



# Building Foundations for Success: Self-Management

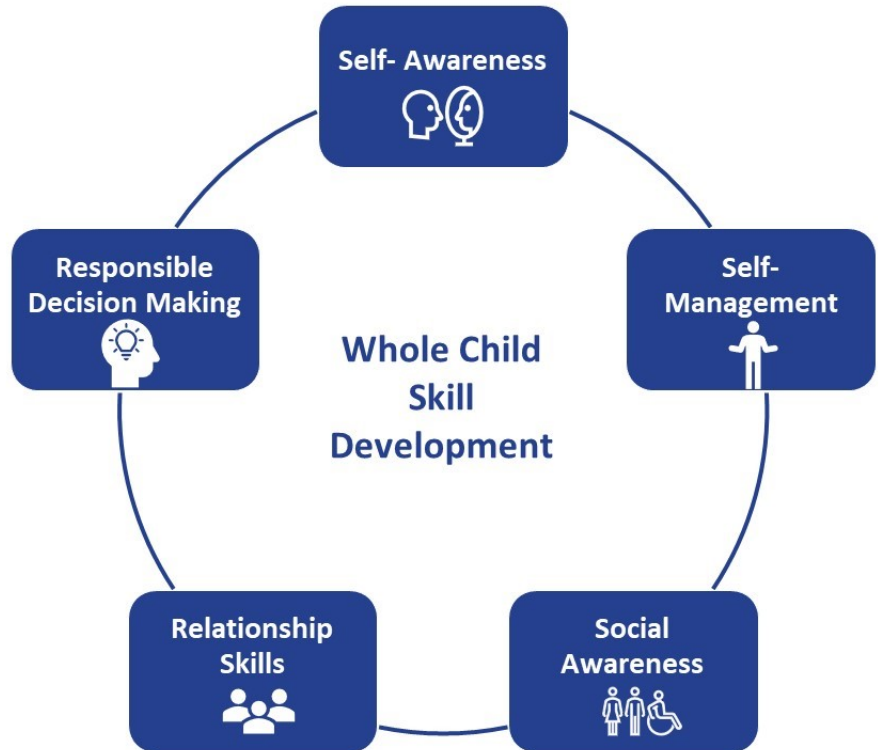
*Whole Child Skill Development*

## Self-Management:

Self-management is the ability to manage one's own feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in a way that allows for greater achievement of personal and collective goals. This includes the ability to manage stress and practice delayed gratification.

Self-management skills include the ability to:

- Control impulses
- Practice self-discipline
- Set goals
- Display organizational skills



## Benefits of building self-management skills:

- Students and adults with self-management skills are able to plan, manage, and carry out the steps necessary to achieve short-term and long-term academic, career, and personal goals.<sup>1</sup> This means students and adults are more successful academically and occupationally.<sup>1</sup>
- Building self-management skills helps students and adults better manage stress and difficult emotions which leads to better mental health and a reduction in aggressive and harmful behaviors that may lead to violence and/or self harm.<sup>2</sup>
- Students and adults with self-management skills display better impulse control and stress management, making them better able to learn, participate, and work productively with others both in the school and in the work place.<sup>1</sup> In the classroom, this may result in fewer disruptive behaviors.
- Building self-management skills assists students and adults in better time and resource management, resulting in an increase in course completion and better financial management as youth and adults.<sup>1</sup>

**Whole Child Skill Development** : Developing whole child skills, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and the ability to make responsible decisions, are essential to student success inside and outside of the classroom. For more information, check out the OPI's [Whole Child Supports](#) website and the [Montana Whole Child Skill Development Competencies](#).

## Classroom Strategies for Building Student Self-Management:

Educators are very likely already implementing strategies that build self-management skills in students. The strategies below are provided for consideration and were selected by a work-group of Montana educators and child development experts as strategies that are strength-based and correspond with the [Montana Whole Child Skill Development Competencies](#). We encourage all strategies to be selected based on ease of implementation into existing curriculum, school practices, and student and educator preference.

### Grade K-2:

- Post a [check-in chart](#) where students place their name or picture next to the feelings they are having to help students begin to communicate about their own emotions. Model strategies to manage difficult emotions (e.g. [positive self-talk](#), deep breathing).
- Use games such as Red-Light Green-Light, Freeze Frame, or Simon Says to demonstrate and reinforce self-control skills.

### Grade 3-5:

- Provide opportunities for students to practice calming techniques (e.g. [positive self-talk](#), deep breathing) to aid in self-regulation and manage difficult emotions. Encourage students to seek help managing emotions if needed.
- Have students compile lists of previous accomplishments and the steps they took to achieve them.

### Grade 6-8:

- Encourage students to practice calming techniques (e.g. [positive self-talk](#), deep breathing) to aid in self-regulation and manage difficult emotions. Encourage students to recognize when they need to use these strategies and to seek help managing emotions if self-regulation strategies do not suffice.
- Ask students to create a vision board using pictures or words that represent their goals. Use a progression visual (e.g. steps, ladder, etc.) to help students break down their goals into manageable steps.

### Grade 9-12:

- Support students in setting short and long-term life goals incorporating personal interests. Pair this activity with action planning, asking students to identify the steps necessary to achieve their goals.

## School-wide Strategies for Building Self-Management:

- Start each day with a morning greeting and activity to help students and staff transition into the school day.
- Create a calming space for students and school staff to access as needed to promote awareness of emotions and strategies to self-regulate during heightened emotional states; teach students and school staff how to effectively use this space.
- Take time to conduct school-wide education sessions about human emotions and how emotions affect the brain and behavior.

## Strategies for Building Self-Management in School Staff:

- Use professional development time to teach school staff [quick stress reducing strategies](#) that they can routinely use throughout a typical workday (i.e. [deep breathing](#), [positive imagery](#)). Reinforce the use of these strategies by practicing them during team meetings throughout the school year.
- Encourage and support school staff in [creating spaces and classrooms](#) that solicit positive feelings and reduce stress by adding personally meaningful décor, lighting, and music as appropriate.

Check out the [Montana Standards Association Framework](#) to learn more about Whole Child Skill Development Competencies and their alignment with other Montana academic standards.