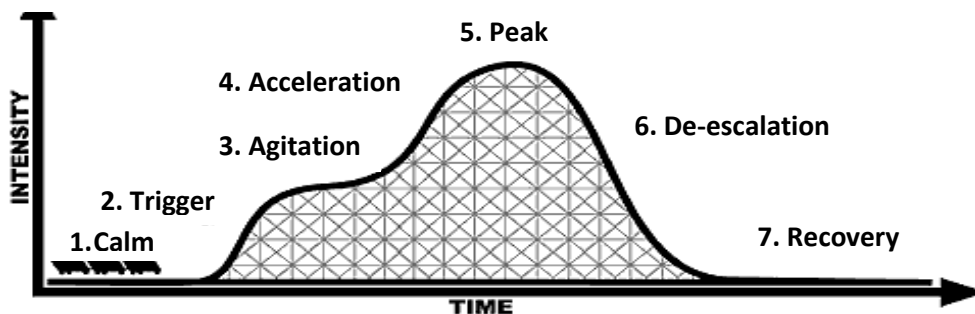


Boone County Schools Mental Health Coalition: The Escalation Model



The escalation model can help us determine the best strategies to address disruptive behavior and reinforce appropriate behavior.



Strategies to use across the escalation model

1. Calm: Students are cooperative and compliant. When students are calm, it is an ideal time to reinforce appropriate behaviors and teach new skills to prevent escalation when frustrated

Strategies

- Active supervision
- Build relationships and provide specific praise
- Teach and practice expectations and skills (e.g. problem solving)
- Maintain classroom structure
- Use behavioral momentum: before asking student to tend to difficult task, request that they complete is less challenging/easier

2. Trigger: Anticipate triggers to provide prevention. Examples of triggers: being asked to do something they don't want to do/is difficult; abrupt changes in schedule; hunger; tired, etc.

Strategies

- Modify work difficulty or length
- Provide advanced notice of changes in schedules
- Chunk assignments
- Provide one on one attention on difficult work
- Allow breaks
- Provide food if hungry
- Give choices

3. Agitation Phase: The student may be staring into space, have low eye contact, and/or no/low conversational language. Students may also be moving in and out of groups, off task, have busy hands, and eye rolling.

If behaviors are not intervened before the beginning of the agitation phase, the behavior will escalate.

Strategies

- Teacher language tips for requesting:
 - It seems like you are struggling
 - How can I help?
 - Do you want to take your assignment to the (setting) to work?
 - Do you want to work on this with a partner?

4. Acceleration Phase: This is the phase when we most often notice the problem. The student may be arguing, questioning, provoking others, or refusing to do work.

Strategies

- Maintain calmness, respect, and detachment
- Most powerful response is no response or to pause
 - Focus on the behavior, not the student; instead of “you are disrupting class”, you can say, ‘your voice level is disrupting the class.’”
 - Matter-of-fact tone
 - Prompt, Redirect, Request

5. Peak: The student’s behavior is out of control; students may assault others, hurt themselves, cry hysterically, or destroy property.

Strategies

- Do not talk or engage student
- Remove all triggers
- Have a safety plan and know how to implement
- Keep everyone safe

6. De-Escalation Phase: The student may withdraw, refuse responsibility, blame others, and/or not want to talk.

Strategies

- Avoid forcing apologies
- Allow student time to calm down
- Avoid processing with student
- Avoid asking the student: Why did you do it?

7. Recovery: Student may still be unlikely to want to talk about the situation but should be calmer and not irritated.

Educator should strive to:

- Acknowledge emotions • Gain understanding from student perspective • Debrief about choices • Make a mutual plan for prevention