

# Promoting Self Control in Young Children

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## What increases our ability to have self-control?

- Be consistent, setting up a schedule or routine
- Count to 10 before reacting
- Take a deep breath
- Support from others
- Thinking positive thoughts
- Concentrate on the desire to better yourself
- Set clear goals
- Accountability - tell someone else about your goal
- To motivate yourself, think about the long term end goal
- Make a plan ahead of time for dealing with typical challenges
- Choose something you are interested in
- Give yourself time to think things through
- Look at the results you are getting as you go (big and small)
- Gain knowledge around the topic
- Practice doing it
- Go for a walk
- Make sure to be well rested
- Think out responses and possible actions first

## What decreases our ability to have self-control?

- Distractions - loud children
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Bad days where things are not going your way
- Stress
- Someone pressuring you to do something not aligned with your goal
- Not caring about the consequences of your actions
- Poor planning
- Lack of sleep / fatigue
- Hunger
- Not taking time to think it through and making a quick decision
- Lack of attention and focus on the goal
- Medical issues
- Being unprepared
- Negativity

## Strategies/Tools to Promote Self-Control

- Get the "Buy in" by teaching "why" it is important and working together to set goals
- Be consistent and follow through
- Set routines and schedules
- Sing songs during transitions
- Schedule in regular calming breaks
- Do and teach breathing exercises
  - Volcano breaths
  - Blow out the candles
  - "Jack in the box"
  - Smell your favorite soup - it's too hot so we blow
  - Squeeze stress balls
  - Breathing boxes - Breath in for 4, hold for 4, breath out for 4, hold for 4. Repeat while quietly saying those words and each count of 4 is 1 side of a box
- Use a timer to show how long things will last and prep for transitions
- Have a quiet area so all can rest and regroup
- Instead of saying "use your words" - help them by giving them the words to use
- Use puppets who work on calming down and practicing self-control skills
- Read books such as "Tucker the Turtle"
- Model - show them how to calm, so they can calm themselves



- Provide ways to calm down
  - Provide a "peace corner" to get a break
  - Stomp in place if frustrated
  - Have music and dance parties to destress
  - Build a fort and read books
  - Provide workout trampoline or "Nugget Couches" or other things to climb on to get our energy
  - Calming jar/ calm down bucket of activities
  - Belly breathing - fill the balloon
  - Brain break videos
  - Draw or paint
  - Do kids Yoga on Youtube such as "Cosmic kids"
  - Weighted stuffed animal lap pads
- Recognize and praise progress, providing positive feedback and noticing when they are having self-control
- Provide verbal prompts telling them what "to do" when they are getting upset

