

WHAT IS SELF-REGULATION?

- The ability to **control one's impulses**, both to stop doing something, if needed (even if one wants to continue doing it) and to start doing something, if needed (even if one doesn't want to do it).
- Not to be confused with obedience or compliance; when children are truly self-regulated they behave the same way whether or not an adult is watching.
- Self-regulated children can **delay gratification** and **suppress their impulses** long enough to think ahead to the possible consequences of their actions or to consider alternative actions that would be more appropriate.



Self-regulation is not limited to the social-emotional domain; also includes elements of cognitive behaviours such as **MEMORY, PLANNING, ATTENTION** and **MOTIVATION**. Learning to persist in complex learning tasks or problems that stretch children's skills is one of the most important outcomes of healthy self-regulation.



What are signs of 'readiness'?



Children who pay attention, remember instructions, manage emotions, complete tasks, wait their turn, communicate wants and needs – are 'life ready'.



‘By the end of the preschool years, well-regulated children can wait for a turn, resist the temptation to grab a desired object from another child, clean up after a play period with little or no adult prompting, willingly help another child or adult with a task, and persist at a challenging activity. Such children also actively try to control negative emotion, often by talking to themselves (“I’ll get a chance soon”) or changing their goals (when one activity isn’t possible, turning to another).’

(Berk et al, 2006 p 74)

