

The Zones!

Students have been taught about the 4 zones. It may be useful to think of the Zones a bit like a traffic light:

- **THE RED ZONE = Out of control**
 - angry, aggressive, yelling and overwhelmed.
 - It becomes tricky to control what our body does and make safe choices
 - We need to ‘stop’ like we would at a red traffic light, and get help to return to the green zone so it is safe to ‘go’.
- **THE YELLOW ZONE = Losing some control**
 - excited, silly, frustrated and worried.
 - We may find it hard to control our bodies responses, but we can still make safe choices.
 - We need to ‘slow down’ like you would if you see a yellow traffic light, and get help to return to the green zone so it is safe to ‘go’.
- **THE GREEN ZONE = Ready to learn**
 - calm, good, happy and ready to learn.
 - We can control our body, our mind is clear, and we can make safe choices.
 - Like a green traffic light, it is safe to ‘go’.
- **THE BLUE ZONE = Moving slowly**
 - sick, tired, bored and sad.
 - Our bodies responses and our brain are not functioning clearly, we may need to rest OR do some movement activities to help us return to the green zone.
 - there is no blue traffic light – but there are blue ‘rest’ signs on the side of the road that remind us it is safe to take a rest or movement break – this is similar with the blue zone.

Please see the next page for some ideas of how you can be using The Zones with your children at home and over the holidays. The more The Zones are used, the more opportunity your child will have to fully understand emotions and the bodies responses, the more they will be able to regulate and participate to their fullest potential 😊 😊

Ideas for home:

- **Use the visual** at home – stick it up somewhere, or even more than one place. Carry it around with you – and encourage your child to use The Zones as a way of communicating how they are feeling.
- Encourage your child to **talk about why they are feeling that way**, help them to express this if they are unsure.
- Help them to **understand how the body changes** to tell us we are experiencing different emotions (e.g. our heart beat gets faster or the muscles become tight) – talk about the bodies physiological responses when they are experiencing different emotions.
- **Talk about how others are feeling** – look at other’s facial expressions and body language. Watch your child’s favourite shows with them and talk about how different characters are feeling in different situations. **Talk about how other’s feelings and actions can change how we are feeling.**
- **Video your child** when they are experiencing different emotions – watch it with them when they are feeling calm and settled. See if they are about to identify the way they were feeling – see if they can see if their actions were safe and what could have been a safer/better option e.g. walking away, counting to 10, asking for help, etc.
- The visual adds a big help to expressing emotions, even if your child understands emotions – **when we are heightened it is hard to find our words and think clearly.**
- When your child requires assistance to calm themselves – trial **strategies** such as:
 - Taking deep breathes (this was taught as a ‘blowing the candles out’ activity).
 - Applying deep and hard pressure to their joints/body e.g. squeezing their limbs, rubbing their backs, completing push/pull activities such as pushing/pulling something heavy.
 - Counting to 10 slowly with their eyes closed.
 - Have a ‘safe’ space they can go to for some time by themselves.
 - You know your child better than anyone – have a think of what you know calms them, e.g. drawing or being outside – use and encourage these activities when you can see them becoming heightened or may have a chance of becoming heightened.