



# CRISIS DE-ESCALATION

Responding Effectively & Calmly

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Figure 1-Stop. From Carva.com

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# OBJECTIVES



01	Understanding Crisis Dynamics
02	Verbal and non-Verbal Communication De-escalation Techniques
03	Implementing Calming Strategies
04	Implementing Strategies for Children and Teens
05	Building Collaborative Relationships with Support Systems

Figure 2. Objectives. From Carva.com

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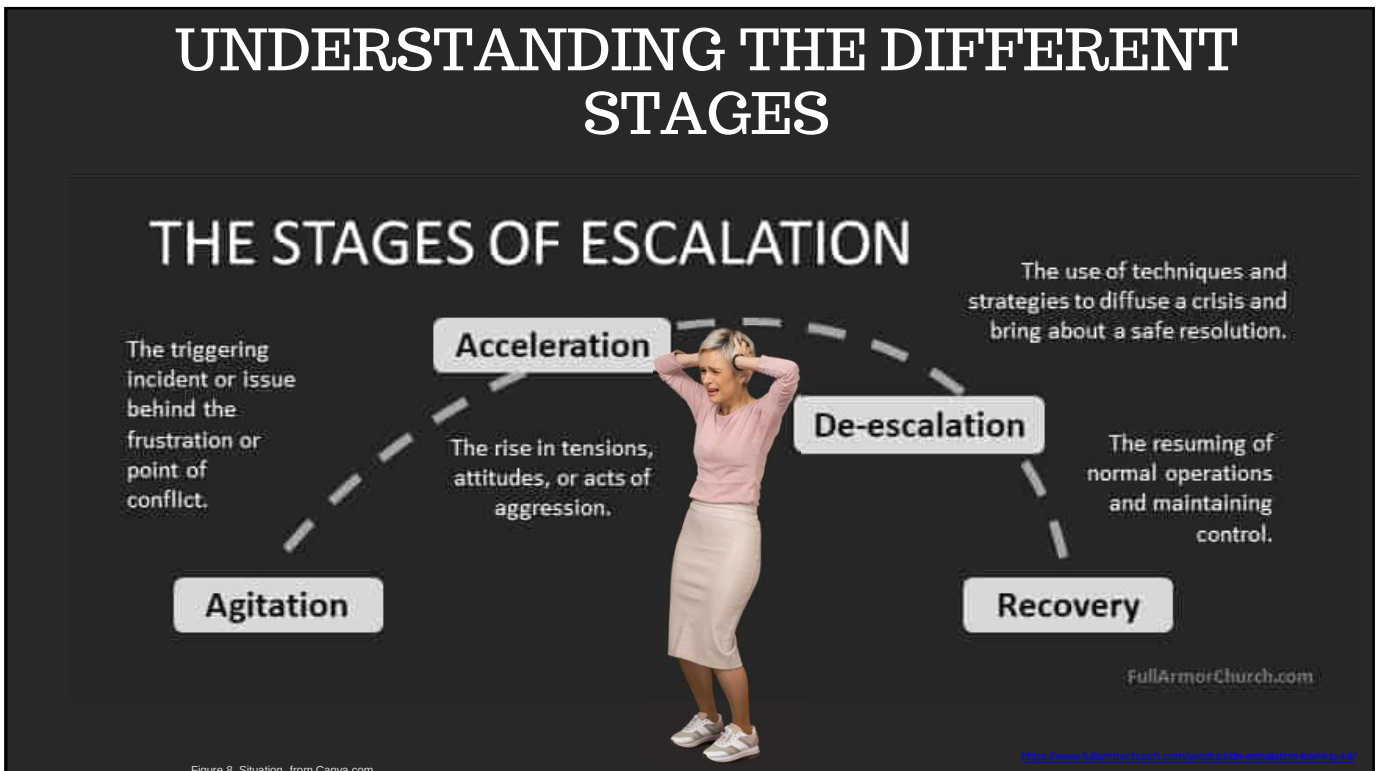
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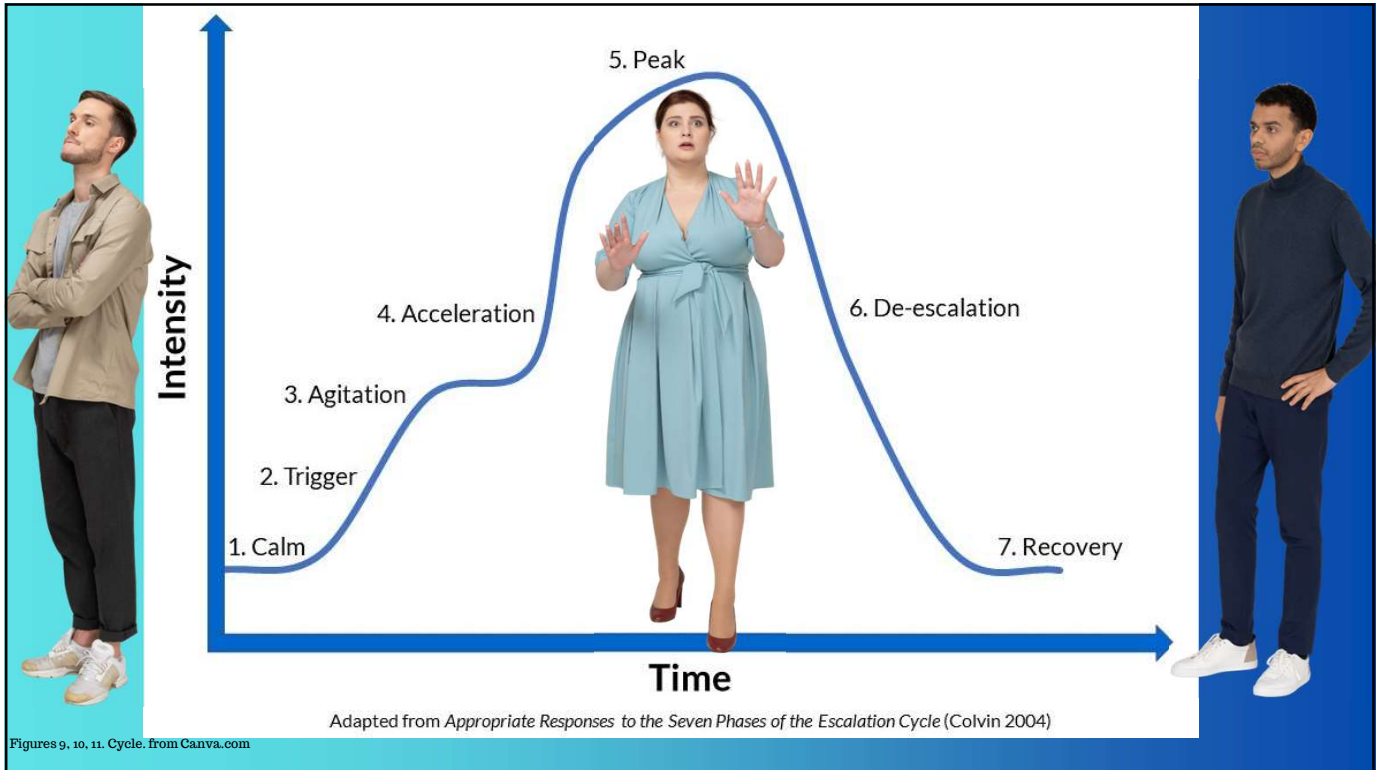
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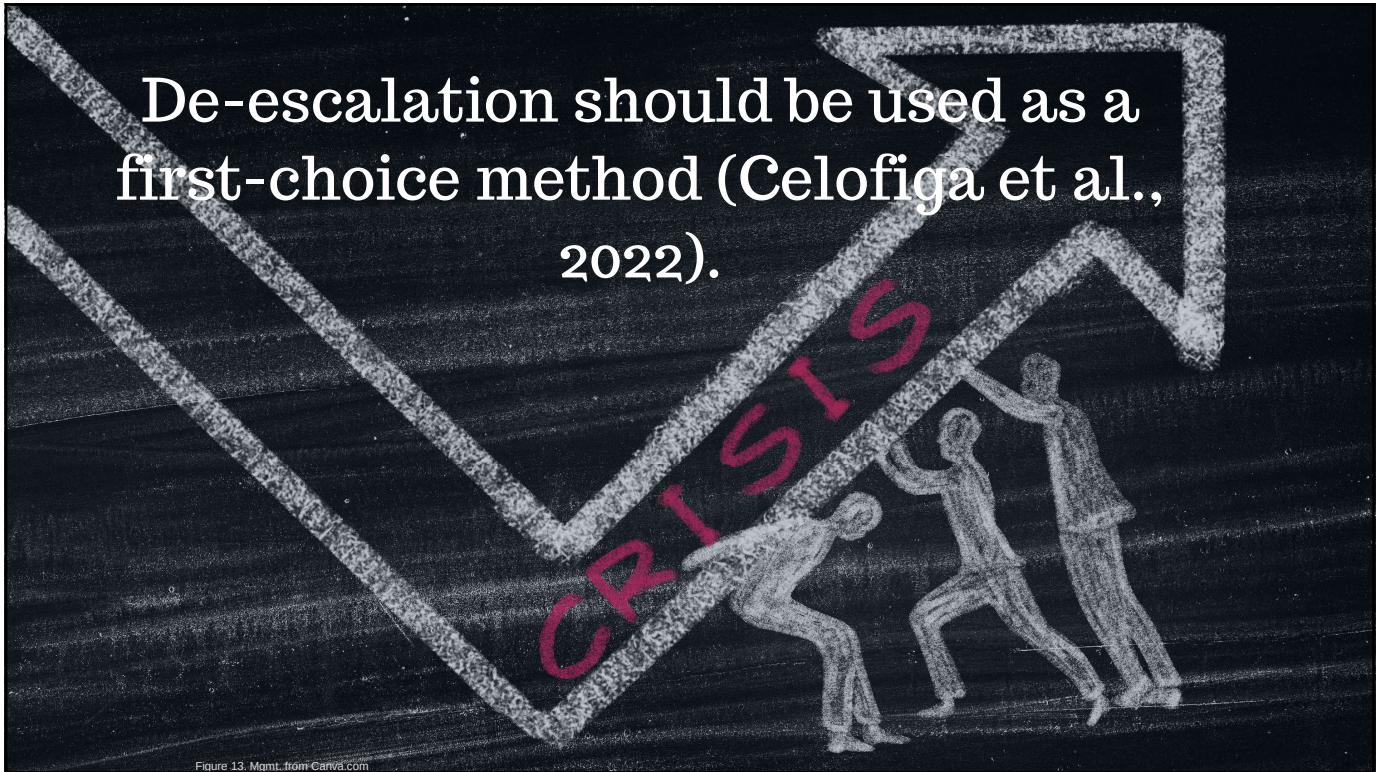
## DE-ESCALATION

- Reducing the intensity of a conflict or confrontation.
- Diffusing a potentially dangerous situation before it has a chance to escalate into violence.
  - Many different strategies can be used for de-escalation.
- Effective tactics include situational readiness, active listening, and negotiation (Goodman et al., 2020; Controlled Force, 2024).

IDEFU SE ID

Figure 12. Situation. from Canva.com

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**THINK SAFETY FIRST**

**Safety First**

Inspect the Environment

Remove Potentially Dangerous Objects

**RESPONDING TO A CRISIS**

Figure 14. Canva.com

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# Implementing Calming Strategies

- Manage emotions, facial expressions, and reactions.
- A composed demeanor helps to facilitate de-escalation.
- Keep body language neutral and be mindful of hand movements.



Figure 16. Calm, from Canva.com

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## COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES ARE KEY

Respect personal space, maintain safe distance, and avoid touching.

Nod, ask follow-up questions, summarize to verify understanding, but do not interrupt or change the subject.

Show genuine concern and desire to understand without judgment.

Speak calmly and respectfully, be mindful of your tone, and speak in a non-threatening tone.

Use silence to think and process before speaking.

Figure 15 Approach, from Canva.com

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## Active Listening

- Give full attention and listen with undivided attention.
- Preparing to listen
- Observing verbal and non-verbal cues
- Providing appropriate feedback.
- Shows attentiveness.



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- ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A GOOD RAPPORT.
- AVOID POWER STRUGGLES BY PROVIDING CHOICES AND OPTIONS.
- ATTEND TO THE INDIVIDUAL'S NEEDS PROMPTLY.
- PROVIDE SPECIFIC POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR.
- GET ASSISTANCE WHEN APPROPRIATE.



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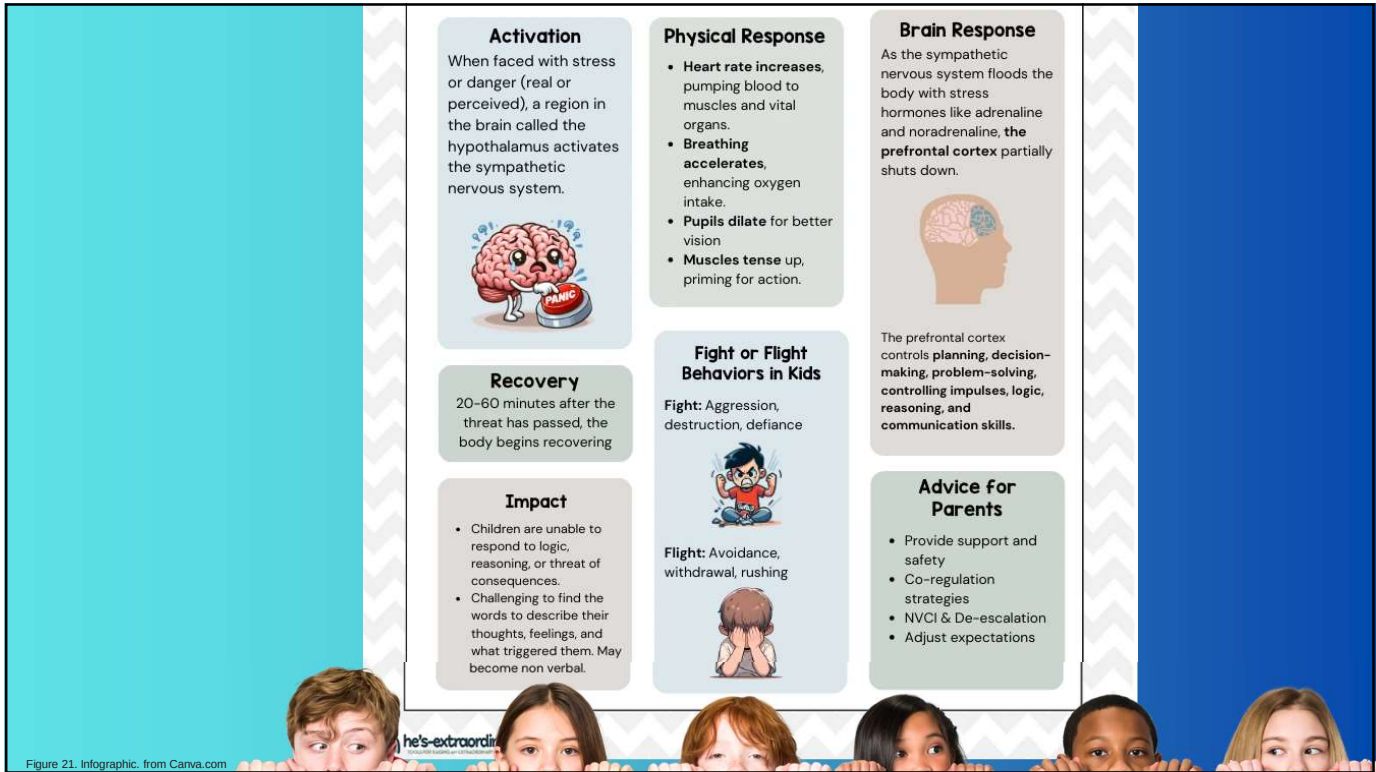




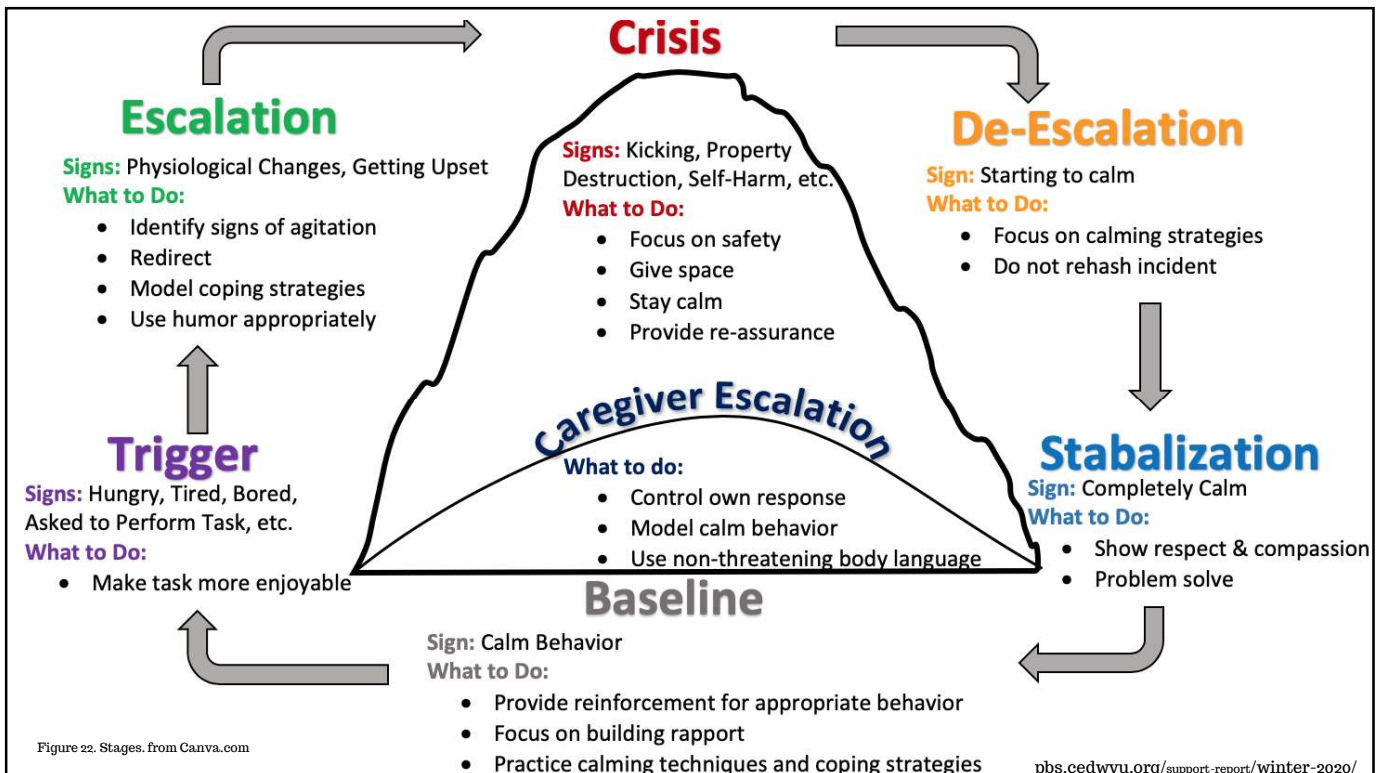
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**1 BE EMPATHETIC AND NONJUDGMENTAL.**  
Remember that students' feelings are real, whether or not we think those feelings are justified. Respect their feelings and be sure not to dismiss them.

**2 AVOID OVERREACTING.**  
While we can't control students' behavior, how we respond to it has a direct effect on whether the situation escalates or defuses.

**3 SET POSITIVE LIMITS.**  
Give respectful, simple, and reasonable limits. Try saying "I'll be happy to talk with you as soon as the arguing stops" or "I'll be able to listen as soon as your voice is as calm as mine."

**4 IGNORE CHALLENGING QUESTIONS.**  
Engaging with students who ask questions that challenge our authority is rarely productive. Instead, redirect them to the issue at hand.

**5 ALLOW QUIET TIME FOR REFLECTION.**  
Don't be afraid of awkward silence. Silence is a powerful communication tool, and it can give students a chance to reflect on what happened and how to proceed.

**6 DO A QUICK BODY SCAN.**  
We can unintentionally co-escalate when we use a raised voice, cross our arms, or clench our jaw. Take a moment to release tension and regain composure.

**7 USE DIFFUSERS.**  
Help your students feel seen and heard by saying phrases such as "I hear you" and "noted." This gives them time to breathe and become calmer.

**8 PRACTICE REFLECTIVE TEACHING.**  
We may find students pushing our buttons again and again. Take a look at the past, and determine how best to apply those lessons moving forward.

*@weareteachers*

Figure 23. Kids. From @weareteachers. from Canva.com

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What psychophysiological changes are occurring in Marvin?

What strategies could assist Marvin in de-escalating the situation?

Figure 24. Stages. from Canva.com

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- Identify resources to involve in crisis intervention.
  - Build collaborative relationships with support systems.
  - Collaborate effectively with law enforcement, mental health professionals, and other relevant parties.
- Coordinate efforts and provide ongoing support to individuals in crisis beyond immediate intervention.
- Encourage debriefing and self-care strategies for those engaged in crisis de-escalation.

Figure 25. Team. from Canva.com

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## SUMMARY



Safety  
First.



Don't  
rush the  
process.



Give  
space.



Validate  
feelings and  
experience.



Don't  
take it  
personal.



Figures. 26-31. Clipart. from Canva.com

The goal is to  
"de-escalate."

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## REFERENCES

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# RESOURCE PAGE

American Psychological Association (APA)

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National Alliance on Mental (NAMI), National Health  
Institute, (NIH),

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Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
(SAMSHA)

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[www.nami.org/Advocacy/Crisis-Intervention/  
Crisis-Intervention-Team-\(CIT\)-Programs](http://www.nami.org/Advocacy/Crisis-Intervention/Crisis-Intervention-Team-(CIT)-Programs)

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Creating Safe Spaces First Responder Course  
SAMSHA