



BUCKLE UP

READING PROMPTS & RESOURCES

Reading Prompts and Resources

Here are some **reading prompts and resources** to help readers maximize the interactive experience and message 'Buckle Up' provides, in regards to self-control and emotional-regulation skills.

This book serves as an educative tool, encouraging readers to acknowledge their emotions, use coping strategies, tap into their imaginations, become more self-aware and aware of situations, problem solve and make good decisions.

Exploring your 5 senses is a mindfulness exercise that allows the reader to be present in the 'here and now', recognizing what they hear, see, touch, taste and smell. This can help regain more focus on the present moment, rather than worrying about what is to come.

Self-control helps children to stop or slow down so they can think before making a decision, respond to a situation and take action.

'**Buckle Up**' takes readers on a journey to reinforce regulation and coping skills as they take control of the wheel.

The older children get and the more self-control is practiced, the more equipped they are with waiting for things they want without throwing a tantrum, take responsibility, manage their frustrations without outbursts, respect their own personal space or others, and even be able to be aware of how their behaviour affects others. This will also help encourage healthy and positive communication so they can better express their feelings and needs. It's okay to have feelings, but what's important is how you manage them.

With practice, self-control can improve. It is hard on children when they are having trouble with self-control in stressful situations. They may become embarrassed for doing something they know they are not supposed to do but don't have the tools to help them overcome it. Give praise, role model and reward positive or improved behaviour.

What is Self-Control?

Presenting Nini the Bird

The author, Stephanie's childhood nickname was '**Nini**'. Stephanie was inspired by budgies since budgies are often friendly, fun, inviting, trusting and calming. The bird acts as a special guide, teaching the readers valuable lessons how to manage their emotions throughout their journey in the book and encourage readers to make 'green' decisions when faced with stressful situations.

Nini would love to be part of your support team. It is important to encourage readers to be aware of their support teams, and be open to accepting and asking for help when in need.



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ME? DRIVE?



“Breathe in calmness and breathe out any fears or worries you may have”. This moment gives readers an opportunity to breathe in calm (quietly whisper “I am calm”) and take a second to think of something you are worried or fearful of. Encourage to breathe it out, as a way of letting go.

BUCKLE UP

Feel free to download the Steering Wheel printable from Stephanie’s website to enhance the experience of having control of a steering wheel. Note the heart with green font for positive thinking- “I am in control”.



SPEED BUMPS

Think about how it may make you feel if something interrupts your day or your day does not go as smooth as you planned. Do you enter the ‘red zone’ and feel frustrated? Annoyed or nervous? How do you cope?



BRAIN BREAK

Brain break station provides readers an opportunity to transition into the yellow zone, if you are escalating towards the red zone. In this book, we are aiming to relax, so choosing a calm brain break activity is vital. It helps to regain focus and to better process what is happening or how to better manage. Brain breaks are meant to reduce stress and frustration, and increase attention and making better choices.

If you notice someone is becoming angry, distracted, tired or restless, get ahead of that behaviour and offer a calming brain break. Feel free to set a timer for 20 seconds to allow readers to practice a short brain break activity. For example, some simple stretching, or even visualizing a calming colour travelling throughout your body, while breathing it into your body from head to toe.



BRAIN BREAK CONTINUED...



You can try this Superhero Pose by Laura Driscoll. **Superhero Pose:** Stand up, feet shoulder width apart, shoulders back, chest out, hands on hips. Take a deep breath in, letting it fill up your chest. Stand tall and proud. Then breath out slowly letting your chest come down inch by inch. Still keeping your head held high. Repeat 5 times.

<https://www.socialemotionalworkshop.com/2019/12/brain-break-activities/>

EEEE IT'S STARTING TO RAIN

Feel free to implement the ‘**Deep Breathing with Nini**’ printable in the Resources section of Stephanie’s website. Implementing slow, calm and in control breaths as you colour and count the raindrops. You can also practice visualizing a happy place or even vision what the rainbow may look like after a rainy day, to give you hope and something to look forward to.



HERE COMES A BIT OF A WINDING ROAD

Sometimes during stressful times, our bodies may start feeling like they are tightening or have some aches and pains. Let this open doors to practice hand and feet relaxation exercises.

For example:

- **Hands/Arms-** Squeeze your hands as if you are trying to make lemonade until you feel all the juice is out. Feel the tightness in your hands and arm as you squeeze. When you can’t squeeze anymore, let go of the lemon and allow your arms and hands to relax.
- **Feet/Legs-** Now pretend that you are standing barefoot in a big, puddle of mud. Squish your toes down deep into the mud. Try to get your feet down to the bottom. Push down, spread your toes apart, and feel the mud squish up between your toes. Now step out of the puddle. Relax your feet. Let your toes go loose and feel how nice it is.
- **Be proud of yourself.** Give yourself a pat on the back or a tight hug. Practice some positive self-talk together in a confident voice, such as “I am proud”.

UH OH! STOP!

During the duck crossing when it says "such as", the intentions are that you focus on the next line "I am PATIENT. I can wait" (**green thought**). Practice saying “I am patient. I can wait” in a confident voice. The more you practice in a confident voice, the more you believe in those positive, helpful thoughts. When we think green, we feel green and then we act in green ways. Green thoughts are helpful and positive thoughts that encourages us to make better choices.

Yellow thoughts help us to transition from the red zone to the green. They help us regroup and regain control such as “I am calm. I am peace. It’s okay to take a break.” **Red thoughts** are negative thoughts that increases the feelings of anger, sadness, worry etc. They are unhelpful and unproductive such as “I can’t do anything right! I always make mistakes!”





IN THE DISTANCE, I SEE A...

Note in the rear-view mirror that the ducks made it across safely. Be mindful of the signs along the road. There will be a train crossing. How can you prepare yourself?

THERE SEEMS TO BE A BIT OF TRAFFIC

You may discuss in further depth what personal space is. Personal space is the distance between you and another person or situation at which one feels comfortable and safe. Building an understanding of personal space helps with socialization and understanding social cues of others.

<https://sociallyskilledkids.com/personalspace/>



RAIL ROAR CROSSING



Notice the road signs. What do the signs tell you? What zone do you think the train is in? Green, yellow or red?

What clues tell you that the train is in the red zone? Note the facial expression, Rail ROAR, the barrier and the arrows to keep personal space between someone who may be angry.

FIRST, STOP

When approaching the 3 different paths, the general idea is that readers take time to become aware of the different signs, colors and feel of the paths, noticing that the **'Brain Break'** sign hints at transitioning to the yellow zone (**yellow path**) to calm down, the bumps on the left hint at frustrations which often leads someone into the red zone (**red path**). The path on the far right encourages you to see the trees, flowers and butterflies, hinting at something more positive and joyful as you would feel in the green zone (**green path**).

It challenges readers to reflect on what they have learned so far, problem solve, build situational awareness and build a better understanding of what the various zones are. **Remember: Green (go), yellow (slow) and red (stop).**

Here is where it is helpful to **'Stop, think and choose'**.

<https://www.freespirit.com/educational-games-posters-and-jars/stop-think-choose-poster/>



WE MADE IT!



What does determination mean?

Determination means never giving up even when you are faced with various obstacles or when something is hard to do. Determination is when you make a decision and act on it! You set goals and you keep trying different steps in order to achieve them.

OH, BY THE WAY.

Nini provides a refreshing **popsicle** to readers as a special treat after a long journey. What flavour is your popsicle?

Give Nini the bird a high five to celebrate staying in control, making great choices and safe navigating! Enjoy your time at the park!



MORE RESOURCES

TEACHING YOUR CHILD SELF-CONTROL

Teaching self-control at an early age helps set up the child for future success.

Lauren M. O'Donnell, PsyD.

Ages 6 to 9

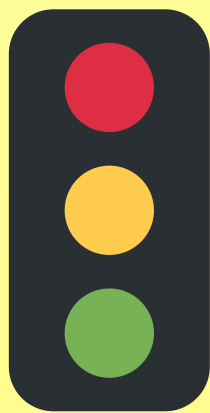
Children are better able to understand the idea of consequences and that they can choose 'good' or 'bad' behavior. It may help your child to imagine a stop sign that must be obeyed and think about a situation before responding. Encourage the child to walk away and cool down before making a decision.

Ages 10 to 12

Encourage children to think about what's causing them to lose control (triggers) and then analyze it.

Urge kids to take time to think before responding to a situation.

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/self-control.html>



ZONES OF REGULATION

The Zones of Regulation framework is designed to foster self-regulation and emotional control. The Zones of Regulation categorizes states of alertness and emotions into four colored zones. Created by Leah Kuypers, MA ED., OTR/L.N.

<https://zonesofregulation.com/index.html>

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT MINDFULNESS AND 5 SENSES:

Refresh Your Senses. Guided Meditation for Kids. Peace Out. Cosmic Kids Yoga.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R69zNPYz0uM>

Coming to Our Senses! Mindfulness Exercises for Kids and Adults by Dr. Liza Varvogli

<https://varvogli.com/2018/02/13/coming-to-our-senses-mindfulness-exercises-for-kids-and-adults/>

