Self Regulation

What is self regulation?

"Self regulation is the ability to transfer sensations, emotions and actions into appropriate responses. (Segal, Hobel, 2010) The ability to control reactions, thinking, behavior and more to cope in different situations.

In addition, self regulation helps with other developmental processes. Children get older and learn to think before they act.

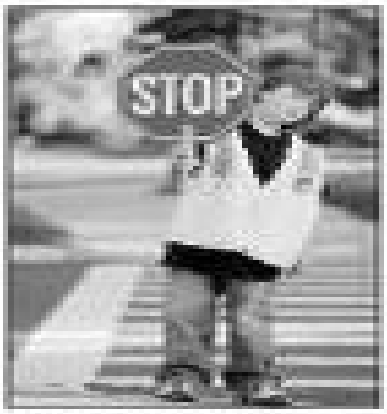
Why is it important?

Research indicates that self regulation is correlated to a production of academic abilities. Children who show levels of self regulation score significantly higher scores in reading, vocabulary and math. In addition, some research has shown that the ability for young children to self regulate is connected with higher IQ and reflection times.

How can you help a child develop self regulation?

Here are some suggested activities to help develop self regulation skills:

- "Work out" opportunities at a young age - children develop the foundation skills for self regulation from birth to 5 years old
- Demonstrate and practice proper behaviors - Model proper behaviors to discuss how to choose an appropriate response in different situations. Partner children who lack self regulation with children who exhibit better self control to act as role models
- Help children to be patient. Build up endurance by providing tasks and games periodically and for gradually growing self regulation segments of a mentally or physically activity
- Provide verbal or physical cues to help children to self regulate. Some examples to cues are "let's play under" or allowing a child to go to a quiet area to relax
- Continually monitor children to determine when adult support can be withdrawn so that the children can learn to be independent in their self regulation
- Play games that require stop and start - Red Light - Green Light, Freeze Dance, Statue Game, etc.
- Participate in dance activities where the child needs to move to the rhythm
- Play any games that require turn taking



Talk to a speech pathologist or physical therapist if you have questions about the exact appropriate activities for a specific child.

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