

# Calm-Down Plan (Co-regulation to Self-regulation)

A simple plan to teach coping skills before big feelings take over. Use at home or in the classroom.

## Step 1: Notice early signs

Coping works best when you catch the moment early.

- Tense body, louder voice, fast breathing
- Restless movement, clenched hands
- Saying “No!”, “I hate this!”, “Leave me alone!”

## Step 2: Co-regulate first

Adults provide the calm that children borrow.

- Lower your voice and slow your pace
- Use fewer words; offer safety: “I’m here.”
- Remove audience and reduce demands

## Step 3: Choose 1 coping tool

Pick one tool and practice it repeatedly.

- Balloon breaths: in 3, out 4 (x4)
- Wall push: 10 slow pushes
- Cold water sip or cool cloth
- 5-4-3-2-1 senses (name what you see/hear/feel)

## Step 4: Repair and learn (after calm)

Teach the skill when the brain is ready again.

- Name what happened without blame
- Practice a better script: “I need help / I need a break”
- Make a small plan for next time

Educational content only. Not medical advice. If you have urgent safety concerns, contact local services or a qualified professional.