

Self Regulation Strategies

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Self-regulation is the ability to focus and prioritize tasks, stay organized and manage time. It also requires self-awareness. Self-regulation skills help students be more successful academically as well as socially. The ability to self-regulate also influences a student's behavior. Educators, parents, and other professionals can provide self-regulation strategies to help their students succeed!



Self Regulation Strategies for Student Success

Self-regulation skills are important to possess because they can help students set themselves up for future success.

There are many different ways to self-regulate such as prioritizing tasks, deep breathing, staying calm, and more. As a preventative measure, it is also good to take breaks when you feel overwhelmed or frustrated.

Benefits of Teaching Self-Regulation Strategies

It is beneficial for teachers to explicitly teach lessons in small groups or to the entire class to encourage the development of self-regulation skills.

According to [Dr. Richard Davidson](#), positive emotions contribute to success, and people with self-regulation skills are more likely to be open to new experiences and opportunities.

People who have higher levels of self-regulation find it easier to postpone gratification or act in spite of fear. People who possess these skills also tend to be less impulsive and better able to control themselves emotionally.

When students are able to self-regulate, their grades can improve—students with higher levels of self-regulation tend to perform better academically. Students who lack self-control may appear unmotivated, disrespectful, or disengaged.

Self-regulation skills also help all learners build social skills and connect with peers.

Students can begin developing self-regulation skills early on by working with their parents to establish routines and schedules. It also helps to give them opportunities for success at an early age so they learn how to take pride in their accomplishments, identify what works for them and learn from mistakes. Parents will need to have the patience to be able to step back and let the children learn these self-regulation techniques rather than do it for them.

When students learn self-regulation and coping skills, they also gradually learn the importance of taking responsibility for their actions and how they affect those around them.

Self Regulation Strategies and Suggestions

If you want to help your students in the classroom, here are some suggestions. First and foremost create an environment that promotes learning to help your students succeed.

Student Voice

Provide your students with a voice. It is important for children to feel that they are heard and can be a part of the learning process.

For example, if your student is struggling to self-regulate to complete assignments, perhaps allow the student to provide input into where assignments will be completed (i.e., in class or at home) and when (before or after school). Specify this information in the IEP/504 Plan to help implement a time management system for completing homework assignments.

Offer Clear Instructions

Provide clear instructions about what needs to be learned, how it will be assessed, and what accommodations will/will not be made before the student begins the assignment. Providing this information reduces emotions about receiving low grades due to misunderstanding expectations.

Give frequent instruction on class preparation too (e.g., what needs to be done before coming to class; e.g., bring pencils).

Movement Breaks and Brain Breaks for Self Regulation Strategies

Your students need to regulate before you can educate them. You can get the brain ready to work by providing physical activity breaks throughout the day. [Yoga is an excellent way to help students learn about self-regulation.](#) Check out a [huge collection of brain breaks here.](#)

Self-Regulation Strategies for Younger Children

Children LOVE to play games. Incorporating games that require children to develop impulse control and waiting to take their turns is an excellent way to build self-regulation skills in kids. Check out these [10 games to encourage self-regulation skills that require no equipment.](#)

Try Small Group Work

Sometimes frustration can set in with students when working in a large group setting. It can be overwhelming and loud. Assign group work with one or two students so they can practice self-regulation skills in a smaller setting.

Work Together to Set Goals

Work with your students [to establish specific goals](#) regarding self-regulation such as completing assignments independently without redirection or practicing self-regulation skills during transitions.

Teach Your Students How to Self-Monitor

Give students opportunities for [self-monitoring where they use a checklist](#) to assess their progress. Always provide detailed feedback about what students did well or need to do differently in order for them to improve.

Targeted Skill Practice

Provide opportunities for practice of targeted skills during class time through the application of new concepts. Try this [self regulation puzzle](#) for practice.

Teach Your Students How to Identify Emotions

Being able to identify and recognize our emotions are a critical first step to emotional regulation. You can help students develop these skills with this [free printable on emotional regulation](#).

Teach Deep Breathing To Add To Your Students Self Regulation Strategies Toolkit

Children will be able to master certain deep breathing techniques better than others. [Teach various deep breathing exercises](#) to children so they can determine which ones are most beneficial.

Use Helpful Study Strategies in Class or at Home

Implement study strategies such as organizers, graphic organizers, cue cards, note cards, and flashcards.

Provide Feedback

Provide frequent feedback by way of redirection if the student is off task. If you expect students to complete most work independently.

Try creating a signal to use with a student so that you can discretely remind them to return to the task at hand.



Modeling

Modeling any task prior to asking students to do it by themselves can be extremely beneficial.

Use Positive Self-Talk

Self talk is a mental strategy using self addressed cues (short phrases or a few words) to trigger appropriate responses by focusing attention on the skill or behavior to help improve performance. [Read more here.](#)

Monitor and Re-Teach Skills

Monitor and re-teach skills until they have been mastered so that the targeted skill is being used in all academic situations. You can use rubrics to monitor a student's progress.

Make sure that the student consistently receives feedback about their performance. This approach will help build confidence and persistence when learning new material or skills.