

FIRST WAVES

My Body Tells Me

A Tide Pool Introduction to Ocean Zones

COMPREHENSIVE TEACHER GUIDE

Mastery-Based Curriculum for Students with Significant Support Needs

Includes:

Quick-Start Guide • Delivery Modes • Complete Unit Lessons

In-the-Moment Scripts • Family Materials • IEP Goals

Calm Connections Learning Lab LLC

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QUICK-START GUIDE (Read This First!)

You have 5 minutes before students arrive. Here's everything you need:

THE 30-SECOND SUMMARY

First Waves teaches Calm vs Not Calm (Units 1-2), then teaches 5 named feelings (Happy, Sad, Mad, Scared, Calm). Tired is included as an always-available option (no standalone unit). Every day: 5 minutes. Show card → Point to body → Name it → ONE breath → Celebrate.

Use the tier cheat sheet as your daily script (keep it visible during instruction):

- Foundational: [First_waves_Foundational_Cheat_Sheet_v2.md](#)
- Supported: [First_waves_Supported_Cheat_Sheet_v2.md](#)
- Transitional: [First_waves_Transitional_Cheat_Sheet_v2.1.md](#)

MINIMUM DAILY SETUP (DO THIS EVERY DAY)

- 2-Zone visual (Calm / Not Calm)
- Not Calm Menu (Break / Help / Squeeze)
- Today's feeling card

If you only remember one thing: This is a skills routine, not a discussion. Keep language short, repeat the same script, and measure progress by participation (not perfect answers).

TODAY'S 5-MINUTE ROUTINE

Time	Step	Say This
30 sec	GATHER	"Let's check our bodies!"
30 sec	SHOW	Hold up card: "This is [FEELING]. [Feeling]. [Feeling]. [Feeling]."
1 min	BODY	"Where do you feel it?" + point to body part
1 min	NAME	"Show me [feeling]!" or "Point to how you feel."
1 min	BREATHE	"Let's take a belly breath. In... Out..." (just ONE)
30 sec	CELEBRATE	"You LISTENED to your body! That's AMAZING!"

For exact daily script wording by tier, use the cheat sheets: [First_waves_Supported_Cheat_Sheet_v2.md](#) and [First_waves_Transitional_Cheat_Sheet_v2.1.md](#).

WHICH FEELING THIS UNIT?

Units 1-2	CALM / NOT CALM	Units 7-8	MAD
Units 3-4	HAPPY	Units 9-10	SCARED
Units 5-6	SAD	Units 11-12	CALM

NOTE: Units are taught in sequence but progression is mastery-based, not time-based. A unit may take 1 week or 4 weeks depending on student progress. Some students will repeat the full sequence multiple times.

WHICH SCRIPT DO I RUN THIS WEEK?

Use the unit sequence to pick the **feeling card**, and use the student's tier to pick the **daily script**.

Units 1-2 (CALM / NOT CALM):

- Foundational: Run the Unit 1 micro-lesson script (30–60 seconds) multiple times daily.
- Supported: Use the Supported cheat sheet backbone (Calm/Not Calm + menu first).
- Transitional: Use the Transitional cheat sheet backbone (Calm/Not Calm + menu first).

Units 3-12 (HAPPY/SAD/MAD/SCARED/CALM):

- **Daily rule (all tiers):** Calm/Not Calm first. If Not Calm → Menu first → deliver → then return to the unit script.
- Foundational: If the routine needs to stay very short, do Calm/Not Calm + Menu only (30–60 seconds). If the student is Calm and stable, you may briefly show the unit feeling card and celebrate participation.
- Supported: Use the Supported cheat sheet 5-minute script (includes feeling card + body cue + breath choice).
- Transitional: Use the Transitional cheat sheet (On-Ramp A or B depending on readiness). Use unit feeling cards as appropriate, but keep the Calm/Not Calm backbone primary.

NON-VERBAL STUDENTS?

Success is ANY response:

- Looking at the card = participation
- Any sound = communication
- Body movement toward card = choosing
- Being present = learning

STUDENT IN CRISIS?

Skip the routine. Just say: "**Your body is telling you something. I'm here. Let's breathe.**" One breath. That's it. Return to routine tomorrow.

IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTE: First Waves is a regulation skills routine. It is **not** a crisis protocol. If a student is in crisis (unsafe behavior, serious aggression, self-injury, elopement risk, or active property destruction), follow your school/district safety plan first. Do NOT attempt First Waves during active crisis. Resume First Waves when the student is safe and settled.

Crisis vs. Not Calm:

- **Not Calm** = Dysregulated but safe. Use the Not Calm Menu.
- **Crisis** = Unsafe behavior requiring safety protocol. Do NOT use First Waves.

That's it. You're ready. The rest of this guide is details.

PROGRAM FIT (USE WHAT YOU ALREADY DO)

First Waves is designed to fit inside your existing classroom routine.

Standard implementation: 5-minute whole group routine once daily, plus 30–60 second 1:1 micro-lessons for students who need errorless practice.

What to keep consistent

- Prompting: ask once, wait 10 seconds, then prompt (use your team's prompt hierarchy)
- Reinforcement: use your existing system (tokens/praise/items)
- Data: track **Independent vs Prompted (I/P)** (or map to your existing codes)

For Schools With Structured Teaching Programs (STAR, TEACCH, etc.)

First Waves fits inside your existing system. Keep your prompt hierarchy, reinforcement system, and data codes. Run First Waves as a 5-minute daily routine.

For Schools Without a Structured Teaching Program

First Waves includes everything you need: scripted lessons, prompt rules ("ask once, wait 10 seconds, then prompt"), I/P data tracking, and built-in reinforcement (celebration step). No additional system required.

IMPLEMENTATION DEFAULTS (USE AS WRITTEN)

Use these defaults unless your team already has standard wording and visuals.

Language (use consistently)

- Zones: **CALM / NOT CALM**
- Script: "Calm means my body is ready. Not Calm means my body needs help."

Not Calm Menu (start with 3)

- **BREAK**
- **HELP**
- **SQUEEZE**

Supported add-on (optional 4th tool):

- **WALK** (to a defined spot and back)

Delivery rule: Student selects → adult delivers within 3 seconds. No bargaining. No negotiation.

Visual standard

- Use one consistent style across the set (icons or photos).
- Use large text labels on all visuals.
- Use soft, neutral colors for visual calm.
- **Do NOT teach zone colors (Blue/Green/Yellow/Red) during Foundational or Supported tiers.** Zone colors are introduced only at Transitional tier.

What counts as a response

Any of these count:

- Point/touch
- Place token/Velcro
- Eye gaze (2 seconds)
- AAC selection
- Stand/move to zone (if mobile)

Prompting + data (default)

Prompt Hierarchy:

1. **Independent (I):** No prompt needed
2. **Verbal (V):** "Check your body"
3. **Gestural (G):** Point to visual
4. **Partial Physical (PP):** Guide hand toward visual
5. **Full Physical (FP):** Hand-over-hand to complete response

Rule: Ask once. Wait 10 seconds (count slowly: 1-Mississippi, 2-Mississippi...). Then prompt.

Data: Track **Independent vs Prompted (I/P)** at minimum.

Primary metric (keep it simple)

Track one primary skill:

- Student indicates **CALM** or **NOT CALM** (I/P)

Breathing rule

- Foundational: breath is offered, not demanded
- **What this means:** Offer one breath opportunity. If student does not participate, note it and move to Celebrate. Do not re-prompt or extend the breath step. Breath participation is tracked but is NOT required for tier advancement at Foundational.
- Always: **one breath only**

Tired (always available)

Tired is NOT a teaching unit. It is always available on the check-in board.

- **Tired can be Calm** (sleepy but regulated) OR **Not Calm** (exhausted and dysregulated)
- Staff ask about Tired proactively when they observe fatigue cues
- When student indicates Tired + Not Calm, run the Not Calm Menu
- Tired does not require a specific response—it's information about baseline state

Decision rules (keep implementation consistent)

- **Adding WALK (optional 4th tool)**
 - Track recovery time in ranges: **<1 min, 1-2 min, 2-5 min, 5+ min**
 - Add WALK when recovery is **consistently <2 min for 3 consecutive school days**
- **Advancement decisions (Foundational → Supported → Transitional)**
 - **Who decides:** Team decision (teacher + specialist)
 - **What to use:** Data sheet + brief anecdotal notes
 - **How often:** Review every **2-4 weeks** (plus ad hoc when criteria are met)

See also:

- **Appendix A (Data & Decision Rules):** [First_waves_Appendix_A_Data_And_Decision_Rules_V2.md](#)
- **Appendix B (Sensory & Environment Supports):**
[First_waves_Appendix_B_Sensory_And_Environment_Supports_V2.md](#)

THREE TIERS: FOUNDATIONAL → SUPPORTED → TRANSITIONAL

First Waves has three tiers:

- **Foundational** — Calm/Not Calm + 3-tool menu
- **Supported** — Named feelings + body cues + optional 4th tool (WALK)
- **Transitional** — Bridge to Ocean Zones; introduces 4-zone colors

Daily scripts by tier (use the cheat sheet during the routine):

- Foundational daily script: [First_waves_Foundational_Cheat_Sheet_V2.md](#)
- Supported daily script: [First_waves_Supported_Cheat_Sheet_V2.md](#)
- Transitional daily scripts: [First_waves_Transitional_Cheat_Sheet_V2.1.md](#)

Tier progression is mastery-based, not time-based. Students advance when they meet exit criteria, not when they complete a certain number of weeks. Some students will stay at Foundational for an entire school year. That's success if they're safer, communicating more, and recovering faster.

Zone colors (Blue/Green/Yellow/Red) are NOT taught until Transitional tier. Materials may use soft, neutral colors for visual clarity, but staff do not teach or label zone colors in Foundational or Supported.

Use: [First_Waves_to_Ocean_Zones_Transition_Protocol_V2.md](#)

Foundational (default)

Use Foundational when the student needs the simplest possible routine.

- Keep the 2-Zone system (Calm / Not Calm)
- Keep the Not Calm Menu at 3 options (Break / Help / Squeeze)
- Keep lessons at ~5 minutes
- Keep breathing as: one belly breath (offered, not demanded)
- **No zone colors. No characters.**

Foundational Exit Criteria

Student advances to Supported when ALL of the following are demonstrated for **5 consecutive school days**:

1. Discriminates Calm vs. Not Calm with **80%+ accuracy** (10+ trials)
2. Selects from Not Calm Menu with **gestural prompt or less**
3. Completes selected tool without escalation
4. Participates in breath attempt (any effort counts)

If criteria are met for 3 days, then not met on day 4, restart the count.

Supported (bridge level)

Use Supported when the student is advancing beyond Foundational but is not yet ready for zone color instruction.

Supported keeps the First Waves backbone (Calm/Not Calm first + Not Calm Menu first), but adds small, controlled upgrades.

Use Supported when the student can:

- Participate in the routine intentionally with consistent prompts
- Indicate Calm/Not Calm with gestural prompt or less most days
- Select from the Not Calm Menu with gestural prompt or less
- Tolerate brief skill practice without escalation

Supported upgrades (keep it small):

- Breathing becomes: student chooses 1 breath from 2 options (still one breath total)
 - Belly Breath
 - Bubble Breath
- Language becomes: add "My body feels " when possible
- Body awareness becomes: 1 body point + 1 feeling word (not multiple)
- Tools can expand by 1 tool only (optional): add WALK
- **Still no zone colors. No characters.**

If you add WALK, define it tightly:

- Walk means: walk to a defined spot and back (10–20 seconds)
- No wandering
- Adult walks with student (or blocks/redirects immediately)
- Return to the routine after the walk

Supported guardrails (do NOT do these yet):

- Do not teach zone colors (Blue/Green/Yellow/Red)
- Do not introduce Ocean Zones characters (Manny/Stella/Shelly/Crabby)
- Do not run long zone discussions
- Do not add large strategy menus
- Do not demand full zone naming
- Do not turn First Waves into a 10–15 minute lesson

Supported Exit Criteria

Student advances to Transitional when ALL of the following are demonstrated for **10 consecutive school days**:

1. Identifies Calm/Not Calm **independently** (unprompted)
2. **Initiates** tool request when Not Calm (doesn't wait for menu presentation)

3. Selects from expanded menu (4 tools if WALK added) with **gestural prompt or less**
4. Chooses between 2 breath options
5. Identifies **3+ named feelings** with gestural prompt or less
6. Points to **2+ body locations** for feelings

If criteria are met for 7 days, then not met on day 8, restart the count.

Supported routine add-on (use within any unit)

If you are running Supported, keep the same 5-minute routine and make only these changes:

- During **BREATHE**: show 2 breath visuals and say: "Pick a breath." (Belly or Bubble.) Do one breath.
- During **NOT CALM** moments: run the Not Calm Menu first. If WALK is present, limit to the defined spot and back.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

First Waves is a **mastery-based curriculum** with 12 teaching units built on one simple insight: before students can manage feelings, they need to notice them.

Units are taught in sequence but progression is mastery-based, not time-based. A unit may take 1 week, 2 weeks, or longer depending on student progress. The goal is skill mastery, not curriculum completion.

Units 1-2 (Foundation): Students learn the most basic question: *Is my body CALM or NOT CALM?* This binary choice is simple enough for any student to grasp. When they identify "Not Calm," they immediately learn to use the **Not Calm Menu** (Break, Help, or Squeeze) — giving them a tool before we add complexity.

Units 3-10 (Named Feelings): Now that students can identify Calm vs Not Calm, we teach specific feeling names: Happy, Sad, Mad, Scared. Each feeling gets a name, a body cue, and practice connecting the two. Throughout, the Not Calm Menu remains available — students always have a tool when they need it.

Units 11-12 (The Payoff): We return to CALM — but now as an **action**, not just a state. Students have spent units learning to notice when they're Not Calm. Now they learn the empowering finish: *"I can GET calm."* They practice the full sequence: notice → use a tool → return to calm.

Across the program, there are **5 taught feelings** (Happy, Sad, Mad, Scared, Calm). Tired is included as an always-available option (no standalone unit).

The 12-Unit Sequence

Units	Focus	Body Cue	Key Learning
1-2	FOUNDATION	Calm body vs Not Calm body	2-Zone + Not Calm Menu
3-4	HAPPY	Smiling face, bouncy body	"My face goes UP!"
5-6	SAD	Tears, heavy body	"My body feels heavy"
7-8	MAD	Tight fists, hot face	"My hands go TIGHT!"

Units	Focus	Body Cue	Key Learning
9-10	SCARED	Big eyes, fast heart	"My heart goes FAST!"
11-12	CALM	Soft body, slow breath	"I can GET calm!"

What About TIRED?

Tired is **always available** on the check-in board but is **not a standalone teaching unit**. Here's why:

- Tired is often confused with sad (both low energy)
- The intervention for tired (rest) is different from emotional regulation
- Ending with CALM is more empowering than ending with TIRED
- Tired is a chronic state indicator, not a discrete feeling to practice

How to use Tired:

- Keep TIRED card always visible on check-in board
- When student looks fatigued, offer proactively: "Your body might be TIRED."
- If Tired + Not Calm, run the Not Calm Menu
- If Tired + Calm, acknowledge and continue
- **Extension option:** Add Units 13-14 for TIRED if your students need focused teaching

DELIVERY MODES (HOW YOU RUN IT)

First Waves is taught in short, repeatable routines. Choose the delivery mode that fits your staffing and your students.

Delivery mode	Primary use	Typical length
1:1 micro-lessons	Teach Calm/Not Calm + Not Calm Menu participation	30-60 seconds
Small group	Practice named feelings + body cues with support available	5 minutes
Whole group	Run the full 5-minute routine as a daily group practice	5 minutes

Minimum daily setup:

- 2-Zone visual (Calm / Not Calm)
- Not Calm Menu (Break / Help / Squeeze)
- Today's feeling card

See cheat sheets:

- **First_Waves_Foundational_Cheat_Sheet_V2.md**
- **First_Waves_Supported_Cheat_Sheet_V2.md**
- **First_Waves_Transitional_Cheat_Sheet_V2.1.md**

When to add small-group instruction (readiness)

Add small-group instruction when the student can:

- Indicate Calm or Not Calm (any response mode) with 80% accuracy across 3 consecutive days
- Select from Not Calm Menu with gestural prompt or less
- Attend to routine for 30+ seconds without elopement

When to run the whole group routine (readiness)

Run the whole group routine when the student can:

- Identify 3+ feelings with verbal/gestural prompt or less
- Point to 2+ body locations when asked "Where do you feel it?"
- Participate in belly breath (any effort counts)
- Attend to routine for 3+ minutes

IMPORTANT: Some students will stay in 1:1 micro-lessons all semester. That's success. The goal is connection to their bodies, not advancing through levels.

Mixed-Tier Classrooms

If you have students at different tiers in the same classroom:

- Run the whole group routine at the **lowest common tier** (usually Foundational)
- Provide tier-appropriate **1:1 micro-lessons** for students at higher tiers
- Keep all materials available but only actively teach to each student's tier
- Do NOT expose Foundational students to zone color instruction intended for Transitional students

Prompting + data (keep it simple)

Prompting rule: Ask once. Wait 10 seconds. Then prompt.

Data rule: Track **Independent vs Prompted (I/P)**.

UNITS 1-2: FOUNDATION

Calm vs Not Calm + The Not Calm Menu

The Foundation

Before students can identify specific feelings, they need the most basic distinction: ***Is my body CALM or NOT CALM?***

CALM	NOT CALM
Also called: • Safe body • Ready body • Relaxed body	Also called: • Upset body • Busy body • Body needs help

The Not Calm Menu

When students indicate "Not Calm," they immediately select **what helps**. Start with **3 options only**:

Option	What It Means	How to Deliver
BREAK	Pause demand, go to calm spot	30-60 sec in designated calm area
HELP	Adult co-regulation needed	Adult sits near, breathes with student
SQUEEZE	Sensory/proprioceptive input	Give squeeze immediately

THE SQUEEZE: Use ONE consistent squeeze item in every classroom (e.g., a small soft pillow, stress ball, or weighted item). Standardization means students recognize it anywhere. Call it **SQUEEZE** consistently.

Unit 1 Daily Script (1:1 Micro-Lessons)

Duration: 30-60 seconds per student, multiple times daily (*use throughout all units for Foundational students*)

1. **Show 2-Zone visual:** "Check your body."
2. **Wait 10 seconds.** (Count slowly in your head.)
3. **Ask:** "Calm or Not Calm?" (*If no response after 10 seconds, prompt.*)
4. **If Calm:** "Your body is calm! Great listening!" (*Done*)
5. **If Not Calm:** "Your body needs something. What helps?" (*Show 3-option menu*)
6. **Wait 10 seconds.** (*If no response, default to SQUEEZE and deliver.*)
7. Student selects: BREAK / HELP / SQUEEZE. (*If no selection, default to SQUEEZE.*)
8. **Deliver within 3 seconds:** Give the break/help/squeeze right away
9. **Celebrate:** "You listened to your body! You told me what helps!"

Unit 2 Daily Script (Adding Group)

Continue 1:1 micro-lessons AND add brief whole group practice:

1. **Gather:** "Let's check our bodies!"
2. **Show:** Hold up 2-Zone mat. "Calm... or Not Calm?"
3. **Wait 10 seconds.**
4. **Model:** "My body feels calm today. See? My shoulders are soft."
5. **Check:** "Point to your zone." (*Accept any response*)
6. **Breathe (offer, don't demand):** "I'm going to take ONE belly breath. You can join if you want."
7. **Celebrate:** "You checked your bodies! AMAZING!"

CRITICAL: "Not Calm" is NEVER bad. It is **information**, not misbehavior. We never punish, shame, or negatively reinforce Not Calm.

Using TIRED in Units 1-2 (always available)

- If the student looks droopy/slow or you suspect low energy, offer the card: "Your body might be TIRED."
- Ask the same question: "Calm or Not Calm?" (TIRED can be Calm or Not Calm.)
- If Not Calm, run the Not Calm Menu first, then return to the routine.

UNITS 3-4: HAPPY

Body Cue: Smiling face, bouncy body **Zone:** Calm

Key Phrase: *"When I'm happy, my face goes UP!"*

If a student is Not Calm during Happy unit, run the Not Calm Menu first (Break/Help/Squeeze), then return to the Happy script.

Unit 3: "This Is Happy"

Goal: Students recognize the word "happy" and the happy face.

1. **GATHER:** "Let's check our bodies!"
2. **SHOW:** Hold up HAPPY card. "This is HAPPY. Happy. Happy. Happy."
3. **BODY:** "When we're happy, our face goes UP! Like this!" (*Big smile*)
4. **NAME:** "Can you show me happy? Show me your happy face!"
5. **BREATHE:** "Let's take a happy breath! Breathe in... breathe out..."
6. **CELEBRATE:** "You showed me HAPPY! Look at that beautiful smile! AMAZING!"

Unit 4: "I Feel Happy When..."

Goal: Students connect "happy" to their own experiences.

- Review HAPPY card: "Remember our friend Happy?"
- Connect: "I feel happy when I eat ice cream! What makes YOU happy?"
- Accept all responses: pointing, looking, sounds, words
- Celebrate: "You know what makes you happy! Your body knows!"

UNITS 5-6: SAD

Body Cue: Tears, heavy body **Zone:** Not Calm

Key Phrase: *"When I'm sad, my body feels heavy."*

If a student is Not Calm during Sad unit, run the Not Calm Menu first (Break/Help/Squeeze), then return to the Sad script.

Unit 5: "This Is Sad"

Goal: Students recognize the word "sad" and the sad face.

1. **GATHER:** "Let's check our bodies!"
2. **SHOW:** Hold up SAD card. "This is SAD. Sad. Sad. Sad."
3. **BODY:** "When we're sad, our body feels heavy. Our face goes down." (*Slump shoulders*)
4. **NAME:** "Can you show me sad? Show me your sad face."
5. **BREATHE:** "When we're sad, a breath can help. Let's try one together."
6. **CELEBRATE:** "You showed me SAD! It's okay to feel sad. You listened to your body!"

Unit 6: "I Feel Sad When..."

Goal: Students connect "sad" to their own experiences.

- Review: "Remember our friend Sad? Sometimes we all feel sad."
- Normalize: "I feel sad when my friend goes away. That's okay!"
- Connect: "What makes YOU feel sad?" (Accept all responses)
- **Key message:** "Sad is not bad. It just IS. And a breath can help."

UNITS 7-8: MAD

Body Cue: Tight fists, hot face **Zone:** Not Calm

Key Phrase: "When I'm mad, my hands go TIGHT!"

If a student is Not Calm during Mad unit, run the Not Calm Menu first (Break/Help/Squeeze), then return to the Mad script.

Unit 7: "This Is Mad"

Goal: Students recognize the word "mad" and the mad face.

1. **GATHER:** "Let's check our bodies!"
2. **SHOW:** Hold up MAD card. "This is MAD. Mad. Mad. Mad."
3. **BODY:** "When we're mad, our hands go TIGHT!" (*Make fists*) "Our face feels HOT!"
4. **NAME:** "Can you show me mad? Show me your tight hands!"
5. **BREATHE:** "When we're mad, we can SQUEEZE... then RELEASE. Let's try."
6. **CELEBRATE:** "You showed me MAD! Mad is okay. You used your breath! AMAZING!"

Unit 8: "I Feel Mad When..."

Goal: Students connect "mad" to their own experiences.

- Review: "Remember Mad? Sometimes we ALL feel mad."
- Normalize: "I feel mad when someone takes my things. That's okay!"
- **Key message:** "Mad is not bad. It just tells us something is wrong."

- Practice: Squeeze fists tight... breathe... release. Repeat.

UNITS 9-10: SCARED

Body Cue: Big eyes, fast heart **Zone:** Not Calm

Key Phrase: *"When I'm scared, my heart goes FAST!"*

If a student is Not Calm during Scared unit, run the Not Calm Menu first (Break/Help/Squeeze), then return to the Scared script.

Unit 9: "This Is Scared"

Goal: Students recognize the word "scared" and the scared face.

1. **GATHER:** "Let's check our bodies!"
2. **SHOW:** Hold up SCARED card. "This is SCARED. Scared. Scared. Scared."
3. **BODY:** "When we're scared, our eyes go BIG! Our heart goes FAST!" (*Hand on heart*)
4. **NAME:** "Can you show me scared? Show me your big eyes!"
5. **BREATHE:** "When we're scared, a slow breath helps our heart slow down."
6. **CELEBRATE:** "You showed me SCARED! And you took a breath! You're SO brave!"

Unit 10: "I Feel Scared When..."

Goal: Students connect "scared" to their own experiences.

- Review: "Remember Scared? Everyone feels scared sometimes."
- Normalize: "I feel scared when it's dark. That's okay!"
- **Key message:** "Scared keeps us safe. And a breath helps us feel better."
- Practice: Hand on heart, feel it beat, slow breath, feel it slow.

UNITS 11-12: CALM

Body Cue: Soft body, slow breath **Zone:** Calm

Key Phrase: *"I can GET calm."*

If a student is Not Calm during Calm unit, run the Not Calm Menu first (Break/Help/Squeeze), then return to the Calm script.

Unit 11: "This Is Calm"

Goal: Students recognize the word "calm" and calm body cues.

1. **GATHER:** "Let's check our bodies!"
2. **SHOW:** Hold up CALM card. "This is CALM. Calm. Calm. Calm."
3. **BODY:** "When we're calm, our body is soft. Our breath is slow." (*Soft shoulders*)
4. **NAME:** "Can you show me calm?" (*Prompt a calm body position or point to calm*)

5. **BREATHE:** "One belly breath. In... out..."

6. **CELEBRATE:** "You showed me CALM! Your body can be calm! AMAZING!"

Unit 12: "I Can Get Calm"

Goal: Students practice one simple return-to-calm sequence.

1. **GATHER:** "Let's check our bodies!"

2. **CHECK:** "Calm or Not Calm?" (*Prompt as needed*)

3. **IF NOT CALM:** "Your body needs something. What helps?" (*Run Not Calm Menu. Deliver within 3 seconds.*)

4. **RETURN:** "Now let's try to get calm." (*Back to CALM card + body cue*)

5. **BREATHE:** "One belly breath. In... out..."

6. **CELEBRATE:** "You listened to your body and got calm! You did it!"

TROUBLESHOOTING

Problem	Solution
Student won't look at card	Hold card near preferred item. Accept proximity as success.
Student picks same feeling daily	That's okay! They found a word. Model variety but don't force.
Student upset during mad/scared	Frame as success: "Your body knows this feeling!" Breathe.
Can't/won't do belly breath	Use bubbles, parallel breathing, or just watching.
5 minutes is too long	Start with 2 min. Just SHOW + BREATHE + CELEBRATE.
Student elopes during routine	Don't chase. Try shorter routine tomorrow. Presence = success.
Student escalates during teaching	Stop teaching. Run Not Calm Menu. Return to Calm/Not Calm only.
Different staff do different things	Return to scripts. All staff use exact same words.

IEP GOAL BANK

Copy and adapt these goals. All goals reference **5 taught feelings** (Happy, Sad, Mad, Scared, Calm) plus Tired as always-available.

Emotion Recognition Goals

Goal 1: When shown a feeling face card and asked "Show me [feeling]," [Student] will point to/look at the correct card for 4 out of 5 taught feelings, across 3 consecutive sessions, as measured by teacher data collection.

Goal 2: When presented with 2-Zone visual, [Student] will indicate (point, eye gaze, AAC, or movement) the correct zone (Calm/Not Calm) matching their current state, with 80% accuracy across 10 opportunities over 5 consecutive school days.

Goal 3: When asked "How do you feel?" during daily check-in, [Student] will select a feeling from their choice board for 4 out of 5 days per week, across 4 consecutive weeks.

Body Awareness Goals

Goal 4: When asked "Where do you feel [feeling]?" [Student] will touch an appropriate body part for 3 out of 5 taught feelings, across 3 consecutive sessions.

Goal 5: During daily check-in, [Student] will imitate the teacher's demonstration of a body cue (e.g., tight fists for mad) with 80% accuracy across 10 opportunities.

Self-Regulation Goals

Goal 6: When prompted "Let's take a breath," [Student] will participate in a belly breath (inhale/exhale visible) for 4 out of 5 opportunities, across 4 consecutive weeks.

Goal 7: When experiencing mild dysregulation, [Student] will use a breathing strategy OR select from the Not Calm Menu to return to calm within 3 minutes, for 3 out of 5 occurrences.

Goal 8: When in "Not Calm" state, [Student] will independently select from the Not Calm Menu (Break, Help, or Squeeze) within 10 seconds, with 80% accuracy across 10 opportunities over 5 consecutive school days.

TRANSITIONAL: BRIDGE TO OCEAN ZONES

After completing First Waves Supported tier, some students may be ready for the Transitional tier, which introduces 4-zone colors.

For First Waves students ready to bridge to Ocean Zones, use:

First_Waves_to_Ocean_Zones_Transition_Protocol_V2.md.

The Tier Progression Path

```
First waves Foundational (Calm/Not Calm, 3-tool menu)
  ↓
First waves Supported (Named feelings, optional WALK)
  ↓
First waves Transitional (4-zone colors + characters introduced) ← Still First waves
  ↓
Ocean Zones Emerging (Full 4-zone system with expanded lessons/activities) ← Now Ocean Zones
```

Transitional Readiness Indicators

The student should demonstrate ALL of the following for 10 consecutive school days before starting Transitional:

- Indicates Calm or Not Calm independently (any response mode)
- When Not Calm, initiates tool request (doesn't wait for menu presentation)
- Selects from Not Calm Menu (Break/Help/Squeeze/Walk) with gestural prompt or less

- Identifies at least 4 out of 5 taught feelings with gestural prompt or less
- Points to body location for at least 3 feelings
- Participates in breath choice (Belly or Bubble) without distress
- Expresses current feeling (with or without support)
- Attends for full 5-minute routine
- Tolerates 10-15 minute group activities

NO PRESSURE TO ADVANCE: Some students will thrive staying in Supported tier long-term. The goal is connection to their bodies, not curriculum completion.

What Transitional Introduces (and What It Doesn't)

Transitional DOES introduce:

- 4-zone colors (Blue, Green, Yellow, Red)
- Zone labels paired with Calm/Not Calm
- Brief zone-identification practice
- Simple strategy matching (1-2 strategies per zone)
- Characters introduced one at a time (Manny, Stella, Shelly, Crabby) as brief visual anchors

Transitional does NOT introduce:

- Long character stories or discussion-based lessons
- Long zone discussions
- Extended worksheets
- Complex strategy menus

Adult Reference Only: Feeling-to-Zone Mapping

This table is for **adult reference only**. Do not teach or drill these mappings. Students will learn zone concepts through experience at Transitional tier.

First Waves Feeling	Maps to Ocean Zones
Calm	Green Zone (calm, focused, ready to learn)
Happy	Green Zone (if calm) or Yellow Zone (if hyper/silly)
Sad	Blue Zone (low energy, down)
Tired	Blue Zone (low energy)
Scared	Yellow Zone (elevated, alert, worried)
Mad	Yellow Zone (frustrated) → Red Zone (intense anger)

Note: Feelings don't map 1:1 to zones. Zones are about energy and regulation state, not specific emotions. A student can be Happy in Green Zone (calm happy) or Yellow Zone (hyper happy).

CELEBRATION & COMPLETION

Unit 12 Celebration Ideas

- **Feelings Parade:** Each student holds their favorite feeling card
- **All the Feelings:** Review all cards together (5 taught + Tired)
- **Breath Circle:** Group belly breath — "We ALL know how to breathe!"
- **Certificate Ceremony:** Present certificates individually (match celebration to student sensory preferences)
- **Photo with Feelings:** Student with favorite feeling card

Completion Certificate

FIRST WAVES CHAMPION — This certifies that ____ has completed First Waves: My Body Tells Me. They learned to recognize feelings in their body, name their feelings, and take a calming breath. They learned: I CAN GET CALM! They are a FEELINGS CHAMPION!

First Waves: My Body Tells Me

A Tide Pool Introduction to Ocean Zones

Version 5.0

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