

Social Emotional Core Competencies: Self-Regulation

Development of Self-Regulation in Children with DCD

Physical activity contributes to self-regulation by helping children to manage their energy levels, improve their moods and reduce their anxieties. Children with DCD are less likely than children without DCD to show interest in sports and other activities that require physical skills. They may avoid physical activities and usually spend less time than other children, engaged in team sports.

At times children need to increase their energy levels to participate in activities and at other times they need to calm their bodies and thoughts. Children with DCD may require help to become aware of their body energy states and to find and use strategies that help them manage when they have too little or too much energy. Children with DCD may need more time than others to regain energy after physical activities because they expend a great deal of intellectual and emotional energy during these activities.

Questions to think about:

- Does your child have a physical activity that he enjoys and that seems to help your child relax and regain energy?
- Does your child recognise when she needs to calm her body to help her focus and attend?
- Can your child take slow, deep breaths to help him when he feels overly excited or upset?

Strategies/Tips:

- Talk to your child about energy levels- what happens in their body, with their emotions and their thinking when they have too much energy, too little energy and just right energy.

- After trying an activity talk about what their energy was like before, during and after the activity.
- Try taking a few deep breathes together, talk about how it feels to focus on breathing

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