Providing Support through CO-REGULATION
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- **Co-regulation** is an interactive process where a supportive adult helps you or your child organize and modulate emotional and behavioral responses.
- **Self-regulation** is not an innate skill; it develops over time through repeated experiences of safe co-regulation.
- **Dysregulation** is a physiological survival state where the nervous system perceives threat or overwhelm, causing the thinking brain to go offline.
- **Behavior** is communication that reflects underlying biological, emotional, and cognitive stressors.
- **Overwhelm** appears as externalized signs like pacing or outbursts, or internalized signs like shutting down, freezing, and withdrawing.

THE THREE PILLARS OF SUPPORT

1. **Relationships**: Build warm, empathetic connections so you create a secure foundation for learning and growth.
2. **Environment**: Maintain predictable routines, clear visual boundaries, and sensory-friendly spaces to reduce anxiety.
3. **Skills**: Explicitly model, teach, and reinforce coping tools and emotional vocabulary.

THE THREE RS OF DE-ESCALATION

1. **Regulate First:** Calm the nervous system using a quiet presence, low volume, and deep breathing before talking.
2. **Relate Second:** Connect, validate feelings, and establish safety without judgment.
3. **Reason Third**: Reflect and problem-solve together only after full calm and thinking functions return.

KEY ACTION STRATEGIES

- **Physical Environment:** Organize structured environments to encourage

engagement, predictability, and sensory calm.

- **Volume and Tone:** Speak softly, slowly, and warmly to help bring energy levels down.
- **Mindful Physical Presence**: Maintain open body language, soft facial expressions, and respect personal space.
- **Less Talk**: Keep spoken directions minimal, avoid abstract questions, and give 10 to 15 seconds for processing.
- **Reflective Language:** Gently name and validate feelings to show understanding.
- **Structured Choices**: Offer two clear options to support autonomy without placing demands.
- **Calming Tools:** Use active releases like walking or deep breathing, and quiet tools like listening to music or resting in a calm space.