









## What is self-regulation and why does it matter?

Self-regulation is a set of underlying abilities that allow children to be successful in social interactions and learning. It's tied to brain development that occurs in the early childhood years and can be influenced by a child's early environment. **The good news:** Parents and teachers can support the development of children's self-regulation, which will have a long-term positive impact in children's lives.

## What does self-regulation look like in young children?

<i>Without</i> Self-regulation	With Self-regulation
	
<p>Children have a hard time waiting, sharing materials and toys. They may know the 'rules' but can't yet inhibit behaviors like grabbing or pushing.</p>	<p>Children can take turns, share materials, and wait for their turn. They can use strategies like asking for something they want, or playing with something else while they wait.</p>
	
<p>Children have a difficult time with transitions like clean up or bedtime – ending something they want to do and doing something they don't want to do! They may 'melt down' and find it difficult to stop and transition.</p>	<p>Children can manage a transition like bedtime or clean up time, even when they are disappointed that a fun time is coming to an end. Young children may still need support—but self-regulation is what's needed to be successful at this.</p>
	
<p>Children without self-regulation may not be able to stay seated and listen to a story, sit through dinner or a game.</p>	<p>Children can control their attention enough to listen to a story, play a game, and sit through a meal. Their attention may wander, but they can bring it back to the task at hand.</p>
	
<p>When facing a difficult learning challenge, children without self-regulation can get easily discouraged and give up. Their minds and attention wander to other things.</p>	<p>With self-regulation, a child can persist at challenging learning tasks, focusing his attention and intentionally using strategies to be an independent self-regulated learner.</p>