

# Self- Control

November 2021 PALS



# What is self-control?

Self-control is something we hear about all the time. Often, we think about it when it comes to stopping a behavior we dislike, like eating junk food, or in the context of managing a feeling like anger. However, the true definition goes beyond these ideas. Here is the true meaning of self-control and how you can master it for yourself.

According to the [Merriam-Webster Dictionary](#), the definition for self-control is "restraint exercised over one's impulses, emotions, or desires." In other words, we can prevent ourselves from doing something we don't want to do or from feeling something we don't want to feel, especially when we're tempted.

Emotional self-control is important, too. It prevents us from screaming at others when we're angry or from punching someone when they wrong us. It also stops us from crying uncontrollably when we do not get our way or from becoming distracted in situations that require attention.

If you learn  
self-control,  
you can master  
absolutely  
ANYTHING.

# Self-Control



**Self-control** is the ability to control your emotions and behaviors when you get angry.

Sometimes we lose self-control when someone makes us mad. Can you name a time

when you lost self-control? \_\_\_\_\_

When we lose control we sometimes do things that we may not be proud of. Here is a list of things that people do when they lose control. Check each behavior that you have experienced when you have lost self-control.

- |                                       |  |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scream       | <input type="checkbox"/> Call names    | <input type="checkbox"/> Slam doors      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Break things | <input type="checkbox"/> Take off      | <input type="checkbox"/> Threaten others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hit someone  | <input type="checkbox"/> Hurt yourself | <input type="checkbox"/> Throw things    |

It is very important that you learn healthy ways to handle anger and stress before you lose self-control. Losing self-control can get you into a lot of trouble with your parents, your teacher and even with the law.

When you feel yourself losing control, try doing these behaviors INSTEAD.



Take deep breaths



Walk away



Talk it out maturely

If you feel yourself starting to get angry, try one of these activities to help calm yourself.

Write the name of each activity on the line provided.



What other things can you do to help keep yourself from losing control?

## Take control of yourself!

A big part of growing up is learning how to control your emotions in a mature, healthy way.

Learning self-control can take a lot of time, hard work and practice. When you start showing others that have self-control, people will see how responsible and mature you have become. You will earn respect from your parents, teachers and your peers.

# Why is self-control important?

Several studies have linked self-control to long term success in life. The ability to control your emotions and impulses to make an informed decision based on reason is an essential life skill. Children who lack impulse control will often go on to struggle to manage their finances or sustain a healthy relationship.



# What does self-control look like?



Delays gratification-to wait to get what you want

Controls emotions when provoked

Thinks before speaking or acting

Is able to consider all possibilities before making a decision

## **When kids struggle with self-control, they have a harder time than their peers managing these kinds of behaviors:**

- Having tantrums or outbursts
- Interrupting friends and blurting out answers in class
- Talking nonstop
- Being overly active or restless
- Grabbing things instead of asking first
- Cutting in line and having a hard time taking turns
- Getting frustrated easily and giving up quickly
- Bursting into tears in response to gentle teasing
- Having trouble listening to criticism



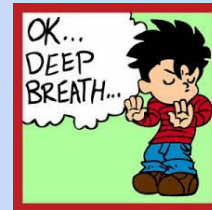
# Teaching Your Child Self-Control

## Ages 10 to 12

Older kids usually better understand their feelings. Encourage them to think about what's causing them to lose control and then analyze it. Explain that sometimes situations that are upsetting at first don't end up being so awful. Urge kids to take time to think before responding to a situation. Help them to understand that it's not the situation that's upset them — it's what they think about the situation that makes them angry. Compliment them as they use their self-control skills.

## Ages 13 to 17

By now kids should be able to control most of their actions. But remind teens to think about long-term consequences. Urge them to pause to evaluate upsetting situations before responding and talk through problems rather than losing control, slamming doors, or yelling. If necessary, discipline your teen by taking away certain privileges to reinforce the message that self-control is an important skill. Allow him or her to earn the privileges back by demonstrating self-control.



## Practice, Practice, Practice....

It has been shown that self-control can be practiced and improved upon over time. Give your child opportunities to practice their self regulation at home. For younger children, you can play games that require self-control like Red Light, Green Light or Freeze Dance. For older children, suggest joining a sport or playing an instrument that requires them to make a plan and follow through.







5 Incredibly Fun

***GAMES***

To Teach

Self - Regulation

# Books about Self-Control

## What Were You Thinking? By Bryan Smith

Kids do things before they think ALL THE TIME! Help them learn self-control and reduce their disruptive behaviors with this fun story.

When you're a child, it's not easy to control your impulses. Children aren't always aware that what they are doing is inappropriate.

Third-grader Braden loves to be the center of attention. His comic genius, as he sees it, causes his friends to look at him in awe.

But some poor decision-making, like ill-timed jokes in class and an impulsive reaction during gym that left a classmate teary-eyed and crumpled on the floor, forces the adults in Braden's life to teach him about impulse control.

But will the lessons shared by his teachers and his mom really help Braden manage his impulses? Young readers will enjoy this story filled with relatable and common situations all children share.

*What Were You Thinking?* shows kids how to think before they act, and is part of the *Executive FUNction* series of books by author and school counselor Bryan Smith. Written for kids ages 5-10 (Grades K-5), this storybook includes tips for parents, counselors and teachers.

This series of entertaining books help kids develop friendships, control emotions and improve their manners.

## Of Course It's A Big Deal by Bryan Smith

If your child overreacts, this book is for you! This entertaining story teaches kids to keep their cool, when things don't go their way.

Braden brings drama to every minor misunderstanding, grievance and annoyance in his life! He overreacts in any situation that doesn't go as he has planned.

What was supposed to be a carefree afternoon of go-cart racing and putt-putt golf, quickly turns sour when Braden shouts and pouts about the rules.

Turns out he is too short to drive a go-cart by himself. He thinks that rule is stupid and shouts out his opinion to everyone!

Will Braden ever learn to keep his cool in the face of disappointment?

Will every discouraging moment send him into an emotional meltdown?

This story is part of the *Executive Function* series of books for children to help them with social-emotional learning. Reacting calmly and appropriately when things don't go your way is an important skill for kids to have. Written for kids in grades K-5, *Of Course It's a Big Deal* teaches kids strategies to calm down and think about whether their reaction will make things better or worse for them.

Tips for parents, counselors and educators are also included.

## What Should Danny Do? by Adir Levy

FUN. INTERACTIVE. EMPOWERING. THE BOOK THEY'LL LOVE TO READ AGAIN AND AGAIN!

With 9 Stories in 1, the fun never ends! What Should Danny Do? is an innovative, interactive book that empowers kids with the understanding that their choices will shape their days, and ultimately their lives into what they will be. Written in a "Choose Your Own Story" style, the book follows Danny, a Superhero-in-Training, through his day as he encounters choices that kids face on a daily basis. As your children navigate through the different story lines, they will begin to realize that their choices for Danny shaped his day into what it became. And in turn, their choices for themselves will shape their days, and ultimately their lives, into what they will be.

Boys and girls both love and relate to Danny, while enjoying the interactive nature of the book they never know what will come next! Parents and Teachers love the social-emotional skills the book teaches through empowering kids to make positive choices while demonstrating the natural consequences to negative choices. A "must-have" on every bookshelf.