



Preschool Pyramid Model Practices Session 5

Addressing Challenging Behavior

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Acknowledgments

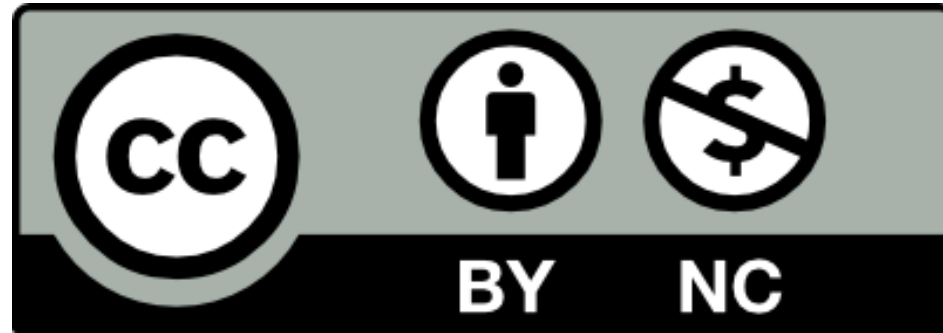
The content for this training day was adapted with permission from the preschool Pyramid Model practices training modules developed by the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI)

Additional acknowledgments:

- Prevent, Teach, Reinforce for Young Children (PTR-YC) book
- Instructionally Enhanced Pyramid Model Classroom Implementation Guide

Thank you to all our Michigan preschools who contributed examples to the content!

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Group Agreements

We are Responsible

- Return on time from breaks
- Take care of our needs

We are Engaged

- Share “air time”
- Plan to participate in multiple ways
 - Chat, breakout rooms, polls, reactions, unmute
 - Ask questions

Training Effectiveness

- At the end of the session, you will be asked to provide feedback on today's training
- Results will be used to make improvements to professional learning and for reporting to TA Center stakeholders
- One of the feedback questions you will see is related to promoting and positively portraying diversity among educators and learners (e.g., focus on asset-based language, positive representation of multiple identities)

Purpose of the Series

The Pyramid Practices sessions are designed to equip teaching staff with the information they need to implement the Pyramid Practices with fidelity, leading to improved social and emotional outcomes for children.

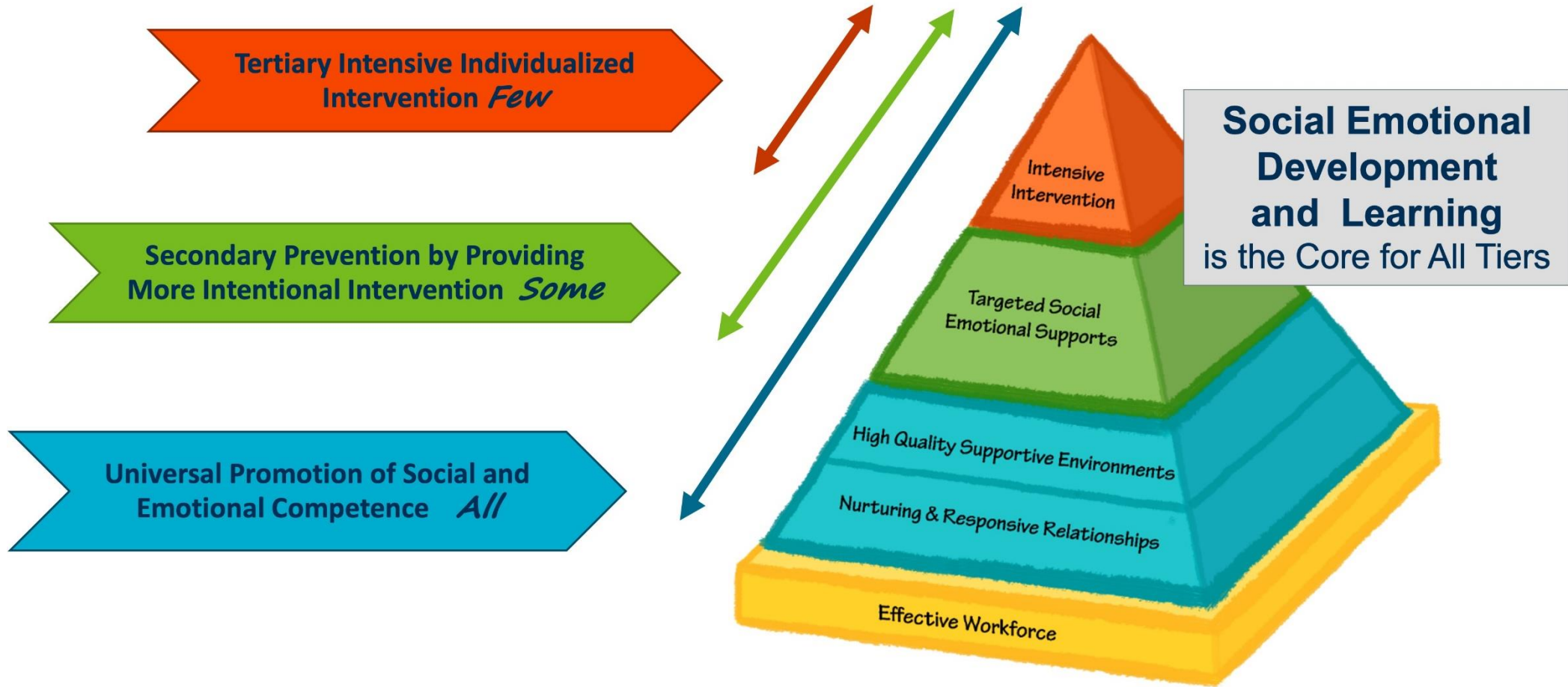
Intended Outcomes

- Identify the three essential strategies for responding to challenging behavior
- Explore factors that can impact our response when challenging behavior occurs
- Identify stages of escalation and adult responses
- Explain the teacher's role in the development of an individualized behavior support plan

Agenda

- 1.0 Responding to Challenging Behavior
- 2.0 Factors Impacting Responses to Challenging Behavior
- 3.0 De-Escalating Behaviors
- 4.0 Developing a Behavior Support Plan
- 5.0 Wrap-Up and Next Steps

Pyramid Model Practices



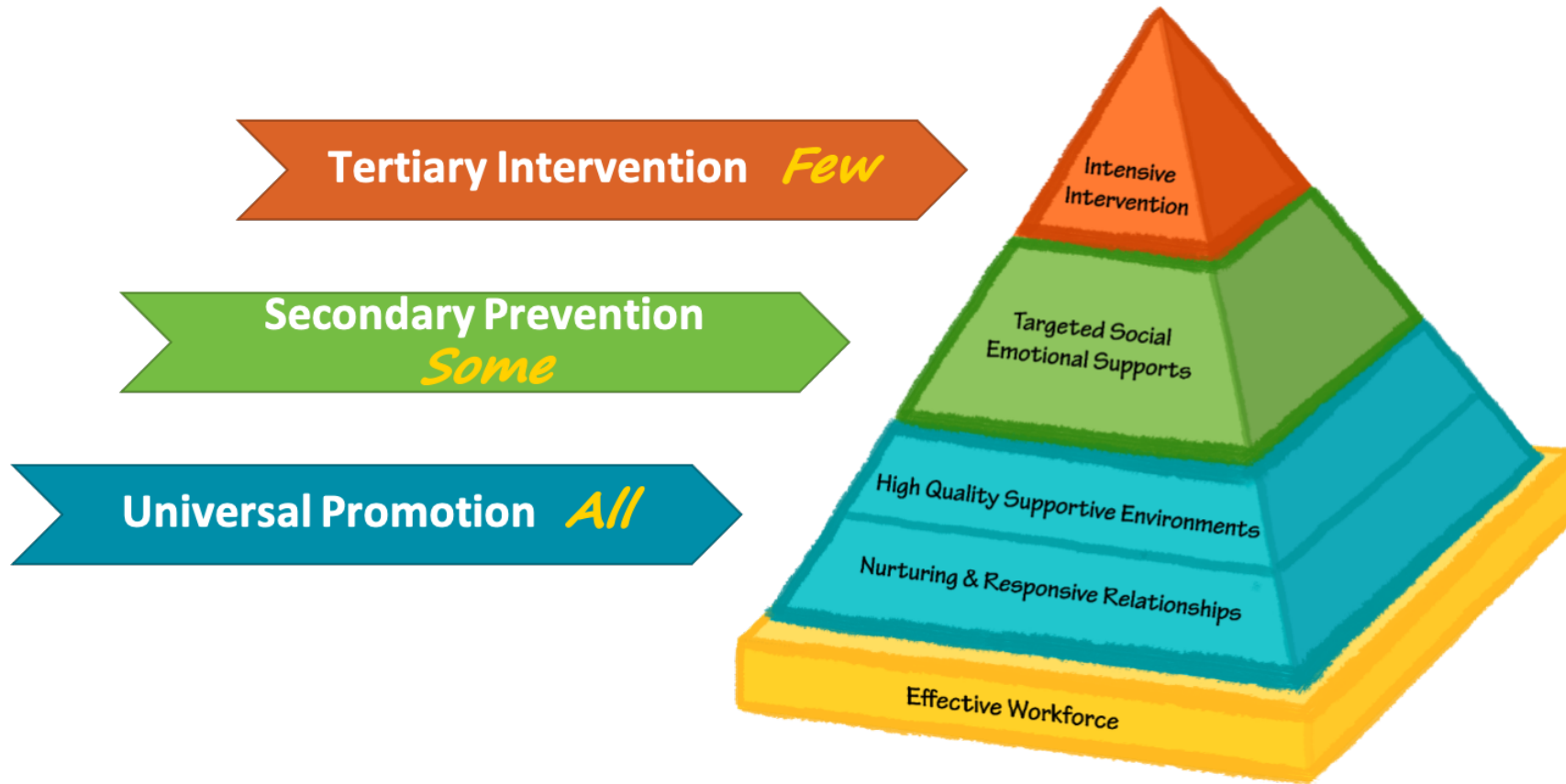


Activity

- Review the slides in your workbook; these are all slides that were shared during Session 4 about understanding behavior
- As you review, record 2-3 big ideas that you remember from the session
- Be ready to share

1.0 Responding to Challenging Behavior

Promotion and Prevention



Even when these practices are in place, some young children will engage in challenging behavior

Activity 1.1

- Review the following sections on the Pyramid Model Practices Implementation Checklist:
 - Understanding Challenging Behavior (pg. 12)
 - Responses to Challenging Behavior & De-escalating Behavior (pg. 13)
 - Participate in the Functional Behavior Assessment (pg. 14)
 - Participate in the Development of a Behavior Support Plan (pg. 15)
- Place checkmarks next to the items that you consistently do well
- Star the items you want to learn more about or possibly get support from your coach
- You'll be using this checklist during your coaching sessions!

Challenging Behavior: 3 Essential Practices

1. Use developmentally appropriate strategies such as:
 - Redirection
 - Planned ignoring
2. Respond to child by stating the expected behavior in positive terms or providing an acceptable alternative
3. Provide positive attention or positive descriptive feedback when the child behaves appropriately

Redirection

Redirection is a strategy that is intended to guide a child's behavior from an inappropriate to appropriate behavior

- Interrupt and redirect the child to an alternative behavior using minimal attention to the challenging behavior, limited discussion, and without emotion
- Focus on stating what the child should or could do that is acceptable

Redirection: Examples

- **Example 1:** If a child takes another child's toy, offer a more appropriate social skill: "You can trade toys with Serenity."
- **Example 2:** If a child is throwing blocks, you might redirect the child by saying: "Let's build. You put your block here!"



Planned Ignoring

- Planned ignoring is a strategy in which caregivers make a conscious effort to ignore undesirable behaviors to prevent reinforcing them
- Keep interactions with children at a minimum
 - Ensure the child's safety while providing minimal or no attention to the challenging behavior
- Must be accompanied by high levels of attention and support for expected and alternative behaviors
- Works best if the function of the behavior is attention
- Peers or other adults must also be ignoring the behavior
- **Ignore the behavior, not the child**

Planned Ignoring: Example

- If another child is hurt, attend to the child who is hurt. Provide brief redirection to the child exhibiting behavior.
- Shift your attention to the other children without saying anything to the child who is being disruptive.

“Tim, it looks like you got hurt. Come sit with me. Sarah, you can stack the blocks.”

Additional Strategies

If challenging behavior occurs, the teaching team might...

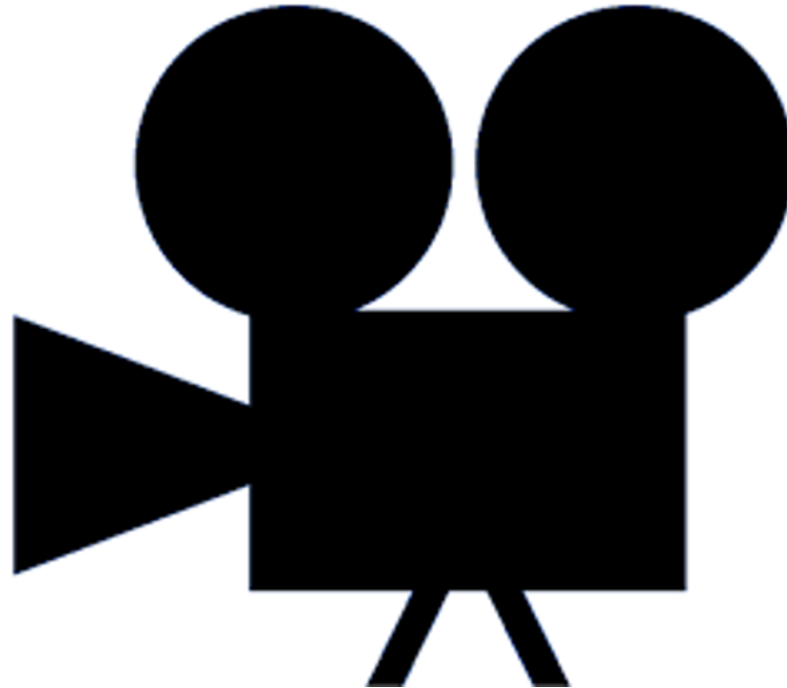
- Remind the child of the posted behavior expectations and rules
- State natural and logical consequences **AND** follow through with stated actions
- Provide support to children who are angry or upset by helping with problem solving
- **Resources:** Tips for Responding to Challenging Behavior in Young Children and Talking with Families about Problem Behavior: Do's and Don'ts



Activity 1.2

- Locate the **Video Response** slide in your materials
- As we view the following video, mark either the Yes or No column if you see the following strategies used:
 1. Use developmentally appropriate strategies
 2. Respond to child by stating the expected behaviors in positive terms or providing an acceptable alternative
 3. Provide positive attention or positive descriptive feedback when the child behaves appropriately

Video: Responding to Behavior



Video Response

Essential Strategies	Yes	No
1. Use developmentally appropriate strategies		
2. Respond to the child by stating the expected behavior in positive terms or providing an acceptable alternative		
3. Provide positive attention or positive descriptive feedback when the child behaves		

Important Point!

”The use of these response strategies is intended to reduce the likelihood of challenging behavior but will not be effective without careful and intentional attention to teaching social skills and emotional competencies.”

-Strain, Joseph, Hemmeter, Barton, & Fox (2017)

Resources: Partnering with Families

- [Help Us Stay Calm](#)

- Backpack Connections

- [Teachable Moments: How to Help Your Child Avoid Meltdowns](#)
- [How to Help Your Child Stop Whining](#)

Help Us Stay Calm

Strategies that help you and your child during challenging behavior

Stay Calm | Reflect | Re-Connect

When your child is engaged in challenging behavior or experiencing anger, stress, sadness or frustration, it is important to stay calm. If you express your anger and frustration, it might result in more challenging behavior from your child. Remaining calm will provide the safety and support your child needs as they learn how to calm themselves.

Step 1: Calm Yourself



Drink some water; Have a snack

1,2,3,4....

Count until calm



Connect with a friend



Think something positive or fun about your child



Take deep breaths



Ask for help

National Center for Pyramid Model INNOVATIONS
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Teachable Moments: How to Help Your Child Avoid Meltdowns

Brooke Brogie, Alyson Jinn & Jill Giacomini

Does this sound familiar? Your children are playing in the living room while you clean up the kitchen. You answer the phone, and a few minutes later, one child is angry and screaming because someone took her toy and the other isn't upset because her sister hit her. It is an excited moment like this that parents often find themselves trying to teach rules or give long explanations. But in these moments such as this, your child is usually not even hearing your words let alone learning the rule. This is not a teachable moment.

There are countless teachable moments daily when skills can be taught and emotions discussed, such as during playtime in the car or bath time.

can ask for help, get a timer or trade her sister for another toy.

- **Bath Time (teaching rule):** "The water stays in the tub. You can use the cup and pour water into another cup or you can pour water on your body."
- **Car Time (teaching friendship skill):** "I saw that your friend, Bella was sad at school today and you made her a picture. I bet that made her..."



How to Help Your Child Stop Whining

Brooke Brogie, Alyson Jinn & Jill Giacomini

There are few behaviors that are more frustrating to parents than whining. Yet for children, whining can be a quick and easy way to get a parent's full attention. Children whine when they feel overwhelmed by an emotion or desire and do not have the vocabulary to express their feelings. They also might whine when they do not have the skills to complete a task or because they feel tired, hungry, powerless, or lonely. Simply put, children whine to ask for help. You can help your child figure out WHY he is whining and help him find a better way to communicate.

Your child will continue to whine until you teach him a new skill. When you give into his whining or cede to the check-out course, you are teaching him that his whining behavior is working and he should use it again. When you take away your son's favorite toy because he whined, you increase his feelings of insecurity and actually also increase the likelihood that he will whine more often. Instead, you can teach him to use his words to tell you about his feelings and, together, you can come up with a way to solve his problem.

- **Try This at Home**
 - If your child often whines when she is tired, consider napping earlier before or after her nap time, when she is rested.
 - If your child often whines when she is hungry or bored, hope for the best but be prepared for the worst. Carry a small snack, pack a coloring book and crayons, or have a special activity ready to go that is only for this type of occasion. For example, you could have a basket of pretzels, books, or toys that you only take out when you are on the phone.
 - Teach your child that his needs get met when he uses his words. If he is whining for milk, tell him, "You can say, 'daddy, milk please.'" When he uses these words, follow up by saying, "Of course I'll get your milk! Thank you for using your words."
- In a calm and happy moment, play with whining. Make a stop sign with "red, stop" on one side and "green, go" on the other. He can pretend to be the dad and you can pretend to be the child. Ask him for a toy using a variety of voices—whining, yelling, talking and whispering and after each request ask him, "Stop or go?" He too can practice using each kind of voice and when he whines, you can say, "No Whyn!" When he asks for the toy in a talking voice you can say excitedly, "Yes, yes! Here's the toy and you get a kiss too!"

Practice at School

At school, children are encouraged to use their words either verbally, using sign language, or using other forms of communication. Teachers enroll children when they write to instead use their words to express their wants and needs. A teacher might say, "I don't understand what you want when you whine. You can use your words to tell me what you need and then I can help you." Often a child just needs a reminder to use words and if needed, the teacher can give the child an example of what to say. "You sound like you are still hungry. You can say 'more crackers please.'" Or, the teacher can show the child how to ask for a cracker in sign language.

The Bottom Line

Whining is a common way for your child to tell you that she needs help. Until she learns a new way to get your attention, she will likely continue to whine. You can teach and show your child how to use her words to clearly express her needs. Children who are confident talking about their emotions and feel heard by their parents are less likely to whine.

More Information

More information and resources on this and other topics are available on our website, ChallengingBehavior.org.




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2.0 Factors Impacting Responses to Challenging Behavior



Activity 2.1

When prompted, answer the following questions in the chat:

1. What is the purpose of responding to challenging behavior? What do you want to see happen when you respond?
2. What factors might impact your response to challenging behavior? Consider factors about the child, the behavior, the situation, and yourself

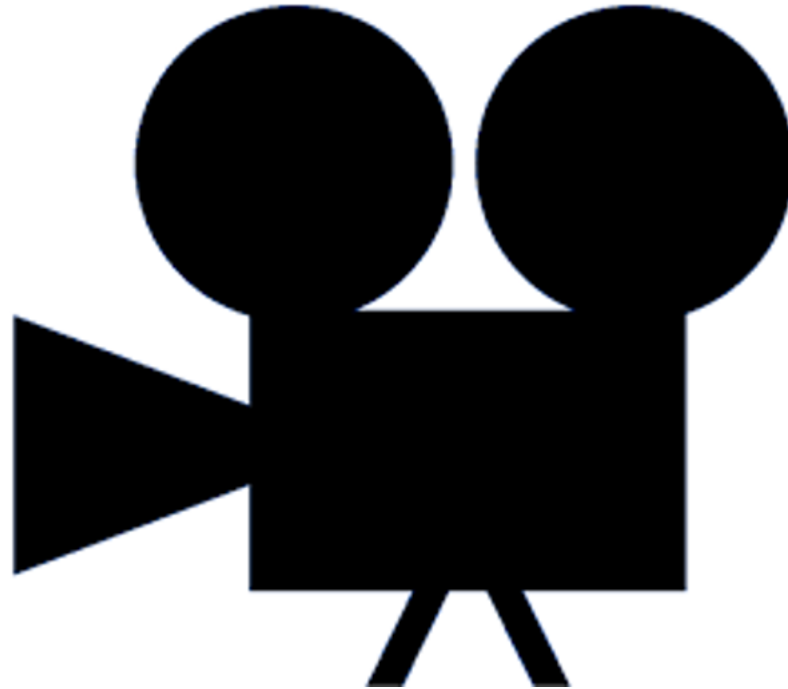
Factors Impacting Responses to Challenging Behavior

- Implicit bias
- Elements of the situation
- Person's decision state
- Deficit thinking vs. strength-based attributions to behavior

What is Implicit Bias?

- Definition: The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an **unconscious** manner (Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, 2018)
- Our behavior is not always aligned with what we believe
 - Bias influences our responses to children
 - Awareness of bias can decrease biased responding

Video: Gilliam Bias Experiment



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ucEAcIMkS0c>

Identify When and How You Respond

- Become aware of when and how you respond to challenging behavior
- Pause to reflect on:
 - Elements of the situation
 - Personal decision states
- Identify what the behavior is really trying to communicate, and if needed, develop a plan to address your response

When Considering How to Respond

- First, **pause** to consider the **elements of the situation**:
 - Am I making a snap decision?
 - Is this a high-stakes situation that could result in the use of exclusionary practices?
 - What influences my response? Time of day? Location of the incident?
- Check in with yourself and how you are feeling (e.g. **personal decision state**)
 - What types of statements am I telling myself? (I'm so tired, I'm so stressed, I'm so frustrated, etc.)
 - Is how I am feeling impacting my response to the child?

Example: Adult ABC

Antecedent/Trigger	Behavior	Consequence/Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delilah has interrupted the story at circle 4 times today• This is the second week in a row Delilah has done this and her teacher is losing patience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The teacher asks Delilah to sit at a table in the back until she can stop calling out	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delilah becomes visibly upset and begins crying for a prolonged time.• The longer she is at the table, the more intense the crying.

Antecedent/Trigger	What Can We Do Here?	Behavior	Consequence/Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delilah has interrupted the story at circle 4 times today • This is the second week in a row Delilah has done this and her teacher is losing patience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher checked herself, counted to 3 in her head, and recognized that she was tired and irritable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher reminds Delilah to raise her hand and wait to hear her name before offering her answer • She showed her the visual prompt associated with the rule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delilah starts to yell out again but sees the visual. • This time Delilah raises her hand but still yells out. • The teacher thanks her for raising her hand and reminds her to wait to hear her name next time. Delilah nods and smiles



Activity 2.2

- Independently, reflect on a situation in your classroom in which you responded to a child's behavior, and the behavior escalated
- Take a few minutes to think about or journal about your responses to these questions:
 - How might bias, elements of the situation, or your personal decision states have played a part in your response?
 - Looking back, how could you have changed your response in a way that may have led to de-escalation?
 - How can we better create opportunities to pause and reflect before responding to challenging behavior in the future?

Reframing Thinking

- Am I making assumptions about why the child behaves the way that they do?
- Have I already passed judgment on whether the behavior was good or bad?
- What leads me to believe that the behavior was inappropriate or desirable?
- What about the behavior leads to my interpretation?
- Am I expecting this child to do something that I am not expecting of the other children and why?



Examining Our Thinking

Deficit Thinking:

- Can be an outcome of negative and incorrect attributions about children or their families
- May be the result of unexamined bias
- Often is directed at children of color
- Reinforces teacher perception the child and/or family is responsible for any perceived problems
- Negatively impacts what attributions are given to behavior

Dray, Barbara J, and Debora Basler Wisneski. "Mindful Reflection as a Process for Developing Culturally Responsive Practices." *Teaching Exceptional Children* 44.1 (2011): 28–36.

Strength-Based Approach

Underlying beliefs of the strengths-based approach include:

- All children and families have strengths and abilities
- Children grow and develop from their strengths and abilities
- The problem is the problem – the child is not the problem
- When children and those around them (including educators) appreciate and understand the child's strengths, then the child is better able to learn and develop



Activity 2.3

- Locate the **Reframing Our Thinking** handout in your materials
- For each example, read the Deficit Thinking statement and see if you can reframe it into a Strength-Based Thinking statement
- The first two examples are completed and will be discussed as a large group

Neutralizing Routines

- What is a neutralizing routine?
 - An instructional vs. reactive response
 - Quick, clear, doable action
 - Interrupts the chain of events so behavior doesn't escalate
- Plan for neutralizing routines before the behavior occurs
- Consider:
 - Elements of the situation
 - Personal decision state
 - Strength-based thinking vs. deficit thinking



Activity 2.4

- Locate the examples of Neutralizing Routines in your materials (PAR and TRY)
- What others have you seen? Do you have one of your own?

Developing Neutralizing Routines

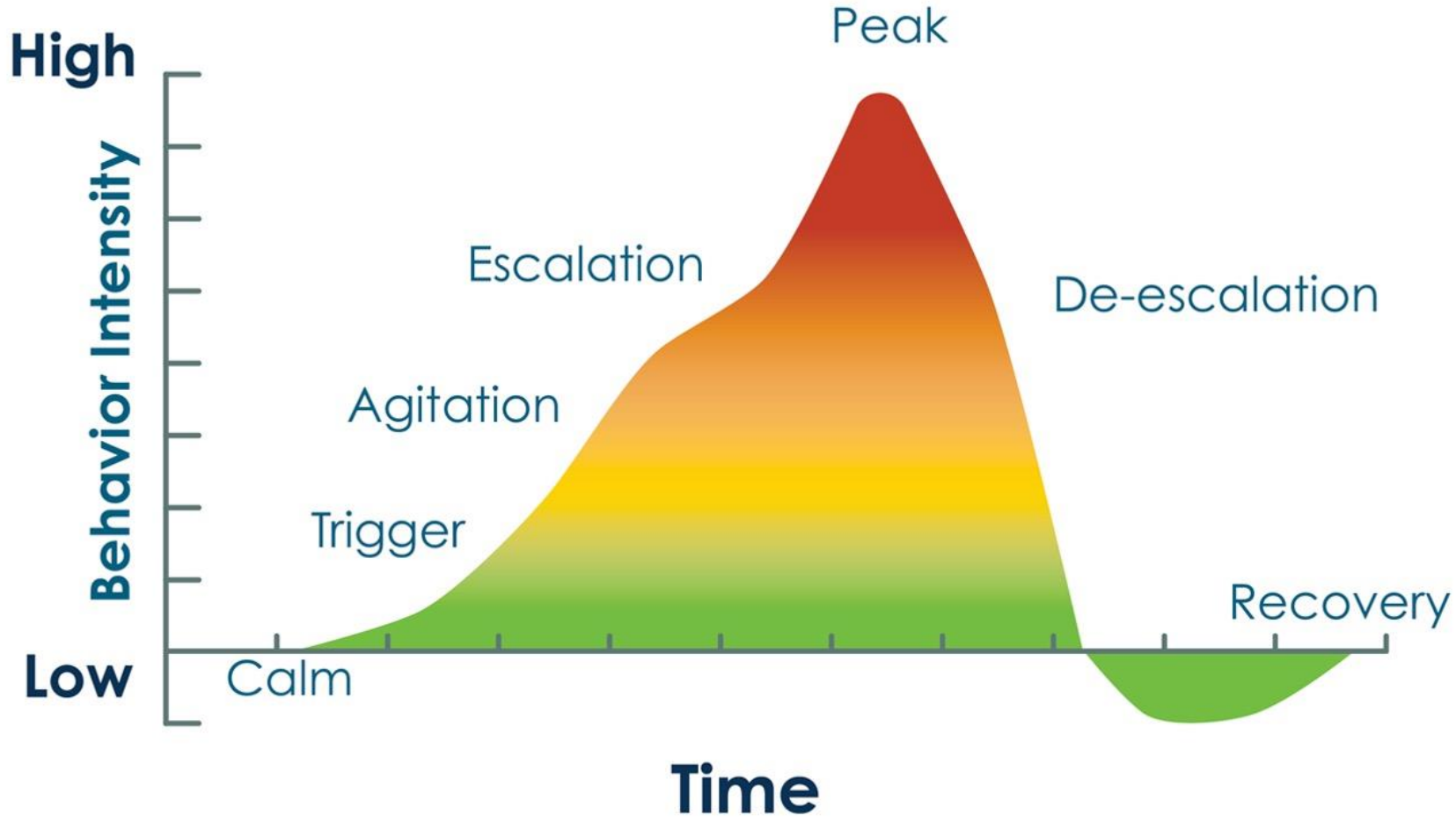
- Identify behaviors that push your buttons
- Develop a routine that:
 - Includes an if-then statement (e.g., If I feel tired, overwhelmed or agitated by the child's behavior, then I will...)
 - Is brief
 - Is clear
 - Is doable
 - Interrupts the chain of events
- Plan for your response ahead of time

Activity 2.5

- Now it's your turn to give it a try!
- Review the information that we covered on the **Developing a Neutralizing Routine** handout
- Fill out the **My Neutralizing Routine** document to begin developing your own neutralizing routine
- When prompted, share the following with your small group:
 - Have you used a neutralizing routine in the past? If so, what was it?
 - What did you include in your new neutralizing routine?
 - How might this strategy help support children in your classroom?

3.0 De-Escalating Behaviors

Escalation Cycle



Example of Escalation Cycle

- **Calm:** Tyler is playing with an airplane.
- **Trigger:** Sarah comes over and grabs the airplane
- **Agitation:** Tyler yells “give it back!”
- **Escalation:** Tyler runs to Sarah and yells “that’s mine!” and grabs the airplane.
- **Peak:** Tyler grabs Sarah’s arm and tries to bite her
- **De-escalation:** Teacher separates the children. Tyler stomps his feet with eyes darting and teeth clenched. Tyler follows teacher prompt to take a deep breath.
- **Recovery:** Tyler sits with his head in his arms and pouts. After a couple of minutes, Tyler plays with blocks.

Activity 3.1

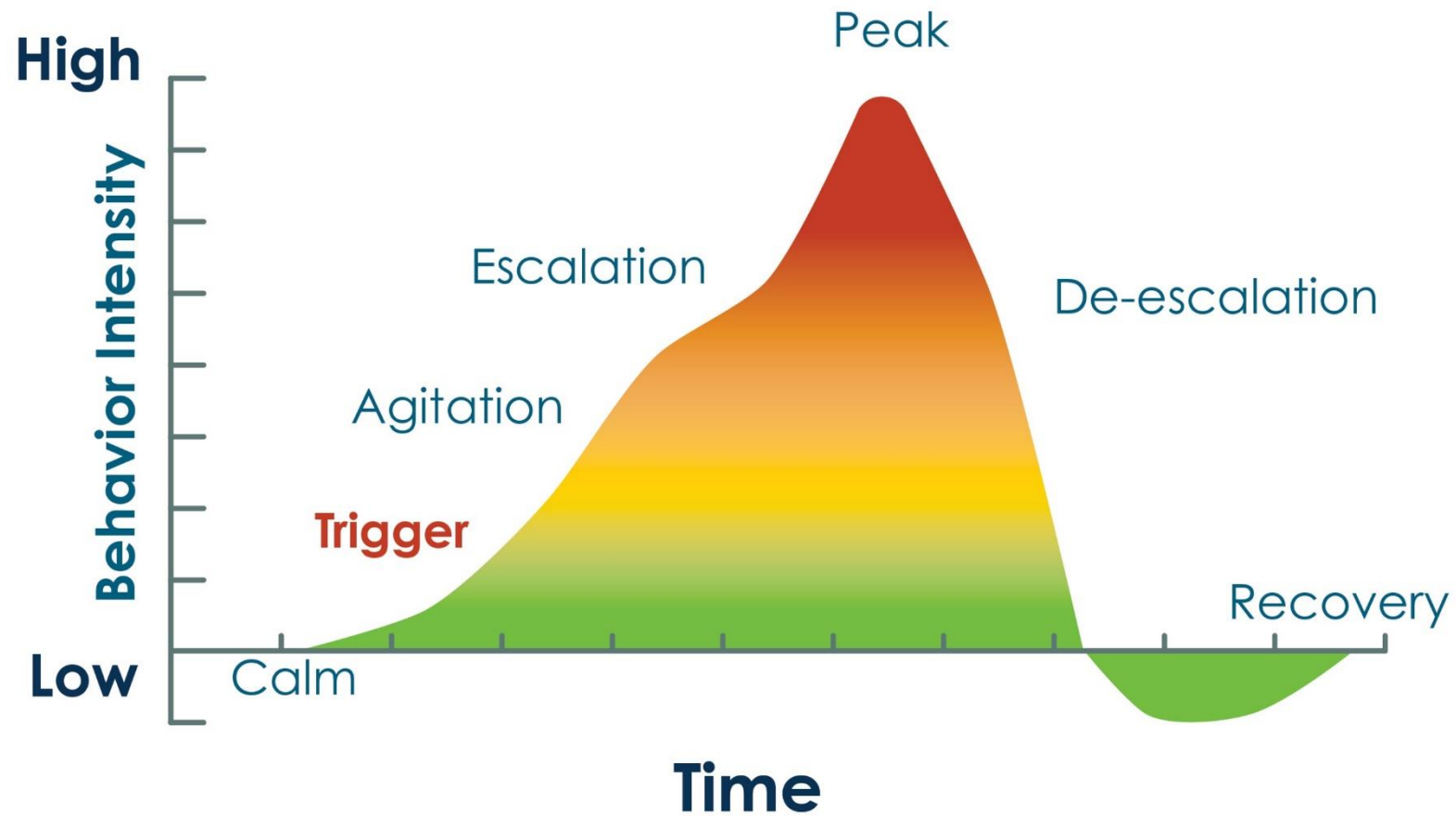
- Think of a time when you were really, really angry
 - How did you escalate from calm to peak? What did you do? What were you feeling? How did you express it?
 - Think about how you de-escalated from peak to recovery; what happened? How did you feel? What did you do?
- When prompted, answer the following questions in the chat:
 - When you are escalating, what might make it worse or intensify your reaction? What should someone NOT do to you when you're angry?
 - What might someone do to help you calm down after you have peaked?



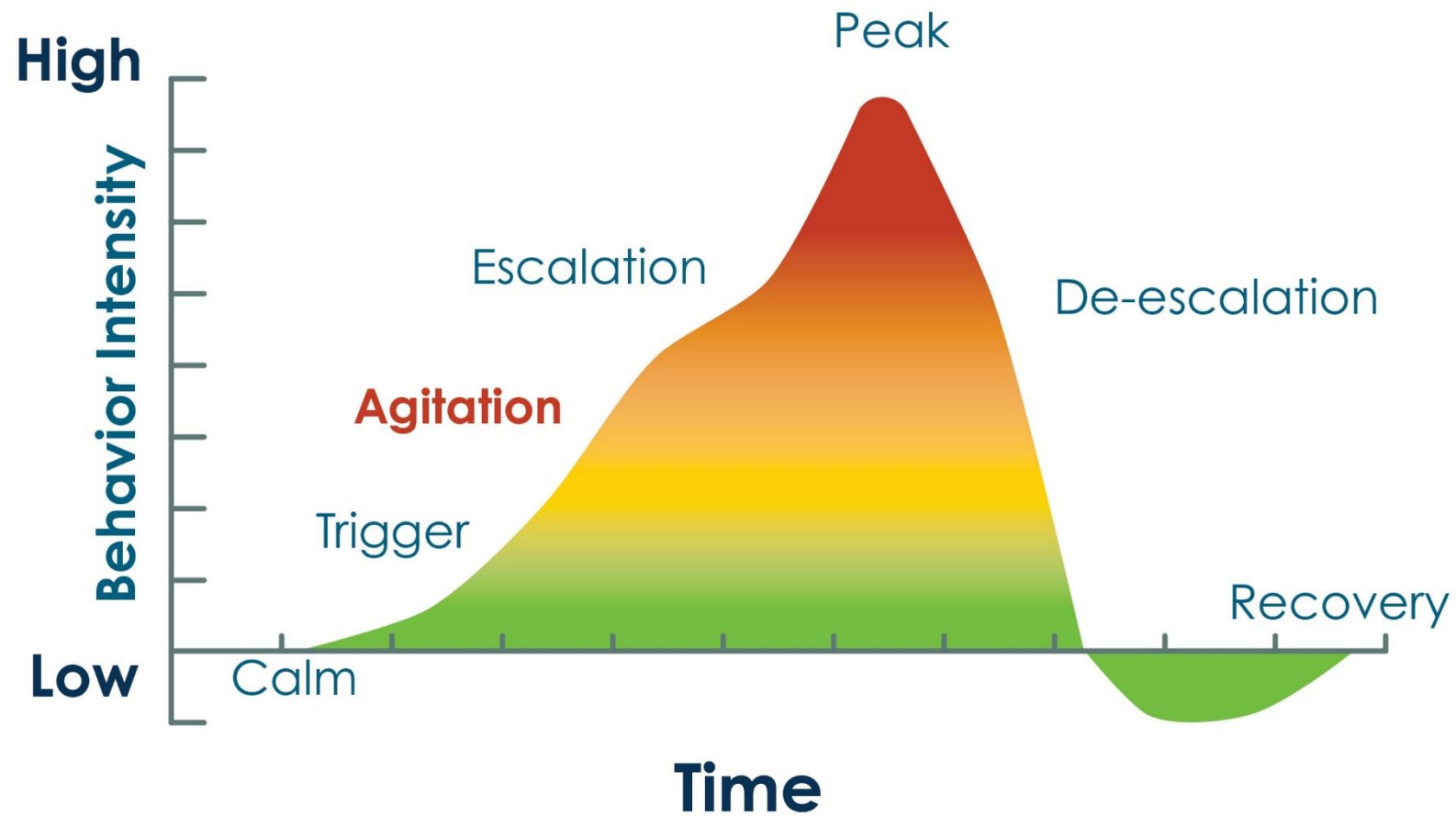
Activity 3.2

- Locate the Escalation Cycle slides in your materials
- For each phase, follow along with the presentation and record the Adult Goal in the space provided

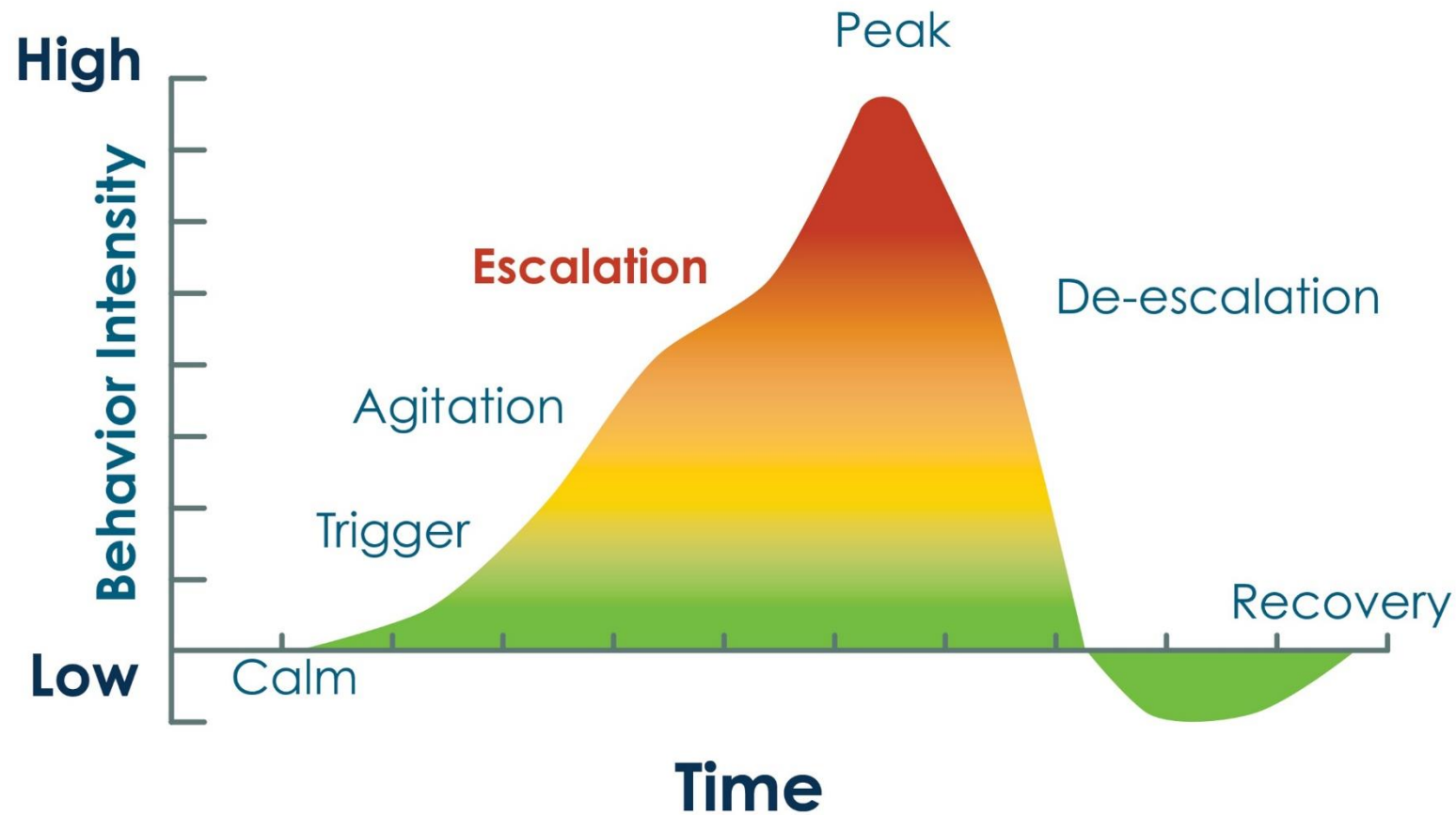
Escalation Cycle: Trigger



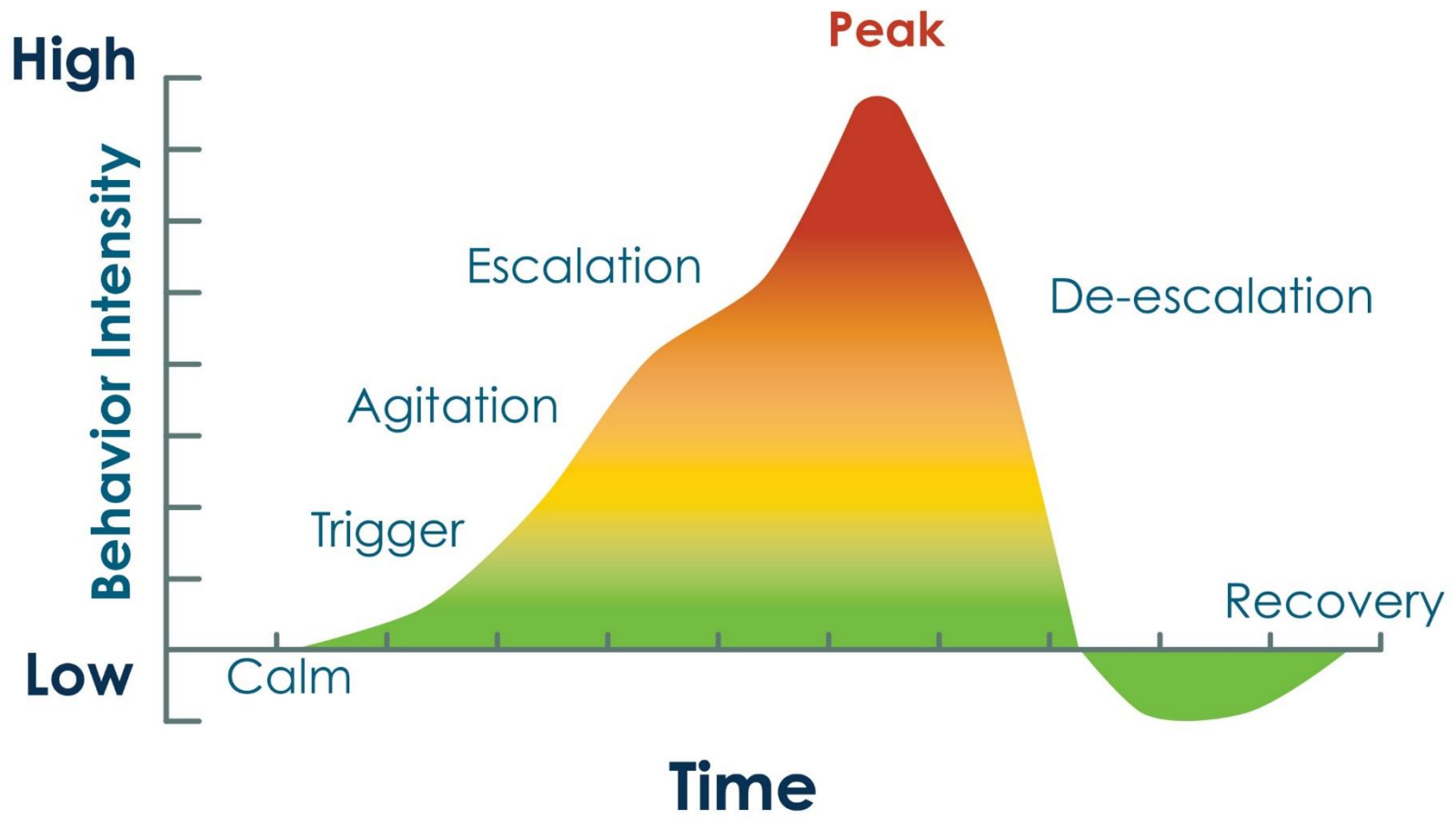
Escalation Cycle: Agitation



Escalation Cycle: Escalation



Escalation Cycle: Peak



Crisis Plans or Safety Net Procedures

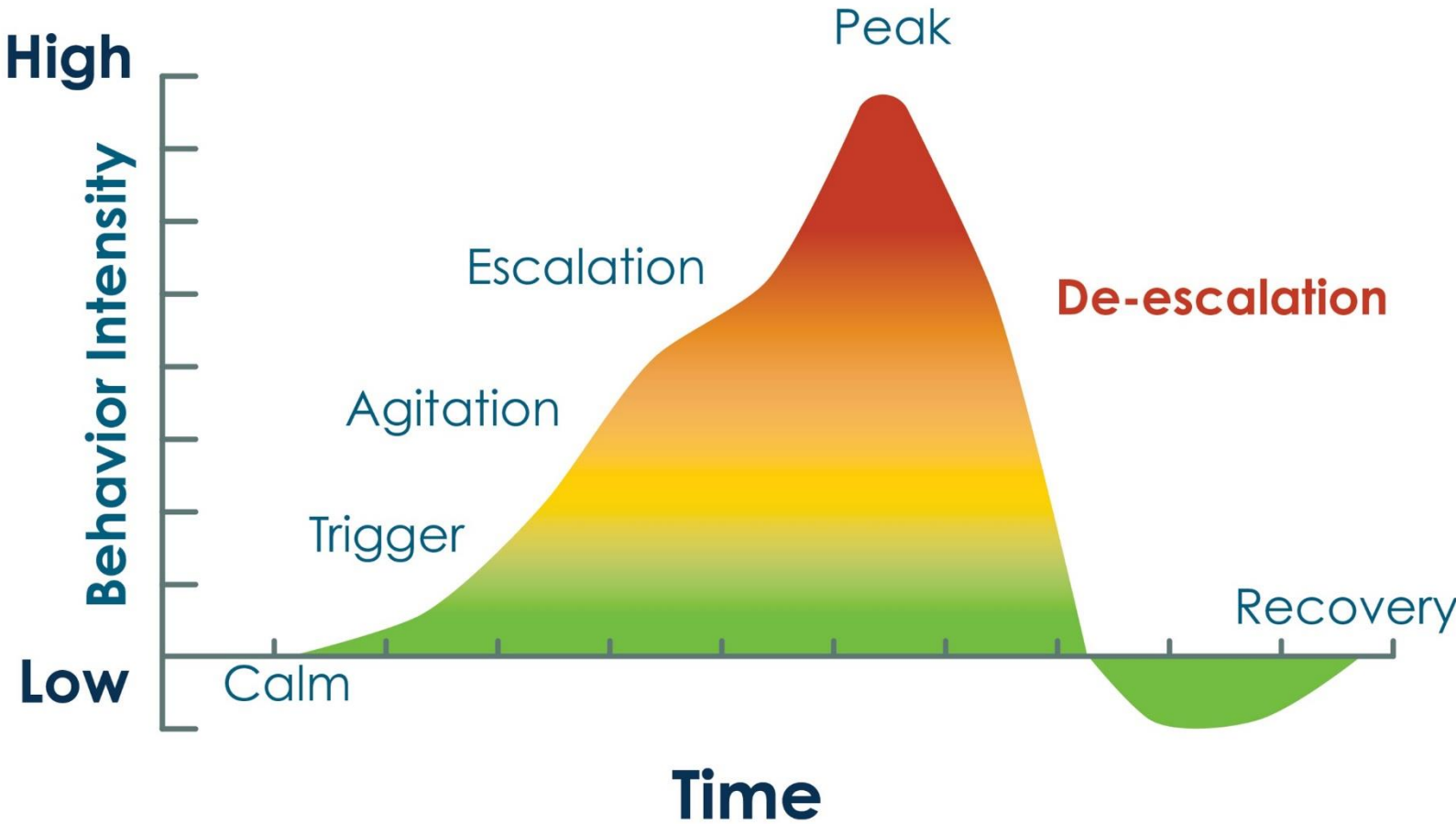
- Know the procedures and policies of your program!
- If a child is in danger of harming self or others, you must first be concerned about safety
- You might remove a child from the situation or remove other children from the situation to keep children safe
- Safety-net procedures should be planned for children who have a history of dangerous outbursts
- Safety-net procedures only keep children safe; they **do not change behavior**
- Safety-net procedures are appropriate only when there is also a full behavior support plan or intention to develop a plan

Avoiding the Power Struggle!

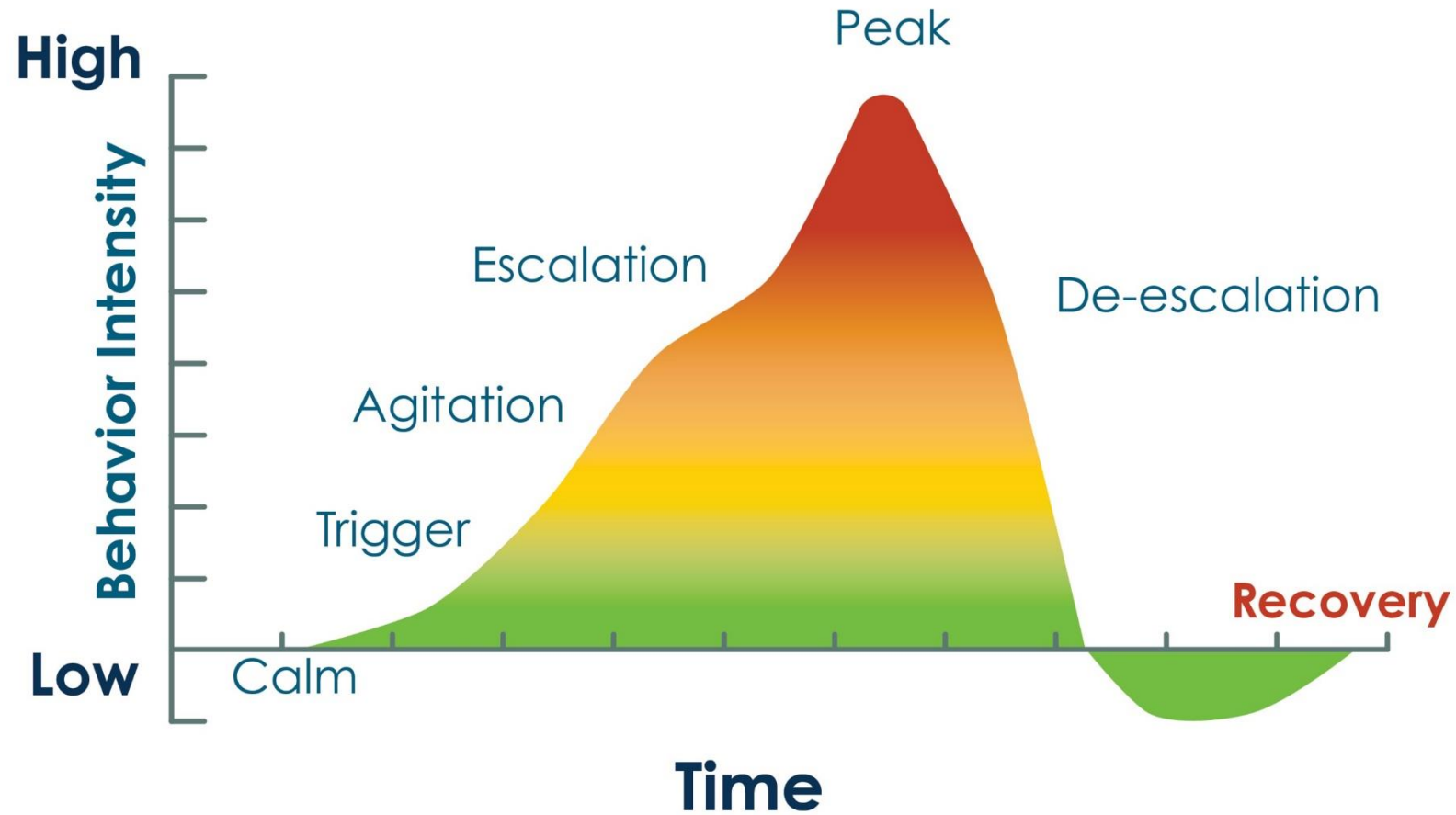
- Step back
- Take a deep breath
- Stay calm
- Maintain a posture of empathy



Escalation Cycle: De-Escalation

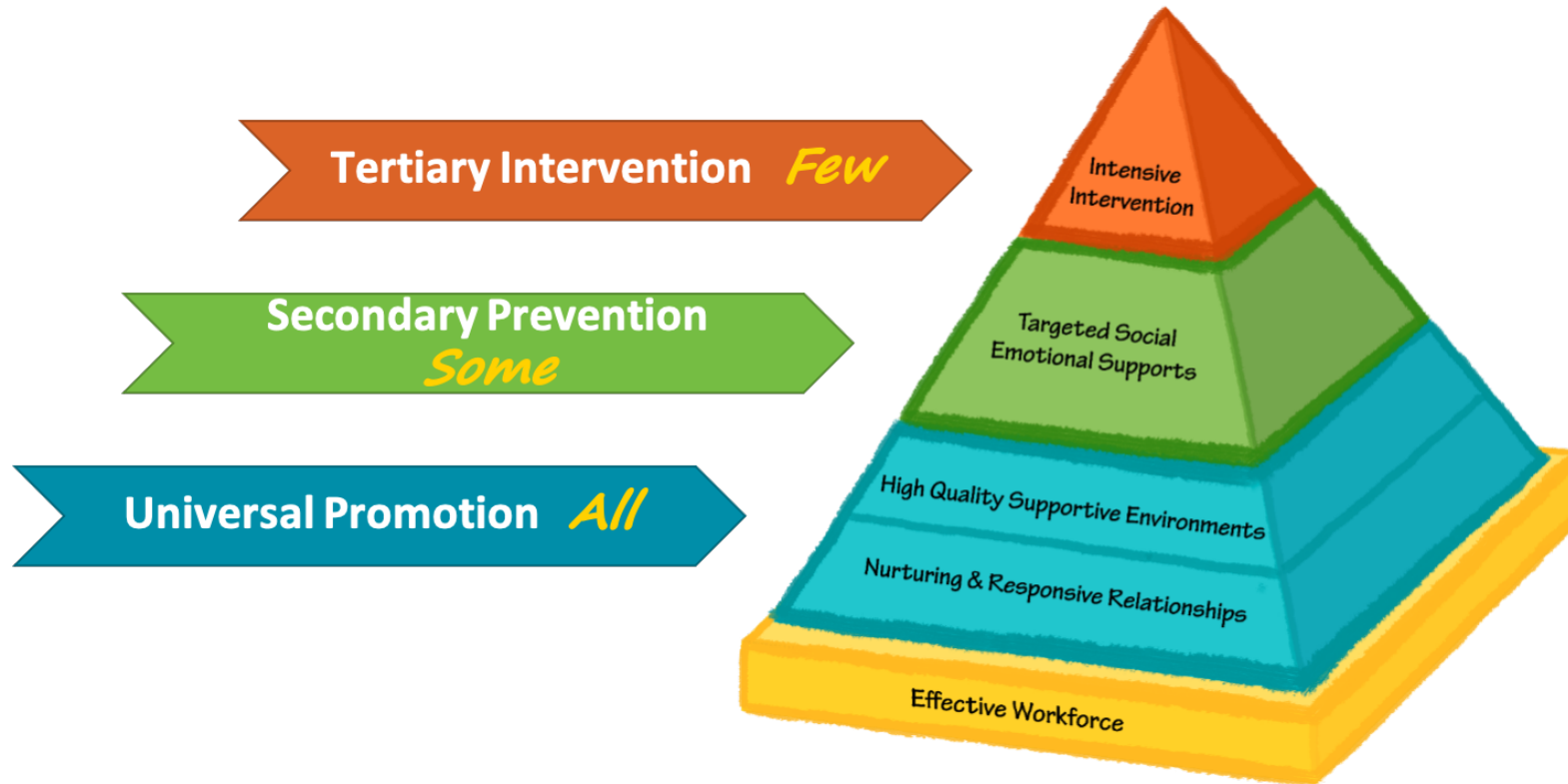


Escalation Cycle: Recovery



4.0 Developing a Behavior Support Plan

Pyramid Model Tiers



- Focus on prevention and promotion practices
- Use evidence-based strategies intended to reduce the likelihood of challenging behavior
- Ensure all tiers are in place



Activity 4.1

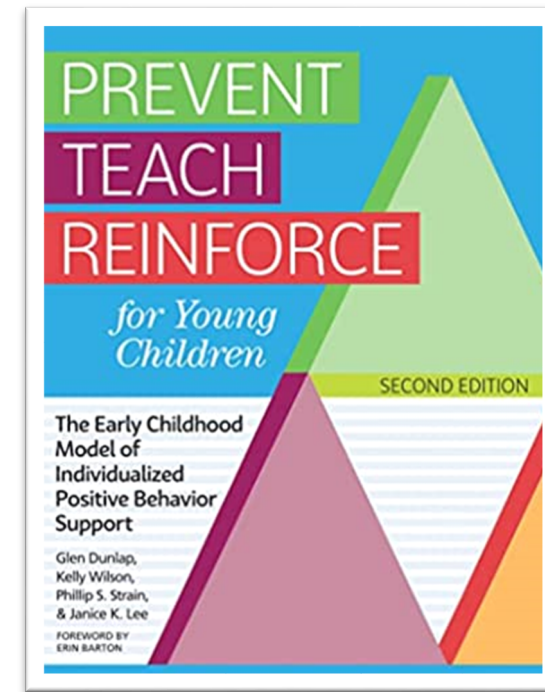
- We start by examining our current classroom practices!
- Locate the **5 Classroomwide Practices to Improve Behavior** document in your materials
- As you read through each of these documents, consider why these 5 practices might be prioritized when there is persistent challenging behavior in a classroom
- In the chat, record one key takeaway

What is an Intensive Individualized Intervention

- An approach for changing a child's behavior using positive behavior support
- Formal team-based process
- Comprehensive functional behavioral assessment (FBA)
- Intervention strategies that are based on FBA results

Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Young Children (PTR-YC)

- A manualized process for behavior support
- A model specifically designed for preschool settings for individualized intervention with challenging behavior
- Research-based practices
- Detailed steps for designing and implementing positive interventions



Summary of steps: https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/PTRYC_process-forms.pdf

Using PTR-YC

- Implemented by a collaborative team
 - Teacher, family member, other team members who know the child, classroom coach
- Facilitated by a person trained in individualized behavior support (i.e., PTR-YC process)
 - Skills in functional behavioral assessment, behavior intervention planning, and collaborative teaming
- Teachers play a key role!
- Families are partners throughout

PTR-YC Pathway

The child is engaging in persistent, challenging behavior...



Team Goal Setting and Data Collection

- Identify the child's challenging behavior to decrease
- Select and operationally define one challenging behavior to target
- Identify the child's desirable behaviors to increase
- Select and operationally define one desirable to target
- Set up data collection for these two behaviors



Gathering Information

- **Functional Assessment:** A process for developing an understanding of a child's challenging behavior and how the behavior is governed by environmental events
 - Collect data on situations that predict challenging behavior and that are linked with appropriate behavior
 - Results in the identification of the “purpose” or “function” of the challenging behavior
- Everyone helps! Families, teachers, therapists, and all staff who are familiar with the child can provide important information
- PTR-YC uses a set of checklists to collect this data

PTR-YC Checklists

- **Prevent** to examine factors relating to antecedents and environmental influences
- **Teach** to identify behavior functions
- **Reinforce** to identify maintaining consequences for challenging and appropriate behavior
- All information is summarized in an A-B-C format to identify the major patterns or themes
- A **hypothesis statement** is developed that will lead directly to the development of the behavior intervention plan

Hypothesis Statement

- Must include:
 - Predictor of the challenging behavior (from the antecedent column)
 - Description of the challenging behavior (from the behavior column)
 - Responses that maintain the challenging behavior (from the consequence column)
 - Purpose of the behavior
- Formatted as a “When....., then...; as a result,” statement
- **Example:** **When** Jill is asked to engage in a fine motor activity, **then** she will scream and/or engage in other disruptive behaviors; **as a result,** she will avoid having to perform the fine motor task

Let's Practice: Creating a Hypothesis Statement

Antecedent/Trigger	Behavior	Consequence/Outcome
Unstructured group play situations (outside play/centers)	Tim engages in aggressive behavior including physical aggression (hit, kick, push, punch) and property destruction (throwing or banging toys)	Peer gives Tim the toy and leaves the play area Therefore, the function of the behavior is to: Obtain items (e.g., toys)

Practice: Hypothesis Statement

When

Then

As a result,

Intervention Plan Framework

Prevent	Teach	Reinforce
<p>What can we do to prevent challenging behaviors from occurring in the first place?</p>	<p>How can we use effective teaching techniques to teach new and replacement behaviors?</p>	<p>How can we respond to behaviors in ways to reinforce appropriate behaviors?</p> <p>How do we respond in ways that do not reinforce challenging behavior and prevent further escalation of behavior?</p>

Prevent Strategies	Teach Strategies	Reinforce Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide choices • Intersperse difficulty or nonpreferred tasks with easy or preferred tasks • Use visual supports and schedules • Embed preferences into activities • Enhance predictability with schedules • Alter physical arrangement of the classroom • Remove triggers for challenging behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach communication skills • Embed multiple instructional opportunities • Peer-related social skills • Self-monitoring • Tolerate delay of reinforcement • Teach independence with visual schedules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce desirable behavior • Reinforce physically incompatible behavior • Remove reinforcement for challenging behavior • Emergency intervention plan

Supporting Families

- Create multiple opportunities to learn about and from families
- Offer to assist families in addressing behavior at home
- Provide the family with materials to use in implementation
- Provide coaching support to assist the family with implementation
- Establish a system for frequent communication



Activity 4.2

- Locate the **Tim's Behavior Support Plan** document in your materials
- Review the example plan, paying close attention to the hypothesis and the strategies selected
- With your small group, answer the following questions:
 - How is this plan similar or different from your current behavior plans?
 - What parts of the process are you hoping to learn more about?

Activity 4.3

Let's Review!

- Look one more time at the following sections on the Pyramid Model Practices Implementation Checklist:
 - Understanding Challenging Behavior (pg. 12)
 - Responses to Challenging Behavior & De-escalating Behavior (pg. 13)
 - Participate in the Functional Behavior Assessment (pg. 14)
 - Participate in the Development of a Behavior Support Plan (pg. 15)
- Make any notes based on what we talked about today; what practices might you want to strengthen?

5.0 Wrap Up and Next Steps



Activity 5.1

- Think about everything we've covered about responding to challenging behavior during today's session
- Fill in the blanks for the following statement
 - I used to think _____, but now I know _____.
- Share your response in chat

What's Next?

- Use the notes you have made on the **Pyramid Practices Checklist** to enhance the practices currently in place in your classroom
- Work with your coach to determine when coaching will begin
- Interested in learning more about early childhood PBIS? Visit our website to see additional offerings for your site