



Strategies for De-Escalating Student Behaviors in the Classroom

De-Escalation in a PBIS Framework

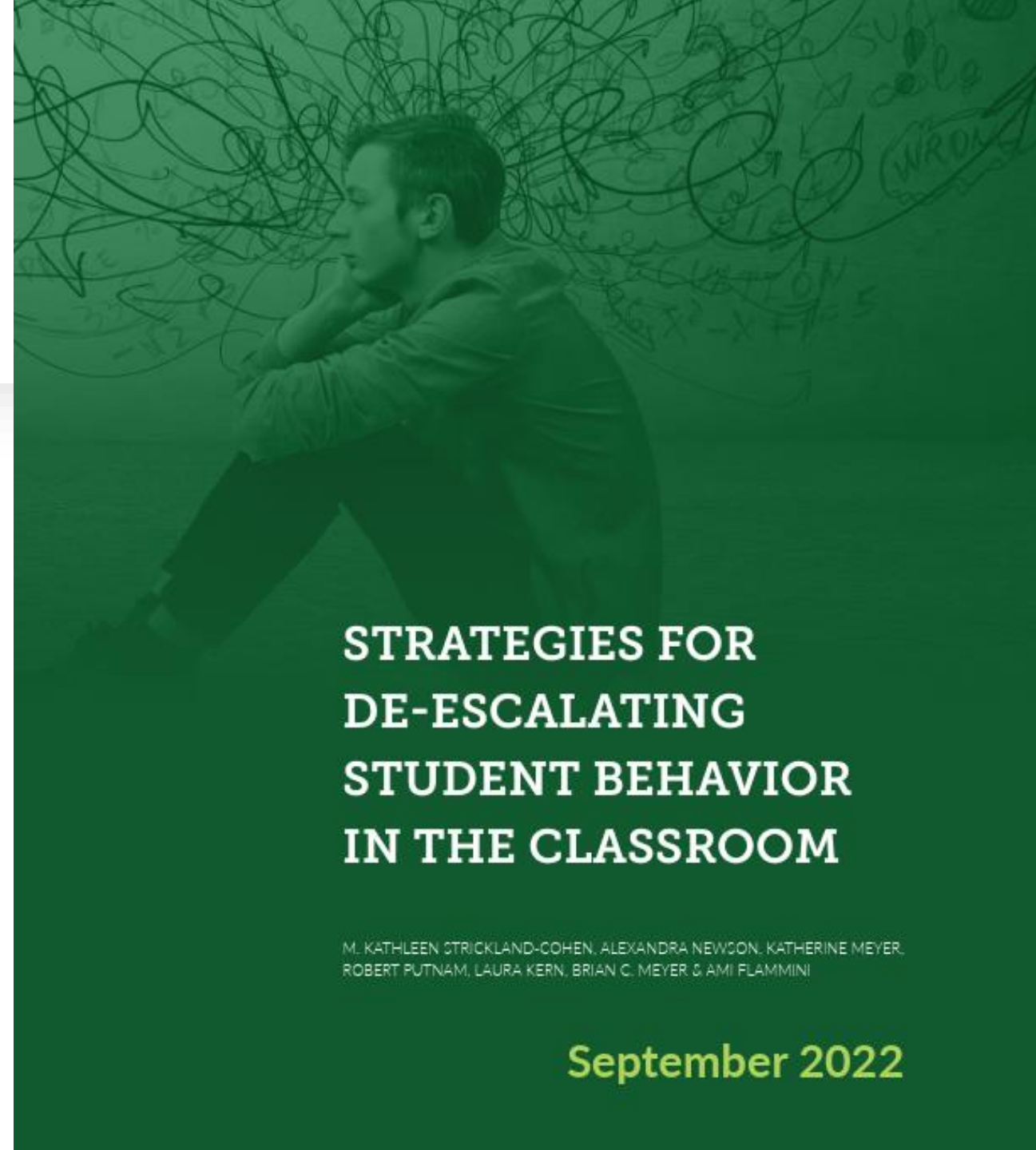
Content created by the Center on PBIS

Presented by Rebecca Turner

Center on PBIS: Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports



[Strategies for De-escalating
Student Behavior in the Classroom](#)

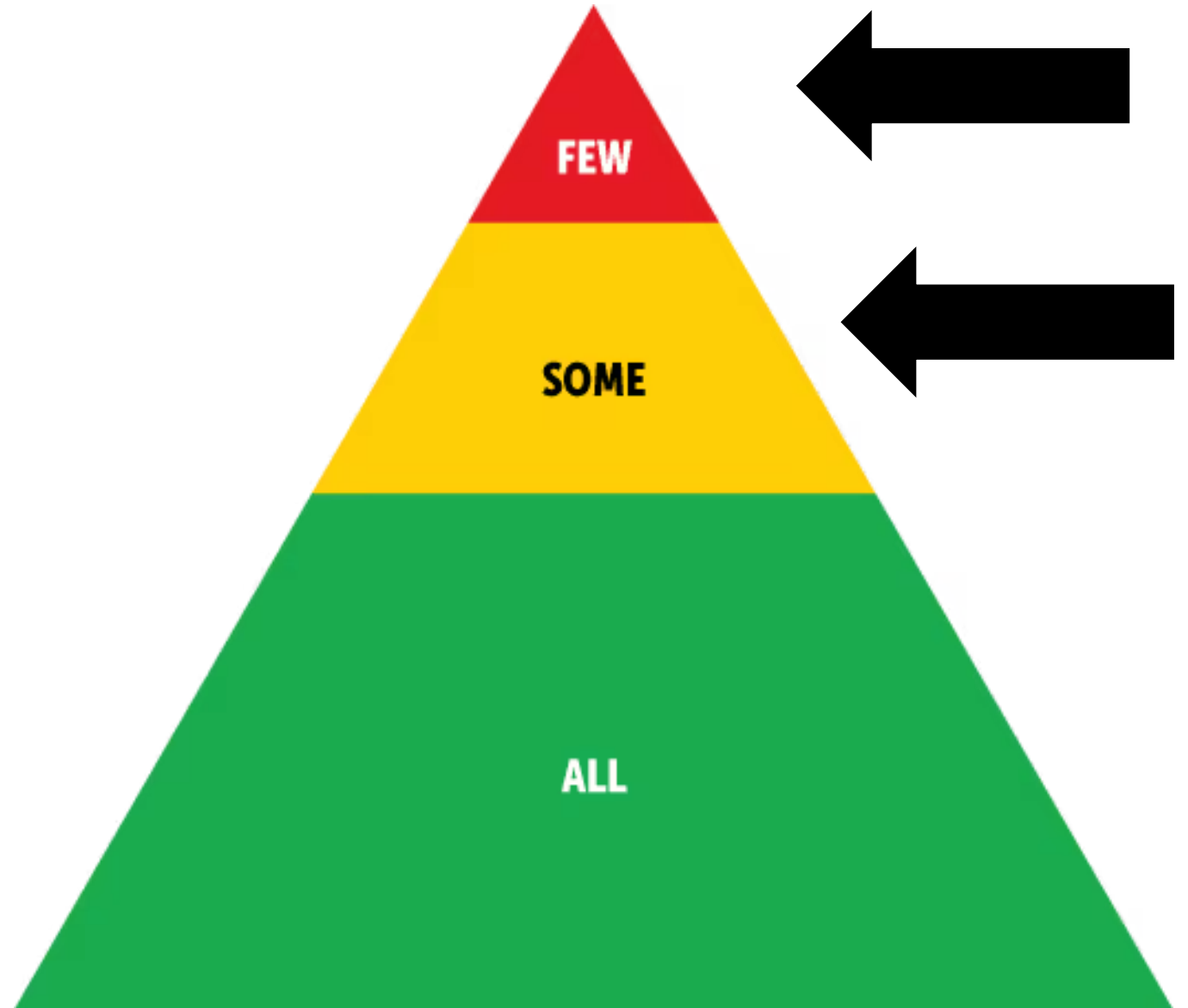


STRATEGIES FOR DE-ESCALATING STUDENT BEHAVIOR IN THE CLASSROOM

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De-Escalation in a PBIS Framework



Prevention Strategies

Creating safe and inclusive environments

Developing and explicitly teaching clear behavior expectations

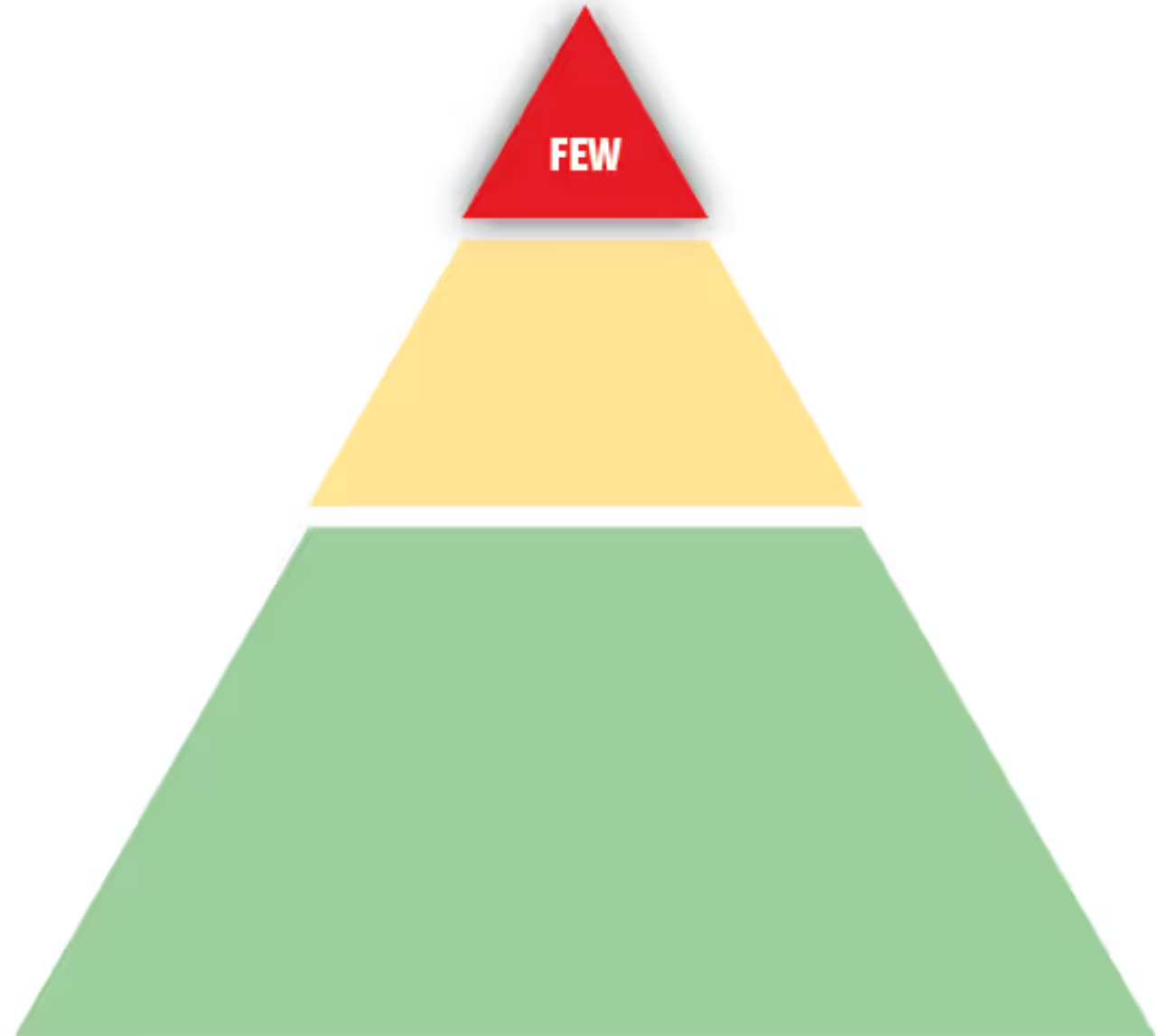
Explicitly teaching clear and consistent routines

Providing engaging academic instruction

Acknowledging prosocial behavior

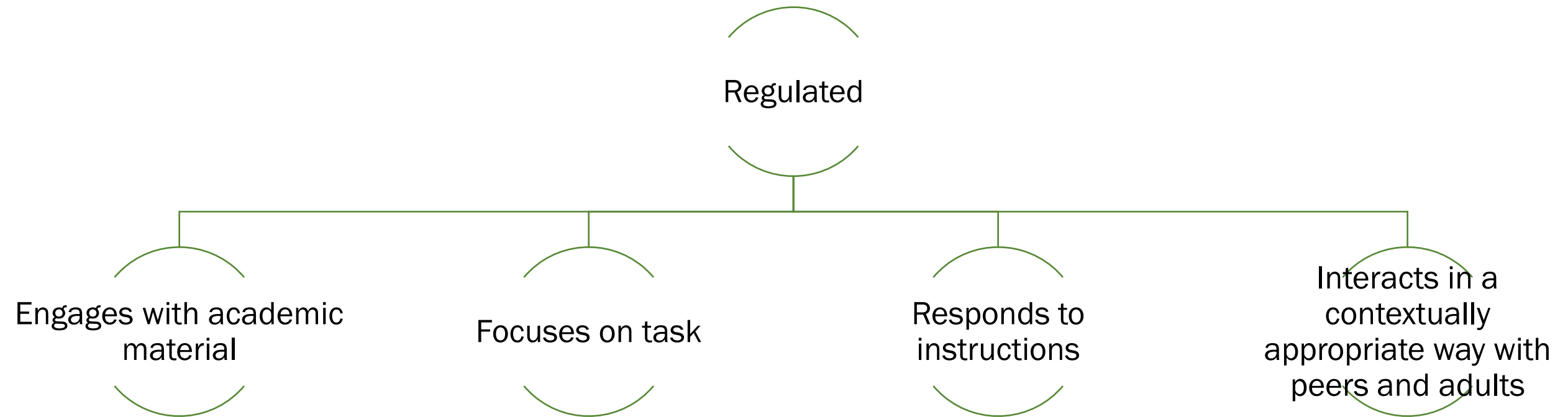
Re-Teaching when behavioral errors occur

Intensive (Tier 3) Support Needs

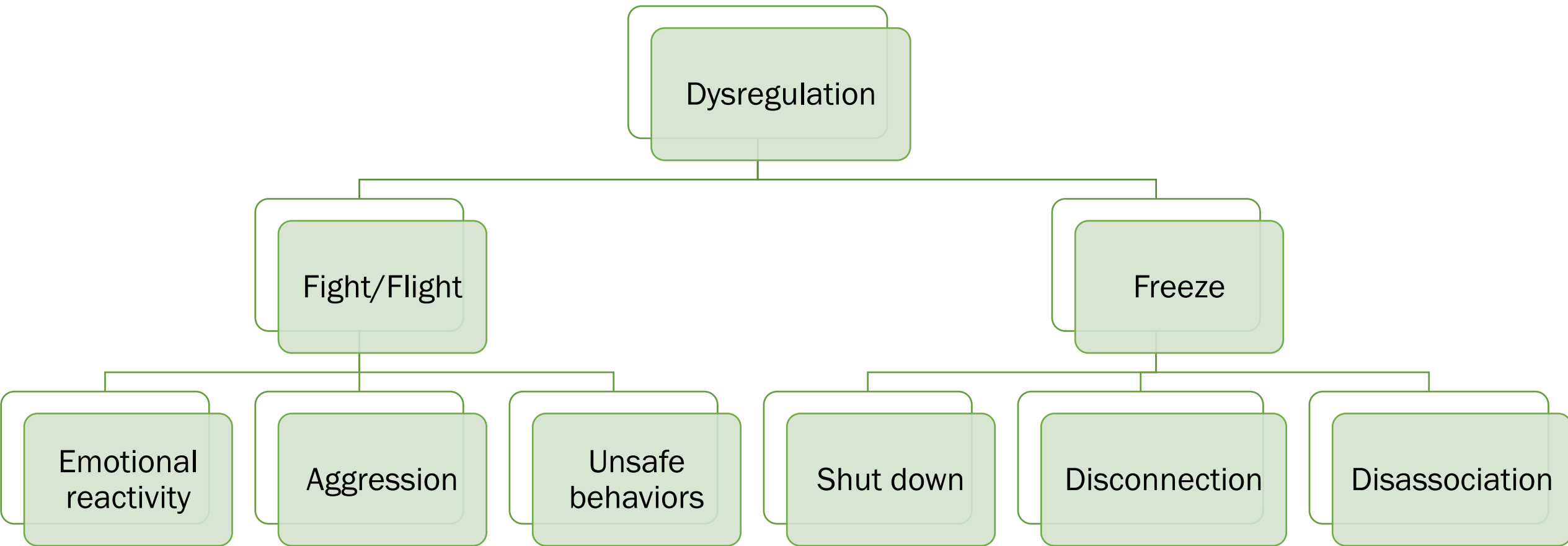


Understanding Behavioral Regulation

Regulation is a state of being where an individual feels safe, present and engaged (Dishion & Connell, 2006).



Understanding Behavioral Regulation (cont.)



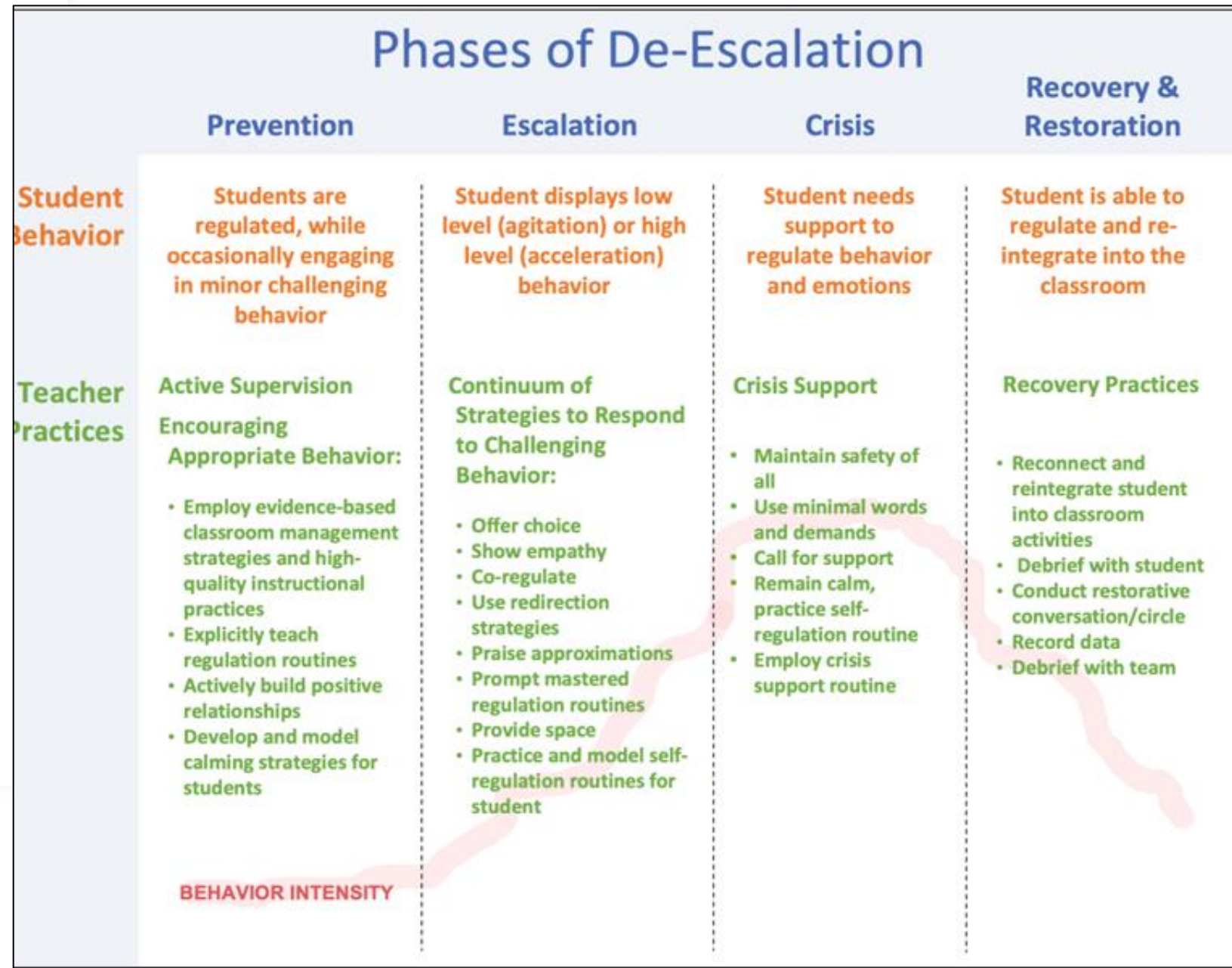
Addressing Dysregulation

Requires a combination of teacher directed techniques and student self-regulation strategies

Must be taught and practiced when student is calm

Helps students recognize feelings of agitation when they first become upset

Phases of De-Escalation



Selecting De-escalation Strategies



Assess existing schoolwide and classwide practices.



Identify effective de-escalation strategies already in place.



Ensure all staff have received training.



Determine changes and additions that may benefit students.

Strategies for De-Escalation



[Strategies for De-Escalating Student Behaviors in the Classroom](#)

Strategies for De-Escalating Student Behaviors in the Classroom

A companion resource for [Strategies for De-escalating Student Behavior in the Classroom](#) from the [Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports \(PBIS\)](#).



Level of Dysregulation	Strategy	Definition	Examples
Agitation	Choice	Provide the student with a small number (2-3) acceptable options for completing the task	"You can complete the worksheet independently or with a partner. Which would you prefer?"
	Redirection	Provide a brief statement that prompts engagement in a more appropriate task or behavior. Effective statements are short, provided with neutral emotion, and may be delivered privately.	"Andy, try starting on the second section and come back to that one." "Jesse, remember to ask for help if you're feeling stuck."
	Coregulation	Assist students in regulating their emotions by expressing empathy, acknowledging and labeling their	"Rosa, I want to make sure you are okay. I see that you are angry because your face is red, and your fists are clenched. When I feel angry, I like to take three deep breaths and count to 10. Watch me and we can do it together."



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Possible Strategies for: Agitation

Strategy	Definition	Examples
Choice	Provide the student with a small number (2-3) acceptable options for completing the task	“You can complete the worksheet independently or with a partner. Which would you prefer?”
Redirection	Provide a brief statement that prompts engagement in a more appropriate task or behavior. Effective statements are short, provided with neutral emotion, and may be delivered privately.	“Andy, try starting on the second section and come back to that one.” “Jesse, remember to ask for help if you’re feeling stuck.”
Coregulation	Assist students in regulating their emotions by expressing empathy, acknowledging and labeling their emotions, modeling desired behavior, and providing positive reinforcement for following expectations.	“Rosa, I want to make sure you are okay. I see that you are angry because your face is red, and your fists are clenched. When I feel angry, I like to take three deep breaths and count to 10. Watch me and we can do it together.”
Prompt Regulation Routines	Prompt use of calming and self-regulation strategies that have been previously taught and mastered as part of a proactive preventive approach.	“Would it help to use your 4-square breathing?” “Cielo, you can grab a quick drink of water and then try again.”

Possible Strategies for: Acceleration

Strategy	Definition	Examples
Reminders of regulation routine	Provide student with reminder (verbal or visual) using minimal verbal directions to prompt mastered regulation or calming routine. Reminders should be brief and provided using a neutral tone and may be delivered privately.	Point to deep breathing poster in classroom: “John, remember our deep breathing strategy.”
Provide space	Give the student room while remaining close enough to monitor behavior. When signs of dysregulation occur, prompt student to go to a break space or safe space to cool down.	Continue to actively supervise student while moving around the classroom to check in with other students. Teacher moves close to student: “Jamie, you seem frustrated. You are welcome to take time to cool down in the break space.”
Co-regulation with limited words	As described above, but shorter and less descriptive.	“Mica, you’re crying. Let’s grab some tissues and sit down together.”

Possible Strategies for: Crisis

Strategy	Definition	Examples
Maintain safety with district approved protocol	Minimizing risk of harm to the student or others by following district-approved crisis protocols to request support and maintain safety. Be familiar with the teams available in the school (Crisis team, Tier 3 team, Administration, etc.) and established protocols, in order to be prepared to make that call when the time comes. Refer to individual student/school building crisis plan for details	Call/text for administrator assistance to support the student. Give the student space with supervision and/or escort other students in the classroom out of the space. Remove items close to the student that might pose harm (i.e., scissors, sharp objects, staplers, computers).
Use minimal words and demands	When a student is in crisis, they often struggle to listen and attend to directions due to their physiological arousal. This is not the time to present consequences for behavior, instead provide space and calm for the student, limiting words and demands.	“Thank you for sitting down, Piper.” “I am here when you are ready, Eli.”

Possible Strategies for: Crisis (cont.)

Strategy	Definition	Examples
Stay calm	Attend to your own state of physiological arousal and practice self-regulation strategies. If you find yourself escalating and additional supports are available/it is safe to do so, take a break from the situation to regain calm. Remember, you cannot use your skills to regulate the intensity of the situation if you are experiencing behavior escalation.	Ask to leave the space if there are other adults in the room to supervise the student(s). Take 3 deep breaths before talking to student. Notice your heart rate and remind yourself to relax.

Recovery

Welcome
student

Reintegrate

Focus on
present



Restoration

Debrief with
student

Staff debrief and
self-reflection



Additional Resources

- [Center on PBIS](#)
- [National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations](#)
- [PBIS : Video Playlist – CIBRS](#)
- [Behavior Lessons & Strategies: Instructional Strategies | NCII](#)
- [Self-Regulation in Preschool: Autism](#)
- [Provider The Power of the Incredible 5-Point Scale: Teaching Communication Skills for Self-Regulation](#)

Contact Information

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[Behavior Resources - Kentucky Department of Education](#)