

**DISTRICT
204**

MENTAL HEALTH
SYMPOSIUM



SATURDAY, MARCH 4

PRESENTED BY:



Regulating Emotions and Managing Crises with Adolescents and Teens

presented by

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BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Week 2: Regulating Emotions and Managing Crises

Mill Street Adolescent Outpatient

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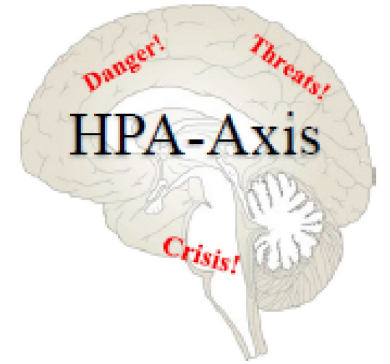
Program Outline

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Understand your child's treatment and treatment goals	Manage periods of crisis and stress	Communicate more effectively with your child	Set more effective limits and consequences at home

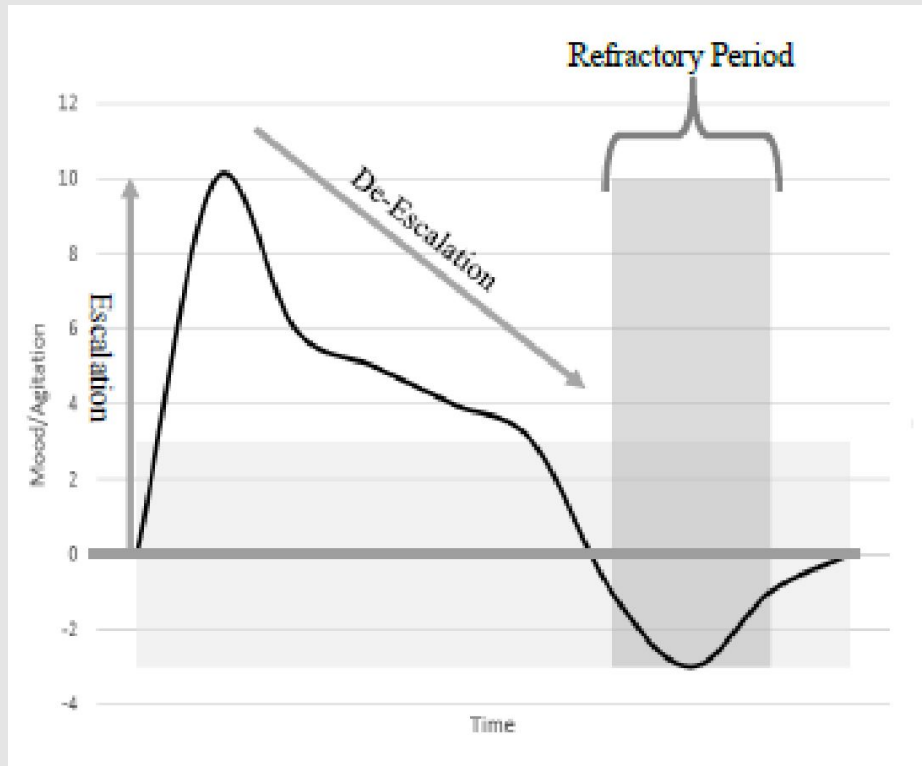
How our bodies perceive threats & become dysregulated

Hypothalamus - Pituitary - Adrenal (HPA) Axis

- We have several structures in our brain which are specifically designed to scan for threats in our environment and respond in a way that helps keep us safe. This system is responsible for our so-called “Fight or Flight” response, but it’s not good at telling the difference between that car that just cut you off in traffic and the threat of failing a final exam.

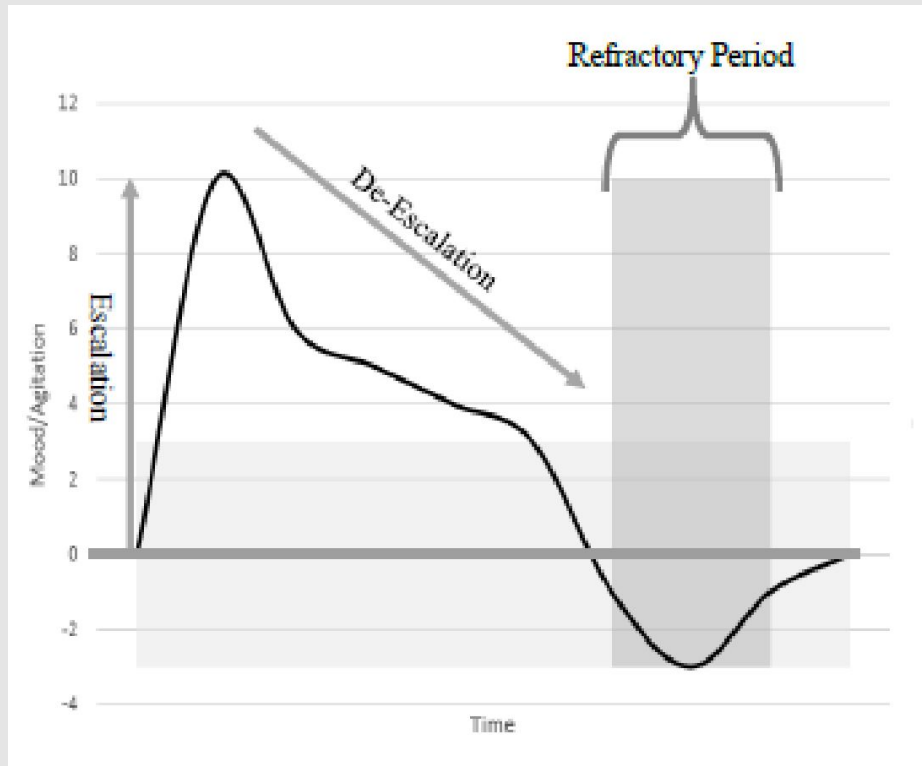


The Cycle of Escalation & De-escalation



- Picture your child's response to stress, anxiety, or depression on a scale of 1-10
 - 1 is relatively calm
 - 10 is where he/she is in a crisis, yelling at everyone or threatening suicide

The Cycle of Escalation & De-escalation Cont.



- When our brain perceives a threat, we quickly escalate from 1 to 10
 - This is meant to keep us safe
- Once our body is above a 3, our ability to control our emotions, respond rationally or think about long-term consequences goes out the window to focus on immediate survival of the current threat

Keep in Mind

Once your child is above a 3, he or she is less able to talk calmly, use appropriate language or act rationally.

When children are escalated, their ability to connect their behaviors (yelling) and the consequences you set (no more cell phone) becomes significantly impaired.

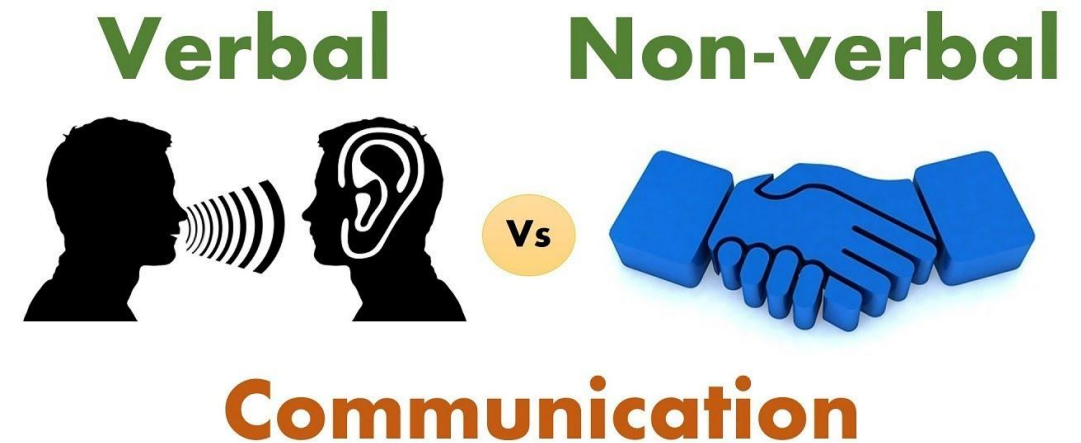
As adults, we are not immune to this process. When you are escalated your ability to stay calm or help your child is also impaired.

Don't be afraid to take a break and let cooler heads prevail. Just be sure to come back to the conversation after about 15 to 20 minutes, and no more than an hour.

Non-Verbal Language & Gaze Behavior—Keys to managing a crisis

Non-Verbal Language

- While we focus on **what** people say, over 70% of our communication is in **how** we say it.
- Non-verbal language includes
 - Our tone
 - Volume
 - Body posture/language
 - Facial expressions

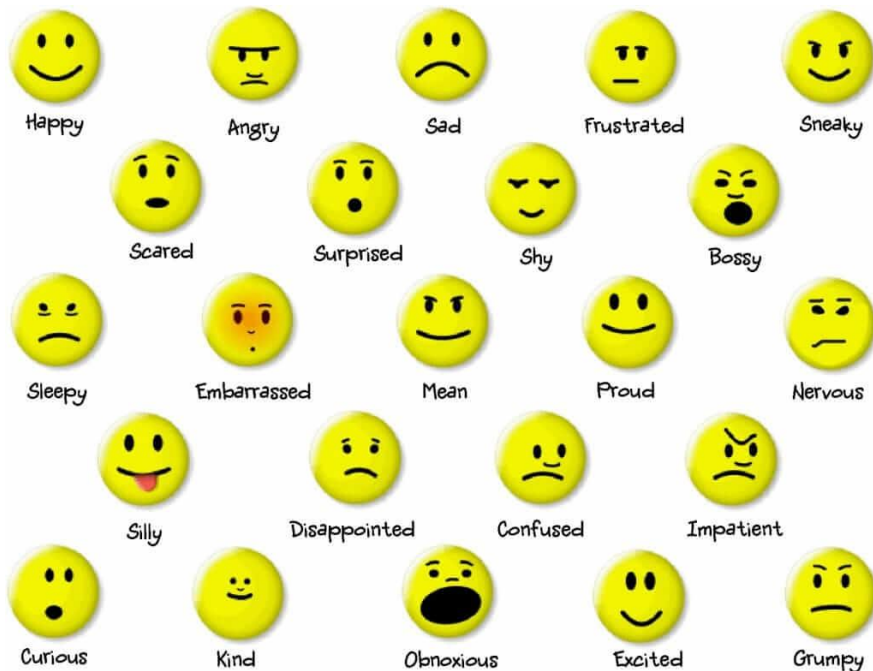


Key Differences

Non-Verbal Language & Gaze Behavior—Keys to managing a crisis

Gaze Behavior

- Gaze behavior: is a fancy way of saying that your children read your non-verbal language to understand how to feel
- Result: your children look to you to decide how they should deal with situations
 - This is true with their mental health issues as well



Validation & Ride the Wave—Skills to Use in a Crisis

Validation

- **The Key:** focus on the first word Valid
- **Goal:** to listen to what our children are saying and make sure they know that we see their feelings as valid and true for them
 - This is **not** the same as agreement
- Validation is about making sure your child feels heard



Validation & Ride the Wave—Skills to Use in a Crisis Cont.



Ride the Wave

- **Main idea:** all our emotions come and go like waves in the ocean; sometimes our depression or anxiety feels like a tidal wave, but it's physically impossible to stay in crisis forever
- This skill encourages our children to ride out the wave of their emotions, without fighting or trying to “fix” it
- Learning to *tolerate* emotions often gets our children much further than trying to fight against them

Common Dialectical Behavioral Therapy Skills

Mindfulness

- **Wise Mind:** Using logic and emotions together
- **Grounding:** Rooting yourself in the here and now
- **5-4-3-2-1:** Naming what you experience with your senses

- **What skills**
 - **Observe:** Notice thoughts, feelings, and sensations
 - **Describe:** Put experience into words

- **How Skills**
 - **Non-judgmental:** Untangle opinions from facts
 - **One Mindful:** One thing at a time



Common Dialectical Behavioral Therapy Skills



Emotional Regulation

Emotional Regulation

- **Opposite to Emotion:** Moving forward despite discomfort
- **STRENGTH:** Reducing emotional vulnerability
 - Sleep
 - Take care of your body
 - Resist target behaviors
 - Exercise
 - Nutrition
 - Gain mastery
 - Time for yourself
- **ABC:** Increase emotional resilience
 - Accumulate positive experiences
 - Build mastery
 - Cope ahead of time

Common Dialectical Behavioral Therapy Skills

Walking The Middle Path

- **Defusion:** Thoughts are stories told by our mind
- **Validation:** Both of us are partially right
- **Lemonade:** Finding the good in the unpleasant



Common Dialectical Behavioral Therapy Skills



Interpersonal Effectiveness

- **GIVE:** Maintaining relationship effectiveness
 - Gentle
 - Interested
 - Validate
 - Easy manner

- **FAST:** Maintaining self-respect
 - Fair to self
 - Apologize less
 - Stick to values
 - Truthful

- **DEARWOMAN:** Getting what you want or refusing requests
 - Describe the situation
 - Express your feelings
 - Assert your wishes
 - Reinforce positive behaviors
 - Willingness to tolerate not getting your way
 - Appear confident
 - Negotiate

Common Dialectical Behavioral Therapy Skills

Distress Tolerance

- **Willingness:** Being open to doing what is needed
- **Radical Acceptance:** accepting what we cannot change
- **Turning the Mind:** Repeatedly accepting the unpleasant
- **Ride the Wave:** Feeling intense emotions but not acting
- **Self Soothe:** Using all 5 senses to calm the emotional mind
- **ACCEPTS:** Distraction from extreme stress during crisis
 - Activities
 - Contributions
 - Comparisons
 - Emotions
 - Push away
 - Thoughts
 - Sensations

IMPROVE: Improve the present moment during high stress

Imagery

Meaning

Prayer/mediation

Relaxation

One thing in the moment

Vacation

Encouragement

TIPP: Interventions to calm the body's stress response

Temperature reduction

Intense exercise

Paced breathing

Progressive muscle relaxation



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Thank you for attending!