.com](http://www.sethperler.com)
- George McCloskey, Professor and Psychologist, [www.georgemccloskeyphd.com](http://www.georgemccloskeyphd.com)
- Michael Delman, EF Coach, [www.beyondbooksmart.com](http://www.beyondbooksmart.com)