

# Be a Youth First Family

*Resources from Youth First Social Workers and Programs  
for parents and caregivers to use in the home.*

## Practice Self-Care

### Emotional Regulation Through Exercise

Emotional regulation is the ability to effectively manage and respond to an emotional experience. When children become dysregulated they sometimes aren't able to appropriately respond to their negative emotions, which can lead to over-the-top reactions.

Many of us begin our days with exercise. It helps to get us moving and start our days more focused. Exercise has also been shown to reduce stress levels and help us to manage our emotions. It shouldn't come as a surprise that exercise can also help our children. In order to maximize the benefits, these exercises should be done in short intense bursts and ideally in the morning.

This workout can be done anywhere. For this workout you will simply need an interval timer. You can use the app Interval Timer.

Set your timer for 7 rounds of 45 seconds of work and 15 seconds of rest. Do as many repetitions as you can in the allotted time and be ready to exercise with your kids. It is great for them to see you model the technique, and exercise is always more fun together!

- Frog jumps—Jump across the room like a frog
- Bear Walk—Put your hands and feet on the floor with your hips and butt in the air. Take two steps forward and two steps back.
- Gorilla Shuffle—Sink down into a low squat and put your hands on the floor between your feet. Shuffle to the right and to the left.
- Starfish Jumps—These are jumping jacks with your arms and legs spread wide like a starfish.
- Crab Crawl—Sit with your knees bent and place your hands on the floor. Lift your body off the ground and move forward and backward.



#### **About Youth First, Inc.:**

*Youth First's mission is to strengthen youth and families through evidence-based programs that prevent substance abuse, promote healthy behaviors, and maximize student success. Youth First partners with 81 schools across 10 counties to provide 60 Master's level social workers who assess needs, develop and implement prevention plans, and connect students and their families to community resources. Youth First also offers afterschool programs involving parents and caregivers to strengthen families. For more information about Youth First, please visit [youthfirstinc.org](http://youthfirstinc.org) or call 812-421-8336.*

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(Continued)

- Cheetah Run—Run in place as fast as you can.
- Elephant Stomps—Stand with your feet hip width apart and stomp, raising your knees up to hip level.

This workout was found on the website <https://hes-extraordinary.com/improve-emotional-regulation-just-7-minutes-per-day>.

The website also provides more specific information on how exercise works to calm us down and other related information.

