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STRATEGY #7

Toning Down ...

Children who are over anxious or stressed often respond better to softer tones of voice. In a classroom or small group give each child a copy of the worksheet with the stoplights. Allow the children to color the circles and discuss the meaning of each. The **green** color is where you want to be (normal tone), the **yellow** is a warning that you may be getting too loud or harsh, and the **red** signals that you need to stop and cool down. Being aware of your tone is key when helping children feel safe and secure when they are around you.

Then play a game stating the following statements. Have the students point to the correct color on their stop light.

Practice – Teacher:

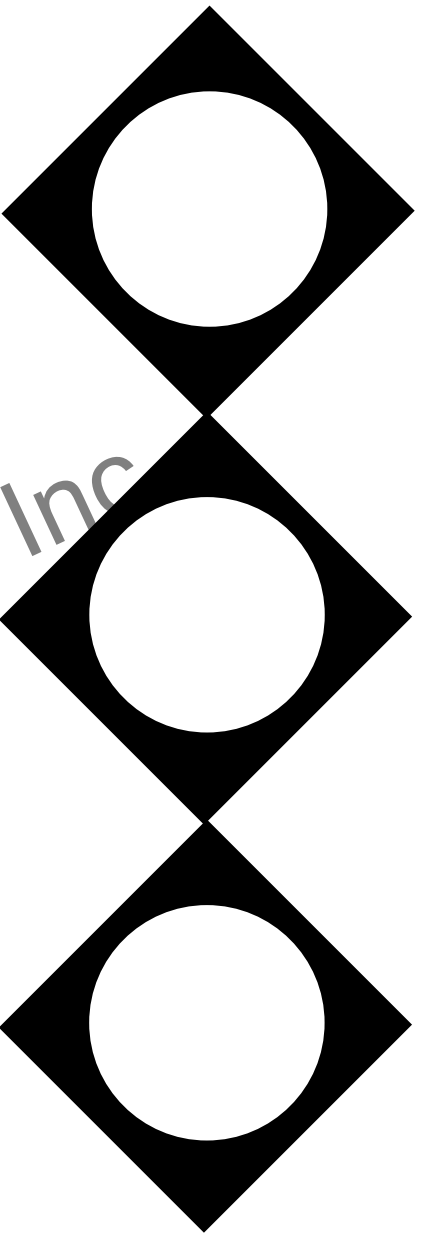
- (Normal tone – GREEN) “Please stand up beside your chair.”
- (Warning tone – YELLOW) “Get out of that chair now.”
- (Stop, cool down tone – RED) “GET OUT of that chair NOW!”

Continue letting the children respond to these statements varying your voice tone:

- GIVE ME THAT PENCIL! (RED)
- Please go get the ball for me. (GREEN)
- Give me that book now! (YELLOW)
- Thank you for that pencil. (GREEN)

Allow children to discuss how the different voice tones make them feel. Now allow them to practice with the group and you restate their sentences using a different tone. (Example: If their tone is loud, you restate the sentence using a softer tone.) Finally, allow the children to discuss that “loud” voices are not necessarily something to be afraid of, but sometimes are used to get immediate attention.





STATEMENT

COLOR (TONE)

HOW COULD MY TONE BE BETTER

GIVE ME THAT PENCIL!		
Please go get the ball for me.		
Give me that book NOW!		
Thank you for helping.		

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TONING DOWN WORKSHEET

*Here are some examples of thoughts to have the child practice
(of course, many more can be added to fit the specific stressful situation).*

Program My Brain

- **I will be OK.**
- **This problem can only last _____ minutes (hours or days)
and it will pass.**
- **Something good that I am looking forward to is**
_____.
- **I am safe because _____.**
- **_____ loves me and is always there for me.**
- **I can do well at _____.**
