



Calm down corners are a key concept in the FocusedKids program and are extremely effective at all levels. They give students a place to re-focus and use self-regulation skills they are learning and practicing daily from the FocusedKids program. They also function as a positive behavior strategy.

Calm down corners work especially well in preschool and elementary classrooms. At this age, though, children do require explicit instructions that support successful mastery of self-regulation skills. Below are some helpful suggestions.

## 5 Steps to Setting Up a Calm Down Corner:

1. **Define the Space-** The first step to setting up a calm down corner in your classroom is to define the space by labeling the area. The exclusive use for this area can only be accessed/used as a calm down space. There is no other reason a child should be there. It is a clearly defined space in your classroom that is conducive to being calm. Then, answer these questions for how a student accesses the clam down area.:
  - Does the student use a visual indication?
  - Do they access the space independently?
  - Do they verbally request the use?

Different students may access the area in different ways. But being very clear and consistent is the way it is done. As you are defining the space, also define the way that students will access it.



2. **Calming Techniques** - Choose the calm down techniques and tools that students will use while in the space. You may decide that you want sensory items, reflection tools, or guides to physical techniques to calm the body. Books and coloring sheets are other great tools. Know that children will choose different tools depending on their preferences and needs. So it helps to collaborate with them when choosing the tools for the corner. It is really important to practice all tool and strategies as a class before putting them in the calm down corner for independent use. We recommend practicing as a class for one week as a class.

3. **Calm Down Rules** - Remember, the calm down area isn't a life sentence or an eternal trip to Neverland. Clear guidelines need to be established for how long a student is allowed to stay in the area and also how they get out. What are ways a student knows when they are calm? Adding a visual to assess how the student is feeling becomes essential in a calm down corner. Not only does it support students as they are developing an understanding of their emotions, but it also allows you to model the emotional state necessary to return to class.

4. **Learning to Calm Down** - An effective calm down corner includes some kind of learning moment. Tools that help them to become more aware of their emotions as well as what triggers certain feelings and then how to deal with them appropriately are critical. Otherwise, if a student is just bouncing in and out of the calm down area with no learning included, you're not setting them up for ultimate success.

5. **Learn to swim first!** - If a student who is in the middle of a behavior requires using the calm down corner, that's the worst time to teach them how to use it. FocusedKids provides and recommends instruction routinely during circle time, several times a day, while they are in a calm state. This includes directions on how to use the techniques and tools in the calm down corner as well as how to access the area. Pre-teaching these skills is the make-or-break for an effective calm down corner in the classroom.

## Visual Supports for a Good Calm Down Corner

If you are trying to get your calm down corner set up and are wondering what visuals and activities to include in your calm down kit to make it most effective, here are a few ideas:

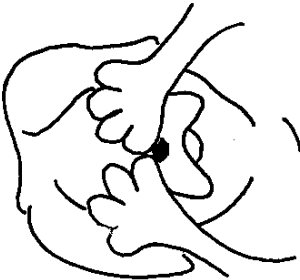


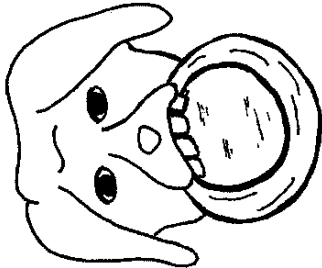
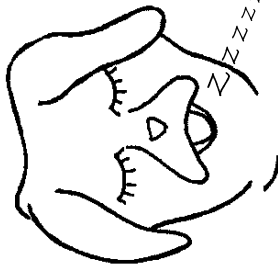




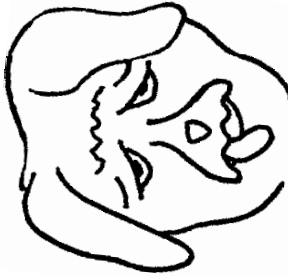

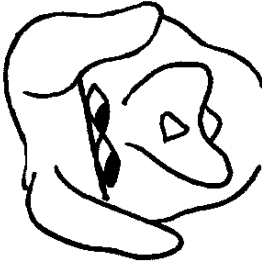



- Calm Down Area Label
- Calm Down Basket with tools for calming
- Finding My Calm Chart
- I Feel Coloring Page
- I Feel Chart
- Social Story Books
- Calming Strategies Cards or Posters
- A Visual Timer
- A Breathing Chart



# FocusedKids Calm Down Corner

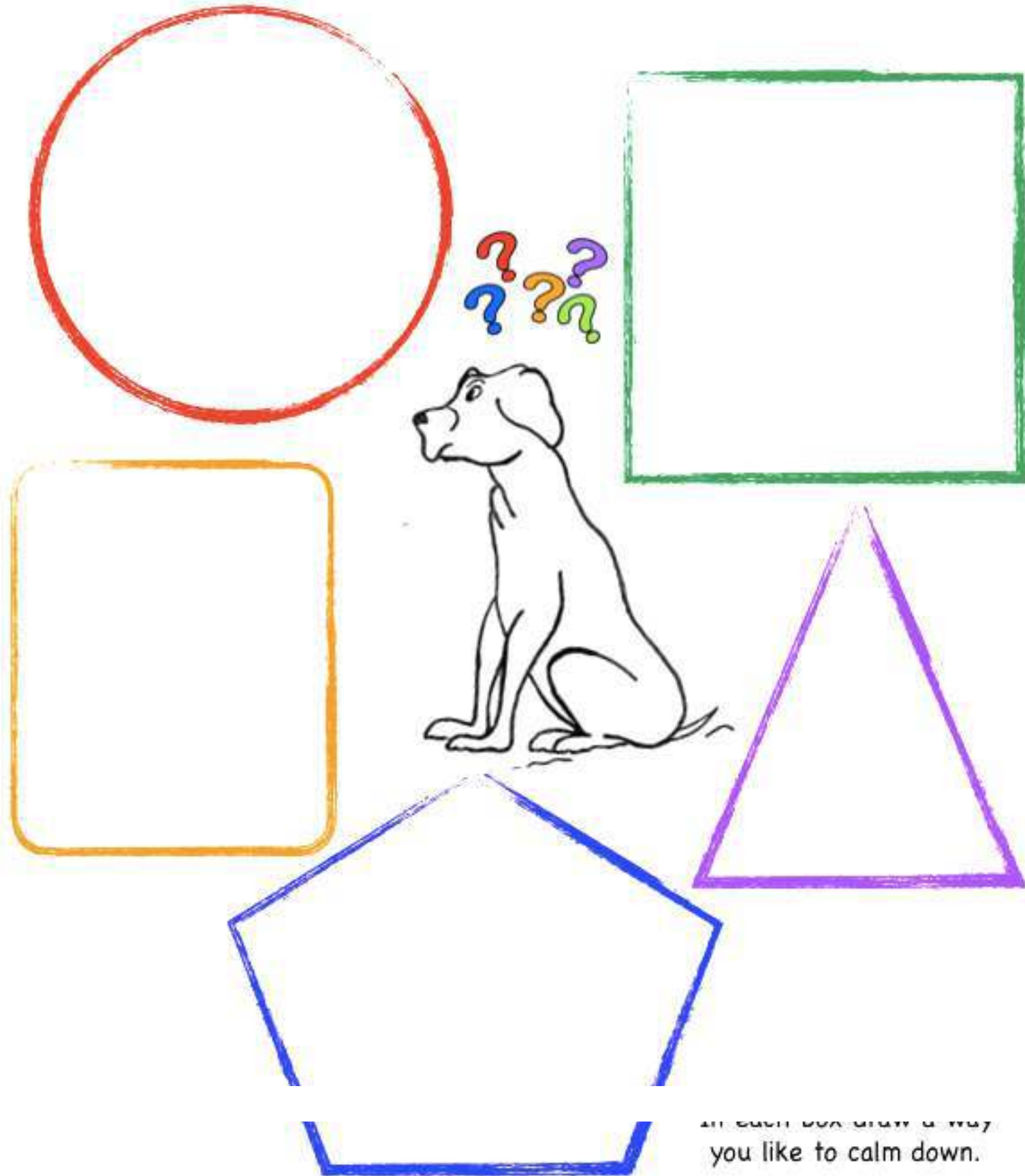


# Guard Dog Feelings

				
Embarrassed	Worried	Sad	Hungry	Sleepy
				
Hurt	Mad	Excited	Scared	Sick
				
Confused	Jealous	Left Out	Anxious	Calm and Focused



## Finding My Calm



# Breathing Chart

Alligator Breath	

Teachers - After you have spent time practicing it as a class, write in a breath type and add a picture of a student doing it. It is important to note that anything that happens independently at the calm down corner has been practiced correctly as a whole class first. So perhaps after a week of doing it as a class in class brain breaks, then add it to the list!



# TIME to CALM DOWN

EXCUSE ME...

I need to take a break  
and calm down.



EXCUSE ME...

It looks like you need  
To take a break  
and calm down.

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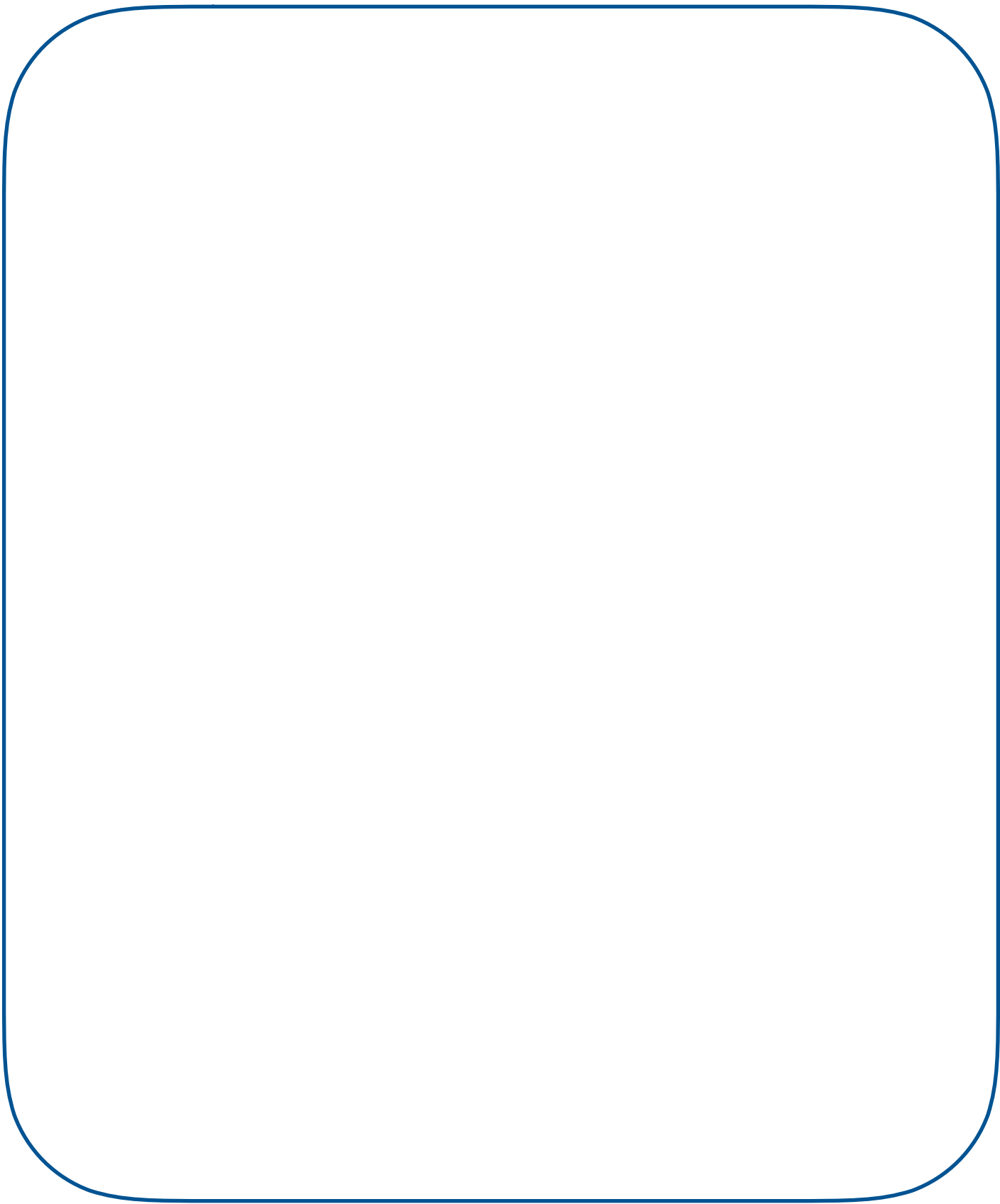
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**Color How You Feel**





# Calm Down Steps

 <p>Ask Permission</p>	 <p>Go Quietly to Calm Down Area</p>	 <p>Set Timer</p>	 <p>Do the 5-finger Breath</p>															
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Happy</td> <td>Sad</td> <td>Scared</td> <td>Angry</td> <td>Left Out</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sick</td> <td>Sleepy</td> <td>Excited</td> <td>Worried</td> <td>Hungry</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td>Embarrassed</td> <td>Cool</td> <td>Jealous</td> <td>Grumpy</td> </tr> </table> <p>Decide How You Feel</p>	Happy	Sad	Scared	Angry	Left Out	Sick	Sleepy	Excited	Worried	Hungry	Good	Embarrassed	Cool	Jealous	Grumpy	 <p>Get the Calm Down Basket</p>	 <p>Sit Down</p>	 <p>Settle Your Glitter</p>
Happy	Sad	Scared	Angry	Left Out														
Sick	Sleepy	Excited	Worried	Hungry														
Good	Embarrassed	Cool	Jealous	Grumpy														
 <p>Breaths with the Ball</p>	 <p>Color How You Feel</p>	 <p>Do a Yoga Pose</p>	 <p>Color a Page</p>															
 <p>Clean Up</p>	 <p>Stop Timer</p>	 <p>Hug the monkey</p>	 <p>Join the Class</p>															



## Social Story Books

- My Magic Breath
- Heart Bubbles
- FocusedKids Mini Coloring Books
- Grumpy Monkey
- Grateful Goat
- Giraffes Can't Dance
- Grow Happy
- King Calm: Mindful Gorilla in the City
- Little Monkey Calms Down
- Peaceful Piggy
- The Color Monster

## Calming Strategies Cards or Posters

- Calm Down Corner Sign
- Calm Down Steps Poster
- Mindful Kids Cards - 50 Mindfulness Activities for KINDNESS, FOCUS, AND CALM
- Finding My Calm Poster

## Calm Down Basket

- Contents:
  - Hoberman Sphere
  - Pinwheel
  - Timer
  - Glitter Jar
  - Stress Ball
  - Brain puppets
  - Coloring book/pages, crayons, markers, pencils
- Additional:
  - Monkey puppet to hug

