



# Visual Support Guide: Dragon Brain

## What?

The “dragon brain” visual support illustrates a story to help teach children how to regulate their emotions when they are upset. Dragon brain refers to a brain that seems to shrink to the size of a dragon’s small brain when we get angry. The story is about a child who gets angry when another child tries to take away a toy and what the child does to calm down. The visual includes two different children that can be used based on which one the child who is being supported identifies with most.

## Why?

- Use a dragon brain visual to help children learn strategies such as taking slow deep breaths and pretending to smell a flower or blow out a candle to regulate their emotions.
- Use the visual in different ways.
  - Teach children ways to calm down when they are upset.
  - Help a child who needs extra support in regulating their emotions in a challenging situation.

## How?

- Make a dragon brain visual support.
  - Print each version and laminate. Translate the behaviors into all the languages spoken by the children in your learning environment or make separate versions for each language.
  - Keep the visuals in a safe place that children can easily access when needed.
- Use a dragon brain visual support.
  - Read the Dragon Brian story aloud during large or small group time or to an individual child.
  - Engage children in discussion about angry feelings. Talk about how sometimes when we get angry, we feel like a dragon with a tiny brain. When this happens, we can only think about one thing: being angry. Ask children to share examples of times they’ve been angry.
  - Explain that the strategies can help children get rid of dragon brain and get back to feeling like themselves again.
    - Point to each picture as you tell the story.
    - Invite children to talk about situations that make them angry and what they do to help them calm down.
  - Describe the breathing strategies, model the behaviors, and have children practice it.

- When a child gets angry, support them to use the breathing strategies from the dragon brain story. Provide intentional positive feedback when you notice a child using the strategies and regulating their emotions.

# Dragon Brain – Child 1

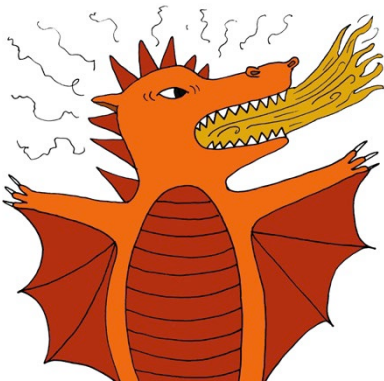
**Situation Makes Child Angry**



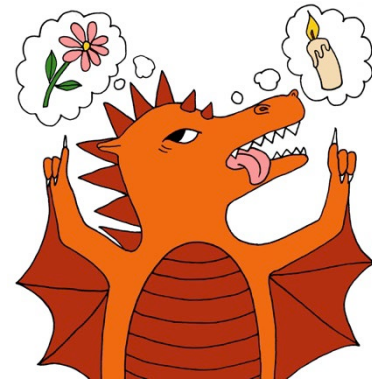
**Child Gets Angry**



**Child Gets Dragon Brain**



**Child Remembers  
“Flower and Candle” Breathing**



**Child Smells Flower**

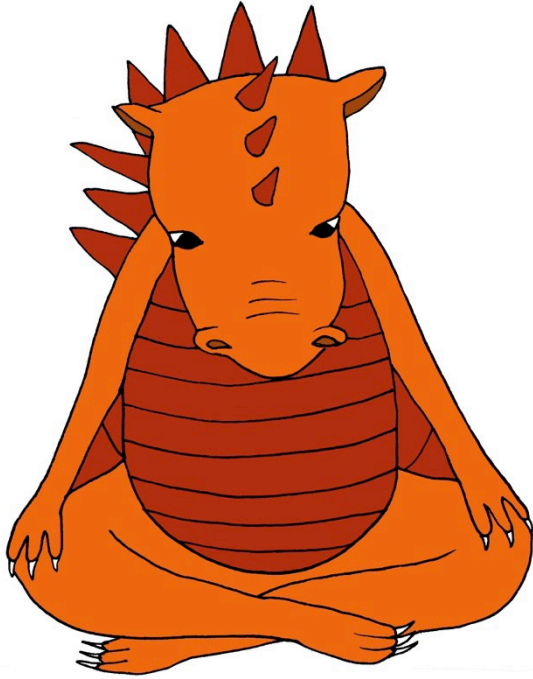


**Child Blows Out Candle**



# Dragon Brain – Child 1

**Child Calms Down**



**Child Is Calm and Ready to Play**

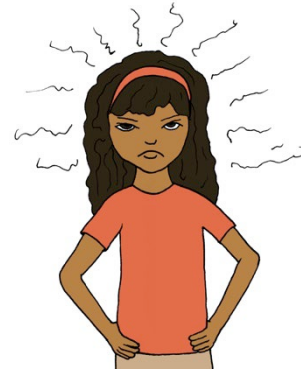


# Dragon Brain – Child 2

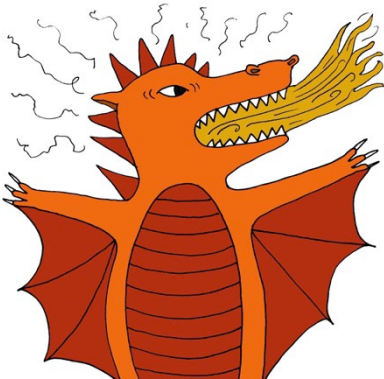
**Situation Makes Child Angry**



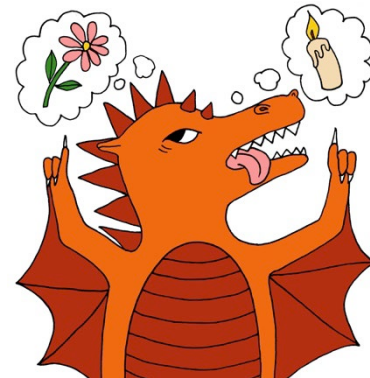
**Child Gets Angry**



**Child Gets Dragon Brain**



**Child Remembers  
“Flower and Candle” Breathing**



**Child Smells Flower**

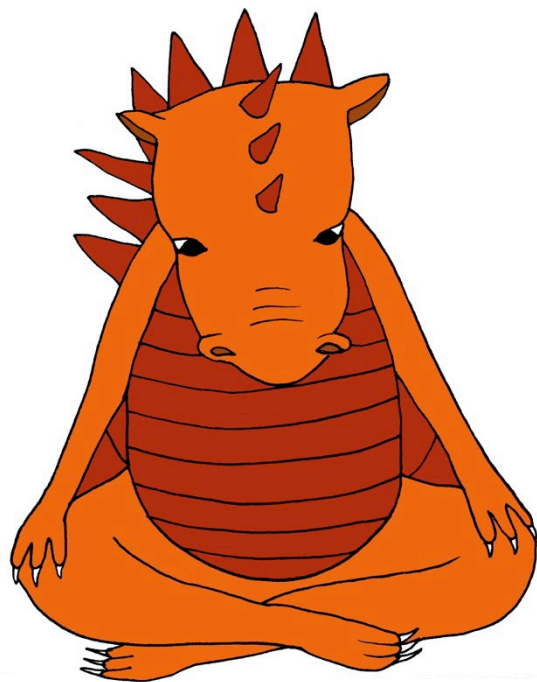


**Child Blows Out Candle**



# Dragon Brain – Child 2

**Child Calms Down**



**Child Is Calm and Ready to Play**

