

I Am Responsible for My Emotions (Grades K-5)



Overview: You may often hear students place blame on others for their own emotions. It is difficult for students to understand that not only do they control their own emotions, but they are responsible for their emotions. One of the best ways to be responsible for your emotions is to be aware of how you are feeling and take preventative measures. This lesson is designed for students to think about how they are feeling, and how they move towards more regulated emotions.

Character Education Objectives:

Students will:

- describe their behaviors and emotions during calm, increasing stress.
- create a plan of how to safely and effectively regulate

during each period.

Materials

- Stoplight handout

Lesson: (*large group*)

1. Share with students about how responsibility includes being responsible for our own emotions. Although it doesn't always feel like, we do have a choice in how we respond and we have the responsibility to regulate our emotions to keep ourselves and others safe.
2. Show students the stoplight handout. Talk about each light. Green light is your calm state. Describe what you look like, what you sound like, what you do and how you feel when you are personally calm. Yellow light is when you are escalating. Again, share your personal feelings and behaviors when you are escalating. Red is distress. Share with students how you feel and behave when you are in distress. It is important to be candid and show students that adults get to the red light occasionally, too.
3. Ask students to individually reflect on their own emotions. Encourage them to write or draw in each light how they feel and how they speak or act while in that light. It may be helpful to go light by light with students, depending on their level of comprehension.
4. Once students have completed their own stoplight, explain that life isn't always being in the green light and it is ok to be yellow or red, but part of our responsibility of our emotions is to regulate and try to bring ourselves back down to green. Also, share that often when we are in the red it is too late. Catching ourselves in yellow means we need to know what yellow looks and sounds like for us. Then, we have to use the tools we have to bring ourselves back down to green.
5. Have students brainstorm ways they can bring themselves

back down to green. Share personal examples and encourage students to think about the resources they have available to them in the classroom or the school.

Journal

Have students write down a few ways they can deescalate when they are in the yellow or green. Ask them to think about the resources they have available at school and home, as these techniques may look different in different settings.

Learn more about character education.