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) manual

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

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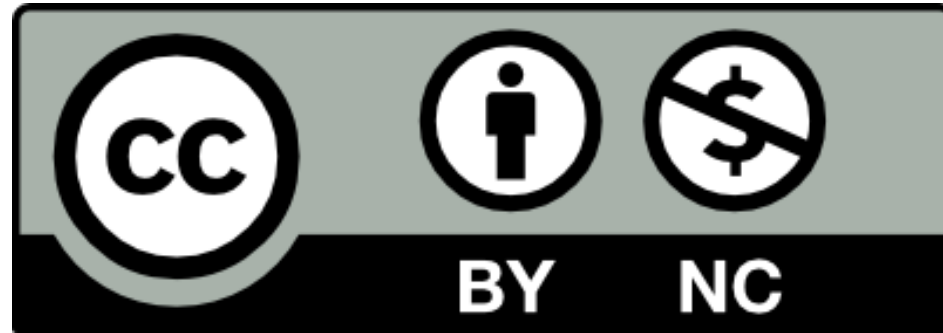
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Group Agreements

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)

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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.

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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

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Agenda

1.0 Responding to Challenging Behavior

2.0 Factors That Impact Responses to Challenging Behavior

3.0 De-Escalating Behavior

4.0 Developing a Behavior Support Plan
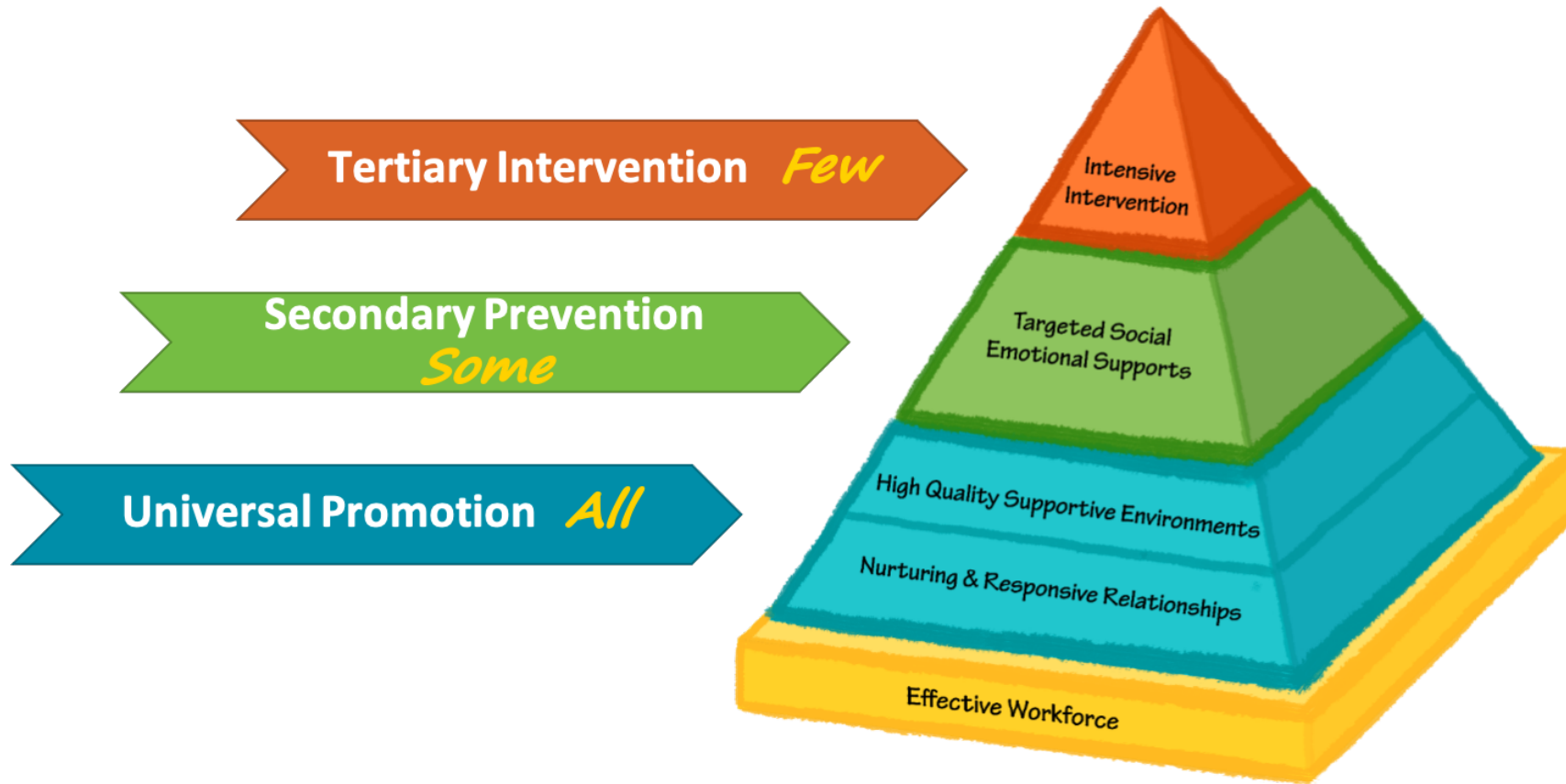
5.0 Wrap-Up and Next Steps

Activity

Let's Review!

- 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

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1.0 Responding to Challenging Behavior

Promotion and Prevention

Tertiary Intervention *Few*

Secondary Prevention *Some*

Universal Promotion *All*

Intensive Intervention

Targeted Social Emotional Supports

High Quality Supportive Environments

Nurturing & Responsive Relationships

Effective Workforce

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

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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!

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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

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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!"

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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: Examples

- 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."

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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 video, mark 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

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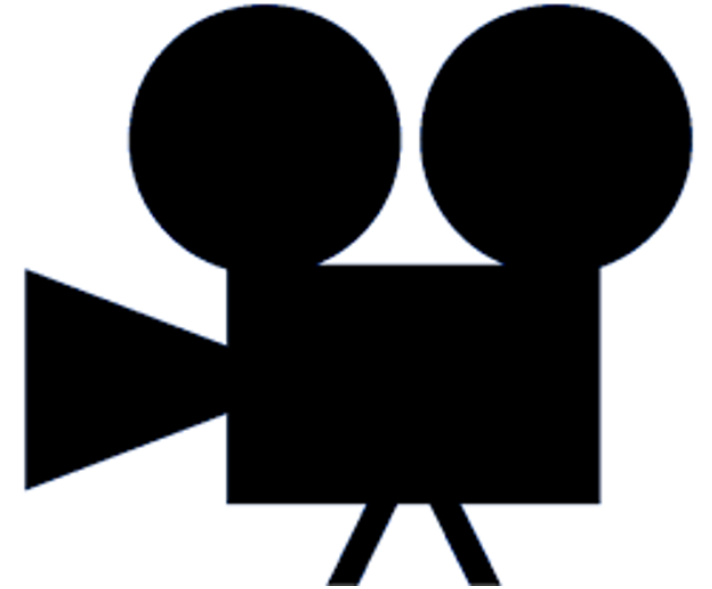
Video Response

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](#)

2.0 Factors That Impact 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

- Deficit thinking vs. strength-based attributions to behavior

- Implicit bias

- Elements of the situation

- Person's decision state

Reflect on Responses to Behavior

- Am I making assumptions about why the child behaves the way that they do?

- What leads me to believe that the behavior was inappropriate?

- 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?

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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.

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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
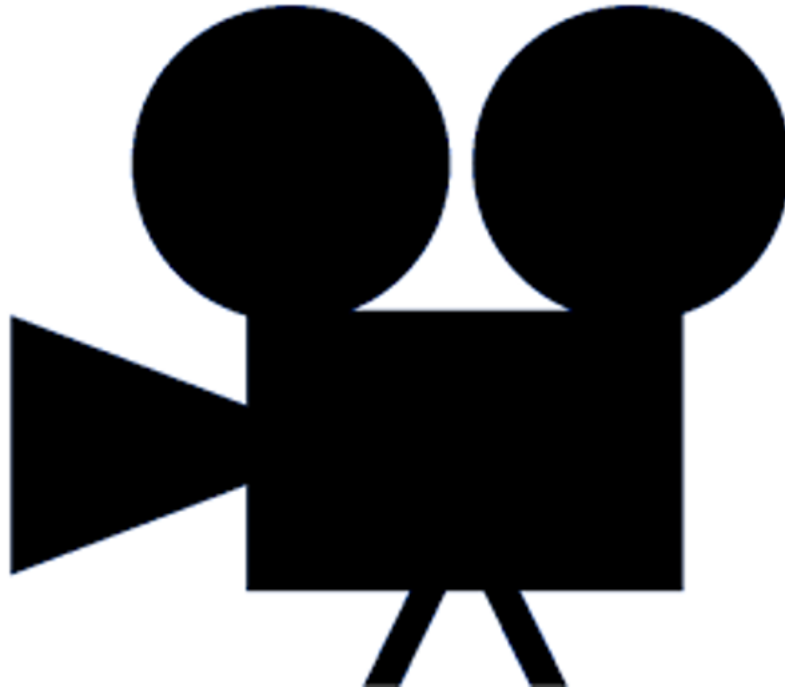
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Activity 2.2

- 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

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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

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Video: Gilliam Bias Experiment

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

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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
• 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	• The teacher asks Delilah to sit at a table in the back until she can stop calling out	• Delilah becomes visibly upset and begins crying for a prolonged time. • The longer she is at the table, the more intense the crying.

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Antecedent/Trigger	What Can We Do Here?	Behavior	Consequence/ Outcome
• 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	• **The teacher checked herself, counted to 3 in her head, and recognized that she was tired and irritable.**	• 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.	• 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 2.3

- 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?

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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?

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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
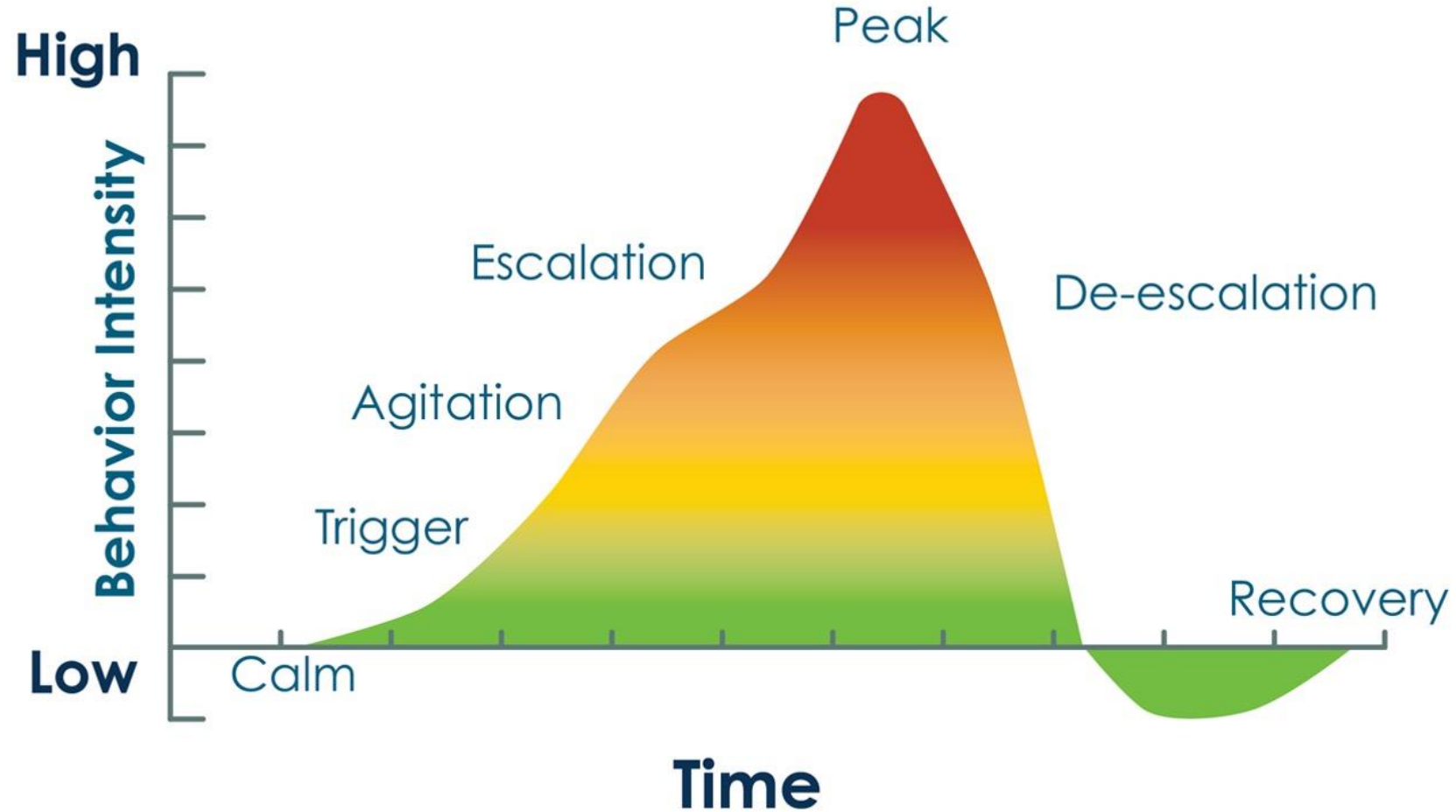
Activity 2.5

- 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

- Be ready to share

3.0 De-Escalating Behavior

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.

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Activity 3.1

- Think of a time when you were really, really angry

- Jot down some notes about how you escalated from being calm to hitting your peak. What were you feeling? How did you express it?

- Be ready to share your responses to the following:

  - When you were escalating, what might have made it worse or intensified your reaction? What should someone NOT do or say when you're angry?

  - What might someone do to help you calm down after you have peaked?

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Activity 3.2

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

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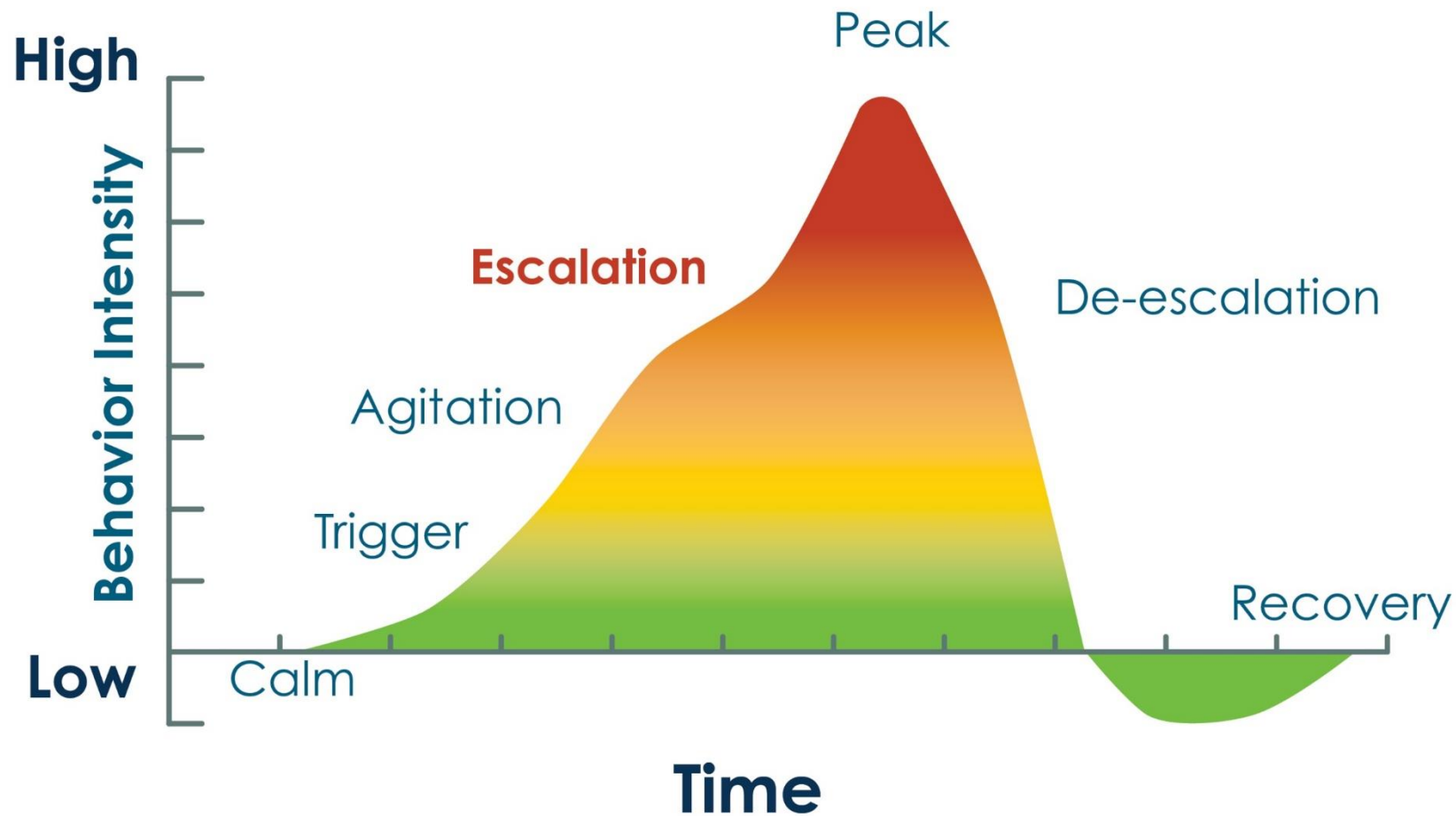# Escalation Cycle: Trigger
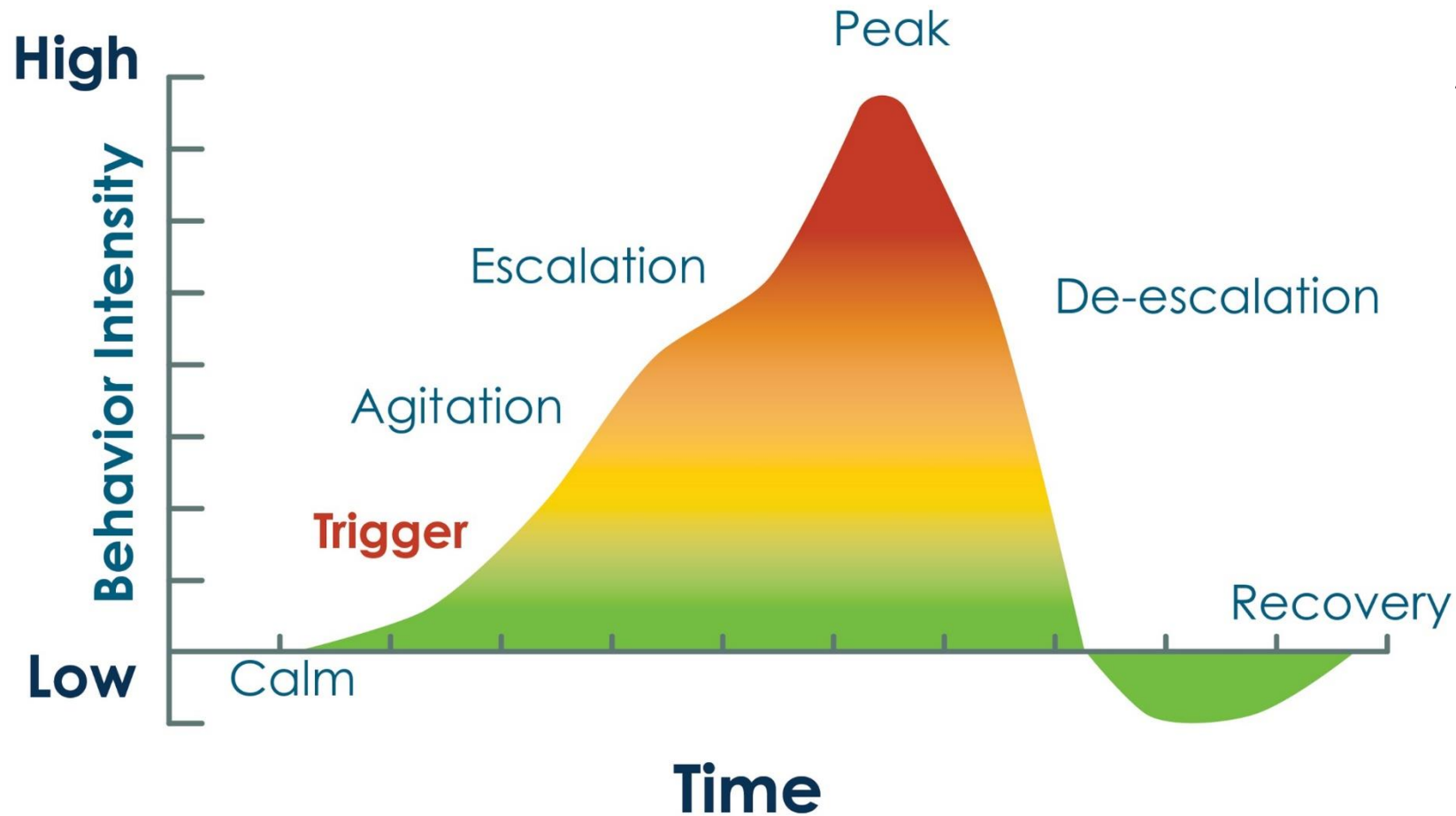
Adult Goal: Help the child **return to calm**; intervene to prevent escalation
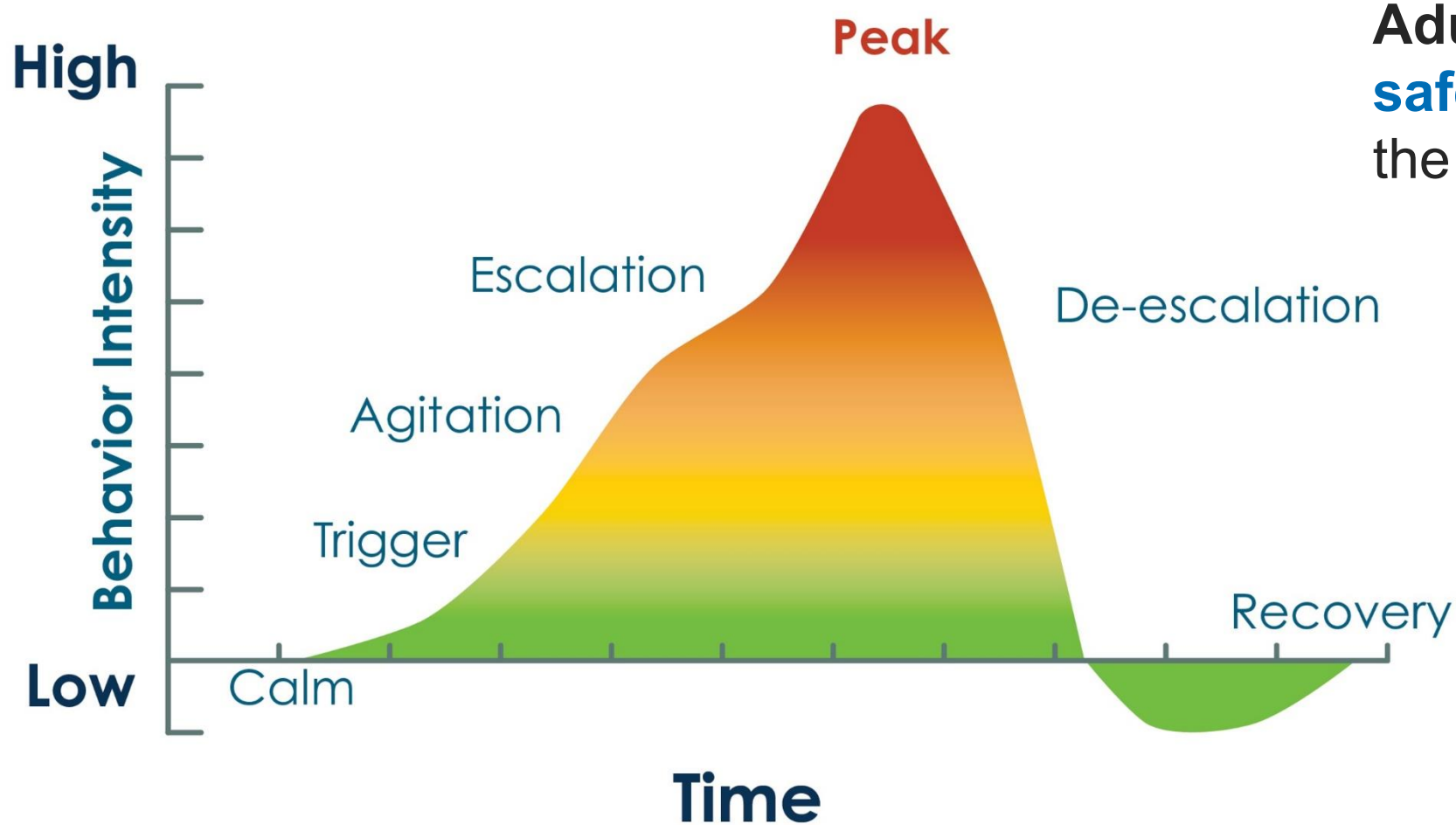
Escalation Cycle: Agitation
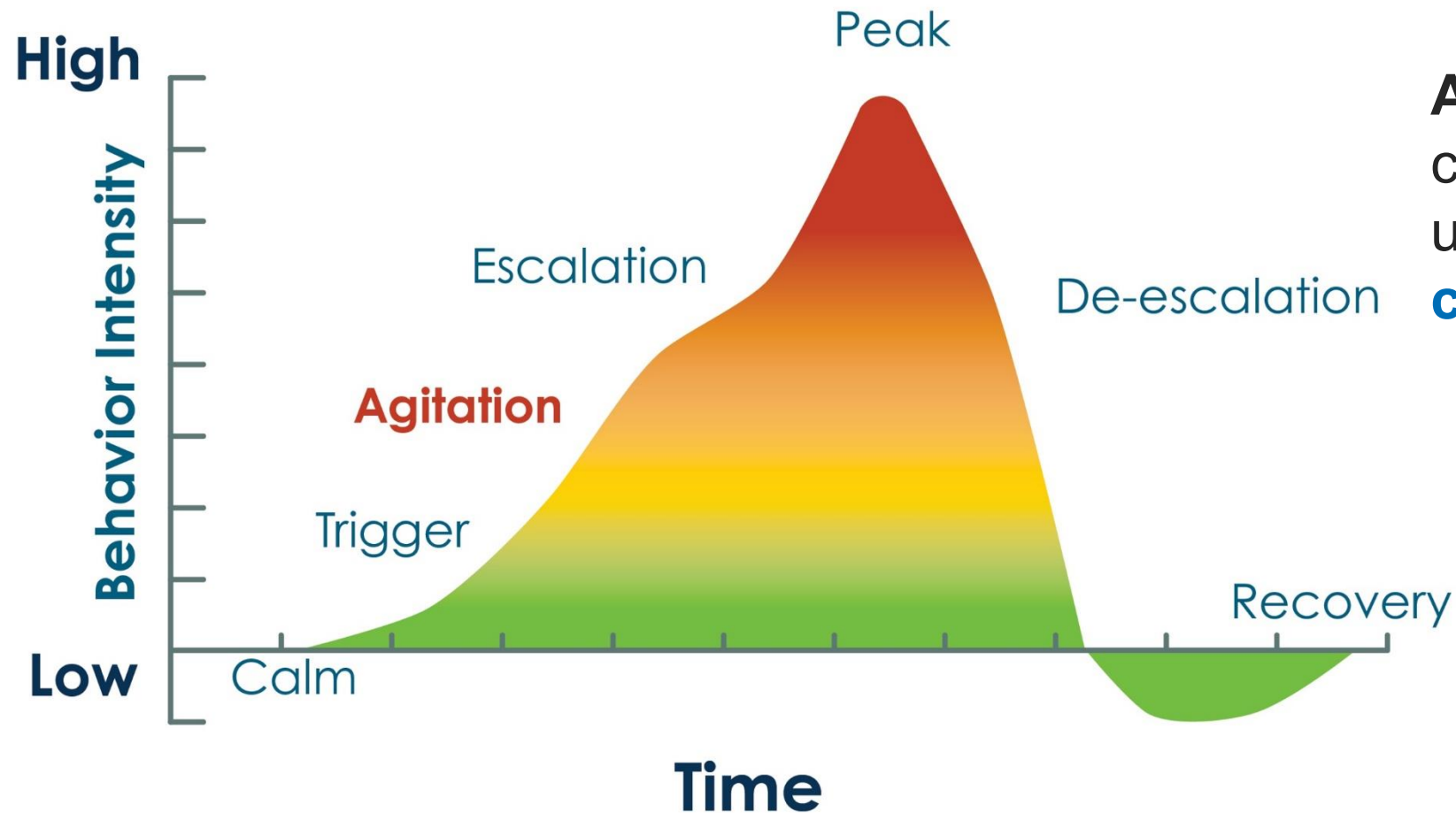
Adult Goal: Drop compliance **demands**; use strategies to return to **calm**

Escalation Cycle: Escalation

Adult Goal: Remain **non-emotional**, non-punitive, and **non-verbal** to prevent a full-blown crisis

Escalation Cycle: Peak

Adult Goal: Provide a **safe environment** until the child de-escalates

49

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

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Avoiding the Power Struggle!

- Step back

- Take a deep breath

- Stay calm

- Maintain a posture of empathy

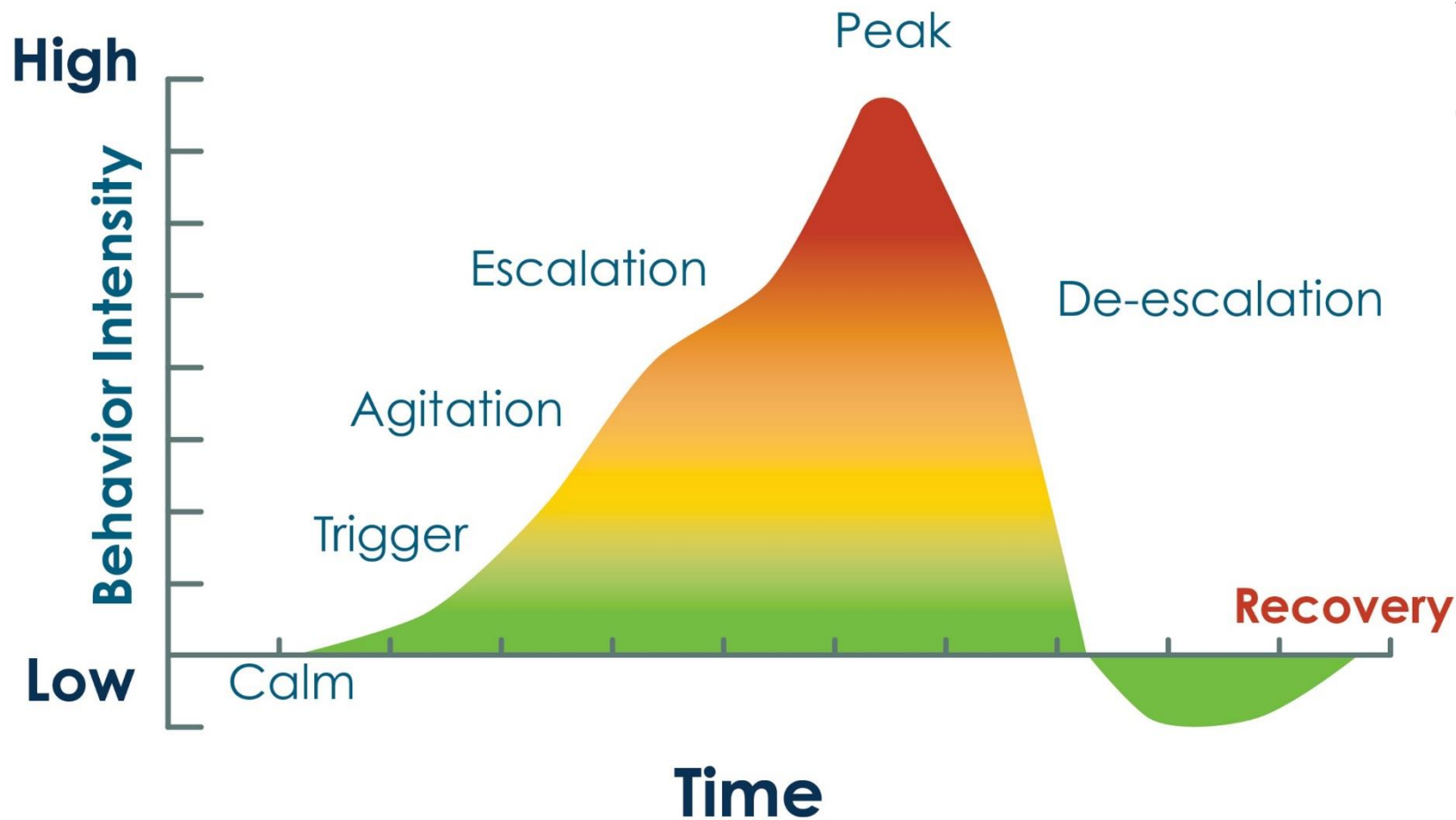MiMTSS
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Escalation Cycle: De-Escalation
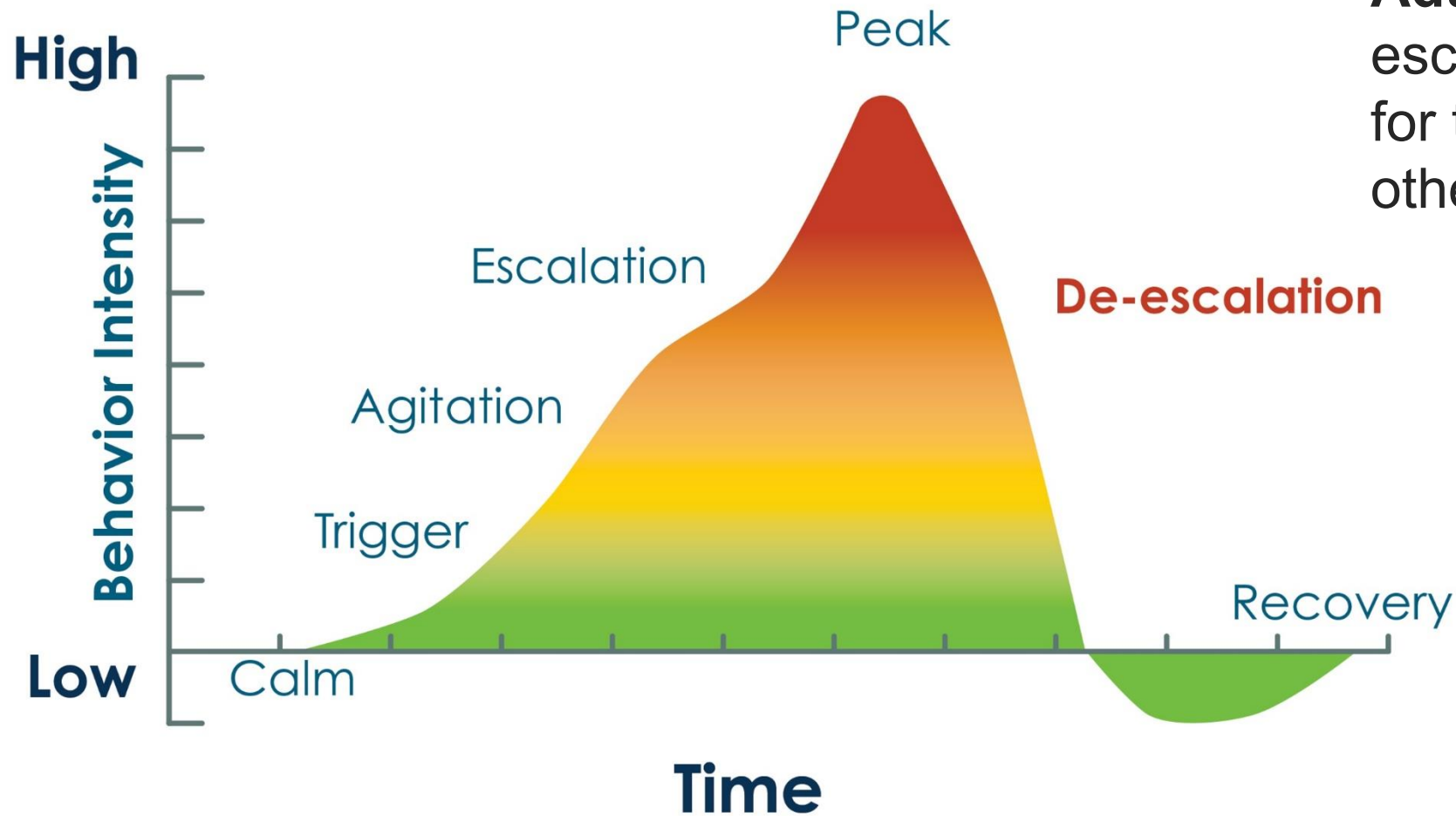
Adult Goal: Prevent re-escalation; provide **space** for the child away from others

Escalation Cycle: Recovery

Adult Goal: Provide **positive descriptive feedback** for appropriate behaviors; support re-engagement in routines
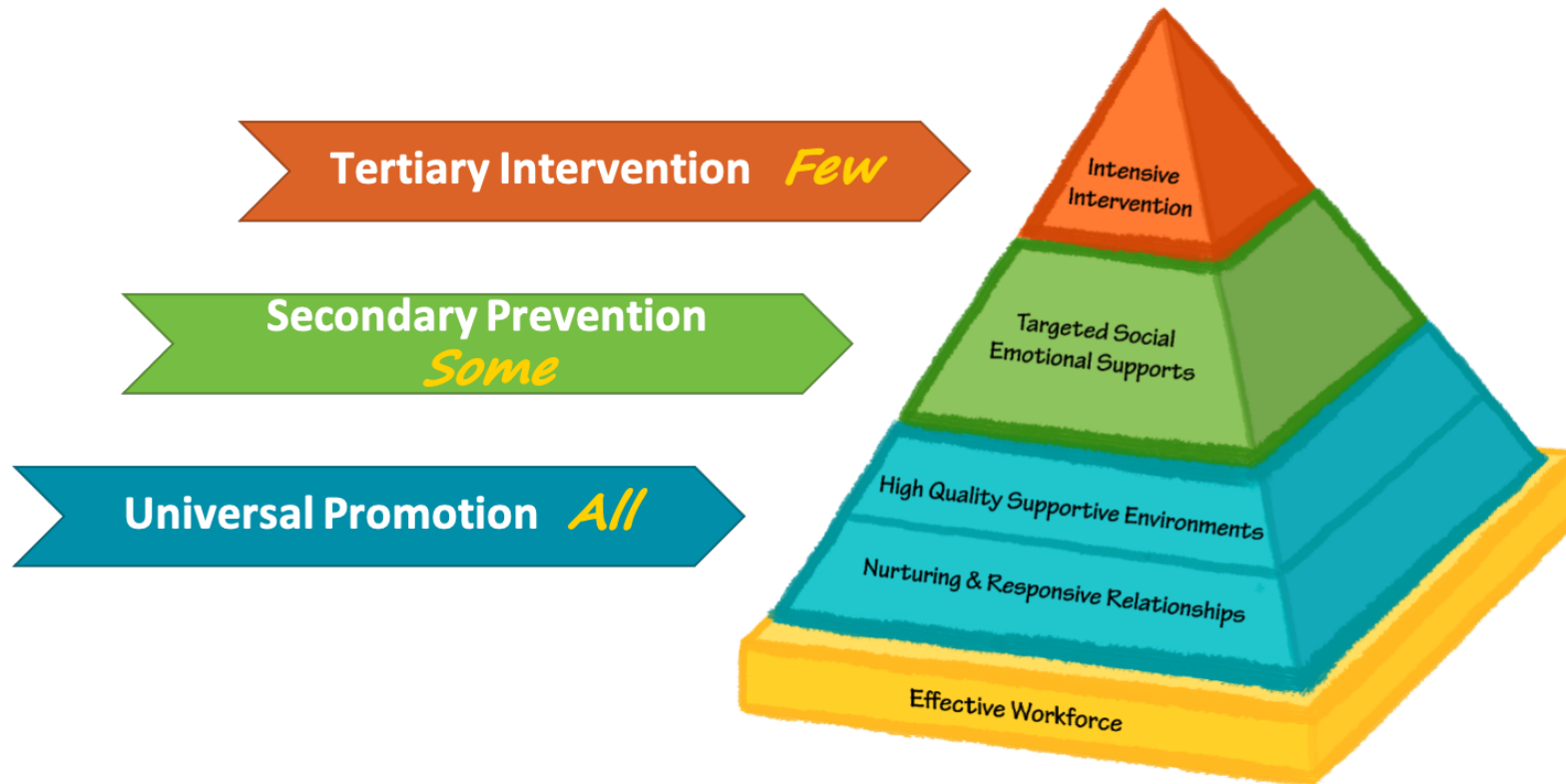
Activity 3.3

Let's Review!

- As a child is escalating, at what phase should adults be non-verbal?

- What kinds of adult actions during de-escalation might accidentally cause a re-escalation?

- At what phase should we reduce compliance demands?

Discuss:

- What phase do you think will be most difficult for you as an adult responding to escalating behavior?

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4.0 Developing a Behavior Support Plan

Pyramid Model Tiers

- Focus on prevention and promotion practices
- Use evidence-based strategies
- Ensure all tiers are in place

Tertiary Intervention *Few*

Secondary Prevention *Some*

Universal Promotion *All*

Intensive Intervention

Targeted Social Emotional Supports

High Quality Supportive Environments

Nurturing & Responsive Relationships

Effective Workforce

56

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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 this document, consider why these 5 practices might be prioritized when there is persistent challenging behavior in a classroom

- **In the chat, record one key takeaway**

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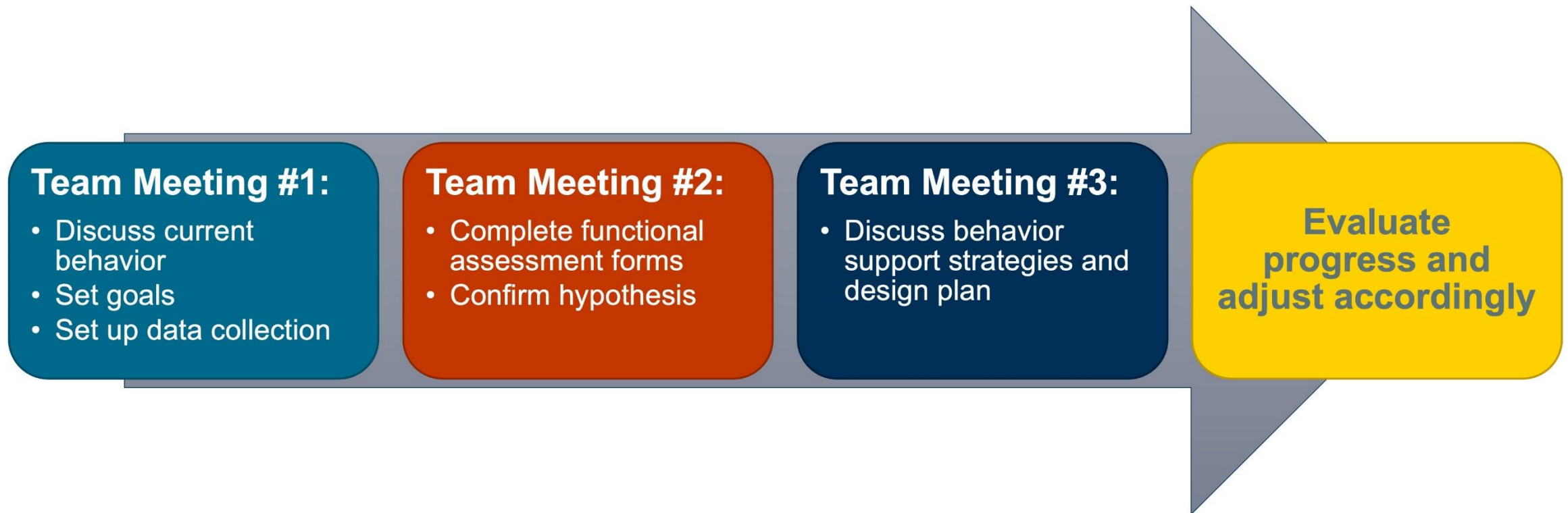
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Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Young Children (PTR-YC)

- Manualized process

- Implemented by a collaborative team

- 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
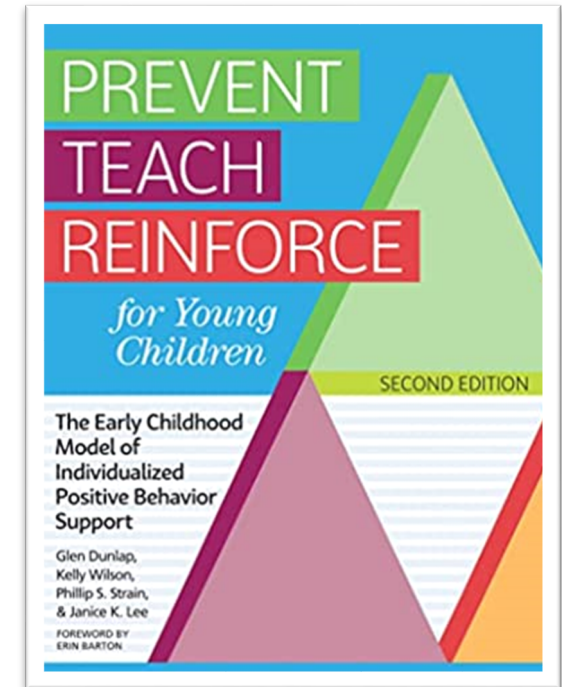
PTR-YC Pathway

The child is engaging in persistent, challenging behavior…

Team Meeting #1:
- Discuss current behavior
- Set goals
- Set up data collection

Team Meeting #2:
- Complete functional assessment forms
- Confirm hypothesis

Team Meeting #3:
- Discuss behavior support strategies and design plan

Evaluate progress and adjust accordingly

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Team Goal Setting and Data Collection

- Create a team that knows the child well and includes family, teachers, coaches, and staff who support behavior planning

- Select and define one challenging behavior to target

- Select and 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

- Everyone helps!

- PTR-YC uses a set of checklists to collect this data

What Information Do We Collect? The ABCs!

- **Prevent Checklist:** Examine factors relating to **antecedents** and environmental influences

- **Teach Checklist:** Identify **behavior** functions and missing skills

- **Reinforce Checklist:** Identify maintaining **consequences** for challenging and appropriate behavior

This information will be used to develop a **hypothesis statement** that will lead to the development of the behavior intervention plan

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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

Intervention Plan Framework

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

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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

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Activity 4.2

- Locate **Tim's Behavior Support Plan** 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 to or different from your current behavior plans?

  - What parts of the process are you hoping to learn more about?

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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?

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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

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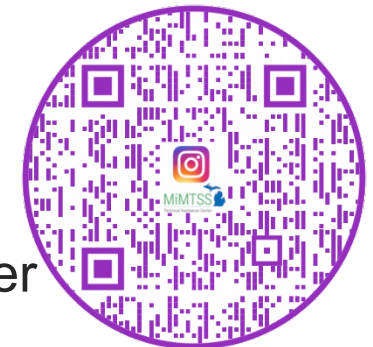
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URLs Used in Today's Session

Help Us Stay Calm (https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/Stay-Calm_Infographic.pdf)

Teachable Moments: How to Help Your Child Avoid Meltdowns
(https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/backpack/BackpackConnection_behavior_meltdown.pdf

How to Help Your Child Stop Whining
(htthttps://challengingbehavior.org/docs/backpack/BackpackConnection_behavior_whining.pdf)

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