

Ways to Prevent Emotion Dysregulation:



It's OK to have emotions

- Reassure the person that emotions are natural and normal, **even uncomfortable emotions.**
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Simplify talking about emotions

- Identifying and labeling different emotions by name may be hard or even impossible.
 - Talk about overall emotional intensity instead of using specific language (i.e. "I feel upset" instead of "I feel very angry").
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Understand a person's baseline

- Rocking or stimming can sometimes be a sign of increasing emotions, but for others is a typical movement.
 - These movements may be a way of regulating emotion.
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Identify triggers

- When the person is calm, work with them to understand their emotional distress
 - Identify **situations and circumstances that cause distress**, such as
 - Overwhelming sensory environments
 - Changes in routine
 - Confusing social interactions
 - Identify **clues of upcoming meltdowns/shutdowns.**
 - How do they know its coming?
 - Are there signs you can look out for?
 - Can they signal to you?
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Ways to Prevent Emotion Dysregulation:



Create an inclusive environment

- **Provide Options:** Have communication cards ready with clear visual choices
 - **Respect Differences:** Do not demand eye contact
 - **Support Difficulties:** Provide supports for group classroom activities
 - **Be an example:** Model taking breaks and self care
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Create individualized plans to minimize or prepare for known triggers

- Review early warning signs. Have plans to redirect early if see them.
 - Identify 1-2 strategies the person knows to use.
 - Set up ways to help encourage calming strategies (visual cue, like hand signals, may be preferred to talking).
 - Do not try new strategies during building distress.
 - Taking a break to calm as emotions increase may be the best plan
 - **Total avoidance of triggers can stop the learning of adaptive strategies**
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