

**SELF-REGULATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOMS:**  
**INFORMING TEACHER PRACTICE IN ORDER TO SUPPORT STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT**

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- 11 Yrs. ECE/ECSE Teacher
- 9 Yrs. Education Administration
- Lifelong Learner



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**POLL: HOW DO YOU SHOW UP TODAY?** 

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- Please type one word in the Chat that describes how you are feeling.

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### WHAT IS SELF-REGULATION ?

Self-Regulation is the ability to monitor and determine which emotions you have, when you have them, and how you express them.



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### I BELIEVE...



"The acquisition of self-regulating abilities in preschool children is an important foundation for development. Effective social-emotional functioning not only facilitates optimal development trajectories in the personal and interpersonal domains but extend into the academic domains"(Gershon & Pellitteri, 2018, p. 26).

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### WHY IS SELF-REGULATION ESSENTIAL IN EARLY CHILDHOOD?

"Children who exhibit self-regulating abilities are better able to pay attention, are more engaged in school, have more positive relationships, and are more empathetic" (Raver, Garner, & Smith-Donald, 2007, p. 132).



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**POLL: HOW CONFIDENT DO YOU FEEL SUPPORTING SELF-REGULATION?**



- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Still building confidence
- Need additional strategies

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**EXAMINING TEACHER PREPAREDNESS IN SUPPORTING SEL FOR PRESCHOOLERS"**

- **Why-** Many preschool teachers are not adequately prepared to support the social and emotional development of their students.
- **Focus-** Understanding the systemic, instructional, and professional development barriers that prevent effective SEL support in early childhood classrooms.

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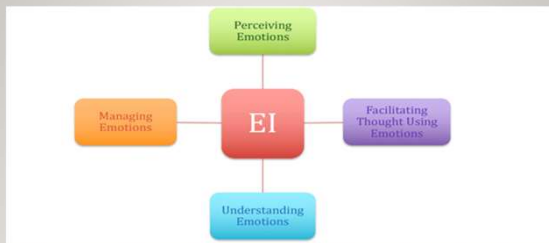
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**ABILITY MODEL**



Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P., 1997

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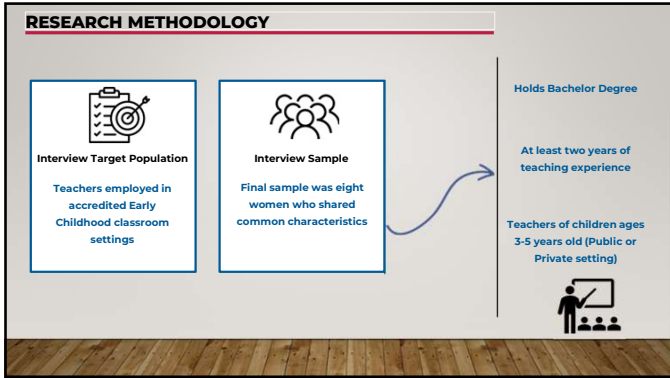
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### FINDINGS-TEACHER INTERVIEWS

- Parent-Teacher communication

"It is important that families are given the same tools, language, and support that we use at school so children can see a consistent connection between behaviors expected at school and those expected at home."

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### FINDINGS

- Instructional resources are needed

"I would like for my School Admin to provide material that extends to what we do in the classroom such as : visuals, songs, breathing exercises, and tools to support independence. There are many ways to reach different children."

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**FINDINGS**

• **Professional Development**

"I would be able to enhance my students ability to self-regulate if I had more professional development that used examples from real district classroom experiences, and evaluations supporting a student with self-regulation."

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**STRATEGIES & ACTIONS**

Foster Home –School Connections	Instructional Support	Professional Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers will create newsletters and strategies for use at home to enhance parent understanding of self-regulation and school expectations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The preschool team incorporates collaborative planning and conduct peer observations to observe self-regulation practices in other play-based classrooms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a regular cadence of professional development for teaching and support staff that focuses on self-regulation specific to the needs of a school.</li> </ul>

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***HOW CAN WE SHIFT FROM BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT TO SKILL-BUILDING?***

- **Behavior is communication**
- Connection before correction
- Teach emotional skills explicitly
- Create psychologically safe environments with appropriate models AND opportunity to self-regulate

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**INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT: ENVIRONMENTAL**




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**PD: LESSON PLANNING/TSG ASSESSMENT**

**Objective 1** Regulates own emotions and behaviors

**a. Manages feelings**

Task	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<p><b>Uses self-regulation to calm self</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calm self using breathing, counting, and/or self-talk</li> <li>• Move away from source of stressors and/or engage in something enjoyable to successfully bring oneself calm</li> </ul>												
<p><b>Communicates self by labeling and social object or person</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gets body language from social object</li> <li>• Communicates "I have the same feeling"</li> </ul>												
<p><b>Is able to look at a situation differently or bring a perspective</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When the Block asks for help, he asks what other people are thinking</li> <li>• Shows and asks, "I can't help you this morning, because my dog is sick. I can't help you this afternoon either."</li> </ul>												
<p><b>Communicates strong emotions in an appropriate manner</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "I'm angry because he's not playing with me!"</li> <li>• "Look, this is a picture of my dog. He's jumping on me today!" while jumping up and down.</li> </ul>												
<p><b>Manages strong emotions using social strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows having conversations with teacher about a plan for controlling an emotion</li> <li>• Finds a quiet place on the playground to help other friends</li> <li>• Demonstrates how a friend can help someone who is being mean to them</li> </ul>												
<p><b>Demonstrates balance with personal feelings based on how they affect others</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows understanding of how others feel</li> <li>• "I'm sorry I can't play with you today. I have to go to work."</li> <li>• "I'm sorry you can't play with me today. I have to go to work."</li> </ul>												

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**HOW CAN ADULTS MODEL REGULATION FOR STUDENTS DAILY?**

Use Co-Regulation Strategies Daily:

- **Validate emotions without judgment**
- Model calm tone and pacing
- Teach breathing and grounding techniques
- Guide problem-solving conversations

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SELF-REGULATION VIDEO

- [https://youtu.be/CGgYyVS\\_rvQ?si=-IzYuYbRMcypE7wB](https://youtu.be/CGgYyVS_rvQ?si=-IzYuYbRMcypE7wB)

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**POLL: WHICH OF THESE STRATEGIES ARE YOU USING OR DESIRE TO USE?**



- **Visual schedules and predictable routines**
- Movement and sensory supports
- Choice-making opportunities
- Calming spaces and emotional check-ins

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***WHAT DO EDUCATORS NEED TO SUSTAIN THIS WORK?***

- **Adult regulation impacts classroom climate**
- Reflective supervision strengthens resilience
- Wellness practices reduce burnout
- Emotionally responsive adults support stronger outcomes

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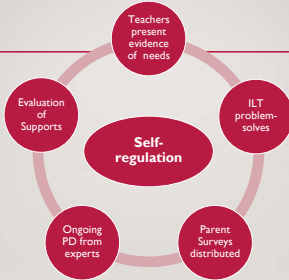
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**RECOMMENDATIONS**



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**NEXT STEPS**

Equity of Resources

Continuity of Learning

"Whole Child" Approach

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**CLOSING REFLECTIONS**



- Research and data is continuously being uncovered.
- Teachers require understanding of how to foster and evaluate this skillset.
- Leaders must provide ongoing professional development opportunities.

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