

Lesson 10: Calming Down

Lesson Concepts

Calming down emotions that are getting out of control helps you think clearly so you can avoid negative consequences.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify situations in which they might need to calm down
- Learn the technique for deep, centered breathing
- Identify and demonstrate other Calming-Down Strategies (using positive self-talk, counting, taking a break)

Why This Lesson Matters

Using strategies to calm down helps students think clearly and avoid acting impulsively on their feelings. Deep breathing using the diaphragm delivers more oxygen to the bloodstream while helping students control their breathing. This slows the heart rate, which helps to calm students when they're upset. This is a versatile technique that can be used in many situations.

Negative self-talk can escalate emotions and lead to aggression. Positive self-talk can engage the thinking part of the brain in emotional situations. Counting is a simple way to engage the language centers of the brain, take a student's attention off a stressor, and create some time between provocation and reaction.

(Contrary to popular belief, punching pillows and other aggressive activities intended to "vent" anger may in fact escalate anger and prevent calming down.)

Before the Lesson

Review the first two Calming-Down Steps: "Stop—use your signal" and "Name your feeling." Have students write about a time they used these two steps since their last lesson.

After the Lesson

- Students can create their own cartoon and words to go with a scenario from this [handout](#).
- Consider providing students with alternative scenarios relevant to their current situation.

Following Through

Use these strategies to reinforce lesson concepts throughout the week:

- Have students do the lesson [Home Link](#) with their families.
- See the lesson [Following Through Card](#) for more ideas about how to build on key lesson concepts.

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