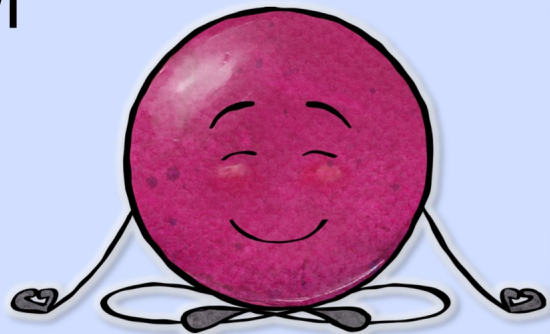


# DE-ESCALATION PRESENTATION

FOR ELEMENTARY FACULTY AND STAFF

## Avoiding Student Escalation

KEEPING KIDS CALM  
WHEN THEY'RE  
BRAINS WANT TO  
LOSE THEIR COOL

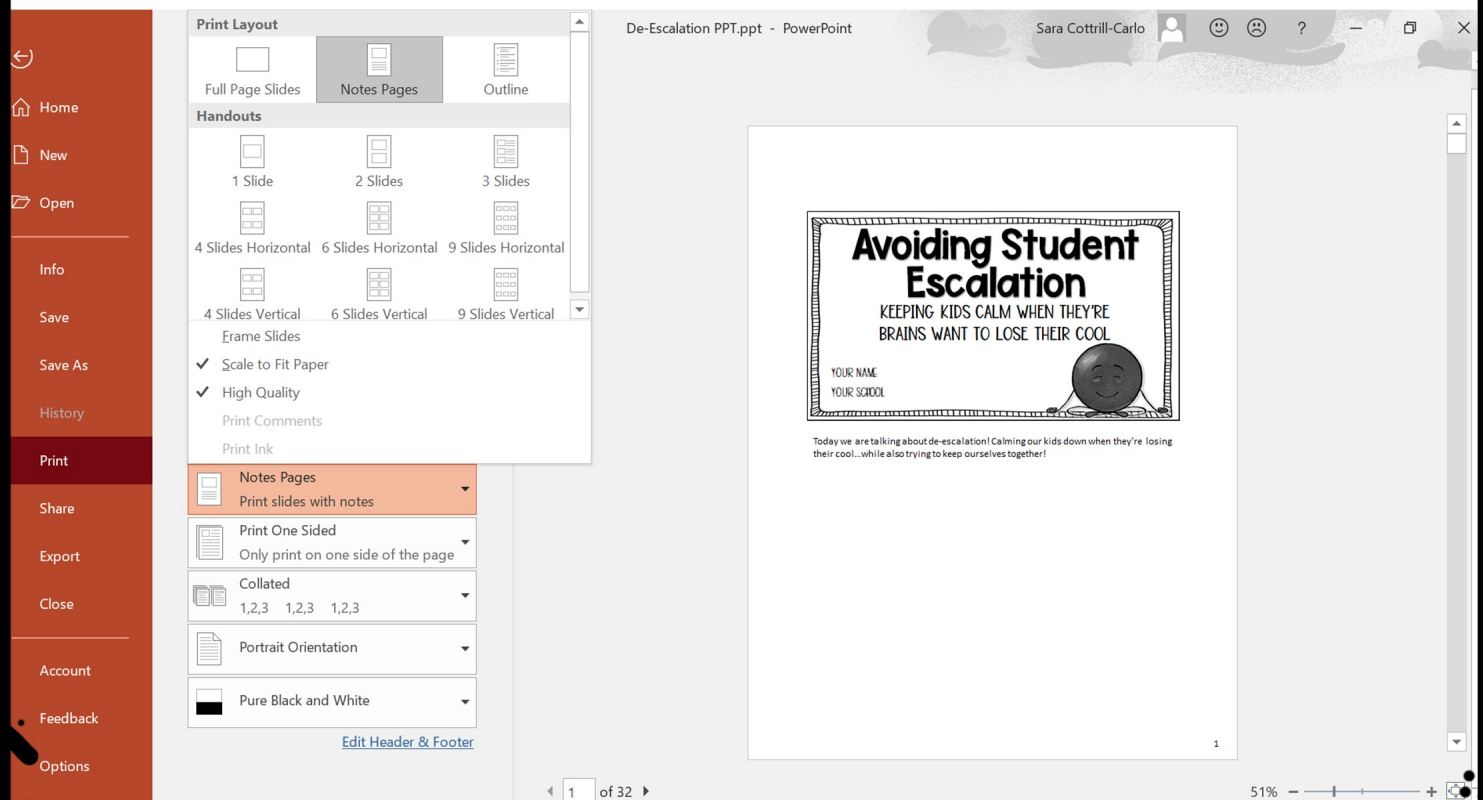


# : NOTES FOR THE EDUCATOR:

This presentation is meant for helping to train faculty and staff in how to successfully and peacefully handle students becoming dysregulated/escalated. It was created with elementary schools in mind. There are opportunities for audience interaction/participation but it is all optional to not force discomfort on faculty that aren't comfortable role playing.

The de-escalation script mini-posters and lanyard cards are meant as ways to make the script quickly accessible to faculty and staff.

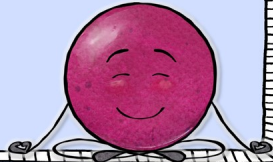
This PPT is fully scripted. The easiest way to reference the script is to print a copy of the slides with the slide notes (script) included. Below is a screen shot of the easiest way to do this – through the print settings! Some of the graphics will NOT show up in this handout version.



# Avoiding Student Escalation

KEEPING KIDS CALM WHEN THEY'RE  
BRAINS WANT TO LOSE THEIR COOL

YOUR NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
YOUR SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_



# Understanding Dysregulation and Misbehavior

## escalated DYSREGULATED

out of  
control

on a tirade

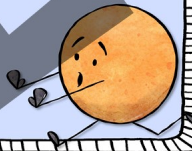
in a panic

flipped a lid

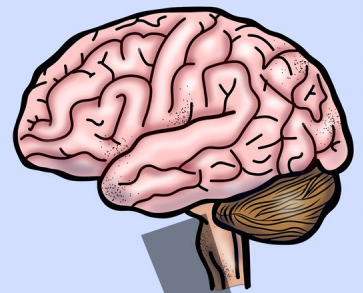
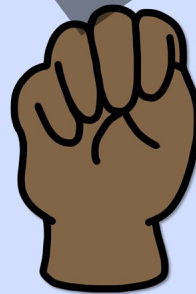
agitated

defiant

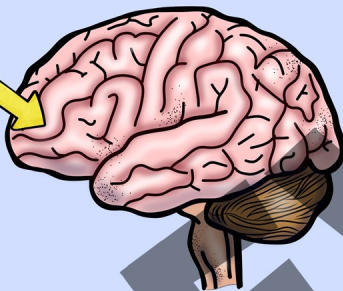
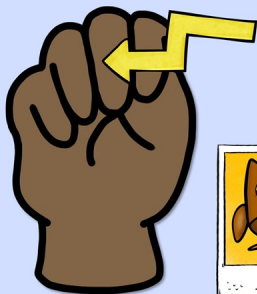
*What does this all mean?*



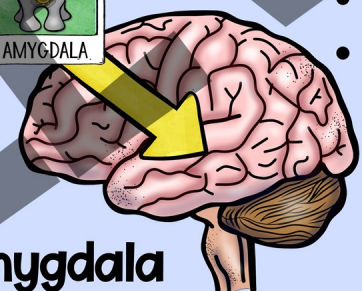
## Let's talk about our brains...



## Pre-Frontal Cortex

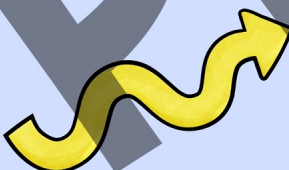
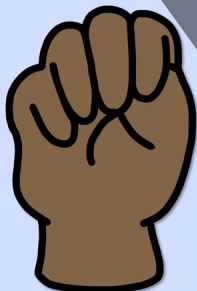


Amygdala

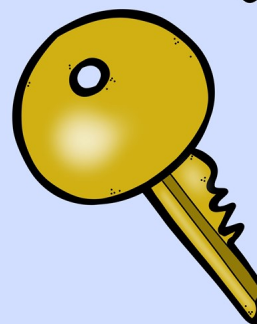


- FIGHT
- FLIGHT
- FREEZE

## Flipping a Lid



## Case Study



## TRIGGERS

peer conflict  
hunger  
change in plan/  
schedule  
thinking they have no  
choice or control

frustration  
reprimand or  
redirection  
feeling  
embarrassed

lack of sleep  
home stressors



## TRIGGERS

On the "insert" tab, click "Video" then "Online Video", then  
paste this URL into it:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbZwkIFZ4XE>

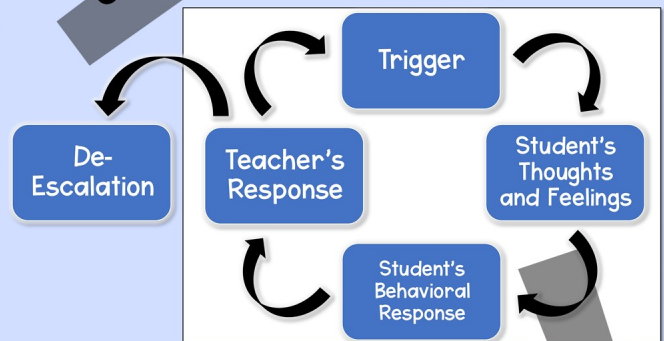
The video will be immediately embedded right here!

## Signs of Agitation

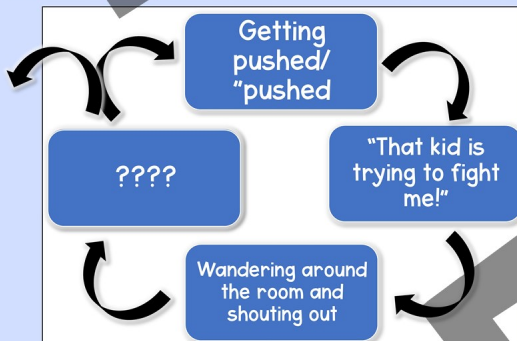
unfocused  
chatty  
out of seat  
clenched  
fists  
off-task  
louder voice  
fidgeting  
head down  
darting  
eyes  
staring off  
into space  
pacing



## Cycle of Student Escalation



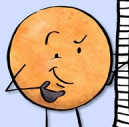
## Cycle of Student Escalation: Example



## Being Proactive

## Making a Plan

- What are the biggest triggers for your high-needs kiddos?
- What times of the day are most prone to dysregulation and misbehavior?
- How can you support your students during these times?
  - Reminders before transitions (verbal, timers)
  - First/then
  - Student jobs



**2:10**

Spend 2 minutes per day for 10 days in a row talking with an at-risk student about anything she or he wants to talk about

**\*BONUS: Improvement in whole class behavior, too!**

- They don't like you or want to talk to you?
  - Don't push it! But keep gently trying and work up to the 2 minutes.
- You don't have time?
  - You also don't have time to constantly be managing their behavior.
- What am I supposed to say?
  - Find a genuine common interest (or disinterest!), pay attention to what they seem interested in.



# REGULATE YOURSELF

*"De-escalation techniques go against our natural fight - or - flight reflexes. Remaining calm and professionally detached is not natural and therefore is a skill that will need to be practiced."*

## What NOT to Do

raise your voice  
point your finger  
touch them without asking  
give a consequence\*  
"no"  
"why"  
"calm down"  
"don't"  
sarcasm  
blame  
accuse  
do it when you're upset  
tag team\*  
try to discuss their misbehavior  
"you"



## Avoiding Power Struggles

"When children are defiant, their goal is not to annoy, disrespect, or frustrate us. Rather, their goal often is to feel significant. Yet their defiance threatens our own similar need. As we both strive to feel significant, we can easily get enmeshed in a power struggle. How do you know you're in a power struggle? You feel as if you're being tested (which you are), and you get angry or irritated. You may even want to dominate the child to prove you're the boss. But teachers never win power struggles. Once you're in one, you've lost. And so has the child: No one wins a power struggle." *-(Margaret Barry Wilson, The Responsive Classroom)*

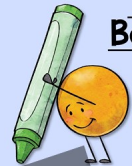
## Avoiding Power Struggles

Re-Word Your "No" Into a "Yes"



Can it wait?

Choose Your Battles



# De-Escalation Strategies

## Goals of De-Escalation and Correcting Problem Behavior

1. Interrupt the problem behavior, and engage student in the appropriate behavior.
2. Increase the chances of the student demonstrating the appropriate behavior in the future.
3. Avoid escalating the situation to more serious behavior.

**Help the student feel emotionally and physically safe!**

# REGULATE

# RELATE

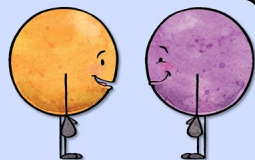
# REASON

# REGULATE



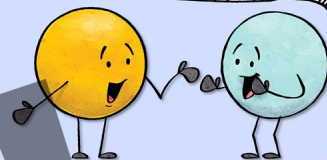
- Body language and tone of voice and simple, short sentences.
- Help them feel safe.
- Prompt to use a coping strategy or go to the peace corner.

## RELATE



- Connect with them.
- Get on their level.
- Find a point of agreement
  - "I would feel angry if that happened to me, too."
  - "I agree that it's not fair."

## REASON



- When the student is calm.
- Conducted privately.
- Here's where your restorative conversation can come in!
- Appropriate logical consequences.

## De-Escalation "Script"

"I see you (behavior)"

"Are you feeling (emotion)?"

"What are you feeling?"

*(If you guessed incorrectly.)*

"I can see you're (emotion)."

## De-Escalation "Script"

"What are you (emotion) about?"

"Who, What, When, Where, How"

*(Avoid asking, "why")*

"You're (emotion) about (source).

Is that right?"

## De-Escalation "Script"

### PLAN OF ACTION

"What do you want?"

"What have you tried?"

"How well has it worked?"

"What are you willing to do?"

### OPTIONS

Remove Source of Trigger

Accept the Situation

Try Something Else

### CONTRACT

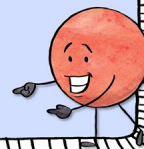
"How would you do it?"

"When?" "Where?"

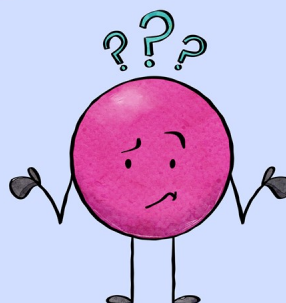
"Would you let me know how it comes out?"

## More Quick Tips

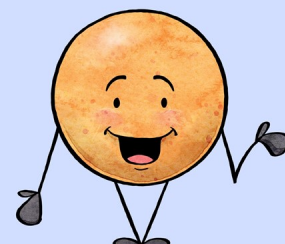
- "What can I do to help you right now?"
- Humor
- Ask if there's another adult that can come help.
- Encourage them to get a drink of water.
- Ask them to draw about it.
- **Distract!**



Not just for kids...



Questions?



Comments?



# When you see someone getting really upset...

- I see you (*action*).
- Are you feeling (*emotion*)? What are you feeling?
- I can see you're feeling (*emotion*).
- What are you feeling (*emotion*) about?
  - *If needed: who/what/when/where/how, NOT "Why do you feel that way?"*
- Ok. You're (*emotion*) about (*source*). Is that right?
- What do you want?
- What have you tried so far? Has that worked?
- What could you do to make that happen?
  - *Try to elicit: removing the source of the problem, accepting the situation, and/or trying something else.*

# the RESPONSIVE counselor



Hey y'all! I'm Sara. I create resources for elementary students, counselors, and teachers that improve social emotional learning and classroom culture. My focus is making things that are *effective* and *engaging* for WIGGLY + CHATTY learners and that utilize wording and scenarios accessible to underserved and ELL populations.

## Education

B.A. from Michigan State University  
Psychology and Anthropology

M.S. from Vanderbilt University  
Community, Research, and Action

M.Ed. From Vanderbilt University  
Human Development Counseling:  
School Counseling and  
Clinical Mental Health

## Experience

I started my post-grad career as a school-based therapist before becoming an elementary school counselor. Social and emotional learning in youth is my passion, whether through large group prevention, individual intervention, or parent and teacher education! I have been an elementary school counselor since 2012, providing a comprehensive school counseling program to a diverse population.

Let's  
Connect:

