

Adult Recess Activities for Self-regulation

Julia Sayles: Hi, everyone. Thank you for joining today. This is a topic that is near and dear to my heart. I'm excited that we have such a great group who has joined us here. My name is Julia Sayles. I provide training and technical assistance for the National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety.

I'm also an assistant professor at Georgetown University. I started off my career in early childhood as a clinician. I've been a mental health consultant in Head Start for many years. Shout out to my Region I friends.

Play has always been a vehicle that has been really important in my professional and personal life. I'm really excited that we're going to have the opportunity to not only talk about adult regulation today and how we can strengthen that through play, but we're going to have the chance to have a collective play experience together.

Today we're going to be talking a lot about the connection between adult well - being, adult regulation, and the regulation of young children, and the well - being of young children. We know that these two pieces are deeply connected. We have to start with regulated and well adults if we want the children that we are working with and their families to be regulated and well.

We're going to talk about that as a starting point. We're then going to really be thinking about play as our vehicle to really strengthen and support self - regulation skills for adults, and then think about how we can include children in that as well.

Then last but not least, I hope everyone is ready to have some fun this afternoon. We are going to go ahead and share some brand - new resources that are currently on the ECLKC. They are Adult Recess videos, and we're going to have a chance to play together. we're going to be able to think about our own bodies, our own well - being, and hopefully have some joy and a good collective experience with this great group across the country and beyond.

I want to start with this quote. "We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing." I want us just to think for a second about our childhood. Think about what play has meant for you. Think about what your favorite games were to play. Did you play by yourself? Did you play in a group?

If you feel comfortable, please share in the chat. What were some of your favorite ways to play as a child? Then I also want you to think about where you are in this time and space. Do you play as an adult? Do you wish you played more as an adult? How do you play on the day to day?

You all are great. I see the chat really going. I'm seeing chutes and ladders. I'm seeing hopscotch, freeze tag, outside, Double Dutch, hide and seek, mud pies, playing catch, jump

rope, just playing outside with friends, volleyball, table tennis, trampoline. Simon says “Green Light, Red Light.” I can't even read the chat. It's moving fast.

I love that people are thinking about how they played. Easy - bake oven. That's fun. What they did. Climbing, using my imagination, badminton, horseback riding, Red Rover Red Rover, reading books up in trees, board games, painting, bike riding, kickball.

This list is going on and on. I think that that really speaks to the power of play and many of those memories that are elicited in us and thinking back about how we like to play. I'm glad we're starting here. I want us to all channel our inner child.

If you haven't played in a while, I want us to be brave today and try out playing as we watch these resources in a few minutes. I'm seeing people are saying now, as an adult, I don't play as much. I miss play. Today is a really great opportunity for us to get that excitement, to get that feeling back.

As we're thinking about the power of play to support adult regulation, we're really thinking about the why behind that. We know that there's two main reasons we really want to be thinking about adult regulation as it relates to our work in Head Start or with young children.

The first is we, as adults, deserve to feel good. We deserve to feel good and show up to our job and feel well and feel like we have the capacity to do the best job that we can. We want to feel joyful in our work. We want to feel present and grounded in our work.

We want to make sure that we're able to show up and care for and teach and love and nurture all of our Head Start children, families, all of our colleagues. We know that that's at the heart of Head Start programs.

We also know that as we think about supporting regulation for young children, and as we hope to lay a really solid foundation for young children in developing their own self - regulation skills, we have to start with regulated adults.

Our infants, our toddlers, our preschoolers, they are relying on adults who are safe, who are nurturing, who are responsive, who are regulated. When our children hit a hard feeling or a hard moment, or they're having a behavior that might be challenging to adults, they really need that adult to show up.

They need to be able to inhale that adult's calm if we need to calm their system down, or they need to rely on that adult to give them a little energy boost if we need to wake that system up. But those two things are deeply linked. We have to start with the adults. We have to start with regulated adults, if we want children who have really great regulation skills.

Next slide. Let's talk a little bit about how regulation is built. Regulation is built like a ladder. We all come into this world with autoregulation. As you think about babies, as you think about those very first moments in life, we think about autoregulation as those things that our body just independently does.

Things like breathing, our heart rate. We think about the sucking reflex, is one of the very first ways that babies are able to soothe themselves or to calm themselves. We might see some of this in adults, too.

Anyone a foot tapper out there? If you get a little nervous or you find yourself just tapping your foot or bouncing your knee or clicking a pen, sometimes we don't even realize we're doing that. It's just an automatic response that helps us to regulate our nervous system. That helps us in those moments of stress to feel a little calmer. That's auto - regulation.

I'm seeing some rocking; I'm seeing twirling hair. You can think about what are those auto - regulatory things that you might do in moments when you notice that your body is under a little bit more stress?

We really want to hone in and focus on co - regulation. After co - regulation comes sorry, after autoregulation comes co - regulation. This is where we're really thinking about using those safe, nurturing relationships of adults to really either stimulate or calm that system.

If a child is having a really hard time or that baby's crying, we're doing all that good stuff. We're rocking them, we're shush, shush, shush. We're in rhythm. We're soothing them. We might be patting their back or bouncing them on our knee.

We might be jumping up and down with a child holding their hands. We can think about the things we do to soothe and calm the system, as well as the things that we do to wake up the system or to energize the system a little bit. But the importance of co - regulation is it's done in relationships, and it's done in a relationship that feels good. It feels safe, it feels nurturing, it feels loving and warm.

I think the thing about co - regulation that is important for us as adults to remember is we need it sometimes, too. I want you to think for a second about if you have a bad day, if you need to vent, who is that person that you go to?

Who is the person that you call up, or you say, ugh, I just need to let this thing happened today. What is their response? Why does it make you feel safe to share? What do they do that makes you feel seen or heard or just soothed?

We think much about the importance of co - regulation for our infants and our toddlers and our preschoolers, but it's really important to hold and remember that we need co - regulation as adults. The families that we're supporting need co - regulation at times. Our co - teachers and staff at Head Start need co - regulation at times. We're going to hold that theme as we talk today.

We can't get to good self - regulation skills without co - regulation. If we don't have enough co - regulation, and this is true for young children, but it's true for adults, too. If we don't have enough of that good co - regulation, we're not going to have effective self - regulation skills.

We know that as we're thinking about supporting all of our young children out there, as we think about supporting their families, regulation skills are such a core tenant of what we know young kids need not only to promote their mental health, to promote their pre - academics, to promote their school readiness, and overall, just to feel healthy and safe. We know regulation is such an important part of that.

I love people in the chat are sharing who their people are. I think that's amazing, and it speaks to the power of relationships. We're going to hold that with us as we go. We can go to the next slide. We can think about regulation like a house.

As we think about this, we can talk about our zone of tolerance. what our zone of tolerance is in this house is it's sort of those two floors of living space. It's that idea of that moment that we're in, that space that we're in, where we can hit a stressful moment.

We can hit a hard feeling, we can hit something that's frustrating, and we start to feel it in our body, or we notice like, "Oh, this is hard right now." But we're able to stay regulated. We're able to use our skills. We're able to ask for help. We're able to talk about it. We're able to identify the feeling. We're able to control our bodies. We're able to control our impulses and our behaviors and our thoughts.

We think about those moments in terms of regulation of being in that zone of tolerance. We hit that hard moment, we hit that moment of stress, but we're able to use our thinking brain. We're able to stay regulated.

What happens if we become dysregulated? When we become dysregulated, I always like to say we either fly through the roof or we fall through the basement. If we fly through the roof and we think about fight, flight, or freeze, flying through the roof or hyperarousal is really that fight and flight.

Oftentimes, these are those external behaviors that we see. It might be crying. It might be using a loud voice. It might be literally leaving the space, that flight. Like, I have to get out of here. Let me get out of this room. Let me get out of this space.

For adults, this might be if you tend to be the person who is waving your hands in the air when you get animated and you're frustrated or your voice starts to get a little louder, that's all in our hyperarousal. We're becoming dysregulated, we hit that hard feeling, we're not able to stay in our window of tolerance or our zone of tolerance. We fly through the roof, and we start to not be able to use those good skills.

On the flip side of that, we have the hypo - arousal. And this is really where we think about the freeze. This is also dysregulated. Generally, when people are hypo - aroused, they're the withdrawn people.

They're the people who are going into themselves. They're quiet. They might look kind of blank in the face or zoned out. They're not really engaging with other people or the materials at hand.

They're just as dysregulated as that person who's flying through the roof, but sometimes when we fall through the basement or we're hypo - aroused, it's harder to tell because it's not as externalized.

You can think for a minute about, for yourself, when you start to leave that zone of tolerance, that comfort zone, when you notice, "Ooh, I'm not using all my skills in this moment. It's a really hard moment." Are you more of a fly through the roof person, or are you more of a fall through the basement person?

Feel free to share it if you want, but you don't have to. The reason we're talking about this, and the reason it's important is because as we think about improving our regulation skills or practicing our self - regulation skills, what we really want to be doing is really stretching that window of tolerance.

When we practice our regulation, we can do that. We can start to make that window of tolerance bigger and bigger that when we do hit those hard moments, when we are under stress, we're better able to control our impulses, to control our feelings, to control our actions and our words. All of these things that we know are important, especially as we think about our roles in the early childhood programs and systems that we all work in.

I'm seeing a lot of people say both. Maybe sometimes, depending on the situation, you're up, sometimes, depending on the situation, you're down. That's totally normal, too. As we think about young children who don't have self - regulation just yet we can see when they're flying through the roof or when they're falling through the basement. It's an interesting way to be thinking about that parallel that's happening.

What's happening for me in this moment, what's happening for that child in this moment? When we're talking about a regulated nervous system, we aren't saying that the nervous system is always calm. If the nervous system is always calm, that person is probably pretty down in the basement. They're probably pretty shut down.

They're not having or thinking about how they're using those strategies when they hit those moments of stress, they're probably just not very engaged with what's going on in their environment or what's going on within those relationships.

We also, as we talk about a regulated nervous system, don't want a lot of high highs and low lows. That doesn't feel good either. We're constantly cycling flying through the roof, falling through the basement, flying through the roof, falling through the basement.

We don't land in that good window of tolerance where we're able to build up and practice those regulation skills that we know are important for our relationships, for our interactions, and for us to feel well showing up in the different capacities that we all have.

What we really want to think about as a regulated nervous system is we have the capacity. We have that window of tolerance to move in and out of those stressful situations, and we're able to stay in that comfort zone.

We're able to stay in that window where we can use our strategies, we can use our skills, we're able to maintain that control, we have that connection between our body and our thoughts and our emotions. That's really what we're talking about as we think about a regulated nervous system. We can go to the next slide.

We know there's many benefits for adults as we think about regulation. On the emotional side of the house, we know that when adults have good regulation skills, it shows up in their relationships. Often, they're able to make deeper connections. They're able to think about their feelings, their own experience, and they're able to hold someone else's feelings and experience, too.

They're able to have that empathy in situations to say, "This is my experience, and I'm curious, or I'm thinking this might be this person's experience." When we have that idea of being able to hold another person's experience, we really get into that relational attunement. We're able to be with that person in a deeper way, and the connection feels good.

We also know that when we have good emotional regulation skills, it often decreases our stress levels. We're able to utilize those strategies in order to use relationships to help buffer stressors, to use other skills that help to decrease stress levels. This improves our mental health overall.

We want to think about having that really healthy, good mental health. We also know that when adults have good self - regulation skills, they're better able to manage their emotions, they're better able to control their behaviors and their impulses, they're better able to manage their stress levels and deal with conflict.

As we think about your role within Head Start or working with young children, we know that these things are important. They're important for relationships. They're important in order to keep everyone safe. They're important to be able to deliver those messages that we want to make sure that our young children and our families are getting, our colleagues are getting. It's really at the core of what we're thinking about in early childhood.

We also know that when adults have good self - regulation, that they have decreased risk for depression and anxiety. It's a protective factor. Again, this all leads to healthy mental health or increases in mental health. We can go to the next slide.

Regulated adults this is our big takeaway message. Regulated adults are better able to meet the social and emotional needs of the children they care for. We start with the regulated adult that eventually we can have children who are able to self - regulate their emotions, their behaviors, their impulses. But we need to start with adults.

We know that there's a lot of stressors out there right now. I hear it on the day to day. We hear it nationwide. There's a lot that's going on. Our hope is to really be thinking about play as a fun vehicle and a fun way for adults to start to practice their regulation skills. We can go to the next slide.

Many of you have probably seen this quote, too, but I love it. We talk about this quote in the importance of play for children, but I think it's just as important as we talk about play for adults. "Scientists have discovered that it takes approximately 400 repetitions to create a new synapse in the brain, unless it's done with play, in which case it takes only 10 to 20 repetitions."

Play is powerful. Play is often our first language. We start playing from infancy before we have communication skills before we have verbal communication skills. Play is such an integral part of us learning and developing, and that doesn't need to stop in adulthood. We can go to the next slide.

We know there's a ton of benefits. There's research out there that shows the benefits of adult play. It's a huge stress reliever. It can help us with our creativity and our brain function. It's a buffer to stress because it often times is done in a collective group. We're playing with others. That increases our relationships and our connections.

It can help with loneliness and isolation. It can promote emotional healing. We're going to talk more about that in just a second. It's a great way for us to continue to practice and refine our social skills. As we're playing collaboratively, oftentimes we are using communication skills. We are thinking about friendship skills. We're thinking about problem solving skills. We're thinking about negotiation.

There's all these things that go into play, and yet when we're doing it in the moment, often we get these great feelings of joy and excitement, and it can bring us back to sort of those childhood games you all were sharing. Yet it's still such an important piece of being able to have really big benefits, like practicing the social skills, deepening relationships, relieving stress. We can go to the next slide.

Play is also a really important vehicle to support healing. We have listed on this slide the six R's from Dr. Bruce Perry. Here, he talks about these six R's as a way of supporting the capacity to heal from hurts or harms that may have happened in relationships.

Play offers a really natural opportunity to incorporate more rhythmicity across our day. Oftentimes in play, we have a serve and return response. We have a back and forth. There's some type of rhythm to it. Whether it's taking turns playing a board game, whether it's dribbling a basketball, whether it's running up to kick a kickball, rhythm is incorporated into that.

We know that relationships are central to play. Oftentimes, we are playing with others. We're connecting with others around common ways we might like to play. That's huge as we think about the capacity to heal from hurts or harms.

We think about repetition. Oftentimes, there's that rhythmicity, and there's the repetition. We're doing something over and over again. That feels good for our brain. That helps to build those neurosynaptic connections.

We think about the relevance. We think about we're all here for a common reason. We're doing something collectively. It feels joyful. It feels fun. There's some type of reward to it. We end up laughing, or we end up being silly together. Or we might be a little unsure, and then we try it out, and we say, "This is amazing. It feels good." The energy has shifted. Our body might have shifted. Our mood might have shifted.

Then last but not least, we really think about the importance of respect. We think about the importance of honoring cultures. We think about the importance of honoring histories. We think about the importance of community. We think about the importance of identity. All of these things are key elements for supporting healing. We can go to the next slide.

As you get prepared to have your own adult recess, because like I said, we are going to have a collective play experience here in just a minute and be able to highlight and showcase some of the amazing adult recess videos that we have created. I want to make sure that everyone is aware of our eight areas of well - being.

We talk about these different spaces where well - being can be highlighted or can be seen. I want you all to take a second and look at these eight domains and think about my wellness strategies or my well - being practices, where do they tend to fall?

Then I want you to think, as we're playing here in a minute, did you highlight some new wellness strategies? Did you notice anything different? We're going to go ahead and play here.

The way these videos work they are videos we are going to be watching them in Spanish. Sorry, in English. They are all available in Spanish on the ECLKC. You have them both ways. These videos, we're just going to follow along. We're going to do what the video says.

They start with a warm up. Every video has some type of warm up. It has the game, and then it has some type of reflection or cool down at the end. Before we watch this first video, I want everyone to check in with themselves.

Notice how your body is feeling. Notice how your mind is feeling, how your emotions are feeling. Notice what thoughts are happening for you right now. We're going to check in on these same questions after we finish playing.

We're going to go ahead and watch our first video. Everyone, be brave. I know you might be in your office, you might be somewhere, but I really encourage you to play along. Do the stretches, do the games, move your body a little bit. We're all going to be doing it together, even if we can't see each other.

[Video begins]

Narrator: Welcome to Adult Recess. Our bodies and our brains are connected. Moving our bodies in a mindful way helps stimulate our brains and regulate our emotions, and engaging in play is healthy for us at any age.

Let's start with a little stretch to wake us up. You can do this seated or standing. Either way, make sure you can move your arms in a circle around you without bumping into anything. First up, a wrist circles. Make a gentle fist with each hand and rotate your hands in a small circle at your wrists.

Choose a direction and start making circles. Your palms are pointed at the ground. Your elbows are relaxed. Nice. Now reverse directions and make circles the other way. Again, your elbows are relaxed. Good.

Next up are ankle circles. You can sit for this one or balance on one foot. Did you know if you press your tongue to the roof of your mouth, you can hold your balance better. OK. Point your toe and rotate one direction. Now rotate in the other direction, and switch legs. Rotate in one direction, and now rotate in the other direction. Nice.

Now we'll make some head circles. Try to imagine the point where your skull connects to your spine. Make small circles on top of that point. Now reverse directions. Again, these are small circles with your head.

Last set of circles, hands on your hips. Now, try to rotate your hips forward, to the side, to the back, to the other side, and back to the front. Try it again a little smoother. Good. Keep going for 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.

Now reverse direction and rotate those hips again. Try for a smooth rotation with the same distance in each direction and stop. Nice work. Today's game is called night at the museum. Imagine what it would be like if all the statues in a museum had a secret dance party every night when no one was looking. Of course, they have to freeze again each time the security guard opened the door to the room.

[Door creek]

[Tink]

[Door creek]

You'll be the statues, I'll be the security guard. Now, when you hear the music, each of you should go ahead and dance in any style you want. The bigger the movements, the better. When I open the door,

[Door creek]

The music will stop, and you will each freeze where you are in whatever position you were in. OK, here we go. Get ready to dance.

[Music playing]

What's going on in there?

[Door creek]

Hmm, I can swear I heard music in here.

[Door creek]

Nice job freezing when the security guard came in. Try even bigger dance moves.

[Music playing]

[Door creek]

Aha, I caught you. Hmm, that's weird. Just statues.

[Door creek]

[Music playing]

[Door creek]

Hello.

[Door creek]

[Music playing]

[Door creek]

I must be hearing things.

[Music playing]

[Door creek]

Nice work! You can relax now. Aha, I knew it. The statues were moving. Just kidding. Now grab a seat or lay down on the floor. It's time for reflection. Gently close your eyes and take three deep breaths.

[Soft music]

Nice. Play is really important at all points in our lives. I want you to think back to the games you played as a child. Is there one that you really loved? Think about a time when you played that game. What were the sounds around you? What were the smells? Is there a moment that stands out to you?

Let's take three more deep breaths. Nice work playing. Have a great day.

[Video ends]

Julia: That was our first game. Feel free to pop in the chat how you felt about that. Did you play along? This second game is called up, down, stop, go. It is my personal favorite game in terms of the Adult Recess videos that we've made. I definitely encourage everyone to play along. Here we go. We're going to jump right into it.

[Video begins]

Narrator: Welcome to Adult Recess. Our bodies and our brains are connected. Moving our bodies in a mindful way helps stimulate our brains and regulate our emotions. And engaging in play is healthy for us at any age.

Let's start with a little stretch to wake us up. You can do this seated or standing. Either way, make sure you can move your arms in a circle around you without bumping into anything. OK. Reach your arms way up over your head into the sky.

Now, try to reach one hand even higher into the air. Do you feel that in your rib cage? Now reach your other hand higher. Switch back and forth a couple of times. Good. Now put one hand at your side and your other hand up over your head and lean across so you bend to the side.

Once you're bent to the side, reach with those fingers to stretch a little bit more. Now switch hands and bend to the other side. Slide your free hand down your leg. Try wiggling your fingers and stretching just a little more.

Good. Now put both hands on your knees. Gently bend over and slide your hands down the front of your legs. When you feel like you can't bend any further, just hold there. Take three deep breaths. Really breathe into your lower back or wherever you feel tight.

Good. Now use your hands to help you straighten back up. Nice work. Today's game is called up, down, stop, go. The rules are pretty simple. When you hear me say up, you put your hands way up in the air. When you hear me say down, you put your hands on your knees. When you hear me say stop, you freeze in place. Extra points for making a silly freeze. And when you hear me say go, you run in place.

Let's make sure you've got the basics. Down. That's right, hands on knees. Up. Yep, hands in the air. Go. Running in place. Stop. Freeze where you are. Now we'll mix it up. Go. Stop. Up. Go. Down. Stop. Up. Go. Up. Down. Stop. Nice.

Now we're going to try to make it a little trickier. You're going to do the opposite of what I say. When I say up, you put your hands on your knees. When I say down, you put your hands in the air. When I say stop, you start running in place. When I say go, you freeze.

Ready? Stop. Go. Down. Up. Down. Stop. Up. Go. OK. A little faster. Stop. Up. Down. Go. Up. Stop. Down. Up. Up. Down. Go. Stop. Up. Go. Nicely done.

Time for reflection. Gently close your eyes and take three deep breaths.

[Soft music]

Nice. Think about this session far. How did you feel before we got started? How did your body feel? What were you thinking about? How did moving your body change things? What did you notice when you were stretching? What did you notice when we were playing the game? How might creating an opportunity for movement help the children in your life?

OK. Let's take three more deep breaths. Open your eyes when you're ready. Nice work playing. Have a great day.

[Video ends]

Julia: I love reading all of your comments in the chat. I love that people are saying that they're finding themselves laughing or being silly trying something new. That they're smiling a lot. That they feel it in their body. That they find these to be kind of calming.

Or in this last game, the opposites are challenging when we talk about really that cognitive flexibility, which is important for executive functioning. That's what we're practicing in that game. We're asking our brain to do different things. When we talk about lifting that brain fog or increasing cognitive flexibility or thinking about creativity, that's what we get to practice, but we're doing it in a fun way.

I love it. Keep it coming in the chat. Be thinking about how you might use these videos in your role. We're going to go ahead and watch one last video and then open it up where you can share.

[Video begins]

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Now try to reach one hand even higher into the air. Do you feel that in your rib cage? Now reach your other hand higher. Switch back and forth a couple of times. Good. Now put one hand at your side and your other hand up over your head and lean across you bend to the side. Once you're bent to the side, reach with those fingers to stretch a little bit more.

Now switch hands and bend to the other side. Slide your free hand down your leg. Try wiggling your fingers and stretching just a little more. Good. Now put both hands on your knees. Gently bend over and slide your hands down the front of your legs.

When you feel like you can't bend any further, just hold there. Take three deep breaths. Really breathe into your lower back or wherever you feel tight. Good. Now use your hands to help you straighten back up. Nice work.

Today's game is called up, down, stop, go. The rules are pretty simple. When you hear me say up, you put your hands way up in the air. When you hear me say down, you put your hands on your knees. When you hear me say stop, you freeze in place. Extra points for making a silly freeze. When you hear me say go, you run in place.

Let's make sure you've got the basics. Down.

[Video ends]

Julia: Sorry about that, everyone. We have some people in the chat like, I think this is the same thing. That was a repeat of the last video. We'll see if we can get our third video to you, which is called a walk in the woods.

If we're having technical difficulties for any reason, Olivia has put the link into the chat, and I'm sure she can do it again for where you can find these videos on the ECLKC, but let's see if we can get the walk in the woods going. I'm glad everyone's listening and paying attention. You all are on it.

[Video begins]

Narrator: Welcome to Adult Recess. Our bodies and our brains are connected. Moving our bodies in a mindful way helps stimulate our brains and regulate our emotions. Engaging in play is healthy for us at any age.

Let's start with a little stretch to wake us up. You can do this seated or standing. Either way, make sure you can move your arms in a circle around you without bumping into anything. Today's stretch is all about rotation. Choose a direction and gently turn your head to look to the side. Only go as far as feels comfortable.

Now slowly turn your head and look to the other side. Now slowly turn back to the first side. This time, when you look to the side, push the opposite hand forward in the air in front of you. Your torso will twist. Now you're looking more behind you.

Try the other side. Turn your head gently and look to the side. Push the opposite hand forward in front of you. Nice. Just one more time. Turn to the first side. Opposite hand comes up. Now, reach behind you with your other arm and gently hold that stretch. Both arms are pointed out. One in front, and one behind.

Let your arms relax. Now turn to the second side. Opposite hand comes up. Now reach behind you with your other arm and gently hold that stretch. Both arms are outstretched. Relax. Nice. We're ready to play.

Today's game is called a walk in the woods. In our warm up, we did some looking around. Slowly start walking in place and look from side to side. Rather than whatever room you see, let's imagine we are on the edge of a forest and are walking on a path into the woods. You're just walking in place.

The air is cool, and the light is filtering through the leaves onto the path around us. We're walking along, listening to the birds and the rustle of small animals in the underbrush. Whoops! A stream is coming up. It's deep and looks chilly. We'll need to hop across some stones to get to the other side.

Still in place, we need to hop to one foot, then hop to the other foot. Three more rocks. Hop, hop, hop. We're walking in place normally. Oh, dear! A tree trunk is blocking the path. We need to lift one leg to climb over it. Now the other. We're walking again.

Oh, Oh! Stop.

[Roar]

Do you hear that? I think there's something up ahead. Oh, dear! It's a bear.

[Roar]

Let's turn back. OK, we are not going to panic. We are just going to walk quickly in place. We're at the tree trunk. Let's climb over. Up one leg. The other leg. Good. Walking quickly. Actually, let's walk really quickly.

Here's the stream. We'll hop to each stone. Ready? Hop, hop, hop. And two more. Hop, hop. Oh, dear! I hear the bear splashing behind us. Let's really walk quickly. Yikes, that bear is really close. OK. Freeze. Let's hide.

[Roar]

Everyone, pretend you have your back to a tree. Good. Breathe quietly. Slowly take a peek to one side. No bear. Now take a peek to the other side. No bear. OK, we're safe. Good job.

Now grab a seat or lay down on the floor. Time for reflection. Gently close your eyes and take three deep breaths.

[Soft music]

Nice. Imagination is a really powerful tool. Think back to when you were a child. Remember a time when you used your imagination to create a whole world around you while you were playing.

As you go through your day to day, see if there's a moment when you can help someone in your life could be a child, could be an adult to use their imagination. OK. Let's take three more deep breaths. And open your eyes. Nice work playing. Have a great day.

[Video ends]

Julia: Thank you all for playing along and getting to see some of these exciting new resources. I already see people in the chat saying that they're excited to bring these back to their programs or to use them in various ways, whether it's with adults at the start of staff meetings or leadership meetings or thinking about kids.

Love these videos, too. I have a 4 - year - old. He and I do them often because he asks to do them. This is another great thing you can incorporate for thinking about including play in classrooms or within your programs, within your family child cares.

I would love people just to be able to share a little bit. How is your body feeling right now? How is your mood? How's your energy level? How do you feel after spending about 20 minutes playing? If people have, I love it. People are saying, I feel tired. I feel great, I feel uplifted. I feel much better and happier. I feel relaxed. I feel upbeat. I feel not tense. I feel energized and refocused. I feel happy.

All of these are such great ways to feel. It's bringing the joy back into work. It's really thinking about doing something that's fun, that's relational. It's a collective experience. Like we said in the beginning, it's an opportunity to really practice many different skills, especially those self-regulation skills.

I would love too to hear if anyone has ideas that you'd like to share out on how you might use these videos that you bring back to your programs or you bring back within your role. I know some people shared that they're already using them and that they've been going over well. I see team meetings. I think that's great. Thinking about how we start a team meeting off with a little play.

I know there was a question in the Q&A asking about that, too. Like what types of play? I think sometimes when you start to build it into the culture or into your schedule or we're going to start every team meeting off with a little play opportunity or we're going to end it with a play opportunity, it gets people excited. And they might bring different ideas of how they want to play.

People might bring games that they played as children. They might bring games to the group that are rooted in their culture and in their own experience. I think it's an amazing way to be thinking about how we incorporate play and are inclusive of all the different ways that people love to play.

I love this. Brain breaks, icebreakers, during presentations as movement breaks. Yes, we love this. Thinking about for parents and families too. We know families need opportunities to practice their own regulation skills. Thinking about how we share this with families is amazing.

For wellness moments. People are bookmarking the page. Thinking about socialization groups and those parent events. I think that these are great ideas. I would say the most important thing we think about as we're incorporating more opportunities to play, it's like anything.

We want to make sure that they're built into our schedule, they're built into our daily routine, and that we're not just doing them once in a while, but that we are really thinking about how are we doing this intentionally?

Think about the way you feel right now and how we can build that into our daily schedule, our daily routine, our daily practice. Recognize that it has immediate impacts not only for you as the adult, but for all the children and families and staff that you all care for.

I want to say thank you. I'm going to pass it over to Melissa to close us out. But thank you all for your participation and being here today. It was amazing, and I'm glad we all got to play together.

Melissa Lin: Thank you, Julia, and thank you, everyone, for participating and for your energy. I actually lost track of the time. When you said that, I was like, no, I think there's more. But I will be definitely doing these videos again.

Just near the end, we wanted to share a few resources. This was shared in the chat, but here is the QR code you can visit to get to the Adult Recess videos in English and Spanish. Then also, I believe this is the link to there was a visual of the eight dimensions of staff well - being that Julia shared earlier.

I'm just giving a moment, as I know that QR codes, it takes a while to scan. You can also get it through the handout which Olivia has shared throughout today's webinar. I think we have Julia - did you want to say anything to this?

Julia: I think we've covered this key takeaway. It's right here for everyone. Just that play is a powerful strategy to really promote regulation, to promote relationships, to promote health and mental health.

Melissa: Wonderful Thank you for your questions and thank you to Julia for answering in the chat and in the question answer box. As always, we ask well, first, we thank Julia again for sharing all of this important information with our national webinar audience and for introducing the videos to our audience today.

If you have any more questions, please go to MyPeers or write to health@ecetta.info. Right now, you'll see an evaluation link in the chat, or you can scan the QR code. Please complete this evaluation. Then after you complete it, you'll get a link to download your certificate.

As always, this evaluation survey is anonymous. We read every piece of feedback to help us improve our future training and technical assistance offerings. We thank you again for choosing to spend a part of your day with us and playing with us.

You can subscribe to our monthly list of resources at this URL. We encourage you to stay connected with us on social media and MyPeers, where you can continue the conversations with your colleagues across the country.

Again, if you have any more questions after today's webinar, you can always email us at health@ecetta.info. you can find today's resources and more in the health section of the ECLKC.

Julia: Melissa, we had one question asking if we could go back to the QR codes quickly.

Melissa: I think this was it. As a heads up, after the Zoom closes, you'll be led to the evaluation link. No worries. If you happen to miss it right now, you'll get it again when you close the Zoom. We'll also send an email within the next day or, where you'll be able to fill out your evaluation and get the certificate.

Thank you again, everyone, and have a great rest of your day.

Julia: Bye.