CRISIS AND SEVERE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION FOR BHAS

Compiled from various sources including but not limited to The Mandt System, Shukla-Mehta and Albin, and UT LRBI

WHAT ARE SEVERE BEHAVIORS?

- Behaviors that have a continuous negative impact on education (to self and/or peers)
- Behaviors that may be demonstrated over a long period of time.
- Behaviors that are harmful to self and/or others

WHAT IS CRISIS INTERVENTION?

- Preventing and responding to heightened levels of escalation.

REALIZE…

We often only think of aggressive, dangerous behaviors as the only severe behaviors. They certainly get the most attention.

However, a severe behavior can just as easily be a child who "shuts down" or refuses to do any work if it's chronic enough.

It may also be self harm or more internalizing behaviors

All "types" are needing our immediate and thought-out interventions.

SOME SEVERE BEHAVIORS WE ARE SEEING..

- Physical aggression towards property, peers, and/or staff
- Verbal aggression
- Threatening
- Bullying
- Self harm
- Property damage
- Refusal to work (extreme noncompliance)
- Urinating/defecating
- Chronic sleeping
- Severe disruptive behaviors

BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS TYPICALLY HANDLED BY <u>TEACHER OR SCHOOL EMPLOYEE</u> THROUGH USE OF APPROPRIATE CURRICULUM, CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT, SCHOOL WIDE PBIS, FBA/BIP, PARENT CONFERENCE, CONTRACTS, MINOR DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS, ETC.

- Defiance, Disrespect, Non-Compliance
- Disruption
- Physical Contact (not serious but inappropriate)
- Inappropriate language
- Property Damage
- Dress Code Violations
- Work Avoidance
- Distracted Attention
- Talking
- Attendance problems

BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS TYPICALLY REQUIRING <u>PRINCIPAL/STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM</u> CONSULTATION AND POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY ACTION, BEHAVIOR SUPPORT, MENTAL HEALTH REFERRAL, PARENT INVOLVEMENT, AND OUTSIDE AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

- Physical threats or contact with staff
- Verbal threats
- Sexual harassment
- Fights between students
- Bullying
- Disorderly contact
- Gang activity
- Physical aggression
- Signs of depression or family problems
- Poor adult/student and/or student/student relationships
- Chronic behaviors from previous slide requiring additional attention

BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS THAT REQUIRE FORMAL DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND REFERRAL TO DISTRICT AND OTHER AUTHORITIES

- Weapons
- Drugs and alcohol
- Distribution of drugs/alcohol
- Serious bodily injury
- Injury to student or staff
- Sexual assault or battery
- Terroristic threats
- Arson/dangerous materials
- Theft, robbery, forgery
- Serious vandalism or property damage
- Truancy
- Chronic behaviors from previous slide requiring additional attention

YOUR ROLE

- Manage yourself (both actions and attitudes) while supporting students.
- Believe that we work with and for students, offering services and supports--<u>without controlling their behavior.</u>
- Offer the most supportive and least restrictive intervention to support students as people.
- Support kids, not just their behavior! Stay connected with kids without taking what they do and say personally.
- **Recongnize that if you cannot effectively manage yourself, you cannot hope to manage others.**

BUILDING
HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

- All individuals should be seen as people first.
- Building positive, healthy relationships is critical
- No relationship is perfect
- People build relationships as a process which grow and develop over time
- It takes commitment and work to have positive relationships with other people

- School-based relationship factors
  - Trust
  - Commitment
  - Influence
  - Communication
- Related to
  - Production
  - Attendance
  - Willingness to work

SCARY REALITY

I've come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in my [classroom]. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather.

I possess tremendous power to make [student's] lives miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is MY response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a person humanized or dehumanized.

- Dr. Haim Ginott

YOUR FOUNDATION FOR ALL POSITIVE OUTCOMES IS THE RELATIONSHIP YOU BUILD WITH THE STUDENT

- Adults who are able to develop a positive relationship with a student are more successful at changing severe behaviors.
- To do so, you must be consistent and predictable.
  - This builds trust.
- You must also understand the role of the Crisis Cycle, and realize that *BOTH* the adult and the student will go through it.
- Most crisis events can be avoided through a caring intervention by a person with the goal of peaceful conflict resolution.
  - This takes TIME and TEAMWORK

UNDERSTANDING
EMOTIONS AND BEHAVIOR

- Emotions are not good or bad
- There is a difference between emotions and behavior
- When students can't manage their own emotions
  - They will often have difficulty recognizing the emotions of others
  - They can't label the emotion and have difficulty recognizing the behavior
  - They should always be treated with dignity, respect, fairness, and consistency

ANGER

- Anger is an emotional signal that tells a person something needs to be changed
- Anger or aggression may be a defense to avoid painful feelings – a secondary emotion
- When it's not directed at someone else, it serves no harm

FEAR

- Fear is a normal human instinct
- Heightens your awareness and makes you ready to protect yourself
- Helps utilize your sense of sight, sound, and ability to move
- *In dealing with people who act angry and appear to be escalated, our actions should be motivated by the need to protect and teach, not by the desire to punish*

REACT OR RESPOND

- When we react
  - We may say and do things we later regret
  - We forget that it is impossible to control others
  - We act from an emotion state
- When we respond
  - We affirm our emotions and choose our behavior
  - We say to ourselves, "I feel ___" and this what I choose to do
  - Behavior can be functional or dysfunctional – choose wisely

Remember—emotions are not right or wrong

THE MOST IMPORTANT SKILL WHEN WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Manage yourself
  - We cannot effectively de-escalate students until we ourselves are de-escalated
  - When we manage our own emotions
    - Model how to act calmly in difficult situations
    - Provide safe shelter for students who may not have safety elsewhere in their life

CONFLICT AND COMMUNICATION

- Conflict is an emotional state
- It arises when someone feels that something has to change
- Communication is a key in resolving conflict
- Understand the other person's perspective
- Stress affects communication
  - Thinking and reasoning are compromised
- Communicate clearly and respectfully
- Send messages that build positive relationships

CONFLICT OUTCOMES

- **Win-Win**
  - Both parties have their needs met - relationship builds.
- **Compromise**
  - Both parties get something and have to give something up - relationship is maintained.
- **Win-Lose**
  - One party gets his/her needs met, the other does not.
- **Lose-Lose**
  - Neither party get his/her needs met.

Avoid Power Struggles!

WHY DO STUDENT'S ACT OUT?

- Internal factors
  - Pain
  - Medication
  - Illness
  - Chemical dependency
  - Stress
  - Mental health
- External factors
  - Room size
  - Noise
  - Environment—lighting, odors, weather
- An inability to effectively communicate
  - Needs
  - Desires
 - Emotions
  - Wants

MEET THE STUDENT'S NEEDS!

- Needs drive behavior
- If needs aren't met, people increase:
  - Duration
  - Intensity
  - Frequency
- If you meet needs, behavior (typically) de-escalates quickly

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PROACTIVE INTERACTION: RADAR

1. **Recognize:** Use your senses to determine what has changed in the environment.
2. **Assess:** Analyze what is happening to people in the environment around you.
3. **Decide:** After recognizing and assessing, determine how to respond to what is happening.
4. **Act:** Perform a verbal, non-verbal, or physical response to a situation.
5. **Review:** Look back at the outcome to determine what works well or if something different should be attempted next time.

5 – Review Results
1 – Recognize
2 – Assess
3 – Decide
4 – Act

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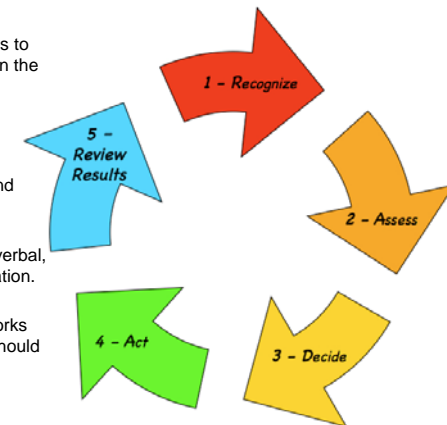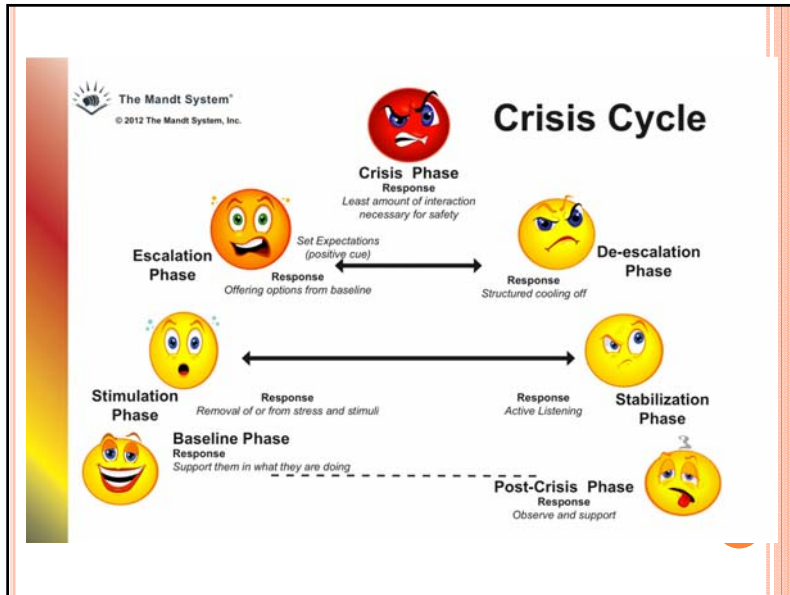
PHASE 0: BASELINE

- Possible causes
  - Treated with dignity and respect
  - Needs are being met
  - Not overly stressed
- Symptoms
  - Typical behavior
- Responses
  - ***Support them in what they are doing***

PHASE 1: STIMULATION

- Possible causes
  - Not treated with dignity and respect
  - Internal stimuli (pain, illness, hunger, emotions…)
  - External stimuli (light, sound, temperature)
  - Inability to communicate needs
- Possible symptoms (often difficult to notice)
  - Slightly different behavior
  - Change in typical mood
- Responses
  - Stay call—de-escalate and manage yourself
  - ***Remove trigger or stimulus***
  - Meet needs

PHASE 2: ESCALATION

- Possible causes
  - Inappropriate or inadequate response in Phase 1
  - Stimulus/stress still present or increasing
  - New stimuli/stresses on top of previous stimulus
- Possible symptoms
  - Physiological: increased agitation, blood pressure, muscle tension, production of adrenaline
  - Mental: decreased reasoning and compromising skills
- Responses
  - ***Offer options*** that will help save face
  - ***Set expectations*** – remind what the expected behavior is
  - Stay calm—de-escalate and manage yourself
  - Diversion/distraction
  - Assist in problem solving
  - Get assistance

PHASE 3: CRISIS

- Possible causes
  - Ineffective intervention in Phases 1 and 2
  - Unresolved or increase in original stumulus/stress
  - Additional stimulus/stress
- Possible symptoms
  - Physiological: rapid breathing, high blood pressure and muscle tension, flushed skin, increased pulse, high adrenaline and endorphin levels, decreased vision and hearing
  - Mental: extremely poor reasoning, compromising, and communication skills, loss of self-control, lack of concern for safety of self or others
  - Behavioral: swearing, crying, hitting, kicking, biting, etc.
- Responses
  - *Least amount of interaction necessary for safety*
  - Stay calm—de-escalate and manage yourself
  - Get assistance
  - Ensure safety

PHASE 4: DE-ESCALATION

- Possible causes
  - Stimuli/stresses have been reduced
  - Effective interaction
  - Emotional and/or physical fatigue
- Possible symptoms
  - Physiological: similar to Escalation, but reversing
  - Mental: similar to Escalation but reversing
  - Behavioral: lessening or ceasing from Crisis
- Responses
  - *Structured cooling off*
  - Allow time for de-escalation
  - Be non-judgmental and understanding
  - Provide appropriate options

PHASE 5: STABILIZATION

- Possible causes
  - Emotional and/or physical fatigue
  - Needs are being met
  - Effective intervention
- Possible symptoms
  - Physiological and mental states are returning to normal levels
- Responses
  - *Active listening*—often a hidden stimulus can be identified
  - Involve team members is appropriate
  - Re-establish contact—reassure the relationship is still there
  - Assist in problem solving if appropriate
  - Process and evaluate the even when appropriate

PHASE 6: POST CRISIS DRAIN

- Possible causes
  - Emotional and/or physical fatigue
  - Needs are being met
  - Effective intervention
- Possible symptoms
  - Physiological: processes drops below normal levels
  - Mental: may be lethargic and fatigued
  - Behavioral: fatigue, sometimes even sleeping
- Responses
  - *Observation and support*
  - Meet the individual's needs as well as your own—you may be drained as well
  - Be available if needed
  - Process and document incident

STRATEGIES TO PREVENT BEHAVIORAL ESCALATIONS

- Reinforce calm and on-task behavior
- Know triggers
- Pay attention to anything unusual about the student's behavior (change from baseline)
- Do not escalate along with the student
- Offer student opportunities to display responsible behavior
- Respond early in the sequence
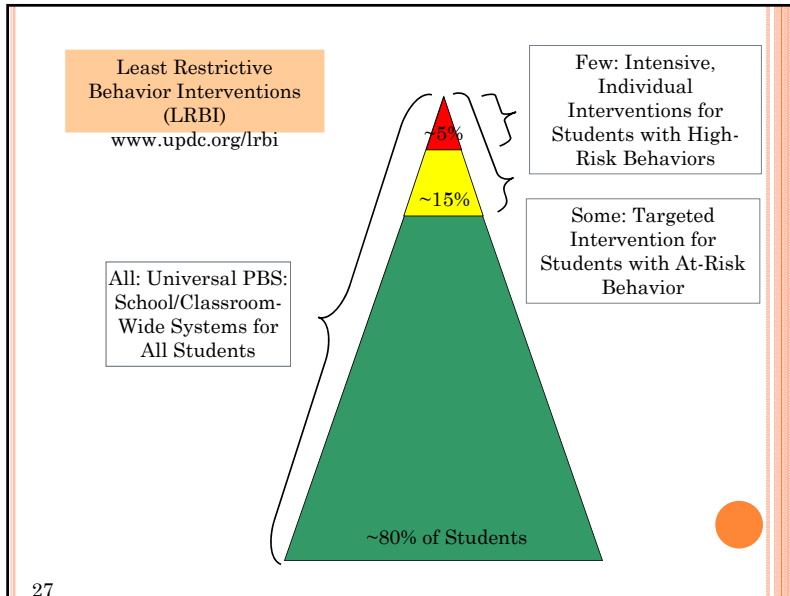
STRATEGIES TO PREVENT BEHAVIORAL ESCALATIONS

- Understand how such behavioral incidents ended in the past
- Know the function of the problem behavior
- Use good judgment about which behaviors to punish
- Use extinction procedures wisely
- Teach students socially appropriate behavior to replace problem behavior
- Teach academic survival skills and set students up for success

TIERS 1 & 2 VERSUS TIER 3 STUDENTS

- Most of our Tier 1 & 2 students don't go through the Crisis Cycle while at school, except under rare circumstances.
  - They have learned the skills necessary to self-regulate their behaviors.
- Some Tier 2 students need occasional support.
- Our Tier 3 students, however, lack these skills and may go through the cycle often.

SEVERE BEHAVIORS ARE NOT ONLY FOUND DURING THE CRISIS PHASE OF THE CRISIS CYCLE!!

- There are times that we see severe behaviors and the student is NOT in crisis. These behaviors are just as intense, but our response will be different.

- Understand the difference between "this true Crisis" and "this is manipulative behavior"

Slide 27

Least Restrictive Behavior Interventions (LRBI)
www.updc.org/lrbi

Few: Intensive, Individual Interventions for Students with High-Risk Behaviors

~5%

~15%

Some: Targeted Intervention for Students with At-Risk Behavior

All: Universal PBS: School/Classroom-Wide Systems for All Students

~80% of Students

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POWER STRUGGLES

- Develop when students refuse to follow the rules, fail to accept a consequence, or follow the rules and even accept the consequences, but do so with an attitude.

- Some are actively defiant, while others are quietly hostile

- Positive note: many students are extremely predictable!!
- This helps us prepare and have an appropriate response.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT POWER STRUGGLES

- Audience is key. The student doesn't want to look bad in front of peers and the teacher doesn't want to look bad in front of the class.

- The goal is to keep the student in class and get back to teaching.

- They can usually be diffused by becoming a "second to the last word person"

BEING A "SECOND TO THE LAST WORD PERSON"

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- In-Class Relationship Building
  - The degree to which students with challenging behaviors feel connected to the teacher strongly influences how they behave.
  - Greet students, start with a clean slate, seek feedback from students (in an appropriate manner), use the 2x10 method

Opportunities for Students to be in Charge
  - Classroom jobs, defer to student opinions/help, find and connect with classroom leaders

Competence Building
  - Teaching strategies to build on improvement

DE-ESCALATION STRATEGIES

- Get on the student's level
- Do not stand over the student
- Stand or squat to the side
- Your eyes must be below the student's eyes
- Non-threatening body posture
- Use a calm voice
- Fewer words, the better

- Use caring statements
- Empathy, perspective-taking, encouragement
- Give the student a way out
- Alternative activity, "Not now, later," "Why don't you take a break and get some water"
- Avoiding shaming, ridiculing, and/or embarrassing the student

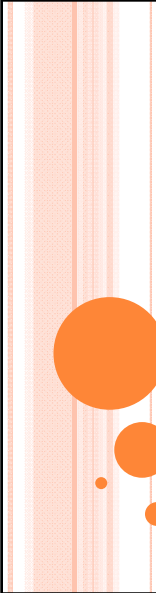## SOMETIMES IT'S NOT ABOUT THE INTERVENTION, BUT ABOUT KEEPING EVERYONE SAFE.

- With some severe behaviors our only goal is to keep everyone safe.

- Help de-escalate the situation (or at least not escalate the situation)

- Use teamwork and get help

FINAL THOUGHTS

- We have to understand that behavior is learned.
- We have to understand the difference between behavior intervention and crisis intervention (both important).
- We have to understand our role in the Crisis Cycle.
- We have to be proactive in building healthy relationships with all students. This is a critical process.
- We have to use behavioral interventions throughout all tiers.
- We have to work together with all interested parties.
- We have to demonstrate the behavior we expect of our students.
- **We have to manage ourselves so that we can effectively work with others.**

Crisis and Severe Behavior Intervention for BHAs

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