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Better Space. Better Work.

Calm-Down Tools

Helping Students Recognize, Express, and Regulate Their Emotions. A practical guide for creating visual supports that help students identify feelings, build coping skills, and return to learning.



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Why Students Need Calm-Down Tools

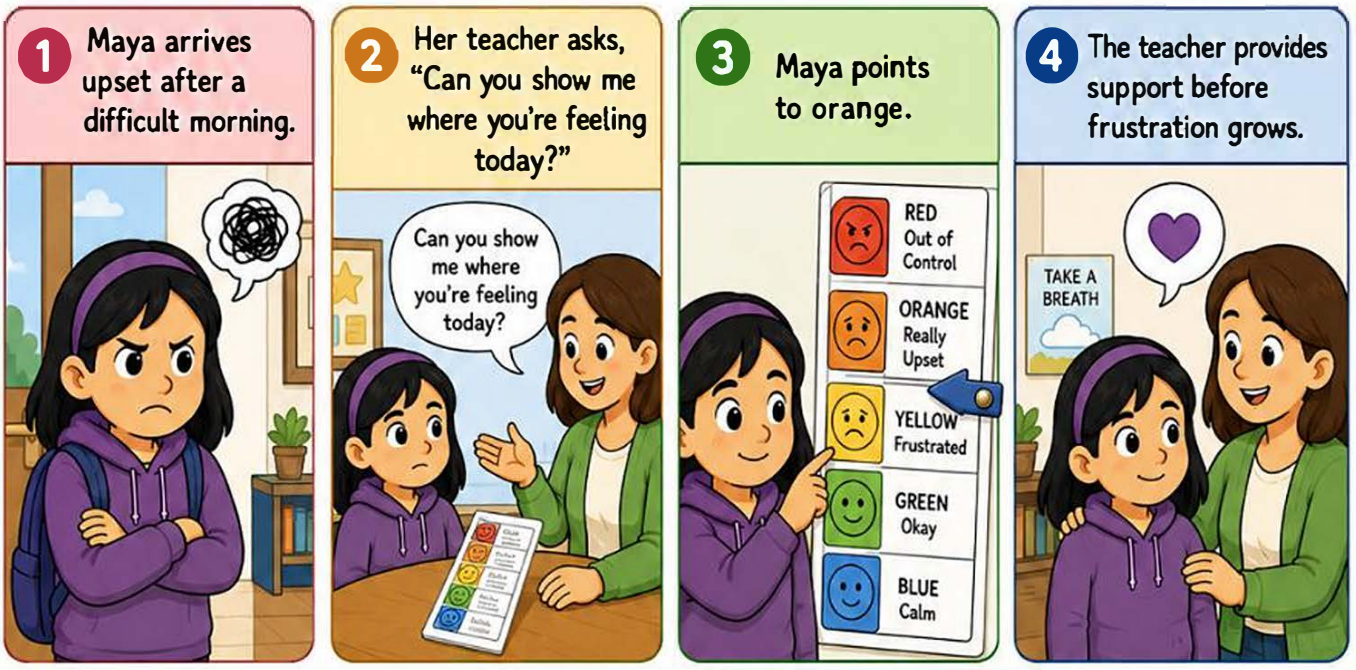


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Feelings Thermometer

Meet Maya. Maya arrives upset after a difficult morning.



Why it works:

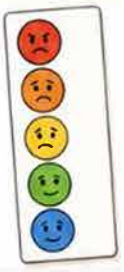
Students can communicate emotional intensity without needing the perfect words.



Build it!



1. CARDSTOCK
for the base



2. CONSTRUCTION PAPER
for the levels and faces



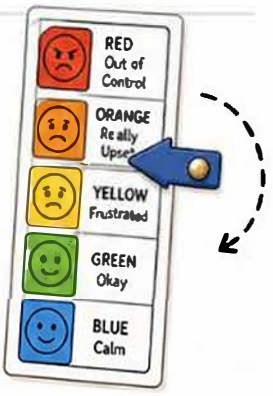
3. LAMINATING POUCHES
for durability and reuse



4. LABELS
for each level



5. MOVABLE INDICATOR
use a brad to attach so it can move



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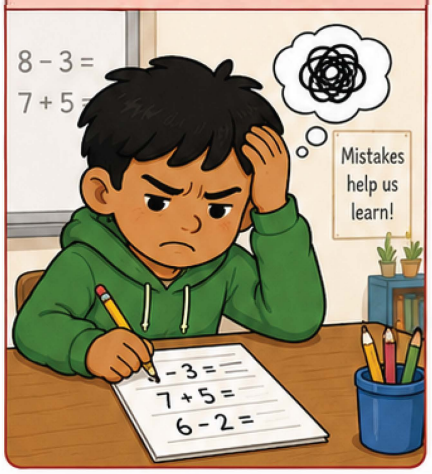
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Breathing Star

**Meet Noah. Noah becomes frustrated during math.
Instead of continuing the lesson,
his teacher introduces a Breathing Star.**

Noah traces the points while breathing in and out.

1 Noah becomes frustrated during math.



2 Instead of continuing the lesson, his teacher introduces a Breathing Star.

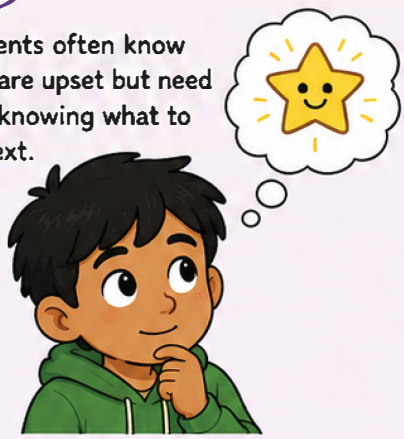


3 Noah traces the points while breathing in and out.



Why it works:

Students often know they are upset but need help knowing what to do next.



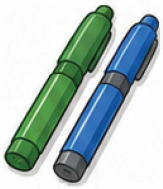
- Gives students a simple, calming strategy.
- Uses movement and breath to calm the body and mind.
- Empowers students to take control of their feelings.

Build it!

You only need three simple materials.



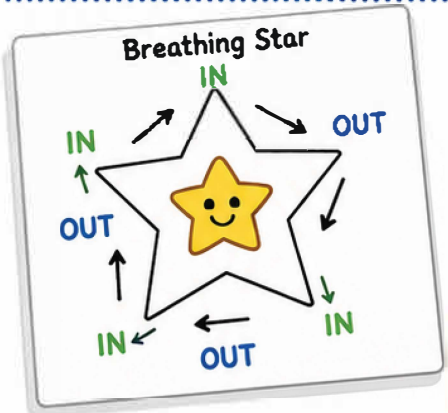
1. CARDSTOCK for the base



2. MARKERS to draw and color the star and arrows



3. LAMINATING POUCHES for durability and reuse



IN Breathe in as you trace to the next point.

OUT Breathe out as you trace to the next point.

Use it anytime you need a calm reset!

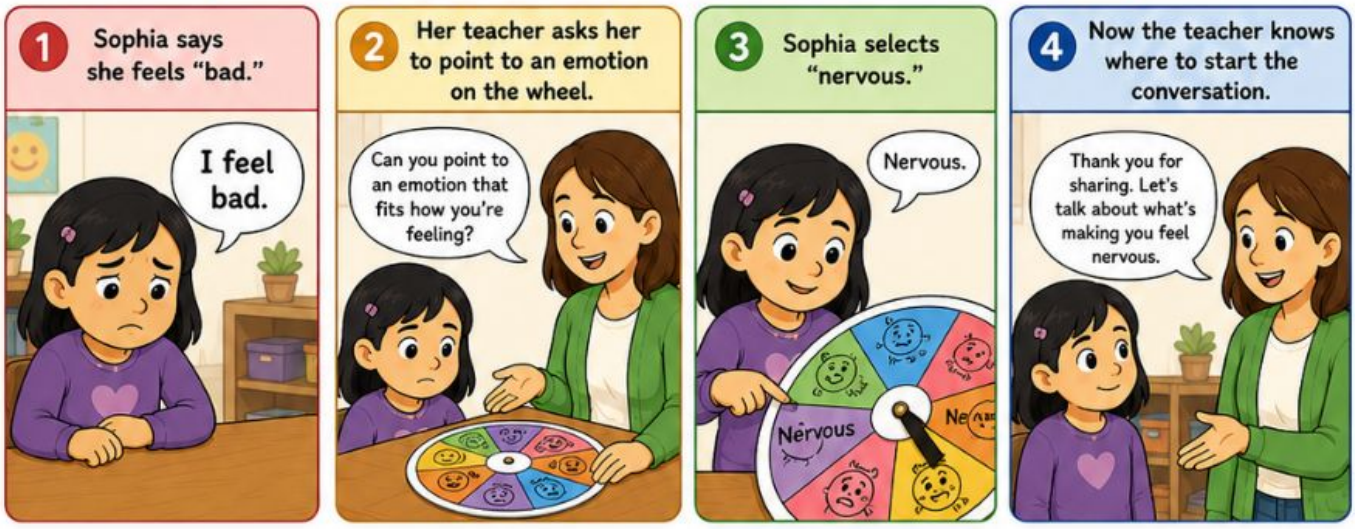
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Emotion Wheel

Meet Sophia. Sophia says she feels "bad."
Her teacher asks her to point to an emotion on the wheel.

Sophia selects "nervous."
Now the teacher knows where to start the conversation.



Why it works:

Students often struggle to find the right words to describe how they feel.



- Gives students a visual way to identify emotions.
- Helps teachers understand and respond with empathy.
- Supports meaningful conversations and stronger connections.

Build it!

You only need four simple materials.



1. **COLORED PAPER** for the wheel pieces
2. **CARDSTOCK** for the base and center circle
3. **FASTENER** to hold the wheel and base together
4. **LAMINATOR** for durability and reuse



Tips:

- Use simple, student-friendly emotion words.
- Add faces or colors to match each feeling.
- Make it classroom friendly and easy to access!

Use it anytime to help students communicate and feel understood.

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Calm Choice Cards

Meet Ethan. Ethan is frustrated after a challenging assignment.
His teacher directs him to Calm Choice Cards.
Ethan selects "Drink Water" and returns ready to learn.



Choose a card to help you feel calm and ready to learn!

Breathe



Take slow, deep breaths in and out. Breathe in calm. Breathe out stress.

Stretch



Stretch your body to release tension and feel better.

Drink Water



Take a sip of water to refresh your body and mind.

Read



Read a book or look at a calming picture.

Move



Get your body moving! Take a walk or do some quick exercises.

Quiet Reflection



Take a quiet moment to think about what you need and how you feel.

Pick a strategy that works for you!

Why it works:

- Gives students ownership of their calming strategies.
- Provides options so every student can find what works best.
- Helps students reset and return to learning.
- Builds independence and self-regulation skills.



Build it!

You only need four simple materials.



1. COLORED PAPER for the card fronts
2. CARDSTOCK for the base
3. FASTENER for durability
4. LAMINATOR for durability and reuse

Use the Calm Choice Cards anytime you need a reset. You've got this!

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Reflection Cards

Reflection Cards encourage students to think about what happened, how they felt, and what strategy helped. They can be used after a calming activity or at the end of the day to build emotional awareness.

Why it works!

- Helps students process their emotions.
- Builds self-awareness and responsibility.
- Encourages problem-solving and decision-making.
- Strengthens communication between students and teachers.



How it works

1. Students complete the Reflection Card.
2. They think about what happened, how they felt, and what helped.
3. They share with a teacher, trusted adult, or keep it to themselves.
4. They use their learning to make better choices next time.



What's on each card?

1. What happened?

What was happening before you needed a calm-down?

2. How did you feel?

Circle the feeling(s) you had.

Happy · Sad · Angry · Nervous · Frustrated · Overwhelmed

3. What helped?

What strategy or tool helped you feel better? (Circle or write it.)

Deep Breathing · Stretch · Drink Water · Take a Break · Talk to Someone · Quiet Reflection



Example

1. What happened?

The math was really hard and I felt stuck.

2. How did you feel?

Happy · Sad · Angry · Nervous · **Frustrated** · Overwhelmed

3. What helped?

Deep Breathing · Stretch · **Drink Water** · Take a Break · Talk to Someone · Quiet Reflection

Reflection helps us understand our feelings, celebrate our progress, and make positive choices!

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Building a Calm Corner

A Calm Corner gives students a safe space and helpful tools to manage big feelings and make positive choices.

OPTION 1: PORTABLE TOOLKIT

A small kit students can use anywhere they need support.



Includes:

- Feelings Thermometer
- Emotion Wheel
- Calm Choice Cards
- Reflection Cards
- Breathing Tools (stress ball, timer, breathing card)

OPTION 2: CLASSROOM CALM STATION

A dedicated station in the classroom for easy access.



Includes:

- Feelings Thermometer
- Emotion Wheel
- Calm Choice Cards
- Reflection Cards
- Breathing Tools (stress ball, pinwheel, timer, breathing cards)

OPTION 3: FULL CALM CORNER

A cozy, inviting space where students can reset, reflect, and recharge.



Includes:

- Feelings Thermometer
- Emotion Wheel
- Calm Choice Cards
- Reflection Cards
- Breathing Tools (stress ball, pinwheel, timer, breathing cards, fidgets)
- \+ Cozy seating, visuals, and calming decor

All three options include these essential tools:





Teach students how to use the tools before they need them.

Practice, model, and talk about feelings every day!

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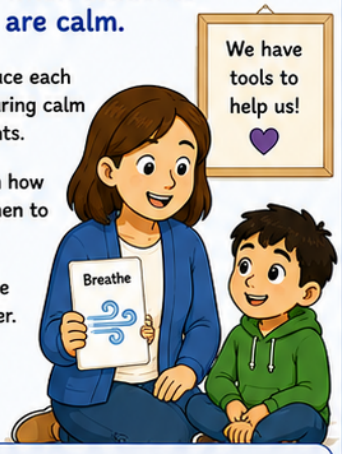
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Teacher Tips

Small moments of support today build strong, resilient learners for tomorrow.

1 Teach tools when students are calm.

- Introduce each tool during calm moments.
- Explain how and when to use it.
- Practice together.



Students learn best before they need the tools.

2 Model each strategy.

- Show students what the strategy looks like.
- Think out loud as you use it.
- Let students see you use tools too!



Modeling shows students it's okay—and effective!

3 Keep tools visible and accessible.

- Store tools in a designated spot.
- Keep them within easy reach.
- Use visual reminders around the room.



When tools are visible, students remember to use them.

4 Practice emotional check-ins regularly.

- Use feeling words and tools daily.
- Check in as a class or one-on-one.
- Normalize talking about feelings.



Regular check-ins build trust and emotional awareness.

5 Celebrate successful use of coping strategies and encourage independence.

- Notice and praise when students use tools.
- Encourage them to choose what works best for them.
- Celebrate progress, not perfection!



Positive encouragement builds confidence and independence.

These tools help students:

- Manage big feelings
- Build self-awareness and self-control
- Strengthen relationships and communication
- Make thoughtful choices
- Grow into confident, resilient learners

You make a difference every day.
Thank you for helping students feel seen, supported, and safe.

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Benefits

When students have the right tools, everyone thrives!

Student Benefits

These tools help students grow emotionally and socially every day.

1 Emotional Awareness

- Helps students identify and understand their feelings.
- Builds vocabulary to express emotions.



2 Self-Regulation

- Gives students healthy ways to calm down.
- Reduces big feelings and helps them make better choices.



3 Confidence

- Students feel capable of managing their emotions.
- Builds a sense of accomplishment.



4 Communication

- Encourages students to share how they feel.
- Strengthens relationships with peers and adults.



5 Independence

- Students learn to use strategies on their own.
- Builds lifelong skills for handling challenges.



Teacher Benefits

These tools support you and create a more positive classroom.

1 Fewer Escalations

- Early support prevents big behaviors.
- Students feel seen and supported before they escalate.



2 Improved Classroom Climate

- Students feel safe, respected, and understood.
- Builds a positive, supportive community.



3 Smoother Transitions

- Tools prepare students to shift between activities.
- Less resistance, more readiness.



4 More Instructional Time

- Less time managing behaviors.
- More time for teaching, learning, and meaningful connections.





Together, we empower students to:

- Understand feelings
- Make good choices
- Build confidence
- Reach their full potential!



Small tools. Big impact.

Stronger students. Happier classrooms. Brighter futures.