



Calming Coping Skills

These skills are designed to help relaxation. For example:

- Taking deep breaths
- Grounding techniques
- Thinking of a safe or favorite place
- Take a break
- Positive self-talk

Distracting Coping Skills are designed to distract and keep attention when the young person might otherwise be focused on a certain stressor. A few ideas:

- Doing something kind for someone else
- Baking or cooking
- Playing a game
- Drawing
- Writing a story
- Plan a fun event

Physical Coping Skills are designed to help rebalance energy, either to energize or to help manage excess energy in the body. Things kids can do:

- Jumping on a trampoline
- Taking a scooter ride
- Doing simple exercises
- Going on a walk
- Go swimming

Processing Coping Skills are designed to help work through thoughts and feelings about challenging situations. Some suggestions:

- Make a worry box
- Write poetry
- Use a journal
- Use a feelings thermometer
- Create a playlist to listen to

Sensory Coping Skills are designed to help kids calm down using their sensory systems, by doing things like:

- Turning upside down



- Using a body sock
- Using a weighted item like a stuffed animal or a lap pad
- Eating something crunchy
- Using mermaid fabric

It's important to have several different coping skills that you can use in a variety of settings. Different types of coping skills will work at different times. For instance, if the young person's coping skill is putting his head down and closing his eyes for a few minutes, that works in some situations. But if he's in the middle of an activity, that will probably not go over too well.

It's also important to try coping skills before passing on them. You never know what will resonate with the young person. What doesn't work at one time may work at another.

Sometimes, young people need more explicit instruction to help figure out what works for them and what doesn't. Or maybe they're experiencing an incredibly challenging period of their life and need to add more coping skills to their repertoire to adapt. That's when we, as the adults, try to teach them healthy ways to cope with their feelings.

How do I begin?

Start small– Identify one new coping skill to try per week. Have the young person try it when they're calm and see how it feels.

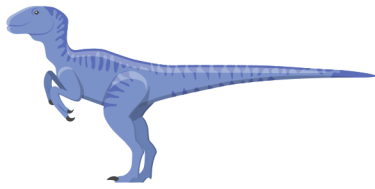
Don't give up–The young person may try a skill and hate it. Don't give up and think they won't ever have coping skills. Try that skill again a few more times. And if they still hate it, move on to a different skill.

Begin with what they love– . What do they enjoy? What do they love to do in their free time? Those activities are the beginning of making a good list of coping skills.

I encourage you to start a conversation with the young person about managing emotions and stress and ways to cope. They will benefit from knowing and using their coping skills!

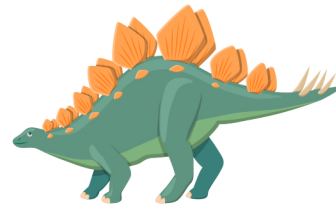
Adapted from FASD Australia.

DINOSAUR WORKOUT FOR KIDS



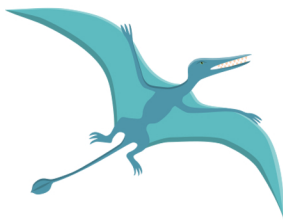
VELOCIRAPTOR RUN

Run in place as fast as you can!



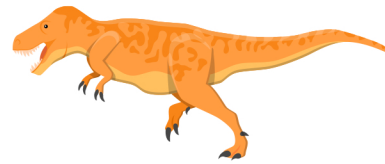
STEGOSAURUS WALKS

On your hands & feet, hips high, walk forward and back, stomping loudly



PTERODACTYL TAKE OFF

Spread your arms wide and move them quickly in a circle, jump up and down as high as you can



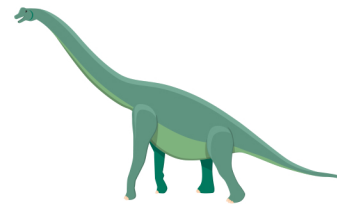
T-REX RUN

Put your elbows in your armpits and run in place lifting your knees as high as you can



COMPSOGNATHUS PRANCE

Jump left & right, crossing one leg behind the other as you move.



BRACHIOSAURUS STRETCH

Stand up straight, stretch as tall as you can with your arms up standing on your tip toes
How far can you reach?



THE DIPLODOCUS

Start on your hands & knees., stretch your left leg behind you and your right arm in front of you. Move your leg up, down, left, & right. Then switch sides and repeat.



SPINOSAURUS STRETCH.

Draw your belly to your spine and round your back toward the ceiling. Your back should be in an arch-like shape, similar the spines on the spinosaurus' back.

PRINTER FRIENDLY INSTRUCTIONS

Velociraptor Run

Velociraptors are known for their speed. Run in place as fast as you can for the entire minute.

Stegosaurus Walks

Stegosauruses are extremely heavy and walk on all four legs. But their back legs are longer than their front legs.

So, on your hands and feet, with your hips high (like a bear walk) walk 4 steps forward and 4 steps back.

But, try to stomp as loudly as you can at the same time so you sound like a heavy stegosaurus.

Pterodactyl Take Off

Stand with your arms spread wide like a pterodactyl's wings and move them quickly in a circular motion then jump up and down as high as you can, like you're trying to take off and fly like a pterodactyl.

T-Rex Run

High knees.

Bend your arms, and try to get your elbows as close to your armpits as possible, making short arms like the tyrannosaurus Rex.

Now, run or march in place lifting your knees as high as you can as if you're trying to get your knees to touch your hands.

Compsognathus Prances

These are like [skater jump](#).

Compsognathus was a small but fast carnivore that relied on its speed to catch its prey.

Stand with your legs hip-width apart, knees bent slightly. You're going to jump left and right, crossing one leg behind the other as you move, prancing back and forth like a Compsognathus about to prance on its prey.

Brachiosaurus Stretch

Stand up straight, feet together, and lift your arms straight over your head.

Stretch up as tall as you can, like the brachiosaurus' long neck. Get on your tippy toes and try to reach farther and farther.

How tall can you make yourself?

The Diplodocus

The diplodocus had the longest tail of all the dinosaurs, it also had a very long neck.

Start on your hands and knees. Stretch your left leg out behind you like the diplodocus' tail, and your right arm out straight in front of you like its neck.

Move your leg up and down and left and right (like you're wagging your tail). Then, switch sides so your right leg and your left arm are extended, and repeat.

Spinosaurus Stretch

This is the cool down move.

Start on your hands and knees. Draw your belly to your spine and round your back toward the ceiling. Your back should be in an arch-like shape, similar to the spines on the Spinosaurus' back.

Alternate between this pose and being neutral or curving the back, trying to elongate your spine with each rep.

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Want to share with friends? Send them the link: www.hes-extraordinary.com/dinosaur-themed-workout-for-kids so they can download their own.

EDUCATORS:

You may share this file on your Google Classroom or in your correspondence with parents. Please include the original URL with the files .

Thanks!

Questions? E-mail : nicole@hes-extraordinary.com

DRAW A FACE

Learning Objective: To teach children about basic emotions & build awareness around facial expressions

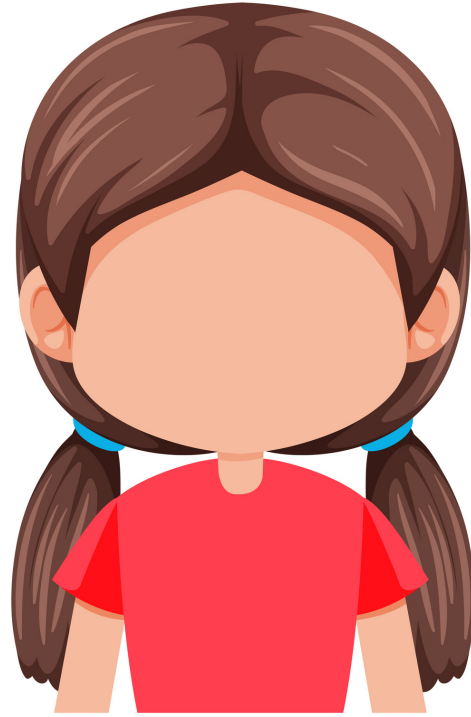


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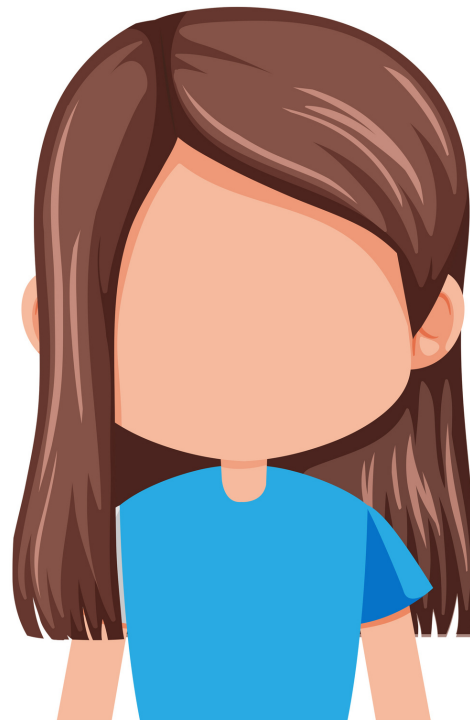
Draw a happy face.



Draw an angry face.



Draw a silly face



Draw a tired face

EMOTIONS WHEEL

Help your kids learn to identify their emotions by using this emotion wheel



Teaching and modelling impulse control- Activities for students

Almost everyone can think of situations when they've had trouble controlling their impulses. Sometimes we want to spend a few extra dollars on something fun online, or maybe eat just eat another piece of chocolate. These habits may seem harmless, but to students who lack impulse control, it can be a real problem in their everyday lives. And the same holds true for all those around them. By the time we are adults, most people have the necessary impulse control skills for everyday situations.

Students are naturally curious individuals with an appetite to explore their environment using their senses. Students will often act on their impulses to fulfill their needs and indulge in their sensory seeking behaviors.

Impulse control

Definition of Impulse Control:

Impulse Control is the ability to resist an impulse, desire, or temptation and to regulate its translation into action.

So, impulsivity is a tendency to act hurriedly and without adequate reflection on the possible consequences.

Why is the student so Impulsive?

Impulsivity in students may be a natural stage of growth and development.

There are lots of reasons why the student may act impulsively, like:

- Excitement
- Frustration
- Fatigue
- Lack of skills / Immaturity

In some cases, though, there are other underlying problems.

One of the common causes of impulsive behavior is ADHD (Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder). Other developmental disorders and mental health issues may also lead to impulsive behaviors. When a student lacks impulse control it affects their daily life, and the whole family too.



Underpinning reasons for poor impulse control

- Students have big feelings they often don't know what to do with.
- Young students act on their big feelings using their bodies rather than words due to their limited vocabulary.
- Without knowing the right words to express themselves, their bodies will act and do the talking by acting on impulses.
- Students don't mean to be impulsive.
- Students often don't realize they are acting impulsively.
- Students can't control the actual feeling of impulsiveness.
- Students don't realize it's too late until after they act on their impulsiveness.
- Students may hurt themselves and others by acting on their impulses.
- Self-control methods for students can be learned and eventually self-regulated.
- Students need the help of disciplined adults to learn proper self-control.

Related Reading:

[Impulse Control Strategies for Students](#)

[How to Teach Students to Wait Patiently](#)

What are the Signs of Impulsiveness in Students?

There are several forms of impulsiveness that can be identified in students:

- Impatience and inability to wait their turn, interruption in classroom and discussions
- Having a short-fused temper, crying, and screaming for long periods
- Taking risks that are potentially harmful and dangerous
- Quitting games, activities and play due to uncontrollable frustration
- Hitting and biting other students and adults
- Lying, stealing, and running away

Why is it Important to Teach Impulse Control to our Students and How?

We need to teach our students to think before they act.

Proper impulse control is mostly taught to students by their parents and other adult figures. Students also learn self-control from their siblings and friends and by living their own everyday lives. The trait of proper impulse control will boost their potential to construct better decisions as they develop as teenagers and grow through adulthood.

When teaching our students about impulsivity, they not only will have a greater awareness of how their actions will affect those around them, but will also recognize that, like them, other students may also lack self-control. Empathy is a powerful tool when teaching our students valuable life skills, such as pausing to think before they act.

Students with ADHD commonly struggle with impulsivity as a daily occurrence at home, at school, and in social interactions. When a student doesn't stop to think before they act, it can lead them to trouble and potentially dangerous situations. The act of stopping to think about our actions is a learned trait that needs practice in order to turn into a regular habit.



Fun impulse control activities to test your student's self-control

Now that we've covered the importance of self-control as a trait, here are some fun and rewarding impulse control activities for students to practice.

"Don't Eat the Marshmallow"

Otherwise known as "The Marshmallow Test", this tried-and-true game was initially developed in the late 1960's as an experiment to study gratification deferral in students. It also works as a fun and rewarding impulse control activity for students as young as 3. In a room with little to no distractions (such as a TV, radio, books, etc.), sit the students at a table and give them a clean plate with a single marshmallow (or other small treats). Tell your students that you'll be leaving the room to finish a task while they wait for you to finish. They have two choices; they can eat the marshmallow now, or they can wait to eat it. If they wait, you will give them another marshmallow to eat when you come back. Once you leave the room to finish your chore, your students will have the time to contemplate the choices you gave them. This will test their ability to think over the pros and cons of acting on their initial desire. After all, good things (and more marshmallows) will come to those who wait.

Red Light, Yellow Light, Green Light

This game is well-known as a classic in class or recess.

Just a little reminder in case it was not part of your childhood games: When your students hear the words "Green light" they can move forward, but when they hear "Red light" they must freeze. You can play this game and once your students are familiar with it, you can turn it into a useful impulse control activity or self-control tool.

You can tell your students to envision a traffic light over their head and check the light before they act on an impulse. This traffic light is *their* light, and *theirs* only.

Explain to your students that they can make better decisions by paying close attention to their imaginary traffic light.

Role-play situations. What is your traffic light telling you?

If the light turns red, this means that their brain is telling them to STOP, and for a good reason; to avoid them getting hurt or in trouble. If their light turns yellow, it means to slow down and think carefully about their next choice, and maybe ask a parent or teacher for help. If the light turns green, they have determined that their decision is a positive one, and they can proceed while feeling good about their choice.

No Talking Game- Attuned listening skills

Who knew that this game would be a favorite for both students and parents?

This activity is great to practice in groups of multiple students, such as in classrooms, library, organized sport and at play. The goal of this game is to not only have students practice withholding their impulse to break the silence with their voices, but to focus on their awareness of their overall environment.

This game is best to start when the class is regulated. Start by telling your students that the “No Talking Game” is starting and they have a few goals to achieve during the game, including:

1. To go as long as possible without talking or moving out of their seat
2. To listen to their environment and use a pencil and paper to take notes (or draw pictures, if they prefer) of all the sounds, sights, smells, textures, and emotions they feel during quiet time.

If the person has the urge to say something, they should write it down or draw it instead of blurting it out loud, with the promise that it will be discussed after the game is over. When someone else is talking, everyone else should carefully listen and not talk until it is their turn to talk.

Providing them a pencil, paper, and a long moment of silence, start the game. You can continue to work on class projects or join your students to make it even more fun! When someone caves into their impulse to start talking, pause the game.

Ask the person who started to speak what they needed to say.

Was it important enough to say before the game ended? Could it have waited until the game was over? Why do they feel it was important enough to say out loud before the end of the game?

If what was said is found not to be urgent, gently remind them that they could write it down to talk about after the game, and you will talk about their writings/drawings once the game is over.

When the quiet time is officially done, each person takes turns to talk about what they wrote or drew on their paper.

This will teach your students that if they are patient and wait their turn, they can comfortably talk, knowing all eyes and ears are on them with little to no communication issues.

Dance/Move/Freeze Game”

This quick and easy game will help students dance and move their way to practicing better impulse control skills. Use a bouncy song or a song the students pick that they like dancing to, use Cha Cha slide dance, any of the Wiggle’s songs with activities as these fun songs instructs students to move, slide, dance, hop, skip, and twirl until the you say, “Freeze”! You can add an extra dimension by getting them to hold a piece of A3 paper or a piece of newspaper above their head and when the music stops, they have to get it to the ground, step on it and then freeze.

PACE - Dan Hughes



Playful

- ★ Creates an atmosphere of lightness, openness and interest
- ★ Antidote to shame, anger and fear; “*stress buster*”
- ★ Involves smiling, laughter and humour
- ★ Telling funny stories
- ★ Being able to laugh at yourself and not take yourself too seriously
- ★ Being together, enjoying each other’s company, having fun!
Generates pleasure and delight; desire to spend more time together.
- ★ Caution! Don’t use sarcasm or laugh at the young person



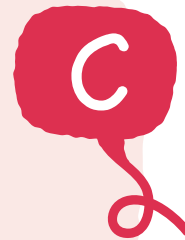
Accepting

- ★ Being able to see the child underneath the behaviours
- ★ Unconditional acceptance for the child (but not their behaviours)
- ★ Creates a sense of safety and security for the child
- ★ Non-judgementally accepting the young person’s views, feelings, thoughts, motives, perceptions, regardless if they are true or not
- ★ Avoid negative judgements – e.g. don’t say I “you just took that money because you have no respect”; instead you can say “I am cross that you took that money”



Curious

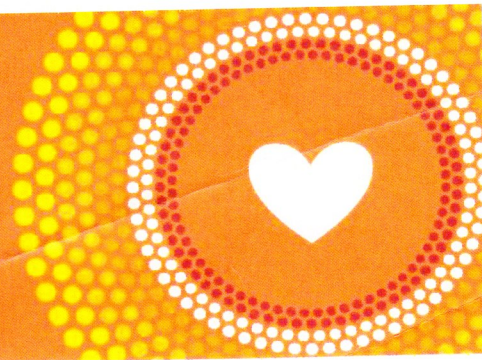
- ★ Wanting to get to know and understand the young person
- ★ Interest in understanding what is going on for the young person here and now; show acceptance and empathy – e.g. “how does that seem to you; tell me about that; what do you think about that” etc.
- ★ Attitude of not knowing rather than assuming
- ★ Opens doors for exploration and discovery, the real “*stuff*”
- ★ Can make guesses about what the young person is thinking or feeling (e.g. “*I wonder if...*”); saying out loud as if just to yourself, not expecting an answer



Empathic

- ★ Allows the young person to feel understood, i.e. “*you get me*”
- ★ Shows the young person that adults are kind, strong and able to help
- ★ Capacity to “*sit*” with the feeling, no matter how difficult, and “*hold*” the young person through it
- ★ Communicates “*you are not alone, I am here with you and for you; we will get through this together*”
- ★ Not problem solving or reassurance





PACE – Sentence Starters

PLAYFULNESS (matching the child's affect)

- I'll take that as a...
- Was that you trying to say hello/goodnight/goodbye?
- That was some really colourful language you've used there! I know you know other words though!
- Every time you call me a.... I imagine you're saying....because...isn't a word I like!
- I much prefer it when you...!

ACCEPTANCE (meeting the child where they are at, no judgement)

- Thanks for telling me...
- If you think That must be really hard for you
- I feel sad that you experience...
- I'm glad you told me....
- I'm sorry you think that I....

CURIOSITY (openness – not making assumptions about the child's behaviour or intentions)

- I Wonder...
- I'm thinking you might be.... Is that right?
- Do you think it's because....?
- Why do you think....
- What was that like.....?
- Are there times when.....?
- What happens when.....?
- I'm wondering if you might be feeling....?

EMPATHY (Feeling with the child...)

- It must be so hard...
- You seem to really want to...
- I know it's really disappointing that you can't go/do...
- It's so difficult when you try really hard and....
- I'm worried you feel...
- I feel sad that you...
- It's really difficult to be told that you can't/have to....
- I'm so sorry that you've been feeling....



Questions you might ask:

Playfulness

I'll take that as a

Was that you trying to say hello/goodbye

That was some colourful words you used there! I know you know other words though.

Every time you call me a.... I imagine you are saying.....because isn't a word I like

I much prefer it when...

Acceptance

Thanks for telling me

If you think.... That must be really hard for you

I feel sad that you do not experience...

I am glad you told me

I'm sorry that you think I ..

Curiosity

I wonder..

Why do you think

What was that like....

What happens when....

I am wondering if you might be feeling

Empathy

It must be so hard

You seem to really want to

I am worried you feel....

I am so sorry that you have been feeling