New Addition (Optional alternative Week 1 session):

Week 1: My Small Sensory Cup Introduction

Objective: Teach about sensory processing differences and empower children to recognize their sensory needs and advocate for themselves by using appropriate strategies and tools to create a more inclusive classroom environment.

- **Visual Schedule of Session:** Present the class with the visual schedule, frontloading what they will be doing that day.
- **Interactive Lesson**: Read "My Small Sensory Cup" by Jenna White. Follow the story with a cup demonstration (outlining some examples what might overflow our sensory cup and what helps us empty our cup (e.g. tools and strategies))
- **Optional: Show the video: A Child's View of Sensory Processing**
- **Activity**: Complete cup drawing activity. Draw things that we like in our big cup and things that we don't like in the small cup
- **Discussion/Cool Down:** Students can share what they have lots of room in their cup for and what they have little room for. Finish with Yoga story or activity cards and breathing.

Week 1: Whole-Body Listening & Green Zone Intro

Objective: Teach that whole-body listening can look different for everyone. Introduce sensory strategies to help students regulate their emotions and energy levels.

Materials:

- Visual Schedule of Session
- Book: Listen, Learn, and Grow
- Variety of sensory tools (fidgets, weighted lap pads, ear defenders, etc.)
- Activate Organize Calm Activity Card visuals
- Whole Body Listening posters
- How Students Listen Teacher Guide
- Optional Understanding Interoception infographic

Plan:

- **Visual Schedule of Session:** Present the class with the visual schedule, outlining what they will be doing that day.
- **Interactive Lesson**: Read Listen, Learn, and Grow (Listening Larry book). Review the neurodiversity-affirming explanation of whole-body listening. Emphasize that while some students might sit still and look at the speaker, others might move, use fidgets, or look away to focus better.
- Introduce the Green Zone and the concept of "feeling just right" for learning. Explain that sometimes our bodies and brains are too tired or too wiggly and that it's okay—there are ways to help!

- **Activity**: Guide students through an “activate” (e.g. jumping jacks, high knees), “organize” (e.g. knee squeeze, peanut rockers), “calm” (child’s pose, hoberman ball breathing) activity sequence with use of the activity cards. Explore sensory tools: test out a variety of fidgets, weighted lap pads, noise-cancelling headphones, and visuals to help students explore what helps them feel ready. Guide students in trying these tools while sitting on the carpet or engaging in a simple task.
- **Discussion**: Discuss the importance of movement breaks and breathing exercises, and how different activities can have different impacts on our energy levels and ability to focus. Teach students simple breathing exercises like rainbow breathing, lazy 8 breathing, or “smell the flower, blow out the candle.”
- What is your current energy level (is your body battery full or running low?) What tool helped you the most?
- Allow students to share their favorite ways to listen and when they find it hard to listen. Validate different needs and preferences.
- **Resources:** Provide “Whole-Body Listening” posters and “How Students Listen” Teacher Guide.

Week 2: Blue Zone

Objective: Introduce the blue zone, associated body signals, and potential strategies

Materials:

- Visual Schedule of Session
- Blue Zone social story
- Chart paper/marker for class "Regulation Strategies" toolbox
- Blue Zone body signals poster (one)

Plan:

- **Visual Schedule of Session:** Present the class with the visual schedule, outlining what they will be doing that day.
- **Interactive Lesson**: Introduce blue zone and potential body signals with use of the Blue Zone social story.
- **Activity**: As a group, start creating a "Regulation Strategies" toolbox with pictures/labels of tools and techniques students can use when they feel overstimulated or need to focus. Teach students simple exercises like knee squeezes, shoulder squeezes, peanut rock. We will continue adding strategies each week.
- **Discussion**: Discuss the importance of movement breaks and breathing exercises, and how different activities can have different impacts on our energy levels and ability to focus.
- How is your body feeling/what body signals do you feel after our activities? What helped you the most?

- Allow students to share their favorite ways to regulate when they are in the blue zone. *Emphasize sharing strategies that we can use in the classroom/at school.* Validate different needs and preferences.
- **Resources**: Share Blue Zone body signals poster.

Week 3: Yellow Zone

Objective: Introduce the Yellow Zone and help students recognize common body signals and emotions connected to it (e.g., excited, silly, worried, frustrated).

Materials:

- Visual Schedule of Session
- Yellow Zone social story
- Body mapping activity (one per student)
- Stickers, crayons, markers, coloured pencils, bingo dabbers, etc. for body mapping
- Yellow Zone body signals poster (one)

Plan:

- **Visual Schedule of Session:** Present the class with the visual schedule, outlining what they will be doing that day.
- **Interactive Lesson**: Introduce yellow zone and potential body signals with use of the Yellow Zone social story.
- **Activity**: Body-mapping activity - **draw**, **stick stickers**, or **colour** to show how your body feels in the Yellow Zone. Add yellow zone strategies to the sensory toolbox.
- **Discussion**: Review the importance of movement breaks and breathing exercises, and how different activities can have different impacts on our energy levels and ability to focus.
- Allow students to share their favorite ways to regulate when they are in the yellow zone. Validate different needs and preferences.
- **Resources**: Share Yellow Zone body signals poster.

Week 4: Red Zone; Upstairs Brain and Downstairs Brain

Objective: Teach students about Dan Siegel's concept of the upstairs brain (thinking, problem-solving) and downstairs brain (reacting, keeping safe). Introduce the Red zone and potential body signals with use of social story. Emphasize the difference between the Yellow Zone (in control) and the Red Zone (loss of control).

Materials:

- Visual Schedule of Session
- Upstairs-downstairs-brain-lesson
- Upstairs downstairs brain youtube video (start at 0.54 seconds- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dk1Nt-xnSGI&t=55s)

- Upstairs brain downstairs brain visual (see options)
- Red Zone social story
- Build Your Staircase activity (one per student)
- Red Zone body signals poster (one)

Plan:

- **Interactive Lesson:**
  Introduce Dan Siegel's concept of Upstairs Brain and Downstairs Brain (option to use upstairs-downstairs-brain-lesson)
    - **Upstairs brain**: Helps you think, solve problems, and make good choices.
    - **Downstairs brain**: Keeps you safe, helps with big feelings like fear or anger, but sometimes makes us react without thinking.
    - **Optional Visuals**:
        - Show this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dk1Nt-xnSGI&t=55s
        - House printable:
            - Cut top from bottom, laminate, and use brass fastener for pivot point to show disconnecting from upstairs brain, OR
            - Attach staircase with Velcro and remove to symbolize losing access to upstairs brain
        - Draw a simple house with two levels and a connecting staircase, then erase the staircase to symbolize losing access to the upstairs brain.

  Introduce Red Zone and associated body signals using the Red Zone social story.

- **Discussion:**
  Talk about how it's normal for our downstairs brain to take over sometimes, especially when experiencing big emotions. Brainstorm strategies together to "rebuild the staircase" and reconnect to the upstairs brain (deep breathing, asking for help, taking a break). Add strategies to the class toolkit. Emphasize that having strategies ready helps us feel safe and regain control.
- **Activity:**
  Students complete a "Build Your Staircase" activity, writing, drawing, or cutting & pasting strategies that can help them move from their downstairs brain back to their upstairs brain.
- **Resources:** Share the Red Zone body signals poster.

Weeks 5: Review and Consolidation of Learning

Objective: Review concepts from previous weeks, check understanding of different zones, body signals, regulation strategies.

Materials:

- Visual Schedule of Session
- Sample Zones of Regulation Social Stories

- Coloured Popsicle sticks to match Zones (four per student; red, yellow, blue, green)
- Self-regulation toolkit (one per student)
    - Tailor version to age/ability level of students
- All zones body signals poster (one)

Plan:

- **Interactive Lesson**: Body-signals social stories. Read out the social stories provided from the sample (or create your own of similar content). Once you read the story, ask the students "which zone do you think _____ is in based on the body signals in the story?" Provide each student with 4 popsicle sticks (in the 4 zones colors) and have them raise the color popsicle stick to answer the question. You can create similar stories like the samples provided. Remember to emphasize body signals that might be felt in each zone when creating your story so students practice identifying body signals and linking them to zones/emotions. These will act as the key indicators for which zone is being described. The story portion can be changed in many ways depending on the developmental level of the students in the class, trying to make it relatable to them.
    - E.g. Sophie stayed up late playing video games. She didn't get very much sleep before she had to get up for school. Her body feels heavy, her breath is slow and she feels her heart beating slow also. She feels she doesn't have enough energy to participate in class, so she puts her head down on her desk to rest. What zone do you think Sophie is in? A: BLUE zone
- **Discussion:** Guide students to reflect on what they have learned about their body signals, zones, and preferred strategies. Emphasize that everyone's toolbox looks different and that having a variety of strategies gives us more choices when we need to regulate.
- **Activity:** Each student creates their own self-regulation toolbox or sensory circuit. Students select strategies from the class list that work best for them and organize them into a personal plan/toolbox.

Week 6: Resilience & Growth Mindset

Objective: Introduce the concepts of Resilience and Growth Mindset, and how we can use strategies from previous weeks to manage frustration and anxiety in order to persevere.

Materials:

- Visual Schedule of Session
- Growth mindset book: e.g. The Magical Yet, The Power of Yet, Your Thoughts Matter
- Optional "Yet" activity (one per student)
    - Older students: Growth Mindset Reflect and Plan worksheet
    - Younger students: Yet fill-in-the-blank worksheet

Plan:

- **Interactive Lesson**: Read story relating to Growth Mindset (e.g. Magical Yet, Your Thoughts Matter: Negative Self-Talk, Growth Mindset). Discuss the difference between growth mindset and fixed mindset.

- **Discussion:** Encourage students to reflect on something they are still working on and identify as a personal "yet" goal (e.g., "I can't tie my shoes yet," "I can't stay calm when I lose a game yet") and strategies from the class list that can help them persevere when things feel hard. Reinforce that these tools and strategies can be used both in and out of school to support learning, relationships, and resilience. Discuss how strategies can help us keep trying even when things feel hard.
- **Activity A:** Students get time to finish their individual toolkits
- **Activity B:** If students are done their personal toolkits, they can complete "Yet" activity:
    - Reflecting on strategies practiced in previous weeks, and the tools they have in their toolkits, students identify self-regulation strategies they can try when things feel hard. For older students, use Growth Mindset Reflect and Plan worksheets. For younger students, use fill in the blank "I can't ____ yet" worksheet, with space to cut/paste strategies and draw picture.