

Keynote

**Managing Severe Problem Behavior:
Understanding the Chain of Behavior and
Developing Effective Interventions**

Presented by

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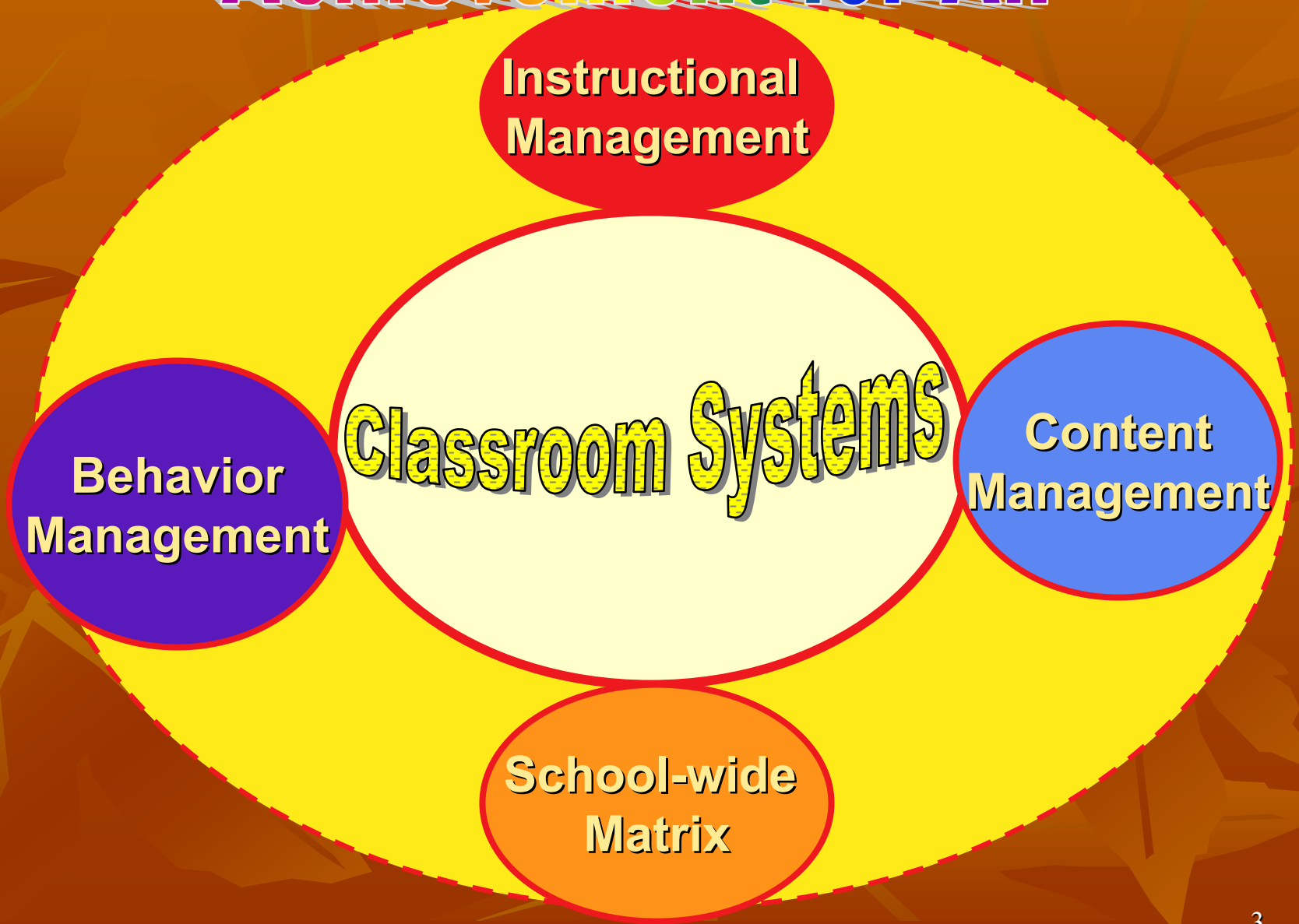
**Region IX: Positive Support Conference
El Paso, Texas
April 6, 2005**



Agenda

1. Big picture ~ perspective
2. Commonalities with severe behavior
3. A model for severe acting-out behavior
4. Critical proactive interventions
 - Instruction
 - S-W support
 - Defusing potentially serious behavior
5. Concluding remarks

Achievement for All



Activity

Identify what is the SAME about each of the following two examples

Example One of the Cycle of Acting-Out Behavior

- During independent work in math, students are expected to complete problems that were assigned in the previous class. One student, Michael, is sitting slouched in his seat, feet stretched out, head down staring at the floor and looking very serious. The successive interactions are presented along with a brief description of the teacher and student's behavior.

Example 1

Teacher

“Michael, it is time to get started with your math.”

“The math you didn’t finish this morning.”

“Well let me see your work please.”

“Good you have done four problems but you need to do ten.”

I announced that at the beginning of class yesterday.”

“Michael, look at the board. See under assignment, one through ten.”

Michael

“What math?”

“I did finish it!”

Michael leans back.

“When did we have to do ten?”

“I don’t remember that!”

“Well that’s the first time I’ve seen it.”

Example 1 Continued

Teacher

“Look Michael. This has gone far enough. You need to finish the rest of your assignment. So please get on with it.”

“OK. Here is your choice. Do the math now or you will have to do it in detention.”

“That’s verbal abuse. I will now do an office referral.”

“Alright. It’s to the Office.” Nudges student on the elbow.

Teacher follows emergency procedures and calls for help resulting in student being escorted to the Office.

Michael

“No way. I’m done!”

“F... you.”

Throws book across the room.

Swings arm in direction of teacher and makes solid contact with teacher’s arm.

Example 2

- Jason is a person with very severe disabilities: An IQ that can barely be measured, cleft palate, constantly regurgitates, hits his face often and pulls out his hair. His arms are frequently in splints because of the self-abuse (hair pulling and face hitting), he has no verbal language and has received several diagnoses the most recent one being severe autism.
- Presently he is required to complete a match to sample task in a voc-ed center.

Example 2 Continued

Teacher

- Prompts Jason to pick up one of the items
- Hands him an item and nudges his elbow
- Taps tray where item is to be placed
- Taps table near item
- Holds hand taps table and slowly lets hand go
- Places splints on arms and tries calm him down

Jason

- Rolls his head, begins to regurgitate
- Slowly takes item and begins to twirl it
- Drops item on table
- Turns hand palm and slaps face
- Turns hand, slaps face and begins to pull hair out
- Rolls head and regurgitates continuously louder than earlier.

Activity

List what is the same about the two examples:

1.

2.

3.

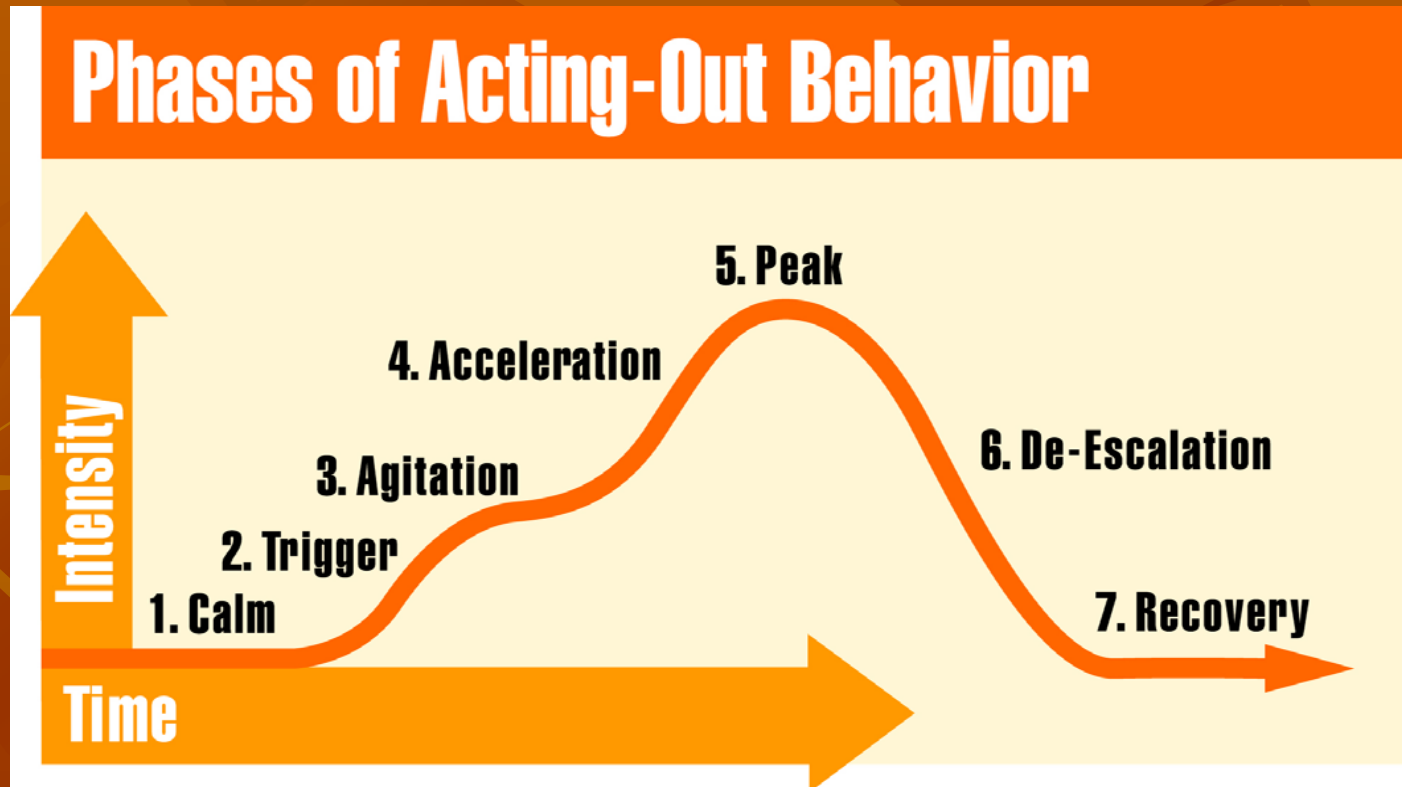
4.

5.

Key Elements

- Task involvement
- Signs of agitation
- Presence of successive interactions
- Presence of an escalating behavior chain.

Model for Escalating Behavior Chain



Two Essential Components for Managing Severe Acting-Out Behavior

Section 1: Understand the Model

- Patterns
- Specific Behaviors for Each Phase
- Know exactly where the student is in the cycle (placement in Model).

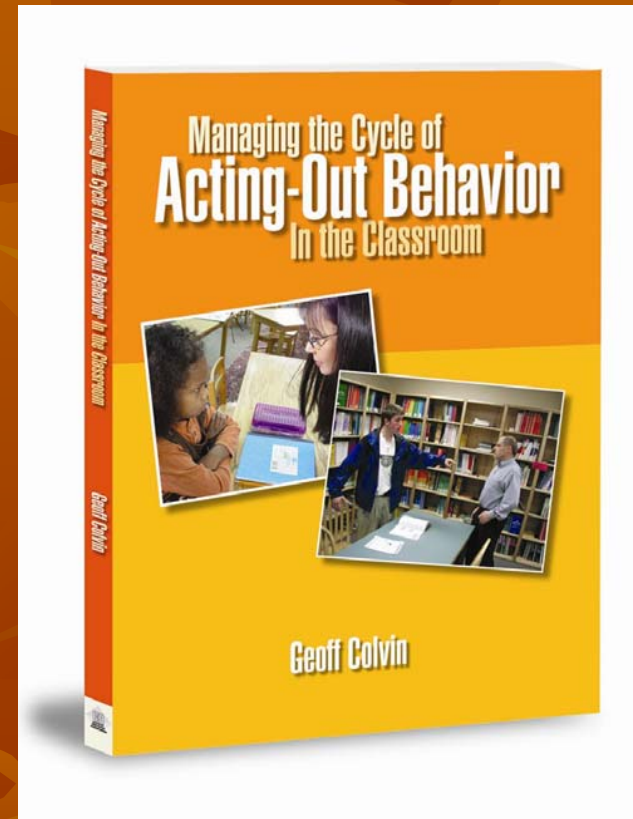
Section 2: Develop Strategies for each phase

- *Implement strategies based on student placement in the cycle*

Full Description

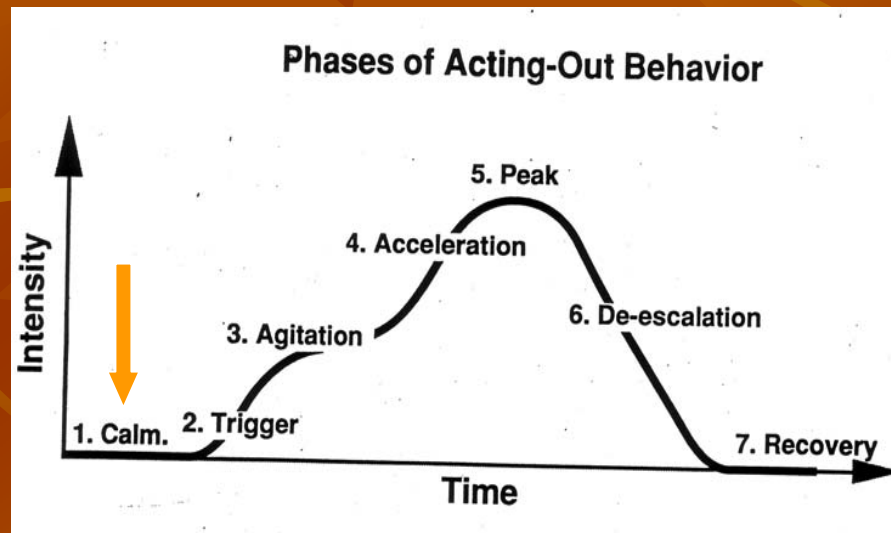
“Managing the cycle of acting-out behavior in the classroom” ~ Colvin

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Section One : Model

Phase 1: CALM



Summary: Phase 1

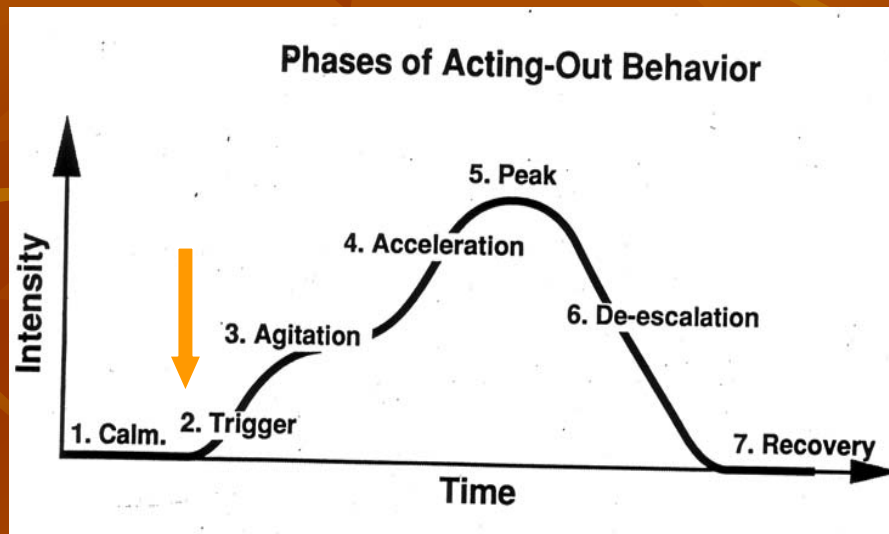
CALM



Overall Behavior is
COOPERATIVE & ACCEPTABLE

Model

Phase 2: TRIGGERS



Summary: Phase 2

TRIGGERS

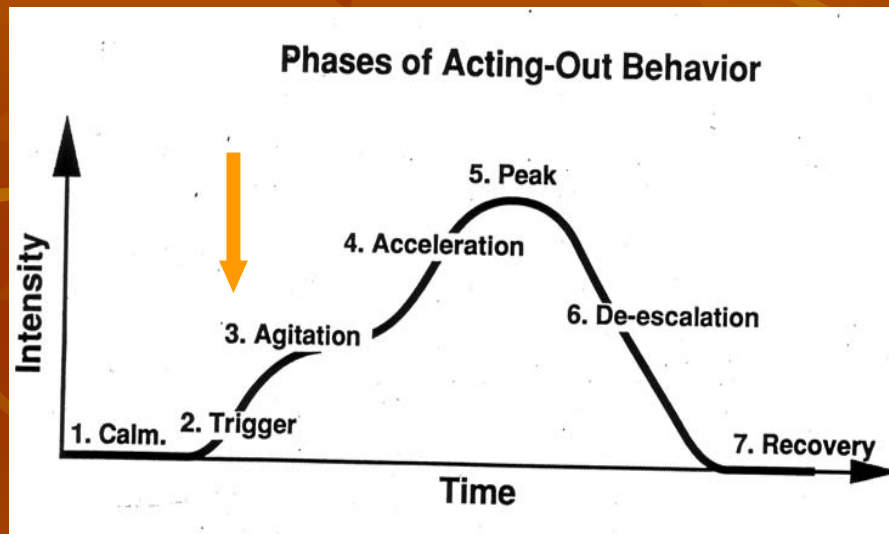


Overall Behavior

Involves series of *Unresolved Problems*

Model

Phase 3: AGITATION



Summary: Phase 3

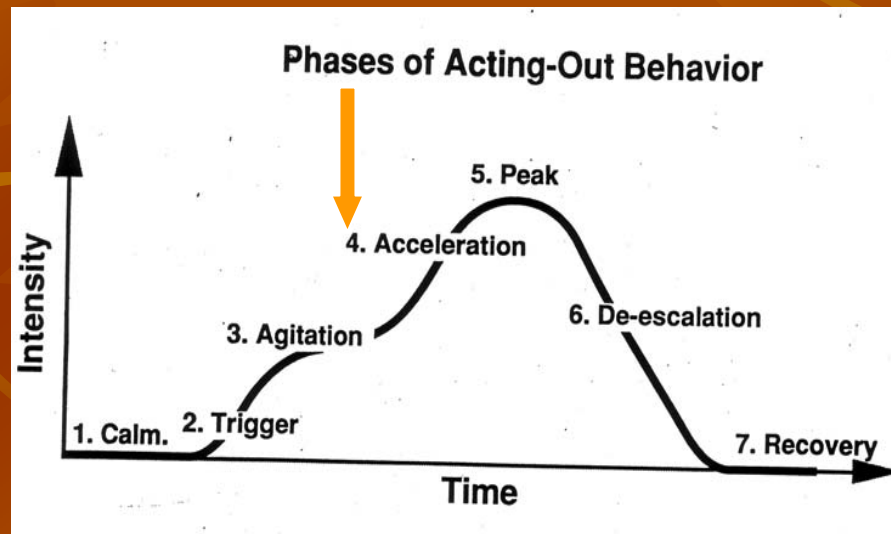
AGITATION



Overall Behavior is
UNFOCUSED & DISTRACTED

Model

Phase 4: ACCELERATION



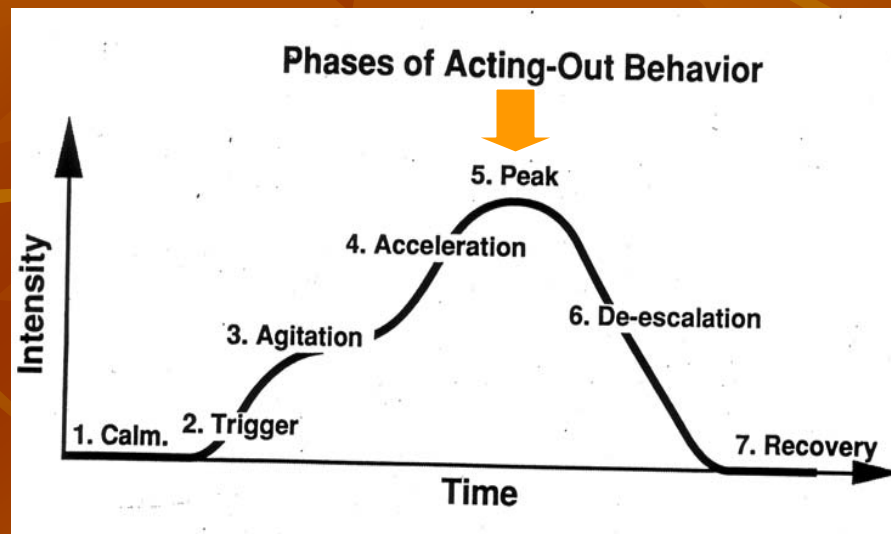
Summary: Phase 4 ACCELERATION



Overall Behavior is
Staff-engaging leading to further negative
interactions

Model

Phase 5: PEAK



Summary: Phase 5

Peak

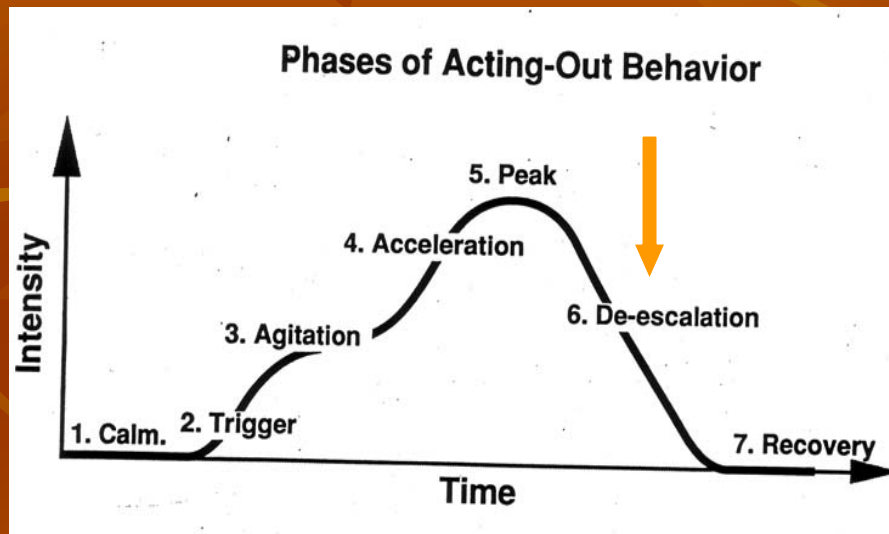


Overall Behavior

Student is out of control creating safety concerns

Model

Phase 6: DE-ESCALATION



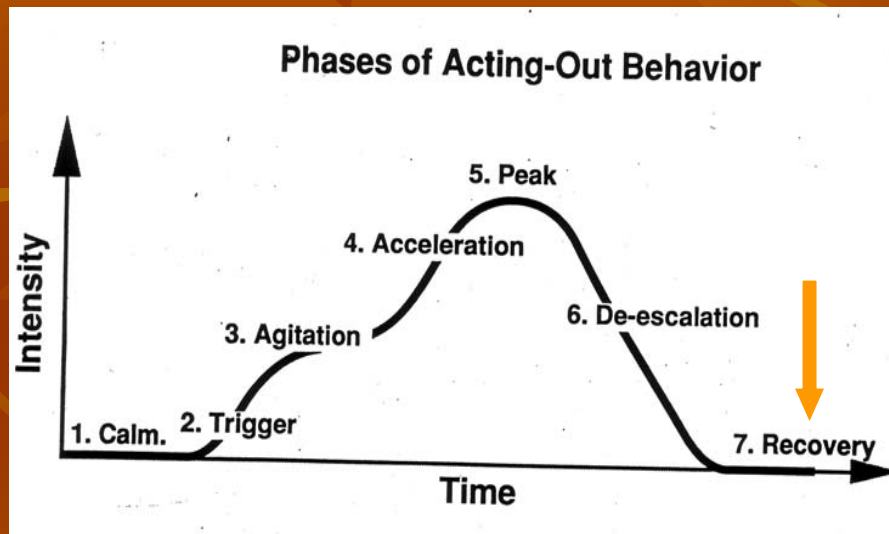
Summary: Phase 6 DE-ESCALATION



Overall Behavior shows
Confusion & Lack of Focus

Model

Phase 7: RECOVERY



Summary: Phase 7



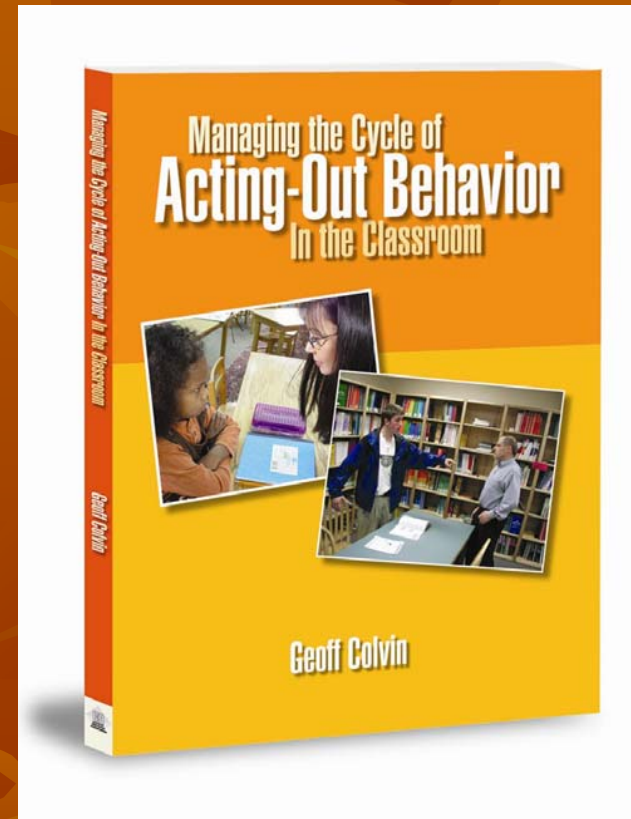
Overall Behavior Shows
Eagerness for **BUSY WORK** &
reluctance to **INTERACT**

Part B

STRATEGIES

“Managing the cycle of acting-out behavior in the classroom” ~ Colvin

Pages: 43-141



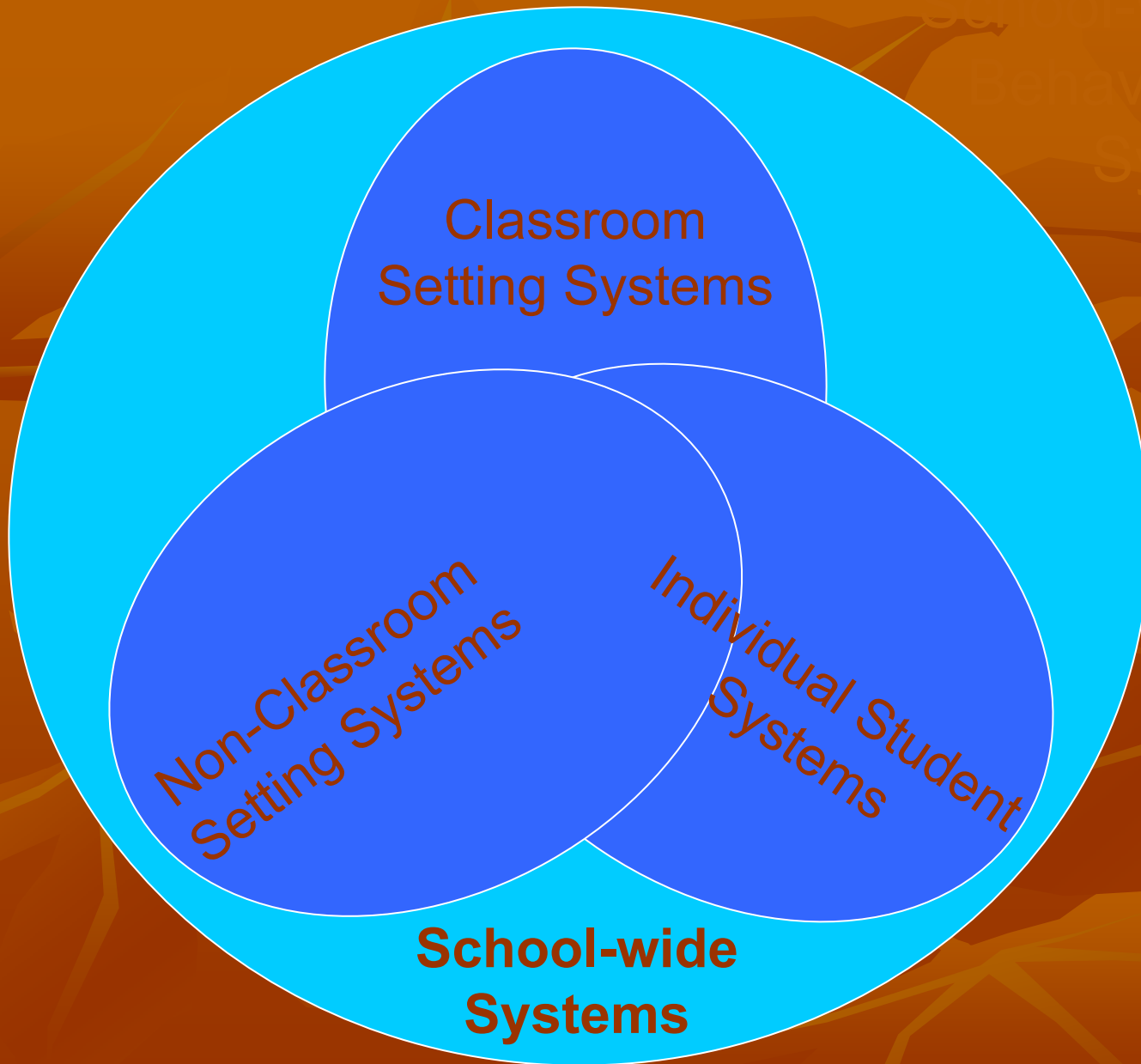
Critical Proactive Interventions

- Instruction



And Positive Behavior Support

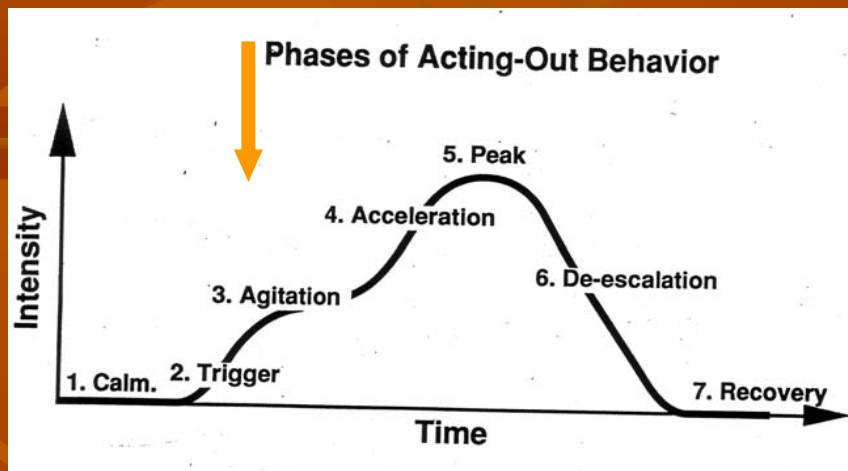
Behavior Support Systems



Defusing Potentially Serious Behavior

- Agitation
- Disrespect
- Non-Compliance

Defusing AGITATION



Key Issues

1. If not addressed student may
 - a. **Escalate** or
 - b. **Remain distracted** making instruction difficult
2. Strategies are **accommodations**
3. Implement **before** onset of escalation
(Colvin Book: Pages 86-97)

Strategies for AGITATION

1. Teacher empathy
2. Assist students to focus
3. Space
4. Providing assurances and additional time
5. Preferred activities
6. Teacher proximity

- 
- 7. Independent activities
 - 6. Passive activities
 - 7. Movement activities (jobs)
 - 8. Student involvement

Defusing DISRESPECT

- Student displays disrespectful behavior and sometimes quite offensive behavior
- Teacher may react and take the behavior personally
- Student reacts to the teacher response
- Situation may easily escalate

Management Steps

1. Studiously reacting personally (such as shouting, challenging, becoming agitated)
2. Maintain calmness, respect and detachment (Teacher modeling role)
3. Pause and focus
4. Focus on the student behavior (“That language...”)
5. Deliver consequence as appropriate

Defusing **NON-COMPLIANCE**



Scenario

Some students may display a range of behavior that is designed to test limits such as

- Refusing to follow directions
- Sustained arguing
- Challenging the teacher
- Sustained off task behavior
- Defiance and insubordination

When these behaviors are directly addressed the student may escalate

Limit Testing Management Steps

1. Pre-Teach the procedures
2. Deliver the following information in a calm matter-of-fact manner
 - a. Present expected behavior and negative consequence as a decision
 - b. Allow few seconds for decision
 - c. Withdraw and attend to other students
3. Follow through based on student decision

Concluding Remarks

The best antidote for severe behavior problems is to have:

- A school-wide positive behavior support system
- A strong emphasis on quality instruction leading to increased academic achievement
- A good understanding of problem behavior and effective use of defusion strategies

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Additional Products Published by Geoff Colvin

Books

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(All available through Behavior Associates: (541) 485-6450)

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