

## Example: Offering Support that is Needed for Emotional Reasons

**Teacher:** Sylvester is a new three-year old at summer camp. He is actively engaged and likes participating in group fun. Every time it is Sylvester's turn to wash his hands for snack he will say, "I don't know how to wash my hands." We always say we would be happy to show him how and help him. I said, "It seems you like it when I help you. It's not that you don't know how, and I'm happy to help you. You don't have to say you can't do it. All you have to do is ask a teacher to do it with you." Sylvester smiled and held out his hands to wash them with me.

## Example: Using S.M.A.R.T Acceptance of All Feelings

**Teacher:** Silas and two other children were racing trucks. One of the boys declared, “I won!” when his fire engine reached the finish line first. Silas appeared upset and insisted, “No, I won.” The other boy stated, “No you didn’t, I won!” And a back and forth ensued. Silas moved his dump truck close to the finish line, put it over, and declared, “I won!” Jeff said, “You won ’cause you started at the end.” I said, “Maybe Silas won the dump truck race, and you won the fire engine race.” Both boys seemed to agree. I said to Silas, “I can see how much you wanted to win, it was really hard when your dump truck didn’t get there before the fire engine.”

## Example: Racial, Ethnic, Class, and Religious Diversity

**Teacher:** Alberto asked for the toy screwdriver while we were outside, so I handed him the toolbox and he said he was going to do some fixing. I asked him if he would like some help, and he said, yes, that I could be his assistant. I helped him fix the stairs, and then he said it was time to fix his “casita.” I asked Alberto what part of the casita needed fixing and he said, “The bathroom and kitchen.” While we fixed his casita, Andrew came towards us and asked what we were doing. Alberto responded, “We’re fixing the casita.” Andrew said, “What’s a casita?” Alberto replied, “My casita.” Andrew didn’t understand, so I said, “It’s the Spanish word for ‘house.’” Andrew said, “I want to help fix the casita!” Alberto handed him a tool and Andrew told Cassie, “I’m fixing the casita!” Cassie, who was with Esther said, “What’s that?” And Esther replied, “It’s Spanish for house!” Cassie said, “Oh, I did not know that. I just learned a new word today.” Andrew said, “Me too!”

## Example: S.M.A.R.T. Classroom Management

**Teacher:** Myles was throwing blocks, and I took him to a corner and asked him to sit next to me . He looked very sad. I said, “Sitting next to me is not a punishment. I really like to sit next to you, and I’m trying to help. This isn’t saying anything bad about you.” (At home his parents tell him that there are elves who watch him and count when he is “bad.”) “Your mom told me about the elves. That is not happening at school. There are no elves here counting up your behaviors. School and home are different. Maybe you are feeling I’m mad at you, but I want to sit next to you and help you.” Myles looked relieved and went back to playing after a bit.

## Example: Applying Loving Regulation for Rule #1 – No Hurting Yourself or Others

**Teacher:** Marshall and Dion were playing at the water table. Marshall started pushing Dion to the left with his body, trying to crowd him out. I said, “I see there is some pushing here. Can I help?” Dion pointed to Marshall. I asked, “Do you like it when Marshall pushes you?” Dion shook his head and said, “No.” I said to Marshall, “It’s important that Dion said he doesn’t like it, so you need to find another way to play with him.” Marshall pushed again. I said, “I see you can’t stop pushing right now, so let’s go over here and build with the blocks.” Marshall came with me, though reluctantly.

## Example: Applying Loving Regulation for Rule #2 – No Grabbing

**Teacher:** I was helping Angela use the blood pressure cuff on the dolls. Sarah sat down close to us and asked what we were doing. I told her Angela was checking the babies' blood pressure. She observed for a while, but suddenly reached over and snatched the cuff from Angela. I said, "I can't let you take the cuff Angela is using, but we can find you another one. It looks like you would like to play with a cuff, too. Let's give this one back and there is one by the doctor's coat." We went to get it and I asked if she would like to use it on the babies, or would like to do something else with it. She said, "On the babies."

## **Example:** Applying Loving Regulation for Rule #3 – No Damaging the Classroom

**Teacher:** Today while I was playing trains with Tom, I saw two-year-old Nash sift sand onto the floor by the shoe cubbies. I said in a friendly tone, “The sand needs to stay in the sandbox.” Nash said, “It is snowing,” and showed me the sand on top of the postal truck. I said, “Yes! That does look like snow, but it needs to snow inside the sandbox – let’s make that happen.” Quinn was already getting a dustpan and brush. Quinn and I cleaned up the mess together, and Quinn said, “Nash doesn’t understand yet about the sand.” I said, “I know, he’s learning.” Nash managed to keep it snowing on the postal truck in the sandbox.

## Example: Helping When Children Take Rejection Personally

**Teacher:** Amy was playing by herself in the sandbox and looked unhappy. I asked if anything was wrong. She said, "I'm not playing with anyone because no one wants to play with me." I said, "Amy, I know that feels hard, and I would love to play with you if you would like." She said, "OK!" I asked her how I could help, and she said, "Well I can't get the sandcastle to stay." I said I could help with that, and we filled up a bucket with sand and I flipped it to make her sandcastle. She showed me how to use the seashells as flying cars for the kitties, and we flew them around. She started giggling and yelling, "This is so much fun!" and I said, "Yes, playing together feels fun, and I would always love to play with you whenever you'd like!" We kept playing for a few more minutes and went inside for lunch.



## **Example:** Learning that the Choice of Play should be Based on Enjoyment

**Teacher:** Alyssa said, “I guess Ian’s not my friend anymore. He was playing with Maya.” I said, “Alyssa, Ian is still your friend. Even when you’re not playing together, you can still be friends. It can feel hard when you want to play with him, and he wants to play with a different friend. Maybe Ian will want to play tomorrow. Let’s find someone who does want to play.” Alyssa said, “I could play that ambulance game with Rose and David. They’re my friends, too.” I said, “Great idea!”

## **Example:** Polite Responses, Although Nice, are Not Required in School

**Teacher:** Sally did a twirl with her skirt and I commented, “Beautiful skirt, Sally.” She smiled back at me. Lucy, who was sitting nearby said, “Say ‘thank you,’ Sally.” Sally did not say anything, and I responded, “Lucy, that’s very thoughtful of you, but it’s OK if Sally doesn’t want to say thank you and, actually, Sally did say thank you by smiling. There are many ways to say thank you. Just being happy is saying thank you.”

## Example: Teachers use Caregiving Motives not Personal Motives

**Teacher:** I had to clean up the Modeling clay before I could read to Camilla, and I asked if Camilla would like to help. She said no, she wanted me to read right then. I said, “I know it’s hard to wait, and I will read to you, but I have to do this first and if you help me, it will go faster.” Camilla said, “I don’t like you anymore!” I said, “I hear that, but there is a difference between not liking what I’m doing and not liking me. I don’t think it’s that you don’t like me. I think it’s that you don’t like what I’m doing, but I know you like me.” Camilla scowled but waited for me to clean up and then sat in my lap while I read a book.

## Example: Teachers Participate in Playful Learning

**Teacher:** Conor wanted to fill a wheelbarrow with snow. I wondered how many scoops of snow would fill the wheelbarrow. He said it should be 20. I asked who should be the scooper and who should be the counter. Conor let me know that I should scoop and he would count. When we got to 10, I asked how many more scoops we needed. “Ten more. It needs 20,” he replied. “Keep scooping.” Conor counted 20 scoops and said, “It’s ready!” I said, “What’s the next step?” “Decorations, we’re making a snow cake,” he replied.

## Example: Math Through Playful Learning

**Teacher:** Rob said he was “marinating” something with modeling clay. I asked him how long it took to marinate, and he said five minutes. He asked me to start a timer for five minutes. After about two minutes, he came back to check. We looked at the timer and I said, “If we set it for five minutes and two minutes are gone, I wonder how many minutes are left?” He held out five fingers and we took two away. “Three!” We both observed the timer together as the time got smaller and smaller. He was so fascinated with watching the numbers change from 3,2,1, and then a number disappeared when it got into the seconds. We talked about how a minute has 60 seconds, and now the seconds were counting down. I let him know that when the timer gets down to zero it will make a sound to let him know that the marinade is ready.

## Example: Addressing Painful Experiences Through Fantasy Play

**Teacher:** When some of the children were trying to get me to go to jail, I wasn't sure what upsetting experience lay behind this game so, while staying in character, I made an open-ended remark, saying, "It's not fun to be locked up. I want to be with you. I don't want to be by myself. What did I do that was bad?" One of the children said, "You were rude and talked back." I asked if the boys ever talked in ways adults didn't like and if so, what happened. The children immediately said they were given time-outs at home, and that they hated being sent to their rooms. I said, "It sounds like when you get a time-out it feels like being put in jail." Both children agreed. I said, "We don't do that here and maybe we could talk to your parents about not doing it at home. Would you like that?" One child said, "Yes." The other, "No."