



Fast and Slow, Then Stop



Here's a way to use music and movement to help children practice slowing down and controlling their actions. Before children can think clearly enough to deal constructively with their angry feelings, they need self-control in order to slow down and calm down.

Children are working on:

- Developing self-control
- Listening carefully

Materials:

- Tape recorder, record player, CD player or radio
- Music – some fast, some slow

Directions:

Talk with the children about self-control. Ask the children to talk about times when they have to use self-control, such as when they have to

- Stop playing when it's clean up time
- Share even when they don't want to
- Walk quietly in the halls
- Wait in line

Then give the children a chance to practice self-control. Play samples of several fast and slow songs, and let the children move to the music. Once the children have felt the difference between "fast" and "slow," play this "freeze" game.

Have the children stop and "freeze" whenever the music stops. First play the slow music, and ask the children to stop. Then play fast music, and let the children see how hard it can be to stop when you're doing something fast. After playing several rounds of the game, end with some slow music, so the children can calm down and get ready to transition to a new activity.

If there's no music available you can practice self-control with a simple clapping game asking the children to clap or roll their hands, slowly, then even more slowly, then quickly, then even more quickly.

Books:

I Was So Mad by Mercer Mayer

When Sophie Gets Really Really Angry by Molly Bang

Sometimes I Feel All Bombaloo by Rachel Vail

The Chocolate Covered Cookie Tantrum by Deborah Blumenthal

Related to Episode 104/Strategy Song:

When you feel so mad that you want to roar,

Take a deep breath and count to four... 1,2,3,4.

