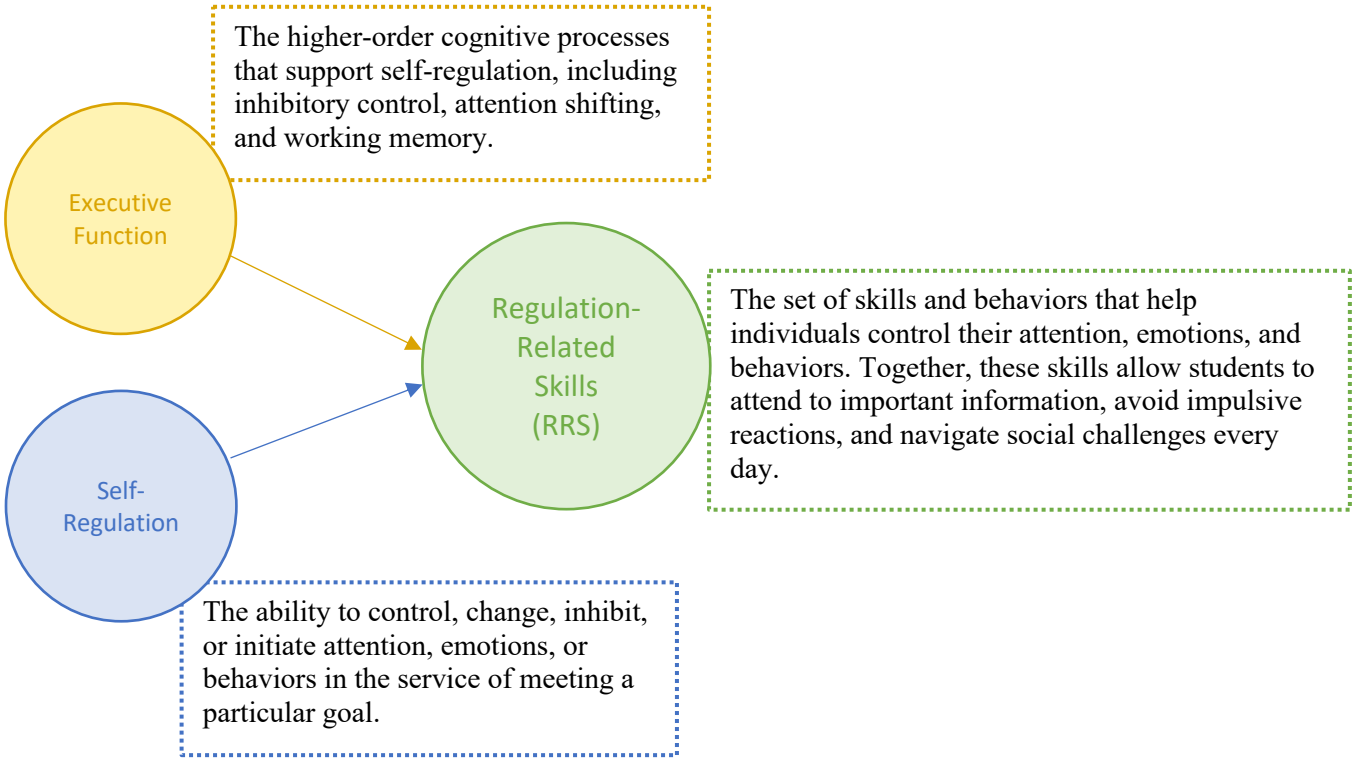
Overview

Regulation-Related Skills and *The Regulation-Related Skills Measure*

Young children, just like older children and adults, must engage specific skills throughout the day to help manage their emotions and behaviors and feel successful in school. For example, while building blocks with a friend, a child might need to employ skills related to attention regulation in order to stay focused on the game or listen to her friend. Similarly, during a more structured activity like a read aloud, a child might be asked to raise his hand rather than "shouting out." Remembering to raise his hand requires that child to regulate attention (stay focused on the story) and impulsivity (resist the temptation to "shout out"). A read aloud might also require children to regulate their emotions if, for instance, the story is very exciting, silly, or even sad.

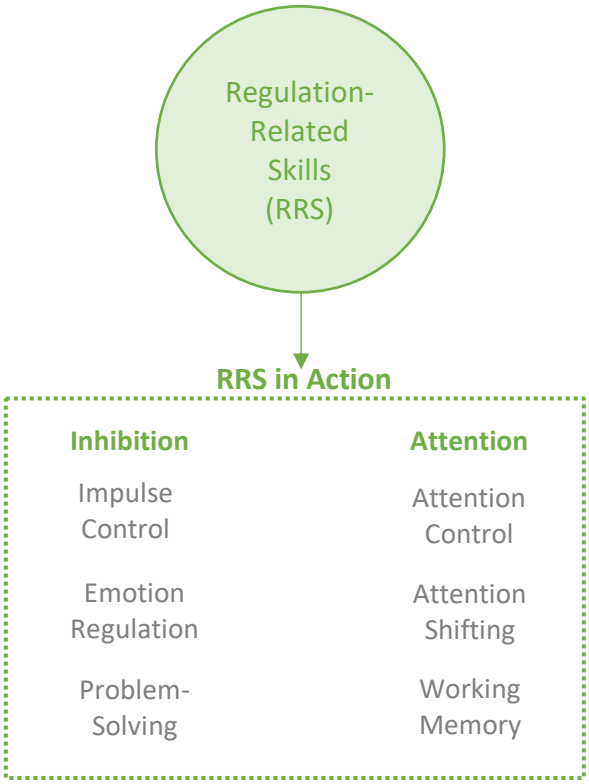
The Regulation-Related Skills Measure (RRSM) is a tool that can be used by researchers to measure young children's employment of Regulation-Related Skills (RRS) by observing their everyday behaviors in classroom settings (e.g., raising hands, waiting turns, listening to one another). More specifically, it is an ecologically valid, objective, observation-based measure of prekindergarten and kindergarten children's RRS, including their ability to employ executive function and self-regulation skills, which has been validated for research purposes.



RRS are a combination of skills or processes that draw on children's (and adults'!) self-regulation and executive function.

These skills help children to…	*And allow students to…*
✓ control their attention	✓ pay attention to important information
✓ modulate their emotions	✓ control impulsive actions/reactions
✓ regulate their behaviors	✓ successfully navigate social challenges

Conceptually, these skills are housed under two broad categories: Inhibition and Attention. Within these two categories are six domains addressed by the RRSM: Inhibitory Control, Impulse Control, Emotion Regulation, Attention Shifting, Working Memory, and Problem Solving.



Finally, within these six domains are 16 distinct observable skills, which are measured by the RRSM. The table on the following pages aligns these 16 skills with the six domains presented in the figure above. For example, a child's ability to control his/her physical movement is an observable skill (i.e., we can see it as we watch the child engage in classroom activities). This skill falls under the domain of Impulse Control (e.g., the child resists the impulse to jump up and down when an exciting new activity begins), which is a key component of overall Inhibition.

As you examine RRSM scores, you may find that students consistently struggle with a particular skill (e.g., listening), or more broadly within a domain (e.g., impulse control). Research into self-regulation, executive function, and SEL identifies teaching strategies and practices that have demonstrated effectiveness in supporting young children's development within and across these categories. Some research has even targeted specific regulation-related skills. (For more on research-based teaching practices, see the RRSM Teacher Tool.)

Inhibition

RRSM Domain	RRSM (Item #) & Skill Child…	Example of "Does" Behavior Child…
Impulse Control	(1) Controls physical movements	✓ maintains "bubble space" ✓ can sit still when it is appropriate to do so
	(5) Can ignore distractions during an activity	✓ ignores outside sounds and keeps working on a task ✓ may be temporarily distracted, but independently returns to the task at hand
	(10) Follows classroom rules and routines independently	✓ completes routine without prompts ✓ does not need reminders about following the rules
	(12) Inhibits inappropriate or automatic responses and enacts appropriate responses	✓ uses appropriate skills to get what s/he wants, instead of grabbing or pushing ✓ waits turn to talk
	(15) Is able to wait for something	✓ waits and watches independently until it is his/her turn ✓ occupies him/herself by chatting quietly while waiting for an activity to begin
Emotion Regulation	(13) Modulates emotional arousal or maintains appropriate level of emotional arousal in response to classroom expectations	✓ matches the feelings of other children without going overboard ✓ quickly calms him/herself down when excited or upset
	(14) Regulates behavior in the face of own emotional arousal	✓ can describe what s/he is feeling and then moves on ✓ works toward the classroom goals even while emotionally aroused
Problem-Solving	(6) Shows evidence of independent planning or monitoring	✓ discusses his/her intentions for an activity before beginning ✓ monitors or reflects on own actions, or the actions of others; may correct mistakes
	(9) Co-creates and/or follows group norms or rules when interacting with peers	✓ follows rules of suggestions put forth by other children, without support ✓ shows a sense of fairness when applying, using, or making up new rules
	(16) Shows evidence of ability to solve and cope with social dilemmas and conflicts with peers	✓ can navigate a social conflict without becoming upset or using inappropriate responses ✓ uses problem-solving strategies with peers

Attention

RRSM Domain	RRSM (Item #) & Skill Child…	Example Behavior Child…
Attention Control	(2) Pays attention to the activity at hand	✓ spends the majority of the time involved in the task ✓ is physically involved in the activity
	(4) Maintains focus during or quickly returns focus after a disruption/interruption	✓ is engaged in an activity or conversation, briefly disengages, and then returns to original activity ✓ quickly returns to activity after being interrupted by something loud in the environment
	(7) Shows evidence of listening	✓ orients body to the speaker ✓ responds to what is said
Attention Shifting	(3) Can shift attention appropriately *within* an activity or task	✓ is able to switch roles in play or in a partnered activity without support ✓ can shift from drawing to writing
	(11) Can transition to new activities, tasks, or major parts of the day	✓ is ready to start the new activity as soon as the one they are engaged in finishes ✓ transitions quickly and smoothly; does not dawdle or become distracted
Working Memory	(8) Remembers and follows a series of instructions or completes a multi-step activity	✓ independently carries out a set of directions in the correct order ✓ remembers the rules or steps of a new game without adult support

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