



A Guide for parents of Highbury and Whitehill

The Zones of Regulation is a complete social-emotional learning curriculum, created to teach children self-regulation and emotional control. All classes at our schools are using Zones along with the 5 Ways to Wellbeing and it is a useful tool to use at home too.

[Leah Kuypers](#) created The Zones of Regulation in 2011. She and her team provide training and resources for schools and individuals looking to use the Zones Framework with children.

Visit: <https://www.zonesofregulation.com/index.html>

This is an overview for parents. It covers a brief explanation of what the Zones of Regulation are, how they're taught to children, and how you can begin using the concepts in your own home.

The Zone Colours

The Zones of Regulation uses four colours to help children self-identify how they're feeling and categorise it based on colour.

The curriculum also helps children better understand their emotions, sensory needs, and thinking patterns. They learn different strategies to help them cope and manage their emotions based on which colour zone they're in.

Additionally, the Zones of Regulation helps kids recognize their own triggers, learn to read facial expressions, develop problem-solving skills, and become more attuned to how their actions affect other people (*Kuypers, L.M, 2011*).

The Green Zone

The green zone is used to describe when you're in a calm state of alertness. Being in the green zone means you are calm, focused, happy, or ready to learn. This is predominantly the state you *want* your child to be in. It's also the state most needed in the classroom in order to learn.

The Yellow Zone

The yellow zone describes when you have a heightened sense of alertness. This isn't always a bad thing, and you typically still have some control when you're in the yellow zone. Being in the yellow means you may feel frustrated, anxious or nervous. But it could also mean you're feeling excited, silly, or hyper – which is okay in the right situations.

The Red Zone

The red zone describes an extremely heightened state of intense emotions. When a person reaches the red zone, they're no longer about to control their emotions or reactions. This is the zone kids are in during [meltdowns](#). Being in the red zone means you're feeling anger, rage, terror, or complete devastation and feel out of control.

The Blue Zone

The blue zone, on the other hand, is used when a person is feeling *low states of alertness or arousal*. When you're in the blue zone you may be feeling down – sad, sick, tired, or bored. You're still in control, as you are in the yellow zone, but with low energy emotions.

Identifying Zones

The first step in teaching the Zones to your child is teaching your child the four zones and which emotions fall into each zone. It's necessary that your child is able to accurately identify which emotions belong in which zone. This is the first step to their success. You'll achieve this through practicing with your child, talking about The Zones frequently and in different environments, and encouraging them to identify which zone they're in.

- [Zones of Regulation Bingo and other free resources](https://www.zonesofregulation.com/teaching-tools.html#) (https://www.zonesofregulation.com/teaching-tools.html#) – Use these Zones bingo sheets to help your child identify which zone each of the feelings belongs to.
- Books about Feelings – Read [different books about feelings](https://www.amazon.com/shop/raisinganextraordinaryperson?listId=VQGUAEKRRX3G) (https://www.amazon.com/shop/raisinganextraordinaryperson?listId=VQGUAEKRRX3G) to your child and actively refer to which zone the feelings in the book belong to.
- Match TV characters to Zones – When you're watching TV with your child, ask them to identify which zone their favorite characters are in throughout the show. This is a great way to turn your child's screen time into a learning experience and to show your child that the zones can be found everywhere.
- [Body Check Activity](https://hes-extraordinary.com/interoception-body-check-chart) (https://hes-extraordinary.com/interoception-body-check-chart) – Use this activity to help your child identify how they experience different emotions. Talk about which zone these different feelings are in.

Getting Back to The Green Zone

Along with being able to identify the zones, and know what zone they're in, your child also needs to know strategies to help them get back to the green zone. Practicing co-regulation and self-regulation strategies while your child is in the green zone will help them learn the best ways to get back there during times when they're feeling stressed, frustrated, sad, etc. Model and talk aloud about what you do to help yourself regulate and feel better.

Remember we are teaching that feelings change and we have the ability to influence this. It is important for us to also recognise however that all Zones are okay to be in and none are “right or wrong” they just “are”.

The Importance of Recognizing Emotions

It's so important for children to learn how to recognise their own emotions but many parents may overlook the fact that their child *is* struggling with this skill. Talking about and identifying our feelings and those of our children is a powerful way to do this. Linking this to 4 simple colours makes it memorable.

Think about this:

Let's say your child recognizes they're angry because whenever they get mad, their heart races. So – they feel their heart race and the result is an angry outburst. Red zone.

BUT – Fear ALSO causes our heart to race. If your child *isn't able* to recognise the other sensations that happen when they're both afraid and angry then they'll react angrily when they're actually scared – and they won't understand what's happening or how to regulate that emotion.

The Zones of Regulation can help teach children all of the physiological sensations they feel in response to different emotions.

When children fully understand what they're feeling, they can make sense of, and regulate their emotions much better.

Print out one of these zone colours to use as a family. Use a counter or an object (you could model yourselves from plasticine!) and put yourselves on the zone you're in each morning and evening. Help each other choose tools or strategies to get back to green. Strategies might include, taking some time out, reading, doing yoga or mindfulness, having a drink of water, doing a puzzle, listening to some music etc. Remember to talk about what is making you or your child feel in the Green Zone while you are actually in it. This way you are helping to illustrate the things that they are naturally doing to regulate themselves. It becomes harder to use strategies the more dysregulates a child becomes.

Where are you right now?





Blue

Green

Yellow

Red

ZONES OF REGULATION!

Blue	Green	Yellow	Red
			
<p>Sick Sad Tired Bored Moving Slowly</p>	<p>Happy Calm Good to Go Focused Ready to Learn</p>	<p>Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Anxious Excited</p>	<p>Mad/Angry Mean Yelling/Hitting Out of Control I Need Time and Space</p>



I hope you have found this guide helpful. Please do ask if there is anything you're unsure of.

Enjoy using the zones with your child

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