**Self-Regulation Assessment Rubric**

**Please use** [**https://prekteachandplay.com/SR-rubric**](https://prekteachandplay.com/SR-rubric) **to share with others**

**Subcomponents of the self-regulation process**: *attention/focus, regulation, interaction, recall, and problem-solving*

*NOTE: When children demonstrate various self-regulation skills (engage in the self-regulation process) is highly dependent upon a wide variety of factors, including the child’s developmental stage, environmental circumstances, and individual differences.*

| **Foundational** | **Emerging** | **Functional** | **Strengthening** | **Generative** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Attention/Focus** Alert during many daily activities
* Orients (e.g., turns, looks, reaches, moves toward) to sensory stimuli (e.g., auditory, visual, tactile)
* Will orient away from stressors (e.g., avert eye gaze when overwhelmed)
* Notices people/things in the environment
 | *Attention/Focus** Focuses attention for short periods of time
* Seeks and tolerates a variety of sensory experiences
* Begins to ignore distractions
* Increasing use of social-referencing (i.e., looks at caregivers for cues as to how to respond) - also noted under *interaction*
 | *Attention/Focus** Determines what to give/pay attention to, more focused but still for short periods of time
* More active role in selecting and shifting attention (some call this attentional control)
* Moves/transitions/shifts from one activity as desired or requested
 | *Attention/Focus** Consistently gets, keeps, and shifts attention as required/needed
* Pays attention to task or person despite internal and external distractions
 | *Attention/Focus** Keeps several things in their mind at the same time
* Greater attentional control for longer periods of time
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| *Regulation** Uses self-soothing strategies when underaroused and over aroused (e.g., uses adult for comfort/closeness, familiar object like blanket or thumb)
* Prefers sameness, stability, predictability, familiar, and easy
* Reacts to sensory stimuli
 | *Regulation** Makes effort to inhibit (stop) actions and behaviors; less reactionary
* Aims to regulate emotion during new and changing situations
* Responds to soothing and comfort from familiar adult
* Delays gratification for brief period
 | *Regulation** Begins to resist impulses, including socially undesirable impulses (e.g., aggression, disobedience)
* Able to become calm; bring self under control
* Begins to be able to stop themselves and respond less on autopilot
* Stops one action before starting another
* Persists during tasks with reasonable demands
 | *Regulation** Reflects on and talks about strategies to calm self, to delay immediate gratification, and to regulate arousal
* Increasingly able to stay regulated when exposed to someone else's stress
* Matches and adjusts level of activity, volume of voice, complexity of talk for situation and others
* Expresses many different emotions (e.g., makes facial expressions, statements, laughs, cries, lowers and raises voice)
 | *Regulation** Adapts to changes in demands and/or priorities
* Makes plans before taking action
* Moves and acts deliberately; stands back to read cues; empathizes
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| *Interaction** Responds to familiar adult’s non-verbal communications (e.g., affect, tone, body language)
* Responds to familiar adult’s “bid” for interaction
* Plays a passive (responder) role during simple communicative and social exchanges
 | *Interaction** Follows the lead of others and does what they are doing
* Engages in brief reciprocal interactions with adults and peers
* Experiments with cause and effect - becomes an initiator - active agent
* Takes action to engage with things and people in the environment (e.g., reaches, turns, seeks to influence)
* Uses cues from adults to know how to respond
* Follows situational and gestural cues in unfamiliar activities
* Turns to familiar adult for help with strong emotions
 | *Interaction** Initiates interactions with familiar adults and peers
* Shares and exchanges social and communicative exchanges with familiar adults and peers
* Shows affection toward familiar adults and peers
* Engages in pretend play (e.g., takes on roles/identities with imaginary objects/people and reenacts events)
* Begins to better understand the function of rules (i.e., expectations or regulations of behavior or language, written or spoken, at home, at school, and in the community)
* Begins to take the perspective of others and demonstrate empathy (i.e., understands and share the emotions of others)
 | *Interaction** Identifies and understands someone else's feelings
* Comforts others who are distressed or upset
* Participates in new and changing situations
* Plays cooperatively with peers by sharing and exchanging materials, assisting one another, taking on jobs, roles, or identities that often lead to mutual benefit for all
* Internalizes (accepts, acts upon) societal rules (these are set and influenced by culture) - *Note: Emerges along w/social-awareness and an understanding of reliance, which is an understanding regarding interdependencies and interconnectedness between objects, people, and/or events. Also includes and understanding of the causal relationship/effects between actions or events including physical, biological, and/or personal/social.*
 | *Interaction** Plays games with rules; negotiates social situations with peers
* Takes on the perspective of others
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| *Recall** Remembers how to activate familiar toys
* Remembers simple games or actions
 | *Recall** Recalls information immediately and with a context
* Remembers labels for objects/people/events not present; Labels emotions some of the time
* Remembers strategies that worked before
* Follows model; actions are often in imitation
 | *Recall** Follows single and/or simple directions
* Recalls information on the same day (in the moment), without contextual cues
* Dramatizes remembered events
* Labels emotions
 | *Recall** Recalls information from memory, understands, and uses/acts upon the information
* Follows routines and rules at home, school, and within the community
* Knows personal information
 | *Recall** Knows the consequences of choices and actions
* Remembers, follows, and completes multi-step directions
* Remembers sequences of words and numbers
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| *Problem Solving** Takes actions to maintain stability, regularity, and congruence
* Tries to get things out of reach and/or things that have gone out of sight
* Tries a number of ways to activate toys and get attention of others (e.g., bangs, cries)
 | *Problem Solving** Stops being interested in only what is familiar & prefers; seeks novelty and variation
* Uses vocalizations including single words and gestures to get help and/or attention
* Tries alternatives when first action doesn’t work and/or will adjust behavior to meet “goal”
* Practices, explores, experiments
* Seeks out activities that challenge (e.g., will choose even moderately hard activities where they may fail)
 | *Problem Solving** Uses simple strategies to solve common problems
* Uses words, phrases, and sentences to get help and/or attention
* Begins to take active role in decision-making and collaborative problem-solving (recognizes the problem, thinks of possible solutions, plans and carries out solutions)
* Takes action to get internal needs met (e.g., hunger, thirst, rest, comfort) and external needs met (e.g., wipe nose, wash hands, change out of wet socks)
 | *Problem Solving** Uses more complex strategies to solve a common problem (e.g., negotiates, brainstorms, seeks input)
* Can begin to take the lead in decision-making
* Tries before asking for help; stays with a task even with distractions or increased complexity
 | *Problem Solving** Considers alternatives
* More accurate take on social situations and conflicts
* Knows when to pick/choose/use different strategies
* Evaluates the outcome (e.g., was the problem solved, was it fair and just, was the issue resolved)
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**References and Sources**

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**Definitions of Self-Regulation**:

* “Conscious control of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors...the ability to stop, think, and then act” (McClelland & Tominey, 2015).
* “Self-regulation refers to the process of modulating systems of emotion, attention and behavior in response to a given contextual situation, stimulus or demand” (Razza, Bergen-Cico, & Raymond, 2015)
* "Self-regulation is defined from an applied perspective as the act of managing cognition and emotion to enable goal-directed actions such as organizing behavior, controlling impulses, and solving problems constructively" (Murray, Rosanbalm, & Christopoulos, 2016).
* "Self-regulation refers to the capacity to monitor, direct, and flexibly adapt one's behaviors and activities to achieve certain goals or meet the demands imposed by others" (Bukatko & Daehler, 2012).
* “Self-regulation refers to several complicated processes that allow children to appropriately respond to their environment” (Child Psychology Chapter 12 Key Terms, n.d.).
* “The ability to modify one’s behavior in order to meet situational demands (Kopp, 1982)
* “Self regulation is the ability to regulate or adapt one’s behaviour, emotions and thinking according to the situation. It includes the abilities to start or stop doing something even if one does not want to do so (Maxwell et al., 2009:2).
* “Self-regulation (also referred to in the literature as self-control or self-management; Chen and Rubin, 2011 and Denham and Brown, 2010) is generally defined in the early childhood literature as the ability to focus attention, manage emotions, and control behaviors (Blair and Razza, 2007 and McClelland and Cameron, 2012).” [http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0193397316300065](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0193397316300065%22%20%5Co%20%22web%20link)
	+ [Pre-K Teach & Play Podcast episode 29](http://prekteachandplay.com/podcast29) explore definitional issues as well.

**Facts/reminders from research summarized by Gabrielle Gunin retrived from** [**http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/appsych/opus/issues/2015/fall/gunin**](http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/appsych/opus/issues/2015/fall/gunin)

* “Preschoolers who are effective self-regulators also show advances in emergent math, vocabulary, and literacy abilities, relative to their peers with weaker self-regulatory capabilities.”
* “Although self-regulation tends to follow a developmental timetable, the skills are sensitive to environmental influences, such as poverty, parenting practices, ethnic background, and school-based interventions.”
* “Given different standards and expectations for behavior, children from different cultures regulate their behavior in different ways.”
* “Based on the research conducted to date, the most prominent influences appear to be poverty status, parenting practices, ethnic background, and in-school interventions. While some of these influences are relatively stable (i.e., poverty status and culture), others are much more malleable and subject to change (i.e., parenting practices and in-school interventions).”

NOTE: Many consider self-regulation as an “umbrella term that encompasses many constructs that may be used to describe similar skills and processes.” This rubric is divided into the subcomponents of attention/focus, regulation, interaction, recall, and problem-solving. Others have noted subcomponents such as willpower, executive functioning, self-control, self-management, etc. For example, see Murray, Desiree W., Rosanbalm, Katie, Christopoulos, Christina, and Hamoudi, Amar (2015) at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/report_1_foundations_paper_final_012715_submitted_508.pdf>

Assortment of skills often associated with the umbrella term of self-regulation:

* Focused attention (getting, keeping, and shifting attention)
* Cognitive flexibility
* Mental shifting
* Goal-setting
* Considering alternatives
* Making plans before taking action
* Self-monitoring
* Problem-solving
* Perspective taking
* Decision-making (moving and acting deliberately)
* Managing strong and unpleasant feelings
* Adapting to emotional situations
* Awareness and understanding of feelings
* Self-calming/soothing strategies
* Tolerance of internal distress
* Empathy and compassion for self and others
* Effortful coping
* Following rules
* Delaying gratification
* Ignoring distractions
* Persistence
* Impulse control
* Conflict resolution
* Recalling information
* Handling socially relevant tasks
* Working memory

**KEY QUOTES:**

“Emotions, learning and memory are closely linked. Children need sound wellbeing, motivation and self esteem to engage in experience and become competent through attention and practice. Attention drives both learning and memory (Rushton et al., 2003:18). Emotions influence a person’s capacity to attend, to be involved and to take action, all of which are essential for learning (OECD, 2007:64). Children’s motivation and endeavour are underpinned by having a sense of security which develops in nurturing relationships, (NSCDC, 2007a).” <http://www.scseec.edu.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/Reports%20and%20publications/Publications/Early%20childhood%20education/Engaging%20Families%20in%20the%20ECD%20Story-Neuroscience%20and%20ECD.pdf>

The research of Shanker (in McCain et al., 2007) shows that learning self-regulation is a primary task of newborns and is only possible in nurturing relationships. By providing appropriate and changing stimulation in response to a baby’s states, moods, and interests, parents help the baby manage their level of arousal and build the networks for self regulation (Sroufe et al., 2005). <http://www.scseec.edu.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/Reports%20and%20publications/Publications/Early%20childhood%20education/Engaging%20Families%20in%20the%20ECD%20Story-Neuroscience%20and%20ECD.pdf>

Self regulation is a process of executive function. Executive function processes have consistently been ranked by first years of school teachers as the most critical aspect of ‘school readiness’ (Bodrova in Zaslow & Martinez-Beck, 2005; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000) and have been directly linked to academic achievement (Bull et al., 2008) and social and emotional development (Hughes, 1998; Howard-Jones, 2008). It has been found that more than half of children entering school do so without sufficient levels of social-emotional and cognitive self regulation (Bodrova in Zaslow & Martinez-Beck, 2005). <http://www.scseec.edu.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/Reports%20and%20publications/Publications/Early%20childhood%20education/Engaging%20Families%20in%20the%20ECD%20Story-Neuroscience%20and%20ECD.pdf>

“It is by being regulated that these robustly growing systems are wired to support self-regulation.” <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/shanker.pdf>