



How a collapsing brick tower led a class teacher to create a Regulation Station

"Ben was a wonderful little boy who entertained my Year 5/6 class every month. He was curious and into all sorts of toys. They loved watching him play and learn how things worked. One day when he came in, Mum explained that he was feeling rather tetchy. She laid out some building blocks for him to play with and some wooden vehicles which he loved. As the children watched, he started to get frustrated because the blocks wouldn't balance on top of the fire engine. Each time he placed them on top, they fell off. All of a sudden he picked up one of the blocks and threw it. One of the children quickly stepped in and helped him. This wonderful outburst enabled me to explore with the children what frustration felt like when we were trying to do something. This was the start of our exploration into emotional regulation."



The class teacher decided to use this observation to talk about frustration when we're trying to learn a new skill or task. The children quickly engaged, able to share how they felt when they couldn't do something. Class teacher then helped them think about what people did that helped them manage and why this worked. Children started talking and sharing a variety of strategies. The class teacher decided to set up a regulation station in the classroom to help children manage how they were feeling. She explained to the children what she was going to do and how it would work. They all started to talk about the equipment and the activities they felt would be good to include in the station. Each week they tested out one of the strategies or activities, talked about how valuable they felt it was, and then if they agreed put it into the regulation station. Over the following months the children use this as a way of coping with a variety of emotions. Some children used it when they were frustrated over work. Others used it when they had had a falling out with friends in the playground. It became a really valuable resource in the classroom. "I was really impressed at how well the children used the distraction station. In the beginning I thought they'd use it just to avoid work but the reality was it helped them get more done. They regulated themselves and then of course had the capacity to work. I wouldn't be without it now."

"Giving children the time to talk about emotions and learn ways to manage them helped me understand the children better which created a wonderful classroom environment."