

4.

*Managing Escalating
Behaviors*

Teaching Compliance and Avoiding Escalations

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<http://pbis.org>

Colvin, G. & Sugai, G. (1989). *Managing escalating behavior* (2nd ed.). Eugene, OR: Behavior Associates.

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What does non-compliance look like?

What does an escalation chain look like?

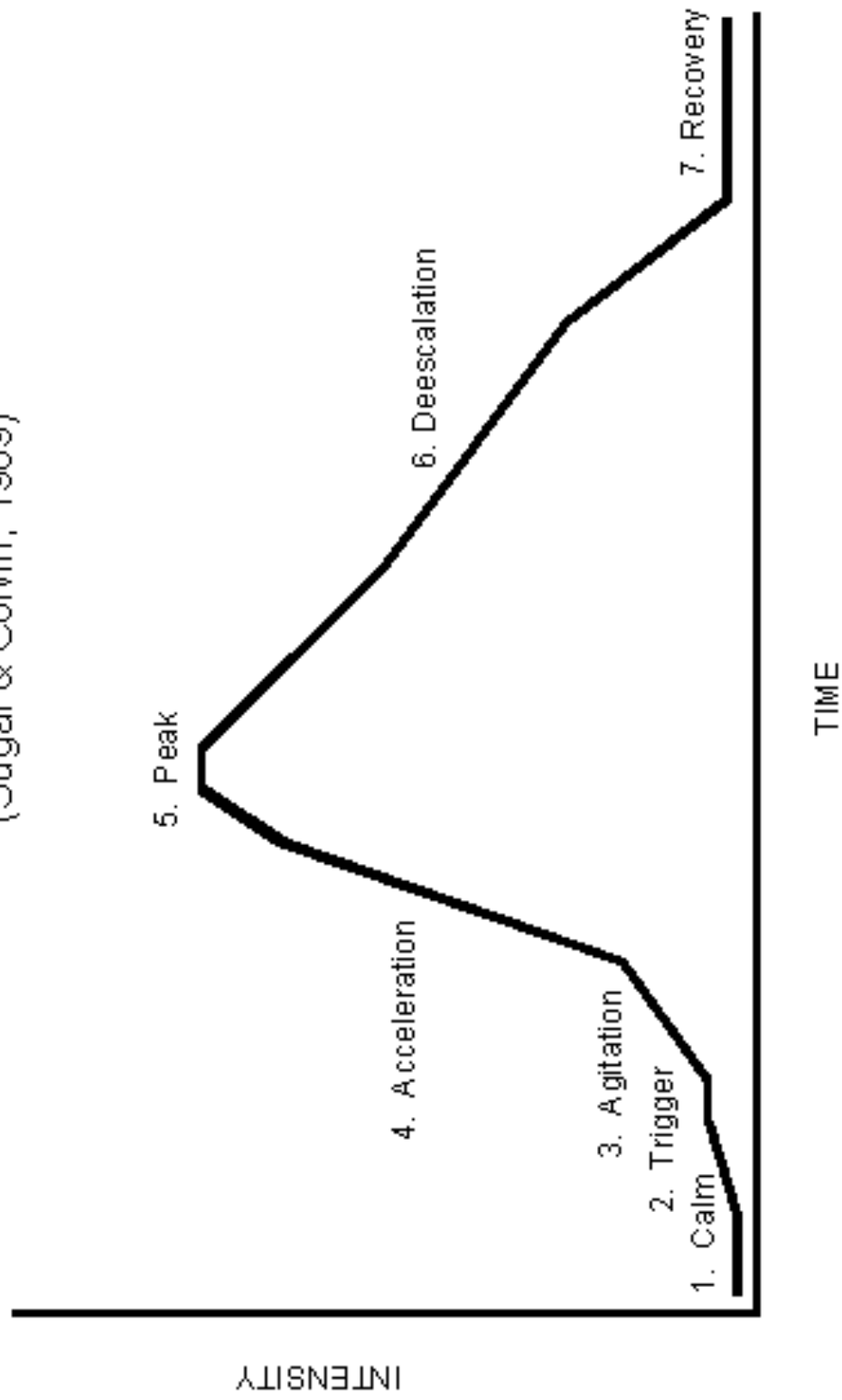
Purpose

- Enhance our understanding of & ways of responding to escalating behavior sequences.
 - Student <=> Teacher
 - Teacher <=> Teacher
 - Teacher <=> Parent
 - Child <=> Parent
 - Teacher <=> Administrator
 - Etc., etc., etc....

Assumptions

- Noncompliant & escalated behavior are learned.
- Compliance & noncompliance require more than one person.
- Escalations are shaped through successive interactions (practice).

ESCALATION MODEL (Sugai & Colvin, 1989)



1. Calm

- Student is cooperative.
 - Accepts corrective feedback.
 - Follows directives.
 - Sets personal goals.
 - Ignores distractions.
 - Accepts praise.

2. Trigger

- Student experiences a series of unresolved conflicts.
 - Repeated failures
 - Frequent corrections
 - Interpersonal conflicts
 - Timelines
 - Low rates of positive reinforcement

3. Agitation

- Student exhibits increase in unfocused behavior.
 - Off-task
 - Frequent start/stop on tasks
 - Out of seat
 - Talking with others
 - Social withdrawal

4. Acceleration

- Student displays focused behavior.
 - Provocative
 - High intensity
 - Threatening
 - Personal

5. Peak

- Student is “out of control” & displays most severe problem behavior.
 - Physical aggression
 - Property destruction
 - Self-injury
 - Escape/social withdrawal
 - Hyperventilation

6. De-escalation

- Student displays confusion but with decreases in severe behavior.
 - Social withdrawal
 - Denial
 - Blaming others
 - Minimization of problem

7. Recovery

- Student displays eagerness to engage in non-engagement activities.
 - Attempts to correct problem.
 - Unwillingness to participate in group activities.
 - Social withdrawal & sleep.

How do we gain student compliance?

- Students must
 - Be fluent at the expected behavior.
 - Be taught the conditions under which the expected behavior is required.
 - Have multiple opportunities for high rates of successful academic & social engagement.
 - Receive or experience frequent & positive acknowledgments when expected behavior is exhibited.

- Teachers must...
 - Have the student's attention, before presenting the directive or making a request.
 - Give clear & specific directives that are stated positively.
 - Provide frequent & positive acknowledgments when expected behavior is exhibited.
 - Have established & taught consequence procedures for repeated noncompliance.

Responding to Escalations

- Disengage as soon as noncompliant behavior is observed.
- Provide reasonable alternatives for compliance.
- Move directly to bottom-line after first noncompliant response.
- Follow established consequence procedures if noncompliance continues.

Cont.

- Focus attention of students who are appropriately engaged.
- Conduct functional assessment to understand student & teacher behavior.
- Establish precorrection procedures for next compliance opportunity based on functional assessment information.

Calm

- Intervention is focused on prevention.
 - Arrange for high rates of successful academic & social engagements.
 - Use positive reinforcement.
 - Teach social skills.
 - Problem solving
 - Relaxation strategy
 - Self-management
 - Communicate positive expectations.

Trigger

- Intervention is focused on prevention & redirection.
 - Remove from or modify problem context.
 - Increase opportunities for success.
 - Reinforce what has been taught.

Agitation

- Intervention is focused on reducing anxiety.
 - Make structural/environmental modifications.
 - Provide reasonable options & choices.
 - Involve in successful engagements.

Acceleration

- Intervention is focused on safety.
 - Remember:
 - *Escalations & self-control are inversely related.*
 - *Escalation is likely to run its course.*

Acceleration

- Remove all triggering & competing maintaining factors.
- Follow crisis prevention procedures.
- Establish & follow through with bottom line.
- Disengage from student.

Peak

- Intervention is focused on safety.
 - Procedures like acceleration phase, except focus is on crisis intervention

De-escalation

- Intervention is focused on removing excess attention.
 - Don't nag.
 - Avoid blaming.
 - Don't force apology.
 - Emphasize starting anew.

Recovery

- Follow through with consequences for problem behavior.
- Positively reinforce any displays of appropriate behavior.
- Intervention is focused on re-establishing routines activities.

Recovery

- Debrief
 - Purpose of debrief is to facilitate transition back to program.
 - Debrief follows consequences for problem behavior.
 - Goal is to increase more appropriate behavior.

Recovery

- Problem solving example:
 - *What did I do?*
 - *Why did I do it?*
 - *What could I have done instead?*
 - *What do I have to do next?*
 - *Can I do it?*

Precorrect for Chronic Behaviors

- Provide prompt in problem context before problem behavior occurrence
- Steps
 - Go to problem context
 - Get attention of student
 - Provide precorrection (reminder/opportunity to practice expected behavior)
 - Watch
 - Reinforce appropriate response

Big Ideas

- Intervene early in an escalation.
- Disengage after non-compliance and drop to “bottom-line.”
- Support and encourage appropriate alternatives to non-compliance and escalation.

Final Thought

- Geoff Colvin (1989):
 - *It is always important to remember that “if you inadvertently assist the student to escalate, do not be concerned; you will get another chance to do it right the next time around.”*

Responding to Escalations Selected References

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