

A Quick Guide to Coregulation, supporting young people in

distress.

What is Co-regulation?

Co-regulation is the ability to regulate emotions, behaviours and stress; supporting someone to return to a calm state with the support of consistent, supportive, emotional responses from an attuned person.

Co-regulation requires warm, responsive interactions through support, modelling, coaching to support children and young people to understand their thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

Children and young people may become distressed, and their feelings may become too big for them to manage alone.

Children and young people can learn to self-soothe and self-regulate through ongoing relationships with other nurturing people.

Remember when adults provide coregulatory experiences you support the child/young person in the moment and strengthen their ability to regulate over time.

What is Attunement?

Attunement is being aware of and responding to a person's internal, emotional and bodily states.

This will help to ensure the child or young person feels safe, calm and understood.

Implications for a pupil

How needs may present in the classroom:

- Communicating through behaviour
- Changes in volume of voice
- Changes in body tension
- Changes in breathing
- Showing distress

Seeking connections

How to help

- 1. Position yourself to the side of the child and not face on and speak calmly and softly. Keep your eyes lowered. Request support from attuned staff if needed.
- 2. Ensure that adults are attuned and take notice of children and young people's emotions.
- 3. Recognise and use emotions as an opportunity for learning.
- 4. Remain calm and limit the use of language if necessary.
- 5. Support children and young people to feel safe, both physically and emotionally. This could be by using non-verbal communication such as open gestures, facial expressions etc.
- 6. Validate feelings and label them, using scripts e.g., "I wonder if you are feeling xxx", "I can see that xxx", "I think xxx".
- 7. Teach strategies to regulate big emotions e.g., using sensory tools, calming activities, grounding techniques.
- 8. Provide reassurance and communicate empathy e.g., "I am sorry that happened", "I understand why you may feel xx", "It's ok to feel xx"
- 9. Be non-judgemental, taking care to avoid any blame or shame.
- 10.Be aware of your own emotions and the impact these can have on others.
- 11.Request support from attuned staff if you become dysregulated or in a heightened emotional state.

Further advice and support

Emotional Regulation Training Notes (beaconhouse.org.uk)

<u>Co-regulation: Helping children and teens navigate</u> <u>big emotions - Harvard Health</u>

10 Steps for Effective Co-Regulation - KindleKids