


A vibrant preschool classroom. On the left, a pink playhouse with arched windows and a tree trunk. In the center, a blue wall and a red bookshelf filled with books. On the right, a blue bookshelf also filled with books. The floor is covered with a colorful geometric pattern. Several tables and chairs in various colors (pink, blue, green, yellow) are arranged throughout the room.

## The Pyramid Model for Social-Emotional Development: Controlling Anger & Impulse

Have you  
ever been in  
a classroom  
and had a  
student  
with a  
challenging  
behavior?  
Please  
share.





A young child with dark hair is focused on playing with colorful wooden blocks. The child is holding a pink block in their right hand and looking down at it. In the foreground, a stack of blocks is visible, including a yellow one on top of two red ones. The background is softly blurred, showing more blocks and a hint of a play area.

What is the  
Pyramid  
Model?

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# Overview of the Pyramid Model

## FOUNDATION

- Effective Workforce

## Tier One: PROMOTION

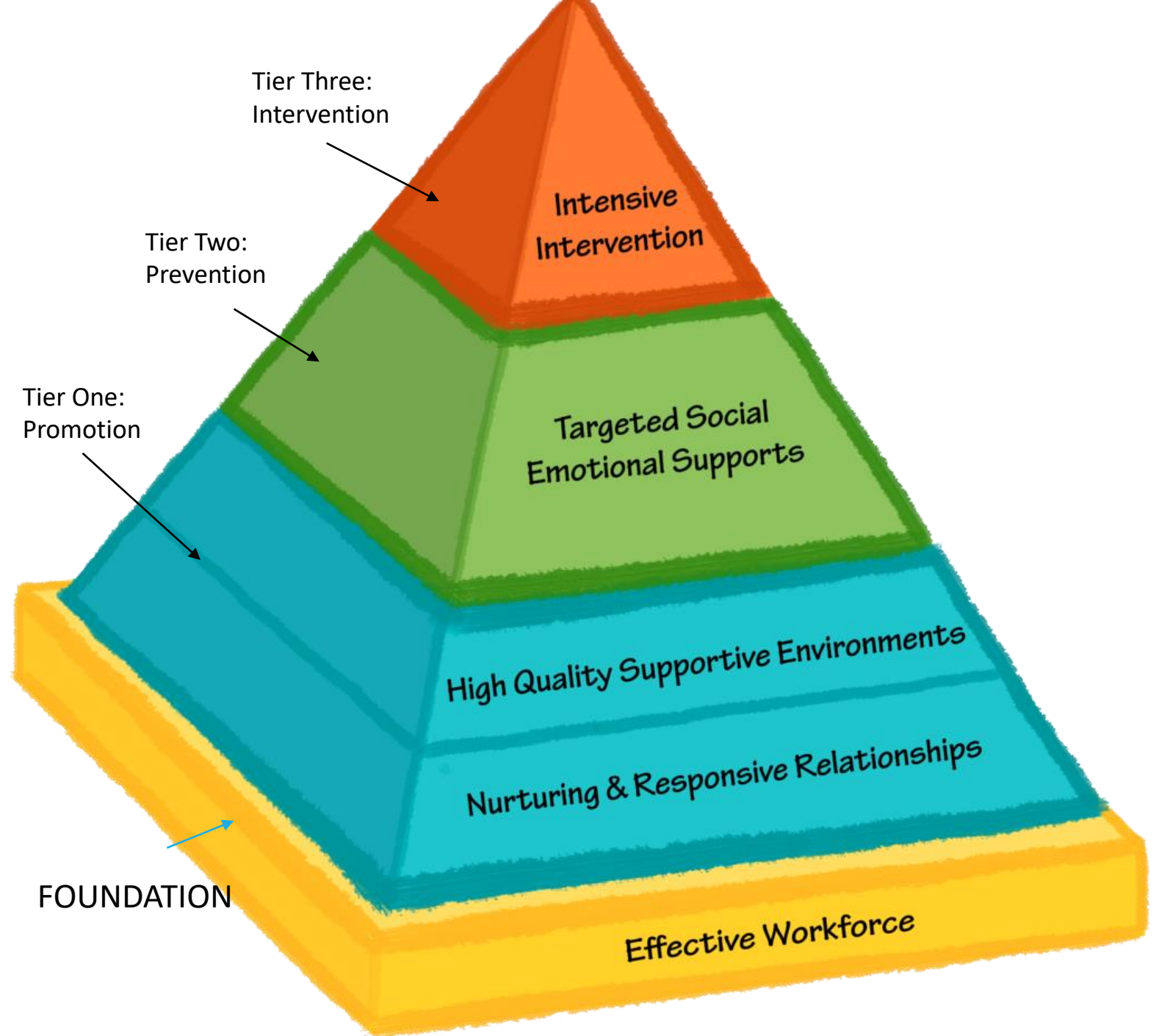
- High quality supportive environments
- Nurturing & Responsible Relationships

## Tier Two: PREVENTION

- Targeted Social Emotional Supports

## Tier Three: INTERVENTION

- Intensive Intervention



# Tier One: PROMOTION

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- High quality classroom environments all meeting the standards of NAEYC
- Supportive Home Environments
- Create nurturing and responsive relationships with children, family, team members
- Focus on prevention and teaching appropriate skills.







# Building Relationships

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- ✓ Helps each child feel accepted in the group
- ✓ Assists children in learning to communicate and have a good relationship with others
- ✓ Encourages feelings of empathy and mutual respect among children and adults
- ✓ Provides a supportive environment in which children can learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and as a group

# Tips for Positive Adult/Child Interactions

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- ❖ Acknowledge child's communication (verbal or non-verbal)
- ❖ Greets children by their name
- ❖ Engage in one-to-one interactions, at eye level
- ❖ Use a pleasant, calm voice and simple language
- ❖ Provide warm, responsive physical contact
- ❖ Follow the child's lead and interests during play
- ❖ Listen to children and encourage them to listen to others
- ❖ Acknowledge child's accomplishments & efforts



# Tier One: Building Relationships

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- Some children may exhibit challenging behaviors
- Children may lack behaviors or skills.



# Tier One: Promotion

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Teach child what  
to do instead of  
what not to do...



# Tier Two: Prevention

Educator Strategies for Promoting Social Emotional Growth & Development

# Tier Two: Prevention

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- Targeted Social Emotional Supports

- Explicit instruction and support
- Self-regulation, expressing and understanding emotions, developing social relationships and problem-solving






# Intentionally Teach! Teach Me What To Do....

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- Friendship skills
- Emotion words/feelings
- How to recognize feelings in oneself and others
- How to “calm down”
- How to control anger and impulse
- How to problem solve





# Tucker the Turtle Story

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CONTROLLING ANGER & IMPULSE

# Tucker Turtle Takes Time to Tuck and Think

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A scripted story to assist with  
teaching the “Turtle Technique”

By Rochelle Lentini


March 2005





Tucker Turtle  
is a terrific  
turtle. He  
likes to play  
with his  
friends at  
school.



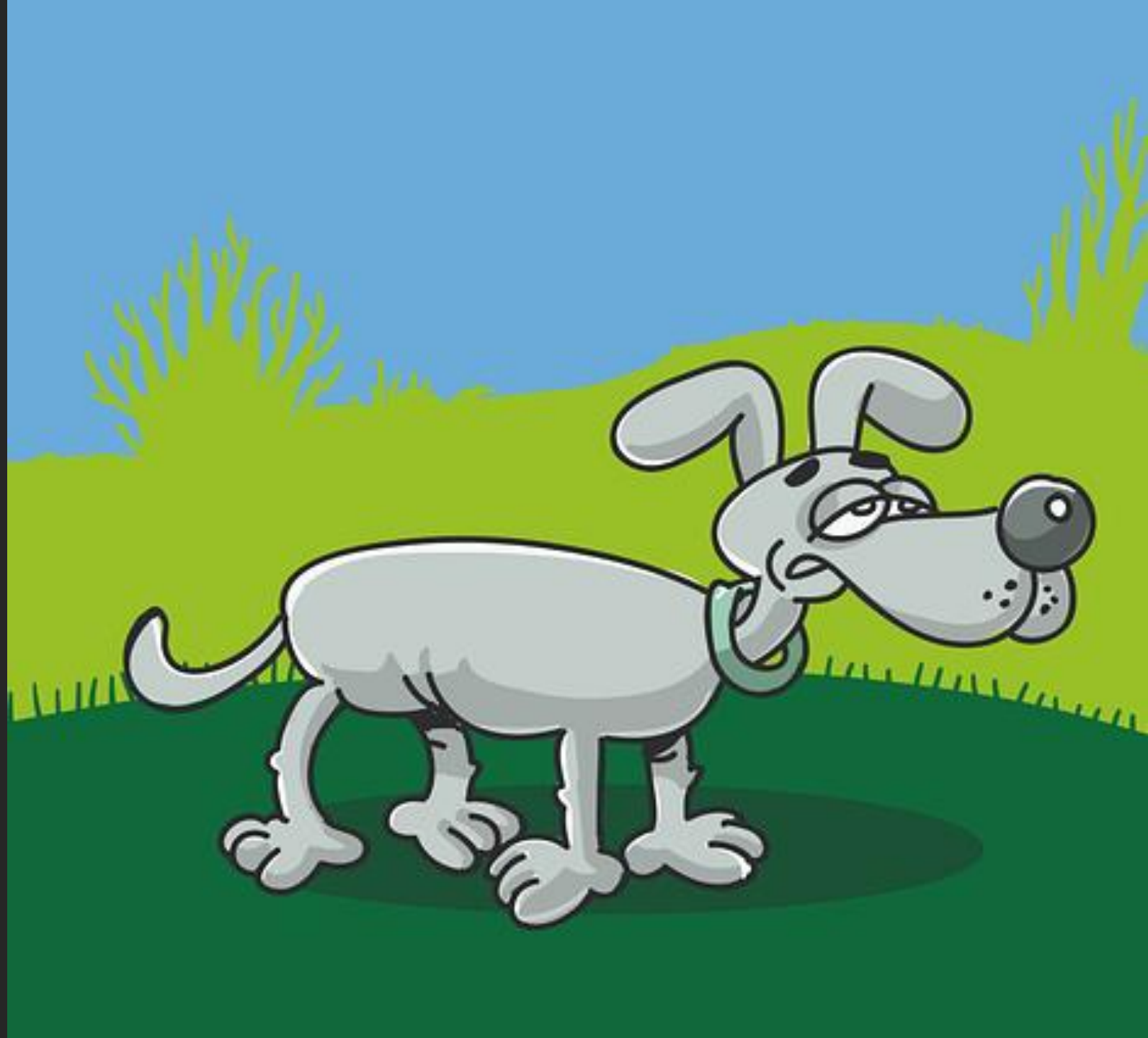
A large, green, cartoonish character with a grumpy expression. It has large, dark eyes with slanted, downward-pointing eyelids, a small black nose, and a wide, open mouth showing two sharp, dark fangs. The character's body is rounded and green with some darker green patches and black outlines. It has small, dark, rounded ears on top of its head. The background is a solid dark grey.

But sometimes  
things happen that  
can make Tucker  
really mad.



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When Tucker got mad, he used to hit, kick, or yell at his friends. His friends would get mad or upset when he hit, kicked, or yelled at them.





Tucker now knows  
a new way to  
“think like a  
turtle” when he  
gets mad.



Step One

He can **stop** and  
keep his hands,  
body, and yelling  
to himself!

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Step 2



He can tuck inside  
his shell and take 3  
deep breaths to  
calm down.

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STEP 3





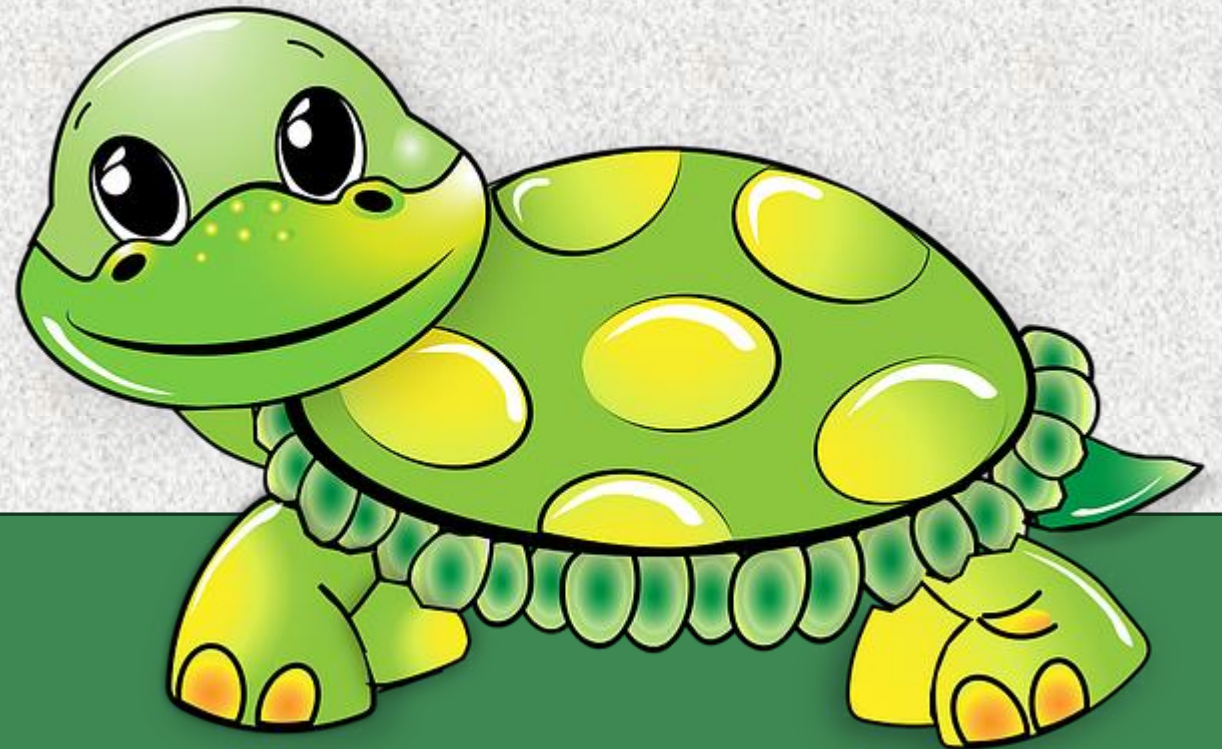
Tucker can then  
**think of a  
solution** or a  
way to make it  
better.

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STEP 4



Tucker's friends are happy when he plays nicely and keeps his body to himself. Friends also like it when Tucker uses nice words or has a teacher help him when he is upset.



# What Does Tucker the Turtle Teach Us?



Teacher helps a child walk through the 4 steps of the Turtle Technique:

- *1. Recognize that you feel upset*
  - *2. Stop, before you take an action*
  - *3. Go into your “shell”*
  - *4. Come out of your shell when you feel calm or ready*
- 
- Emotions are okay, but not all expressions are okay
  - Teacher uses the Tucker the Turtle craft to teach children how to “Think like a Turtle”
  - Labels negative feelings paired with actions to regulate
  - Helps children identify appropriate choices





# Additional Tucker the Turtle Uses

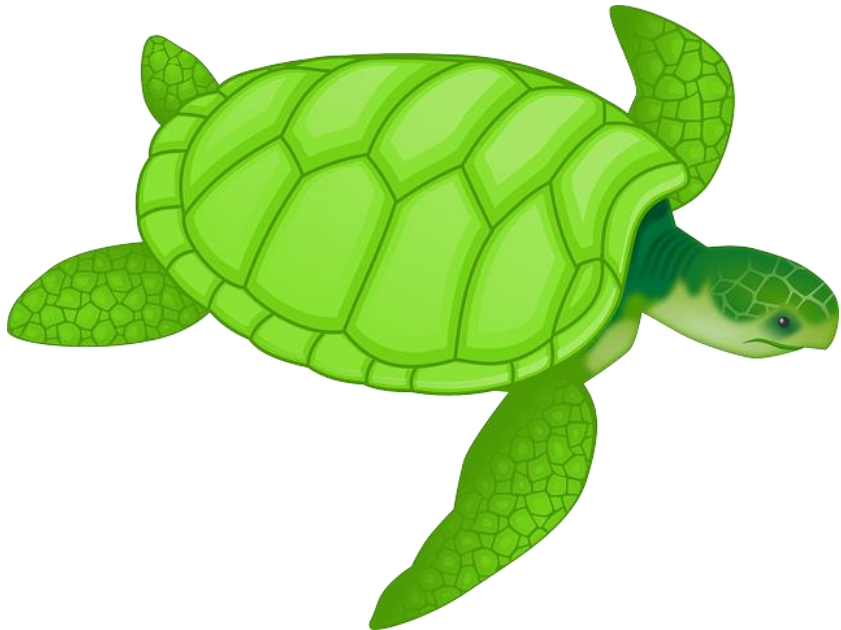
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CONTROLLING ANGER & IMPULSE

# Tucker the Turtle Finger Play

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To the tune of: *Where is Thumbkin?*



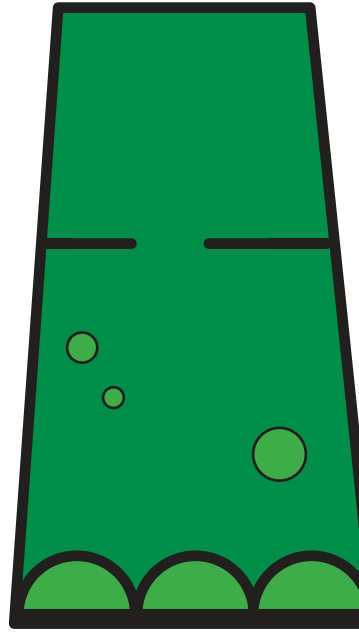
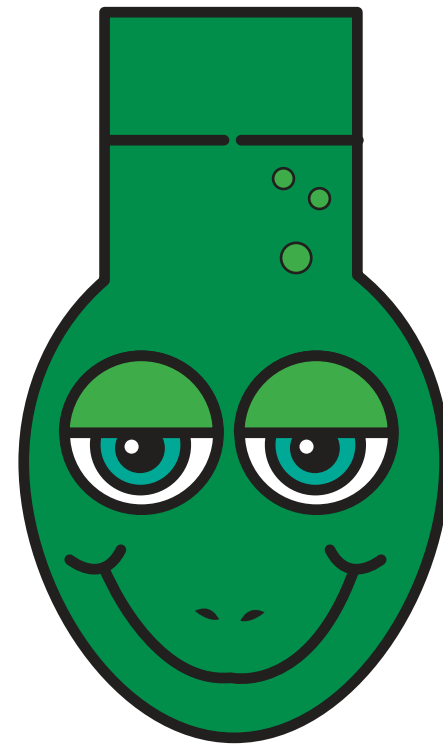
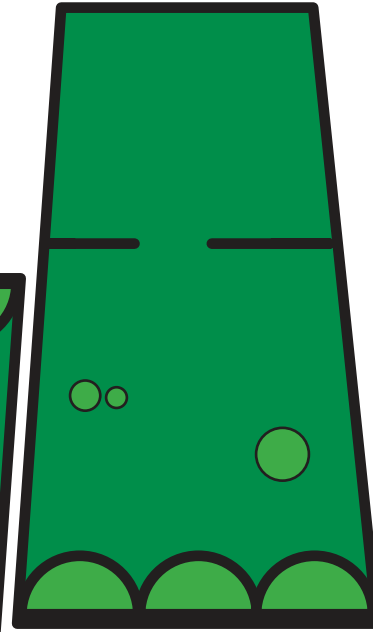
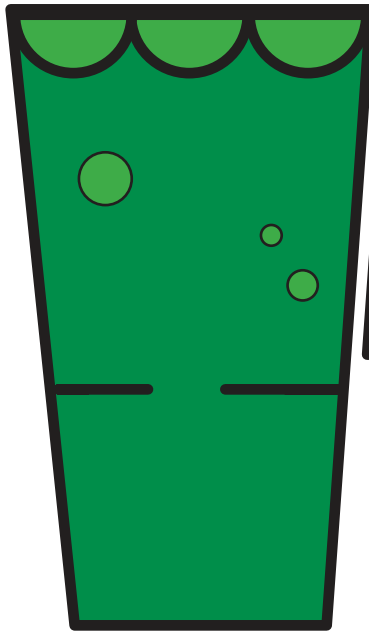
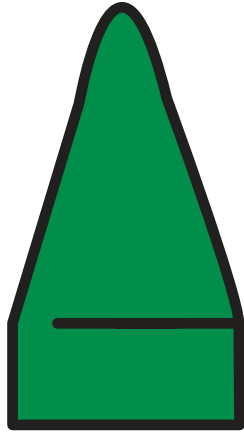
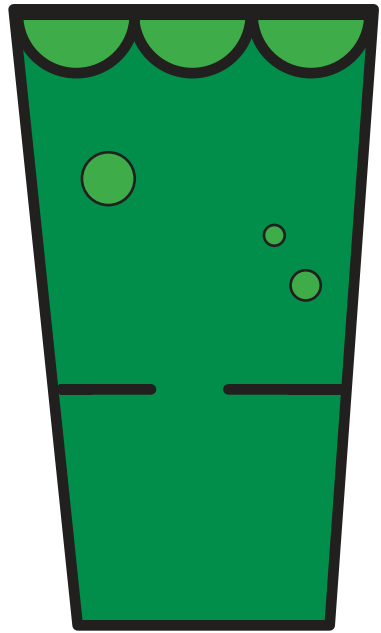
Tucker Turtle, Tucker Turtle,  
He's our friend. He's, our friend.  
When he gets angry or frustrated,  
He tucks in, tucks in.

Tucker Turtle, Tucker Turtle,  
He tucks in, he tucks in.  
Then takes 3 breaths; then takes 3 breaths.  
To think, think, think. Think, think, think.

Tucker Turtle, Tucker Turtle,  
Think, think, thinks; think, think, thinks.  
He knows a better way. He knows a better way;  
That Tucker can play and what to say.







SOURCE:

[https://challengingbehavior.org/PyramidNation/Community/docs/pyramid\\_model\\_kit\\_guidefinal.pdf](https://challengingbehavior.org/PyramidNation/Community/docs/pyramid_model_kit_guidefinal.pdf)

# TURTLE TECHNIQUE

# Partners with Families: Tucker the Turtle Goes Home

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Activity hint: Head and tail are on a stick to pull head in and out.



# The Turtle Technique

FLASH CARDS OR POSTERS



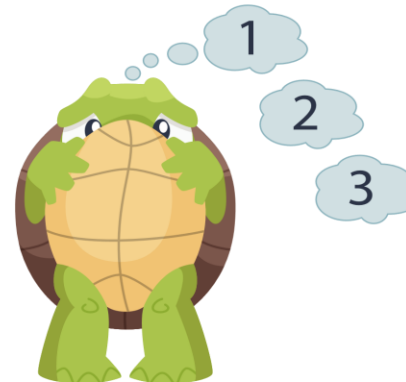
## The Turtle Technique



**Step 1.** Recognize your feelings.



**Step 2.** Stop your body.



**Step 3.** Tuck inside your shell and take three deep breaths.



**Step 4.** Come out when you are calm and think of a solution.



The background image shows two young children sitting at a table. The child on the left is looking down with a sad or bored expression. The child on the right is resting their head on their hands, also looking downcast. An adult's hands are visible on the right side of the frame, possibly interacting with the child. The scene appears to be a classroom or a play area with various toys and materials on the table.

# Tier Three: Intervention

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# Tier Three: Intervention

## Individualized Intensive Interventions

- Family-centered, comprehensive interventions
- Assessment-based
- Skill-building





# Super Turtle Letter

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Dear Parent,

Billy did a great job today handling frustration and not getting angry when we ran out of his favorite cookie at snack. Instead of getting upset, Billy took three deep breaths and decided he would try one of the other cookies. That was a great solution, and he really liked the new cookie too!

You can help Billy at home by: Asking him what he did at school today when we ran out of his favorite cookie. Ask him how he calmed down. Comment on what a great job he did. Tell him that you hope that he will do that again when he gets frustrated about something.

Thank you so much!



# Foundation & Three Tiers

- Effective Workforce is the foundation
- Tier One: Universal **Promotion**
- Tier Two: Secondary **Prevention**
- Tier Three: Tertiary **Intervention**



# Educator Resources

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Full training for The Pyramid Model are available here:

<https://challengingbehavior.org/>

<https://challengingbehavior.org/training/get-trained/>

[CSEFEL: Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning \(vanderbilt.edu\)](https://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/)





# Handout: Inventory of Practices

**Inventory of Practices for Promoting Social Emotional Competence**

**Building Positive Relationships**

Skills and Indicators	Frequency			Target for training?		Observations/Evidence
	3	2	1	YES	NO	
<b>1. Develops meaningful relationships with children and families</b>						
<input type="checkbox"/> Greets children on arrival; calls by name						
<input type="checkbox"/> Communicates with children at eye level						
<input type="checkbox"/> Verbally interacts with individual children during routines and activities						
<input type="checkbox"/> Participates in children's play when appropriate						
<input type="checkbox"/> Shows respect, consideration, warmth to all children						
<input type="checkbox"/> Speaks calmly to children						
<input type="checkbox"/> Uses a variety of strategies for building relationships with all children						
<input type="checkbox"/> Attends to children in positive ways at times when the children are not engaging in challenging behavior						
<input type="checkbox"/> Uses a variety of strategies for building relationships with all families						
<input type="checkbox"/> Creates a classroom that is a place that children and families like to be (i.e., feel comfortable, welcome, and safe)						
<b>Comments:</b>						
<b>2. Examines personal, family, and cultural views of child's challenging behavior</b>						
<input type="checkbox"/> Considers personal beliefs regarding the acceptability and unacceptability of specific types of child behavior						
<input type="checkbox"/> Considers personal beliefs regarding the causes of specific types of unacceptable child behavior						
<input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledges contrasting or conflicting beliefs held by others regarding acceptable and unacceptable types of child behavior						
<b>Comments:</b>						

Date 1 Completed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date 2 Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Found in Module 2
- Checklist for Tiers
- Find it here:  
[https://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/training\\_preschool.html#mod2](https://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/training_preschool.html#mod2)



# Assessment

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[Jeopardy Game Link](#)