

Keeping Calm

Skill Area(s):
 Feelings/Emotions
 Nonverbal Language
 Perspective Taking
 Stress/Behavior

Level: beginning, intermediate

Goal: students will learn to strategies to help them calm down.

Materials needed: this activity comes from Jed Baker's book Social Skills Training

Activity: This activity involves learning the steps for calming down. They are

1. Stop and count to 10 ☹️ 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
2. Take 3 deep breaths
3. Tell someone how you feel- I'm angry because...
4. Do something fun to feel better e.g. play a game, computer etc.

Explain to the group the procedures for keeping calm, in another lesson teach students how to avoid becoming upset in the first place.

Role-play the steps for keeping calm. Frequent practice will help the skills become more automatic.

Ideas for role-play may include:

1. Pretend the student can't have something that they want (toy, game, candy)
2. The student must stop a preferred activity
3. The student broke a favorite object, (toy, video game)
4. Student loses when playing a game

After the students have become proficient at calming down, create situations that are frustrating for them so they can practice self-calming. When the student is very upset, try distracting them, do not give them what they want but something else as a diversion. Provide rewards when students do show that they can keep calm and use the skills they have learned.