

4 Regulation-Based Movement Strategies for Pediatric OTs



yoga
phamily

Welcome

Pediatric occupational therapists support emotional regulation, sensory processing, and attention every day — often with limited time and space. Purposeful, developmentally appropriate movement can be a powerful regulation tool when framed correctly and used intentionally.

This guide shares regulation-based strategies grounded in:

- Developmental stages
- Breath and movement integration
- Trauma-informed teaching principles
- Real-world pediatric settings

THE STRATEGIES

Proprioceptive & Vestibular Regulation Through Dynamic Movement

Key movements:

- Jumping from Star Pose → Tree Pose
- Cat–Cow

Strategy 1:

★ Jumping from Star Pose → Tree Pose

OT focus: Proprioceptive + vestibular input, postural control, motor planning

How to use:

- Jump out wide into Star Pose
- Land softly and transition into Tree Pose
- Alternate sides slowly

Why it supports regulation:

The jump provides strong proprioceptive input, while transitioning into Tree Pose requires balance, body awareness, and controlled slowing. This shift from big movement to stillness helps the nervous system organize.

Clinical use:

- Before fine motor tasks
- After high-energy play
- To support attention and impulse control

Strategy 2:

🐱 Cat–Cow

OT focus: Body awareness, spinal mobility, breath coordination

How to use:

- On hands and knees
- Inhale into Cow (arch)
- Exhale into Cat (round)

Why it supports regulation:

Cat–Cow provides rhythmic, predictable movement that supports regulation while gently integrating breath. It's grounding without requiring stillness.

Clinical use:

- During transitions
- After emotional escalation
- To re-center attention

THE STRATEGIES

Strategy 3:

Regulation Through Predictable Class Structure

Children feel safer and regulate more easily with consistent routines.

Apply this by:

- Starting with a grounding ritual
- Embedding movement before seated tasks
- Ending with a predictable closing activity

Strategy 4:

Trauma-Informed Language During Movement

Use invitational language:

- "You might choose to try..."
- "If it feels right for you..."
- "You can rest whenever you need."

Why it matters:

Choice supports autonomy, safety, and nervous system regulation.

CLINICAL TAKEAWAYS

These strategies are:

- Developmentally appropriate (ages 2–18)
- Easy to document
- Adaptable for clinic, school, or home
- Aligned with pediatric OT goals
- Low-prep and equipment-free

Want Session-Ready Regulation Strategies You Don't Have to Re-Create Every Week?

You're already doing the hard work:

- supporting dysregulation
- managing transitions
- adapting on the fly
- documenting everything

But most OTs were never trained to use movement this intentionally — or efficiently.

That's what the full training solves.

The strategies in this guide are just a small sample of the full framework used inside my AOTA-approved course.

Inside the full training, you'll get:

- ✓ 20 AOTA-approved contact hours
- ✓ Session-ready regulation sequences (no guessing)
- ✓ Age-specific movement for real pediatric settings
- ✓ Trauma-informed language you can use immediately
- ✓ Easy-to-document strategies that protect your license
- ✓ Self-paced, on-demand access

This is for you if:

- You want practical regulation tools, not fluff
- You're short on prep time
- You work with sensory, attention, or emotional regulation goals

This is not for you if:

- You're looking for yoga poses without clinical reasoning

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AOTA-Approved Provider

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