

# MANAGING INTENSE EMOTIONS

## Skill Sheet for Educators

Every emotion we experience can become intense at times, which makes us want to act in certain ways. Our hedgehog friend was feeling a lot of anger and sadness, he ran away and started crying. However, he learned that when these big emotions take over, the best thing we can do is grab something calming, like the items in the hedgehog's self-care backpack, to help us feel better. These calming items can help bring us back to the present moment. After our intense emotions pass we will be better able to choose how to handle challenging moments.

### Summary of the **KEY POINTS** from the video.

- Everyone feels big and intense emotions sometimes.
- Everyone has urges to act that are caused by big, intense, and uncomfortable emotions. The key is riding out the urge and waiting for big feelings to lessen.
- You can ride out big feelings by using your five senses (sight, sound, taste, touch, smell) to ground to the present.

### Practice Skills

- Include visuals around your room that reference ways to ride out big and uncomfortable feelings.
- Model opportunities when you utilize a strategy to ride out a big feeling. Create your own self-soothe kit that you can show to your students and use in the classroom.
- Provide calm-down strategies in your classroom, such as creating a self-soothe kit utilizing the five senses for students to use.
- When students are starting to feel big emotions, you can direct them to self-soothing opportunities in the classroom first before trying to problem-solve the situation.
- Use specific positive feedback frequently, immediately, and consistently when your students utilize a strategy to ride out a big emotion and impulse. Using specific positive feedback is the best way to shape behaviors you want to see. You might say:



“I see you were feeling overwhelmed, and I love how you’re working on riding out those big feelings.”

“I love how you’re using your stress ball to help with big feelings.”

**Start with this →**

- Create time and space in the classroom for sensory breaks where students can utilize their five senses for calming moments.
- In addition to using their five senses for calming, provide your students movement breaks where they can feel connected to their bodies.
- Each student can create their own self-soothe kit that can be utilized in the classroom as a “go to” for when they are feeling intense emotions.

On the next page there is an activity that you can share with your students as a class activity to create self-soothe kits that can help when big feelings occur during the school day.

## Activity

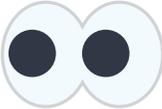
Practicing these skills helps you to increase awareness of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to improve your mental health and wellness.

# What Is in Your Self-Soothe Kit?

Brainstorm a self-soothe kit. Come up with ideas for what might be soothing in each category and then collect the items from around your house.

Remember that feeling intense emotions is normal and can make us feel like we need to do something. Using the five senses can help us ride out that wave of intensity and help us choose what to do next.

- 1 Find a small, portable bag that can fit in your backpack (for example, a small pouch, pencil case, or Ziploc bag).
- 2 Select one or more favorite items from each of the five senses to put in your kit (or something that is close by and you have easy access to).

5 Senses	One thing that makes me calm and relaxed is:	Stumped on what to pick? Here are some suggestions:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Calming colors</li><li>• A relaxing scene</li><li>• Small picture of my favorite person, family member, athlete; or place to visit</li></ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Listen to rainstorm or ocean sounds</li><li>• Recordings of funny jokes or comedians</li><li>• Happy or soothing music</li></ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good-smelling hand lotion</li><li>• Small perfume bottle</li><li>• A scented candle</li></ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pieces of your favorite candy or other treat like gum or a mint</li></ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Satin ribbon or soft fabric</li><li>• A small pompom or pouf</li><li>• A small feather</li><li>• A stress ball</li><li>• Slime</li></ul>