



The TOOLBOX

TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE WITH THEIR EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL NEEDS



HOW DO WE RECOGNIZE TEENS' EMOTIONAL REGULATION DIFFICULTIES?

TOOL: Prevention | Intervention

TARGET AUDIENCE: Teens

TOOL INTENDED FOR: Professionals | Parents

DESIGN

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TOOL: Prevention | Intervention

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– Details: Teachers, psychoeducators, special education technicians, psychologists, educational consultants, parents.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

– Teens who have difficulty managing their emotions, particularly children who are stressed, impulsive, inattentive, hyperactive, oppositional, aggressive, anxious, depressed or those with autism spectrum disorder.

NEEDS AND BEHAVIOURAL MANIFESTATIONS

- Difficulty recognizing their emotions or those of others.
- Difficulty managing emotional states that can lead to emotional escalation.
- Difficulty regaining a state of calm and well-being after experiencing an intense state.
- Difficulty appropriately expressing negative emotions.

SPECIFIC GOALS

– To help people around teens (parents, professionals, teachers, etc.) recognize their emotional regulation difficulties.

DESIGN

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HOW DO WE RECOGNIZE TEENS' EMOTIONAL REGULATION DIFFICULTIES?

Emotional regulation is a key skill that helps people adapt. It means that teens are able to identify, modulate and appropriately express their emotions if necessary. To help teens better manage their emotions, you first need to identify the difficulties they are experiencing.

EMOTION IDENTIFICATION refers to recognizing and understanding the emotions felt in yourself or others. Children must be able to make connections with the incidents and contexts that give rise to these emotions.

EMOTION MODULATION refers to managing various emotional states (including sensations, thoughts, intensity of emotions and responses) in order to avoid an emotional escalation or regain a state of well-being after experiencing intense emotions. To achieve a state of well-being, an individual must be able to manage both their negative and positive emotions, either by decreasing them (for example, anger, anxiety or excitement), or by increasing them (for example, the feeling of pleasure if the person is depressed).

Lastly, **EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION** involves appropriately communicating emotions to those involved (for example, during conflicts) or to significant people around them (for example, confiding their sadness to their parents). It also implies being able to express them in a different way (for example, artistic expression) in order to regain a state of well-being.

The following table shows teens' main emotional regulation difficulties according to specific skills and certain characteristics related to adolescence.

SKILLS	DIFFICULTIES
<p>Emotion identification Ability to recognize and understand emotions in themselves or others and make connections with incidents and contexts that give rise to these emotions.</p> <p>During adolescence: Teens are generally able to recognize and name emotions, but some still find it difficult to determine what caused those emotions. Many still find it very difficult to consider others' viewpoints and may misinterpret their emotional states.</p>	<p>Identifying their own emotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under-estimate their own aggression. • Repress negative emotions. • Have difficulty making connections between their emotional states and situations that cause them. • Have unhelpful thoughts that increase the intensity of negative emotions. <p>Identifying others' emotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of sensitivity to others' non-verbal emotional cues. • Show a high sensitivity to what other people are going through. • Have difficulty understanding others' perspectives, emotions, thoughts, intentions and desires. • Show little empathy for others. • Hypervigilant to danger signs. • Think that other people have hostile intentions towards them when it's not the case.

SKILLS	DIFFICULTIES
<p>Emotion modulation Ability to manage emotions (including sensations, thoughts, intensity of emotions and responses) in order to avoid emotional escalation or regain a state of well-being after experiencing intense emotions. To achieve a state of well-being, an individual must be able to manage both their negative and positive emotions, either by decreasing them (for example, anger, anxiety or excitement), or by increasing them (for example, the feeling of pleasure if the person is depressed).</p> <p>During adolescence: Hormonal and developmental changes associated with adolescence may affect emotional regulation and make it more difficult, which can lead to a sense of regression.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek immediate gratification: find it difficult to wait for needs to be met or to accept constraints. • Have a relatively low frustration threshold (get angry more easily). • Make less effort during boring tasks. • Become easily excitable. • Have more difficulty staying calm in a frustrating or anxiety-provoking situation. • Emotionally overreact. • Overreact to changes. • Feel more quickly overwhelmed by or overreact to emotions. • More easily experience an escalation of emotions. • Have difficulty redirecting their attention to something positive when they are disturbed. • Trouble calming down when emotionally disturbed; remain emotional or upset longer. • Have emotional outbursts (for example, laugh very loudly when they are happy). • Have difficulty reasoning when they are emotional. • Have difficulty objectively assessing situations when they are experiencing intense emotion. • Adopt risky behaviours (psychoactive substance use, self-harm, etc.) in order to repress emotions or decrease the intensity of negative emotions.



SKILLS

Emotional expression

Ability to appropriately communicate their emotions to those involved (for example, during conflicts) or to significant people around them (for example, confiding their sadness to a friend). Ability to use an appropriate way to express emotions in order to regain a state of well-being.

During adolescence:

The influence of peer groups is significant and teens may have less desire to confide in adults around them, or at least not want to give too many details about what they are going through.

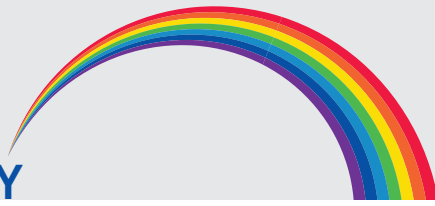
DIFFICULTIES

- Refuse to communicate how they feel.
- Pretend that everything is fine.
- Isolate themselves.
- Communicate their emotions through externalized behaviours (for example, hit or throw objects).
- Have difficulty expressing negative emotions in order to maintain healthy communication with those around them (for example, shouts or blames others for emotional states).
- Project negative emotions on others ("My mother is very angry about my father's departure").
- Have difficulty choosing the right people to share their feelings.



Adolescence is a period with many changes and new experiences, which can have an impact on emotional management. Teens may be more emotional, have mood swings and have more intense emotional reactions. In addition, when teens are tired or stressed, they may have greater difficulty controlling their emotions. We need to be more sensitive and recognize the intensity of the "emotional roller coasters" experienced by teens and provide them with support to help them better manage their emotions.

BIBLIOGRAPHY



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