

# Teaching Take 5!

## A Flexible Scope & Sequence

### Take 5! Scope & Sequence: A Flexible Approach to Social and Emotional Learning

Flexible thinking is an important self-reg capacity – one we hope to instill in the kids we work with. It stands to reason, then, that our approach to teaching social and emotional learning would also be flexible. For this reason, Take 5! offers a Scope & Sequence tool that builds in flexibility.

Often, SEL programs organize learning activities into structured units, topics, and lessons. And, in many contexts, that's a logical way to engage with the material. It's easy to take this approach with Take 5!

But social and emotional learning doesn't always fit neatly into a structured curriculum. In response, Take 5! also offers educators a flexible approach – ensuring the learning is adaptable to the child, the curriculum and the circumstances.

So, while Take 5! can certainly be organized as a step-by-step curriculum, it provides enough flexibility to respond to the unique needs and experiences of the kids in your care.

## 5 x 25 = Self-Reg Asset-Building

Take 5! learning and capacity-building objectives are organized in two ways:

### a) 5 Self-Reg Assets

There are five self-regulation capacities at the heart of the Take 5! approach:

1. BE HERE ... Mindful Awareness Assets
2. BE WITH ... Interpersonal Effectiveness Assets
3. BE CALM ... Emotion Regulation Assets
4. BE STRONG ... Resilience & Thriving Assets
5. BE CHANGE ... Connectedness & Contribution Assets

These five assets form the foundations of the Take 5! Framework.



## b) 25 Building Blocks

In addition, there are 25 building blocks that, individually and together, help to grow each of the above self-reg assets. Here's a short summary. And because self-reg strengths-training isn't just for kids, we'll use the language of personal and professional development.

### **BE HERE: Mindful Awareness Assets**

#### ***Being Present in ME Space***

##### **Building blocks that support mindful awareness include:**

- **Self-awareness:** Being aware of my own inner experiences ... my thoughts, feelings, attitudes, assumptions ... and how they're connected to my body and my actions.
- **Mindfulness:** Intentionally bringing more mindful awareness into my personal and professional life.
- **Felt-sensing:** Accessing the wisdom of the body, as well as the mind. For example, what's my "gut sense?"
- **In-Sight:** Self-knowing; seeing into my inner world, paying attention to my inner experiences; taking a perspective on myself.
- **Presence in Every Moment:** Being more fully present and accepting, in each and every moment. Even the difficult moments.

### **BE WITH: Interpersonal Effectiveness Assets**

#### ***Being Together in WE Space***

##### **Building blocks that support interpersonal awareness include:**

- **Other-Awareness:** Growing my awareness and ability to be present ... not only with myself but with others.
- **Perspective-taking:** Seeing any situation from more than one perspective ... not just my preferred perspective.
- **Mindsight:** Integrating insight & empathy; seeing my own inner workings *and* the inner experiences of others.
- **Boundary Awareness:** Setting healthy boundaries in my personal and professional life; respecting the boundaries that others set.
- **Mindful Togetherness:** Participating with others in ways that honor personal needs *and* the greater good.

## **BE CALM: Emotion Regulation Assets** *Senses in Sync*

### **Building blocks that support emotion regulation include:**

- **Sensing:** Fine-tuning my sensory awareness; paying attention to the messages my body is sending. Connecting the dots between what I feel in my body, my thoughts & emotions, and my actions in the world.
- **Conscious Breathing:** Becoming more aware and intentional with my breath. Using the breath as a tool to calm.
- **Becoming the Witness:** Standing back a little ... shifting my viewpoint. Often called “witness awareness” – taking a more distanced perspective on something that feels charged.
- **Living my Power:** This is the kind of empowerment that’s mine once I can master my senses, my impulses, my actions.
- **Building Mastery:** Practice, practice, practice ...

## **BE STRONG: Resilience & Thriving Assets** *Even When Life Gets Tough*

### **Building blocks that support resilience & thriving include:**

- **Distress Tolerance:** Distress is part of life, and I accept it. I can stay present to difficult experiences and emotions, even when I’m feeling uncomfortable.
- **Truth Testing:** I know that my perspective influences what I believe to be “true.” In any situation, there’s more than one truth. I’m just as interested in your “truth” as am in my own.
- **Making Sense of the Problem:** When I experience problems, I try to understand the situation, and find some meaning in it. For example, how does this problem support my own development?
- **Wise Mind:** In any situation, even when I feel triggered, I’m able to use my “wise mind,” integrating my rational mind *and* my emotional mind.
- **Rocking Resilience:** Life went sideways. But I didn’t. A least not for long.

## **BE CHANGE: Connectedness & Contribution Assets** ***Making Change that Makes a Difference***

### **Building blocks that support connectedness & contribution include:**

- **Flex/Flow Thinking:** I'm comfortable with complexity in people, and in systems. I'm even comfortable with paradox: two things, seemingly opposite, can be equally true. I look for the seeds of potential in every problem.
- **Imagine a Preferred Future:** A positive future is possible – for me, and the young people I support.
- **Stepping Up:** I am involved. I make a difference in my world.
- **Playing it Forward:** I take into account how my choices and actions will impact my own future, and future generations.
- **Busting My Immunity to Change:** I'm aware of how I can get in my own way, trip over myself from time to time, and undermine my best intentions for positive change.

### **c) The Take 5! Framework:** **All Kids, All Ages & Stages of Development**

The Take 5! Framework shows how five Self-Reg Assets and twenty-five building blocks come together in one easy-to-navigate planning resource. This framework brings together ideas, concepts, and topics that will be introduced throughout the year as students engage in asset-building activities.

For example, the Take 5! Framework:

- Provides an overview of the material to be covered, expected learning outcomes, and a practical pathway for introducing the approach to students.
- Orients educators toward those activities in the Take 5! Starter Kit that help to grow a particular self-regulation asset – the capacity to BE HERE, for example. Or, more specifically, self-regulation building blocks such as *flexible thinking*, *perspective-taking*, or *distress tolerance*.
- Facilitates lesson planning and activity planning.
- Promotes informal inclusion of ideas and concepts during other class discussions such as circle time, or class meetings, as well as integrated into other everyday classroom activities: art, games, imaginative play, show and tell, music, science, etc. See the Take 5! Starter Kit for more detailed suggestions.
- Acknowledges current and growing strengths, and offers supportive scaffolding as new self-reg capacities are explored and developed. And it's a framework that grows with children – starting in the early years ... through elementary, middle and high school ... and into adulthood.

To summarize, the Take 5! Framework identifies five essential self-reg assets, and offers five building blocks for each asset. Here’s how it all comes together in a quick-reference chart ... one for younger kids, and another for older kids:

### Take 5! Self-Reg Assets for Younger Kids

BE HERE	BE WITH	BE CALM	BE STRONG	BE CHANGE
<p><b>Mindful Awareness:</b> <i>Being Present in ME Space</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Awareness – Me:</b> I’m aware of my thoughts, feelings, body, actions</li> <li><b>Mindfulness:</b> Being here <i>with</i> myself, <i>for</i> myself</li> <li><b>Felt-sensing:</b> Getting information from my mind &amp; body; trusting my gut sense.</li> <li><b>In-Sight:</b> Making ‘me maps’; seeing my thoughts &amp; feelings; seeing my triggers &amp; reactions.</li> <li><b>Being Myself:</b> Seeing my uniqueness; valuing my strengths &amp; challenges; trusting my senses &amp; my experiences in life.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Interpersonal Effectiveness:</b> <i>Being Together in WE Space</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Awareness – We:</b> Being present in ‘we space’</li> <li><b>Flexible Thinking</b> Others might see things differently.</li> <li><b>Mindsight:</b> ‘Me maps’ and ‘you maps; insight &amp; empathy</li> <li><b>Boundary Awareness:</b> Me and you, separate and together; respecting my own body, thoughts, feelings &amp; perspectives, and also valuing yours.</li> <li><b>Mindful Togetherness:</b> I think about you, and I think about me. We validate each others’ experiences &amp; perspectives.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Emotion Regulation</b> <i>Senses in Sync</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Sensing:</b> What’s happening in my body? How is that connected to my thoughts, my emotions and my actions?</li> <li><b>Conscious Breathing:</b> What shifts when I pay attention to my breath?</li> <li><b>Standing on the Moon</b> Does the problem look different if I’m seeing from a distance ... e.g. ‘standing on the moon?’</li> <li><b>Being the Boss:</b> I can be the boss of my senses and my responses. “I have emotions ... my emotions don’t have me.</li> <li><b>Building Mastery:</b> I practice my calming skills every day.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Resilience &amp; Thriving ...</b> <i>Even When Life Gets Tough</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Distress Tolerance:</b> I can soothe myself when I’m feeling triggered. I can notice my impulse, then do the opposite.</li> <li><b>Reality Check:</b> I can’t always change the situation but I can change the way I respond.</li> <li><b>Lemonade Thinking:</b> Seeing the opportunity within the problem.</li> <li><b>Wise Mind:</b> Using my thinking mind <i>and</i> my feeling mind.</li> <li><b>Rocking Resilience:</b> I can resist urges, rebalance my thoughts &amp; emotions, bounce back from adversity.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Connectedness &amp; Contribution</b> <i>Making Change that Makes a Difference</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Being Connected:</b> I feel connected to people &amp; nature. What I do affects others; what others do affects me.</li> <li><b>Being a Change Wizard:</b> Life is always changing. I can be a force for positive change; I can make a difference in my world.</li> <li><b>Stepping Up:</b> “What if I ...?” “What if we ...?”</li> <li><b>Playing it Forward:</b> In my mind, I wonder: How will this action affect me, my friends, my family, my community?</li> <li><b>Seeing My Resistance to Change:</b> How do I sometimes get stuck in old habits, even when I know a change is needed?</li> </ol>

Tam Lundy, 2016



### Take 5! Self-Reg Assets for Older Kids

BE HERE	BE WITH	BE CALM	BE STRONG	BE CHANGE
<p><b>Mindful Awareness:</b> <i>Being Present in ME Space</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Awareness – Me:</b> Thoughts, feelings, body, actions</li> <li><b>Mindfulness:</b> Being here <i>with</i> myself, <i>for</i> myself</li> <li><b>Felt-sensing:</b> Mindful focusing; tapping inner wisdom</li> <li><b>In-Sight:</b> Making ‘me maps’; seeing perspectives, assumptions, taken-for-granted’s, judgments</li> <li><b>Presence in Every Moment:</b> Tuning in to the present moment &amp; accepting it; validating my experience</li> </ol>	<p><b>Interpersonal Effectiveness:</b> <i>Being Together in WE Space</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Awareness – We:</b> Being present in ‘we space’</li> <li><b>Perspective-taking:</b> There’s always more than one perspective</li> <li><b>Mindsight:</b> Integrating insight &amp; empathy</li> <li><b>Boundary Awareness:</b> Me and you, separate and together</li> <li><b>Mindful Togetherness:</b> Being here <i>with</i> others, and <i>for</i> others.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Emotion Regulation</b> <i>Senses in Sync</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Sensing –</b> What’s happening in my body? How is that connected to my thoughts, my emotions &amp; actions?</li> <li><b>Conscious Breathing:</b> What shifts when I pay attention to my breath?</li> <li><b>Standing on the Moon</b> What shifts again when I stand back a little, when I practice “witness awareness?”</li> <li><b>Living my Power:</b> What shifts again when I bring awareness to my actions? When “I’m the boss of me?”</li> <li><b>Building Mastery:</b> Practice, practice, practice ...</li> </ol>	<p><b>Resilience &amp; Thriving ...</b> <i>Even When Life Gets Tough</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Distress Tolerance:</b> Accepting, finding meaning in, &amp; tolerating distress</li> <li><b>Truth Testing:</b> Is there more than one truth in this situation?</li> <li><b>Making Sense of the Problem:</b> A ‘sense of coherence’ generates health &amp; well-being</li> <li><b>Wise Mind:</b> Integrating rational mind &amp; emotional mind</li> <li><b>Rocking Resilience:</b> Resisting urges; working with dynamic tension; bouncing back from adversity</li> </ol>	<p><b>Connectedness &amp; Contribution</b> <i>Making Change that Makes a Difference</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Flex/Flow Thinking:</b> Change is constant; everything has its opposite; yes/and thinking; finding hidden potential in the problem</li> <li><b>Imagine a Preferred Future:</b> A chosen future, not just an inherited future</li> <li><b>Stepping Up:</b> “What if I ...?” “What if we ...?”</li> <li><b>Playing it Forward:</b> How will this action affect my future, our future, the planet’s future?</li> <li><b>Busting My Immunity to Change:</b> How do competing commitments undermine my very best intentions?</li> </ol>

Tam Lundy, 2016

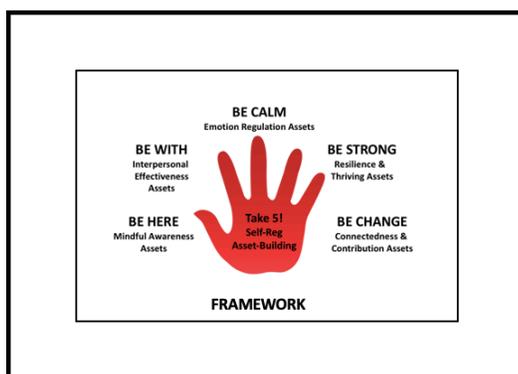


## Where to Start?<sup>1</sup>

Here's a pathway that has successfully guided the introduction of Take 5! in an elementary school setting.<sup>2</sup>

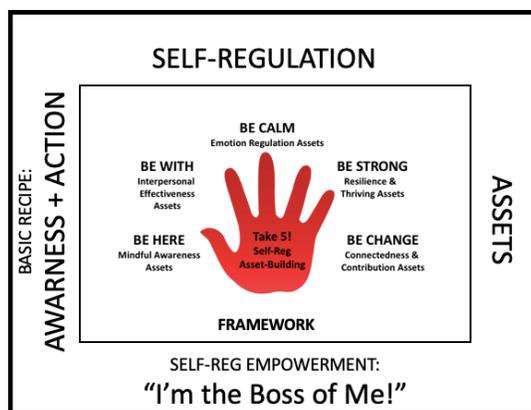
### 1. Start with the Framework:

Begin by introducing the Take 5! Framework ... exploring, for example, “what does it mean to BE HERE, BE WITH, BE CALM, BE STRONG & BE CHANGE?”



### 2. Explore Key Terms:

Next, explore some key terms: self-regulation, asset-building, the “basic recipe” and the self-empowerment goal: “I’m the boss of me!”

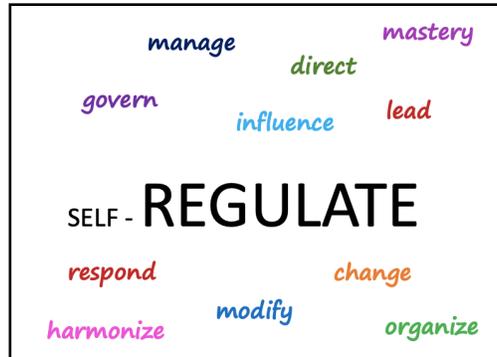


<sup>1</sup> Also see the Take 5! Starter kit for “Tips for Getting Started”.

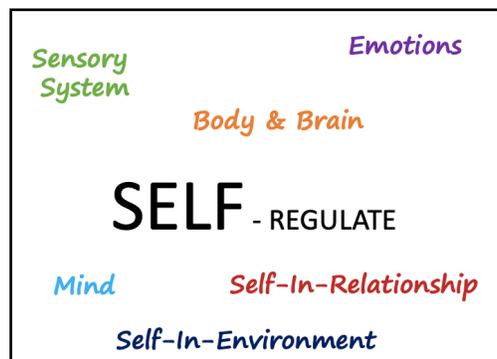
<sup>2</sup> We are indebted to the teaching and counseling staff at San Domenico School in San Anselmo, California, who piloted Take 5! with their Grade 4 students for a year before taking next steps to extend participation to all elementary school students. Then, when schools were shuttered due to the COVID-19 virus, they adapted their interaction with students to a distance learning model. We applaud their commitment to continue teaching SEL skills to their students, even under challenging circumstances.

a) **Introduce students to the term “Self-Regulation”:**

It may be helpful to spend some time exploring these words. For example, when we use the word “regulate” we might mean:



And when we talk about the “self,” it’s important to include *all* parts of a person:



b) **Explore the idea of “assets”.**

You might explain to students that assets are strengths & attributes that are useful and valuable ... and that we can grow them over time.



**SELF-REG ASSETS:  
EVERYONE NEEDS A HANDFUL**

Self-reg assets are building blocks for thriving – growing our capacity for mental wellness, learning, healthy relationships and lifelong development.

The more assets a child has, the more chances that he or she will thrive ... even in difficult circumstances. - *Search Institute*



c) **Introduce the “Basic Recipe.”**

Explain that everyone can improve their ability to self-regulate by growing their personal capacity for awareness before action. It just takes practice.



### The Basic Recipe

d) **Self-Regulation → Self-Empowerment.**

Explain that self-regulation is a potent form of self-empowerment. More and more, I can say: I'm the boss of my emotions, my thoughts, my behaviors ... “I'm the boss of me!”



e) **Use it! Especially when you think you might lose it!**

Finally, explain to students that they already have the Basic Tool – their hand. Remind students that “This handy tool is always there when you need it. You were born with this tool. And you have it with you, everywhere you go.”



The Basic Tool

### 3. Introduce the Take 5! Hand Signals:

If you're working with younger children, you might start by introducing them to the Hand Signals. Hand signals help kids remember that they always have a practical self-reg tool at their disposal. These are embodied felt-sense reminders that I can BE HERE, BE WITH, BE CALM, BE STRONG and BE CHANGE.

For instructions, see page 17 in the Take 5! Starter Kit.



### 4. Have fun with the Hand Tools and Asset-Building Activities in the Starter Kit

Now that students have a foundational understanding of self-regulation, they're ready to engage in learning that helps them to enhance their self-reg capacities.

- a) Have students practice some of the 25 Hand Tools that help to grow awareness. Introduce them in any order that feels right. And practice them often.
- b) Engage students in the asset-building activities – again, in any order that feels right.

Perhaps most importantly, take advantage of all of those “teachable moments” that arise during a typical day – opportunities to expand thinking, practice skills, and grow capacity. And don't hesitate to include other ideas, activities, books, etc. from other SEL resources in your library.

### 5. Start where students are. Then offer supportive scaffolding as children learn skills that are new to them.

As students transition from an early childhood program to elementary school, or from an elementary classroom to middle school, their ability to self-regulate will have a lot to do with the maturity of their mind. But kids rarely develop at the same rate. In any classroom there will be kids who are “mature beyond their years” and kids who are working hard to catch up.

For this reason, we offer two different Starter Kits:

- Take 5! Starter Kit for Early Childhood and Elementary School Classrooms
- Take 5! Starter Kit for Elementary and Middle School Classrooms

The overlap is intentional – it allows you to choose the activity that best fits the kids you work with. Sometimes it makes sense to start with an activity geared toward younger students, to create some solid foundations, before moving on to an activity geared to their actual age and grade level. And many activities can be repeated, grade by grade.

## 6. BE flexible ... and BE creative!

### ***Flexible & creative use of resources***

With the tools and activities in the Starter Kits, you have everything you need to begin working with the Take 5! Framework. But you'll no doubt have other activities that you enjoy doing with students – feel free to include them!

Take 5! is well-adapted to use with other SEL resources; for example, *Responsive Classroom* is a well-loved program that is a good fit with Take 5! *RULER* is another evidence-based approach that supports students to monitor and modify their emotions – again, a great fit with Take 5! And you will no doubt have other resources at your disposal – books, videos, and games, for example. These can all be integrated, offering practical support as students work to strengthen their self-reg capacities.

### ***Flexible & creative pathways***

There's no single pathway to self-reg success. As described earlier, the teaching of Take 5! can easily be organized as a step-by-step curriculum, starting with BE HERE, and moving sequentially through BE WITH, BE CALM, BE STRONG, and BE CHANGE. On the other hand, you may discover that modifying the sequential approach is beneficial. Instead, you might introduce – or, from time to time, return to – some of the activities and learning objectives associated with a different asset.

For example, while you might start with BE HERE, the conversation might take a brief detour to BE CALM, because you notice that your students could use a little help understanding emotions before carrying on with the building blocks for mindful awareness. Or, when adversity and trauma is part of a child's life experience, a focus on distress tolerance (BE STRONG) may help create conditions that support learning. Or, when children have difficulty with transitions and other experiences of change, you might want to spend a little time up front with some of the BE CHANGE tools & activities. In this way, learning can easily be adapted to fit the children, the curriculum, and the circumstances.

### ***Flexibility & creativity in action***

Here's an example of flexibility and creativity in action. In one school, teachers and counselors began the year by introducing the BE HERE asset. To help students understand the concept of mindful awareness, they borrowed from the popular children's book *What does it mean to be present?* And, in addition to the tools and activities in the Take 5! Starter Kit, they integrated some of the mindfulness practices from another program in which they had received training: *Mindful Schools*. It was a good fit. The school also had a copy of *Sitting Still Like a Frog* in the library; students enjoyed the activities in the book as well as the recorded guided mindfulness exercises on the accompanying CD. Then, before moving on to the next asset, BE WITH, the facilitators felt it would be good to spend some time talking about feelings – something that we associate with the BE CALM asset, boosting emotion regulation skills. So, they decided to take a temporary detour, borrowing some *Kimochis* resources from the counseling office to help students explore emotions. Again, a good fit.

Really, there's no "right" way to teach self-reg skills, so be flexible and creative. You'll find your own pathway, and it might vary a little from group to group, year to year. No matter which pathway you choose, the key is to always link the activity – or the "DO'ing" – with the capacity that the activity is helping to strengthen: the ability to BE self-regulated.