

Teaching and Learning

Self-regulation and executive function



Self-regulation is the ability of children being able to -

- concentrate their thinking
- plan what to do next
- monitor what they are doing and adapt
- regulate strong feelings
- be patient for what they want
- bounce back when things get difficult.

Executive function includes the child's ability to -

- hold information in mind
- focus their attention
- think flexibly
- inhibit impulsive behaviour

For children to be able to achieve their full potential and have good self-regulation and executive function skills, they need to have their basic needs met well. Maslow Hierarchy of needs can really support us in trying to understand, what children want and need. When children's basic needs are not met, this can often result in children having an emotional response and a behaviour shown which demonstrates their lack of self-regulation skills.

Task

Use the diagram headings and establish a list of what you do under each heading to ensure the needs of the child are met in your setting. This list will help you to celebrate what you already do well but also highlight perhaps some of the gaps that you have.

This task could be completed as a whole setting or in individual rooms. This will allow for a more specific reflection appropriate to the age and stage of the children.

For example-

- Physical - Provide adequate rest/sleep opportunities/temperature of the room
- Safety - Risk assessment/safe equipment
- Love/belonging - Key person/access to comforters
- Esteem - Boundaries/praise and encouragement
- Self-actualisation - child choice/voice

