

Transforming Culture and Climate in Oakland Schools



OAKLAND UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Community Schools,
Thriving Students*

School Security Officer
Professional Development
June 17-25, 2014
Police Services Building

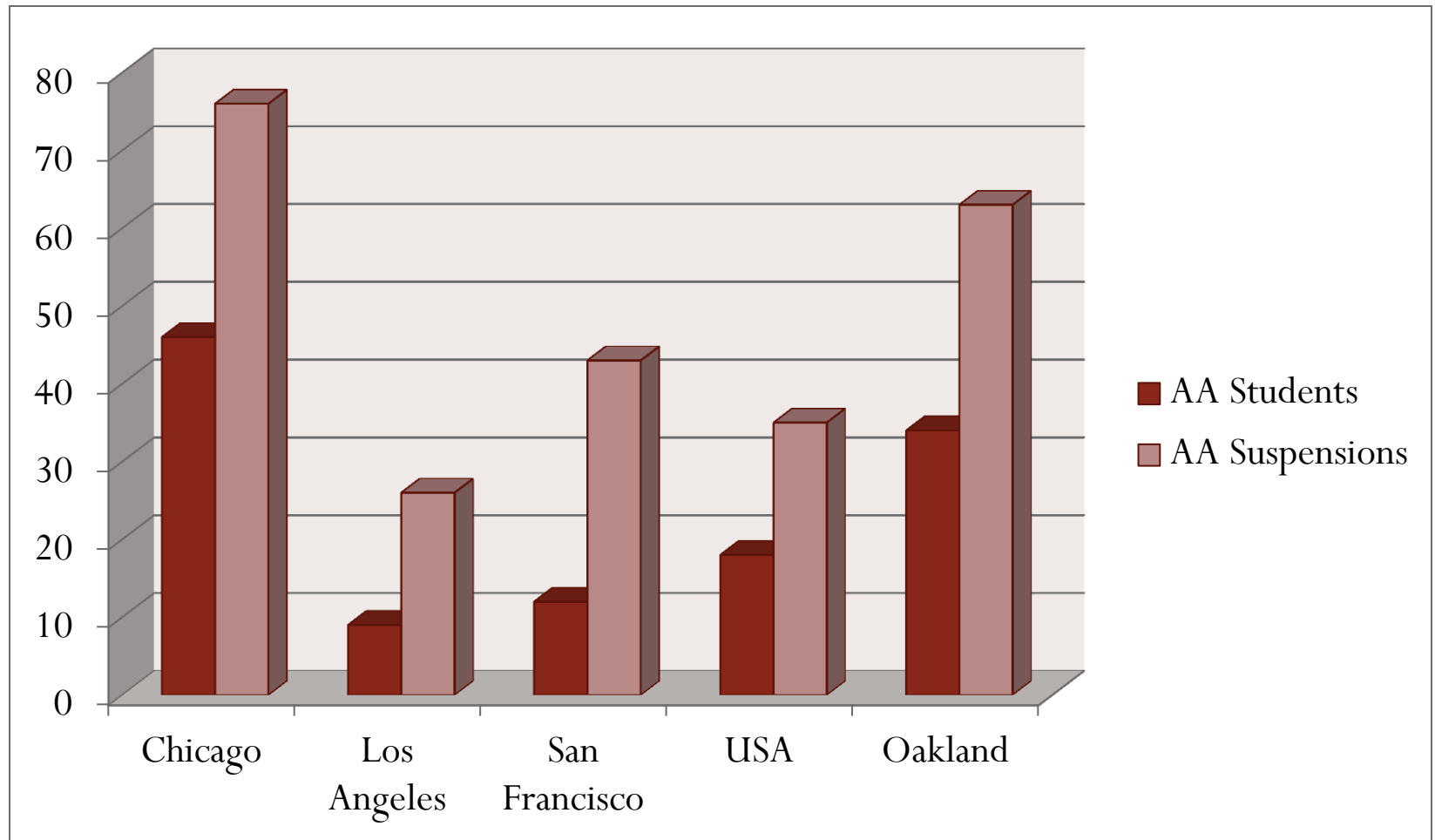
Goals for Today

- Unpack changes in school discipline policies and practices
- Analyze data on inequities
- Share selected best practices for reducing unfair treatment of African American students
- Explore the impact of trauma on student behavior
- Practice de-escalation techniques for problem behaviors
- Engage in restorative justice community building practices

Voluntary Resolution Plan

- Based on 2010-11 suspension data, the US Office of Civil Rights (OCR) reprimands OUSD for pushing out African American students
- 2011-12 -- OUSD enters a voluntary agreement with OCR promising broad, systemic discipline reform
- OCR seeks dramatic reductions in suspensions by 2017:
 - <1% suspensions for elementary school students
 - <5% suspensions for middle & high school students

National Trend in Inequity



Inequities in OUSD

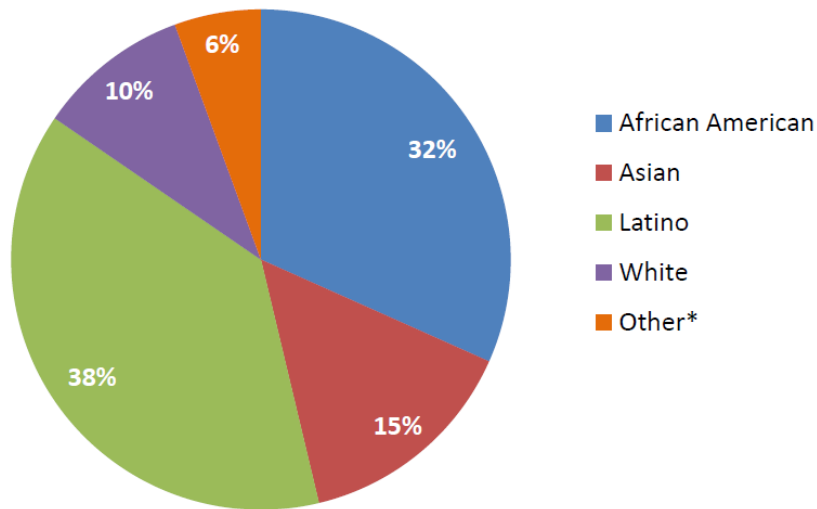
- In Oakland Unified we have 33% African American Students and they receive 67% of suspensions

African American male students make up 17% of our student body and receive 42% of all suspensions

Racial Inequities 2011-12

2011-12 OUSD Student Enrollment by Ethnicity

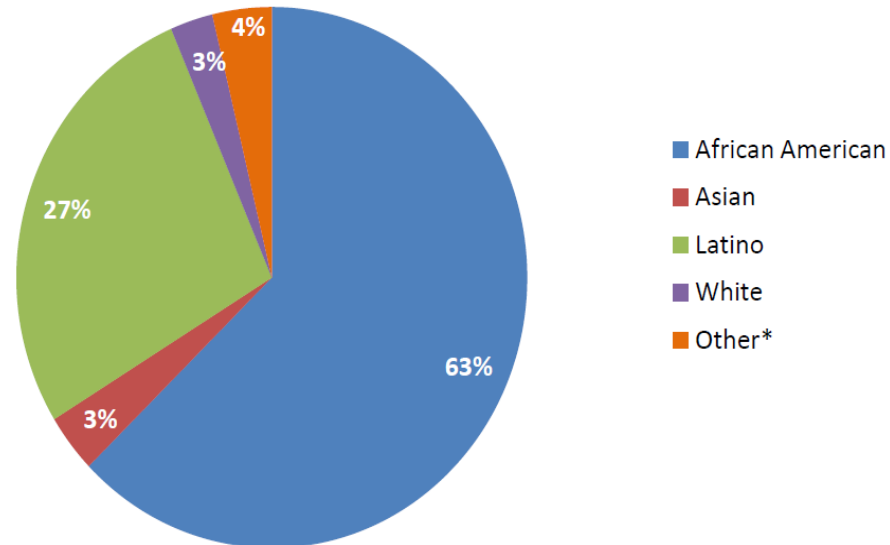
Total = 37,742



* Other includes: Filipino, Native American, Pacific Islander, Multiple Ethnicities, and Not-Reported

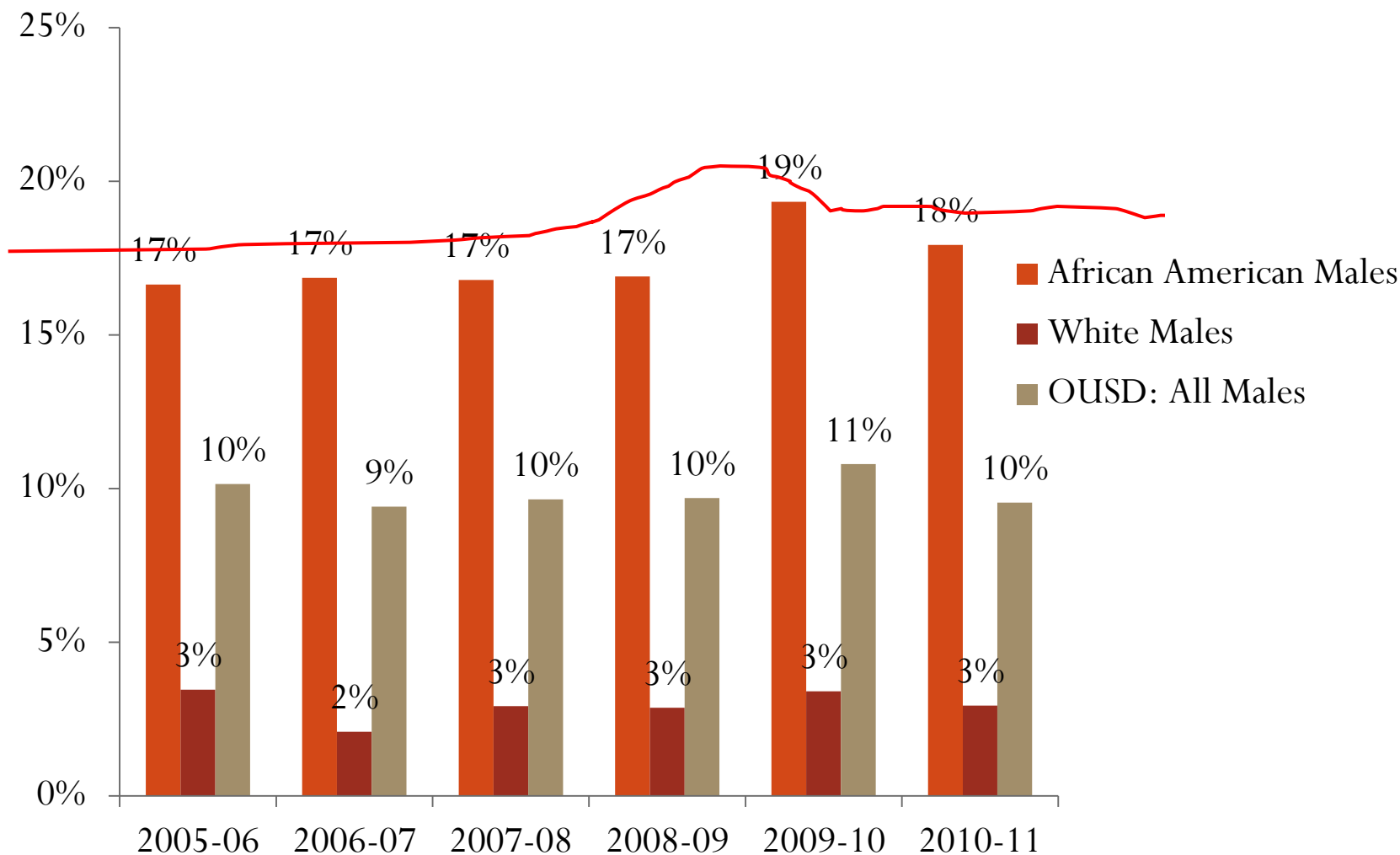
2011-12 OUSD Suspended Students by Ethnicity

Total = 2,964 suspended students



* Other includes: Filipino, Native American, Pacific Islander, Multiple Ethnicities, and Not-Reported

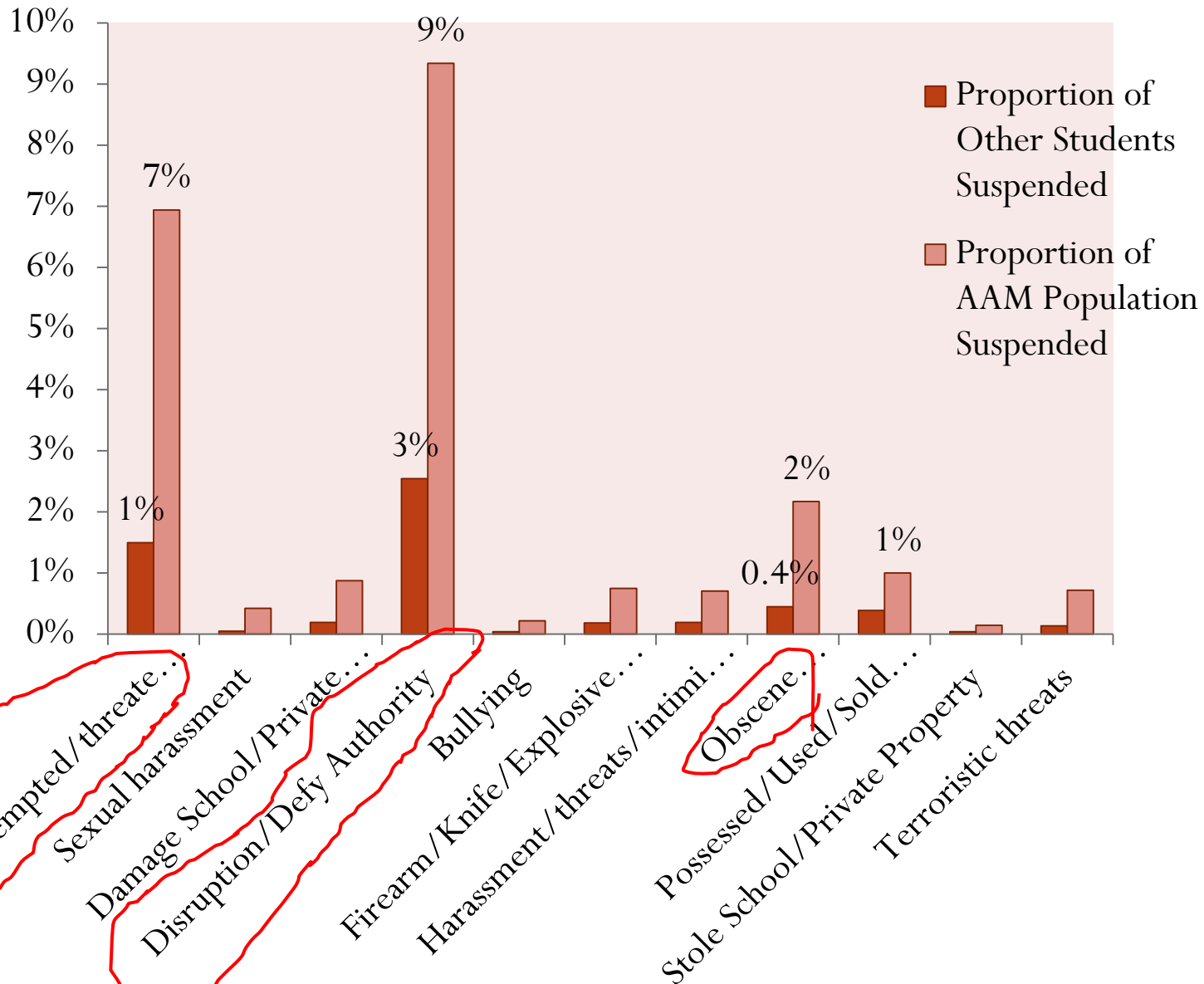
Percentage of Boys in All Grades Suspended Once or More, 2005-06 to 2010-11



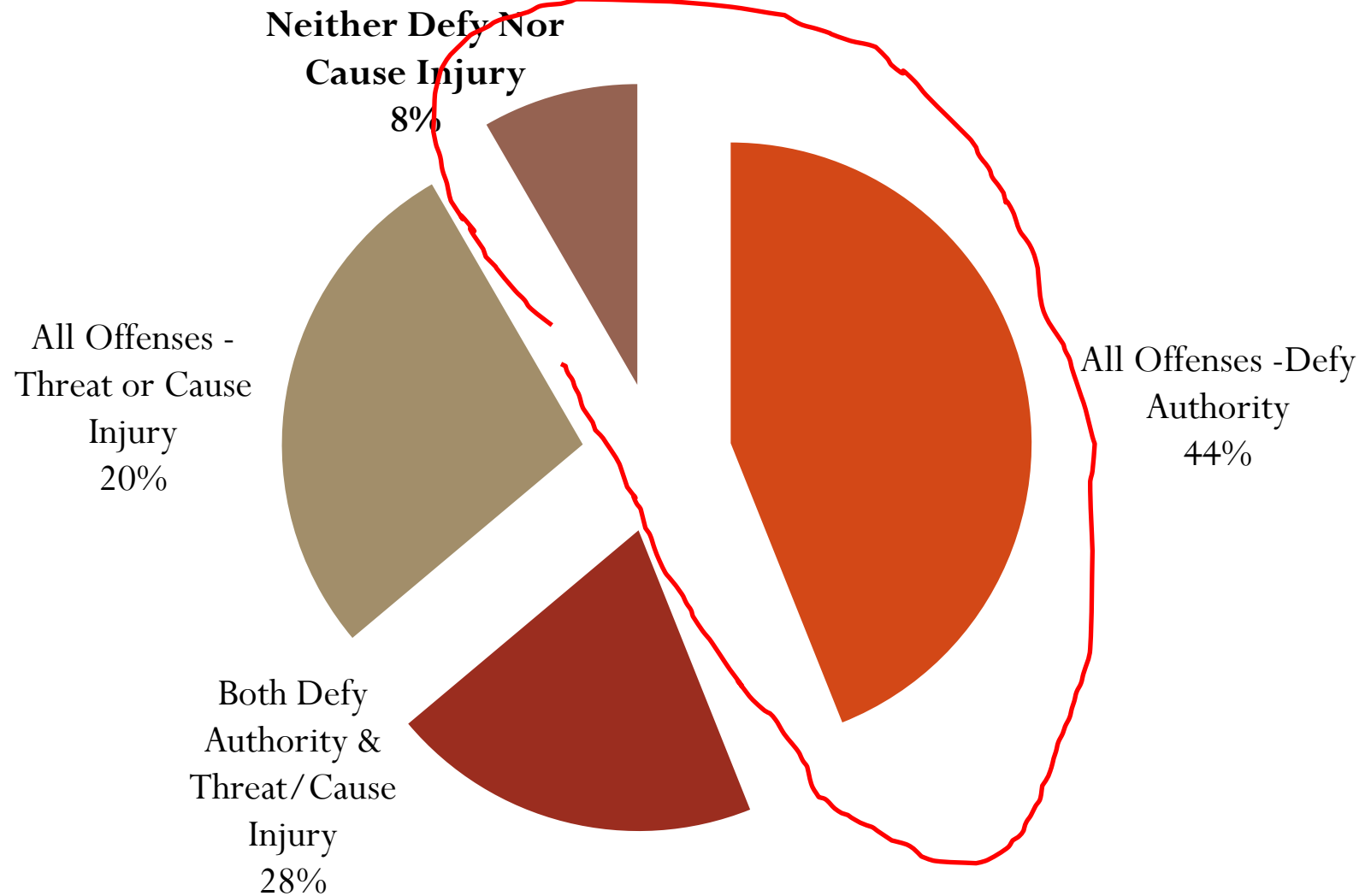
Source: Oakland Unified School District (OUSD)

Note: District average includes African American males.

Percentage Suspended by Reason (Grades K-12) 2010-11



American Males with *Multiple* Suspensions in 2010-11



Reducing Suspensions for Defiance



Impact of unequal suspension on African American students

↑ Increase alienation from school

↑ Increase risk of dropout

↓ Increased risk of incarceration

↓ Reduced classroom instruction

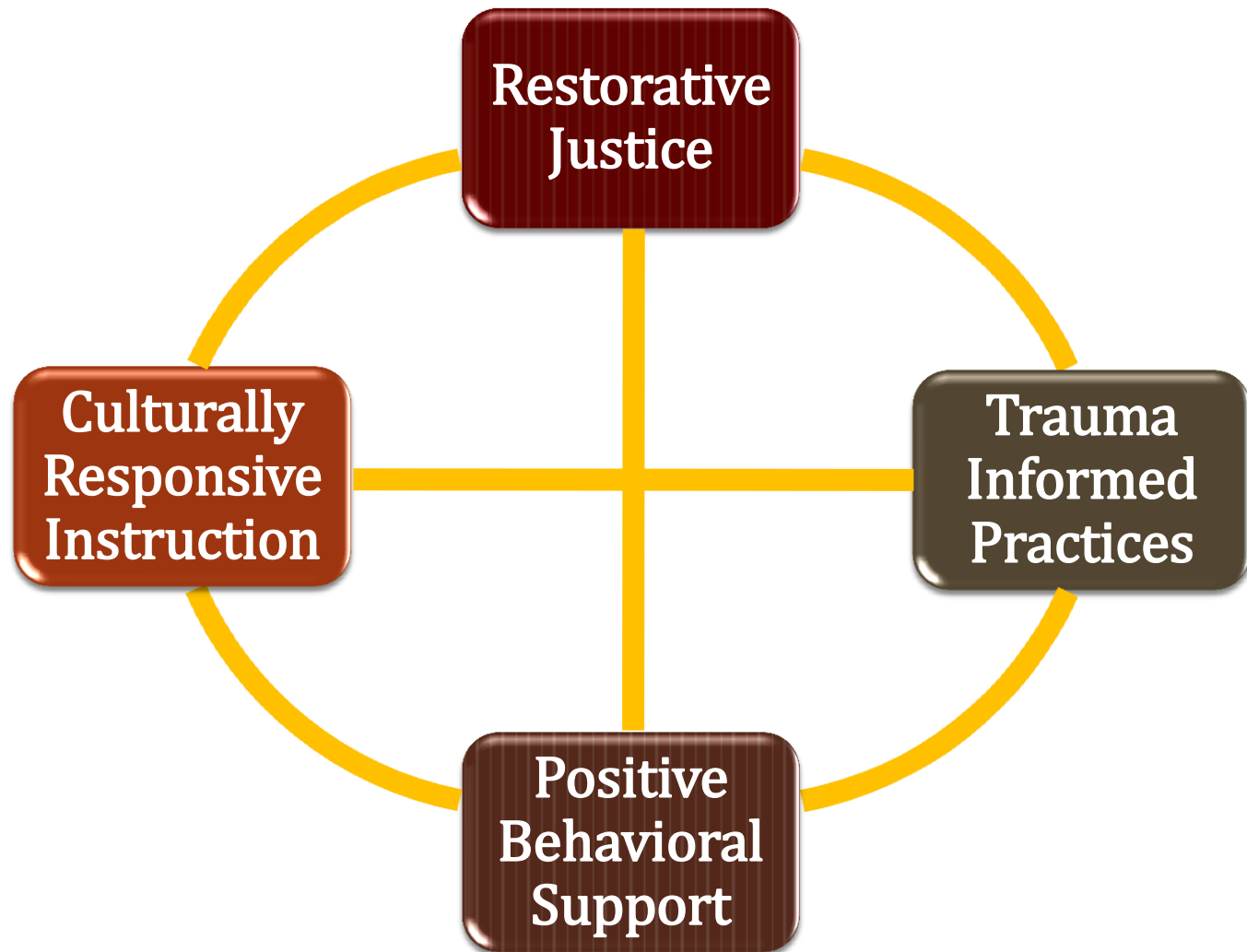
↓ Reduced academic achievement

↓ Reduced life expectancy

Obama's Issues Guiding Principles on Improving School Culture and Discipline

1. Create positive climates and focus on prevention
2. Develop clear, appropriate, and consistent expectations and consequences to address disruptive student behaviors
3. Ensure fairness, equity, and continuous improvement

Promising Community School Approaches



Expanding Best Practices

- Restorative Justice at 24 schools
- Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS) expansion at 26 schools
- Manhood Development Classes at 15 schools
- Staff Professional Development on Trauma-Informed Practices
- Universal office referral form piloted at 10 schools

African American Male Achievement Initiative

- **Manhood Development** provides a school day program for African American students in grades 6-10.
- Program incorporates culturally relevant social emotional development curriculum, team building exercises, cultural field trips, case management, and college tours.

We are not
dangerous.
Racism is.



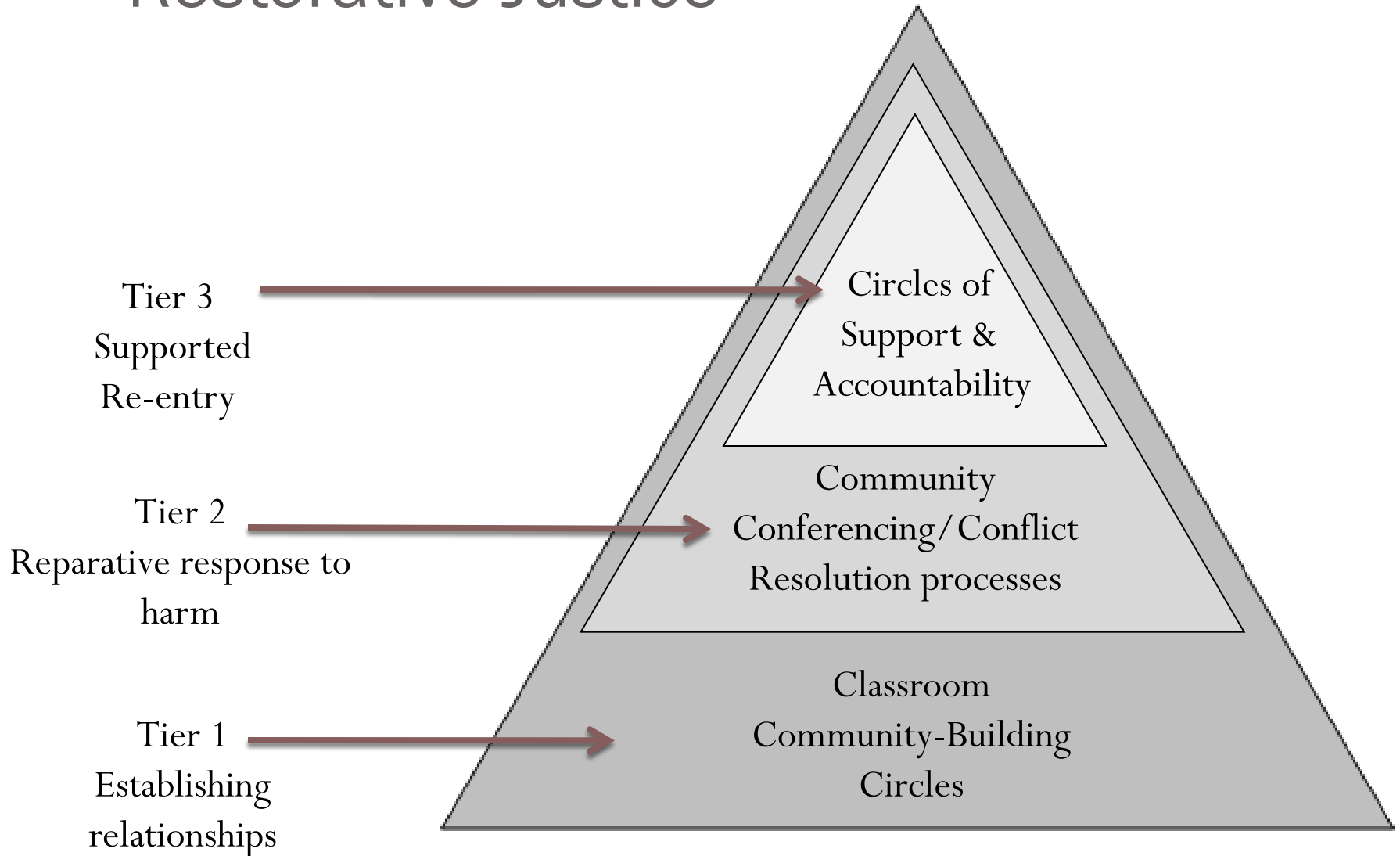
Restorative Justice: Shifting from Punishment to Healing and Accountability

- Restorative justice is based on the idea that *because crime hurts, justice should heal* (Braithwaite).

Restorative Justice Paradigm Shift

Retributive Justice	Restorative Justice
What rule or law was broken?	What harm was caused and to whom?
Who broke it?	What needs and obligations were created?
What is the prescribed punishment?	What shall be done to repair the harm?

3 Tiers of Whole-School Restorative Justice



HIGH



—Systems, Expectations, limit setting

LOW

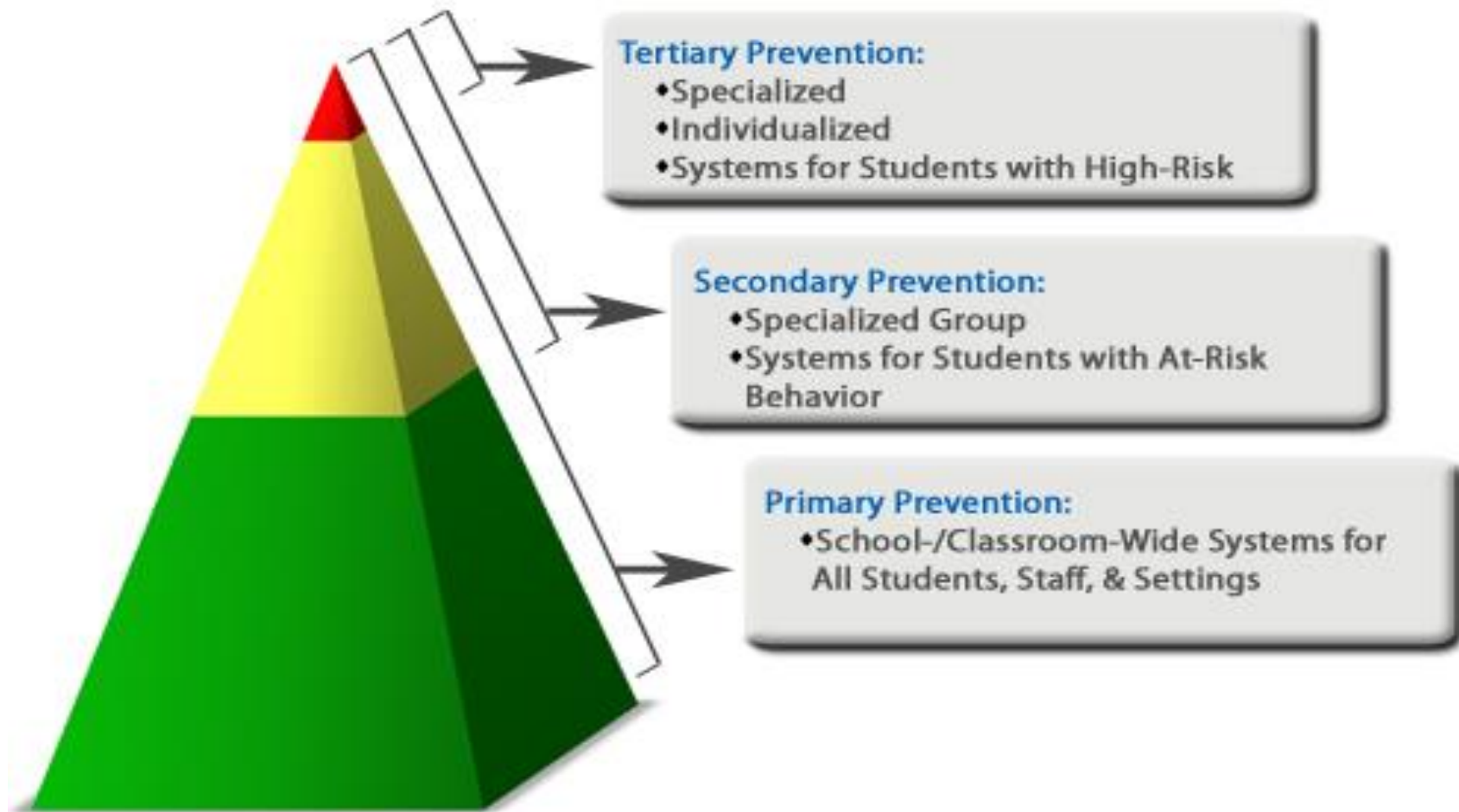
TO punitive authoritarian	WITH restorative authoritative
NOT neglectful irresponsible	FOR permissive paternalistic

—Support, Encouragement, Empathy

→ HIGH

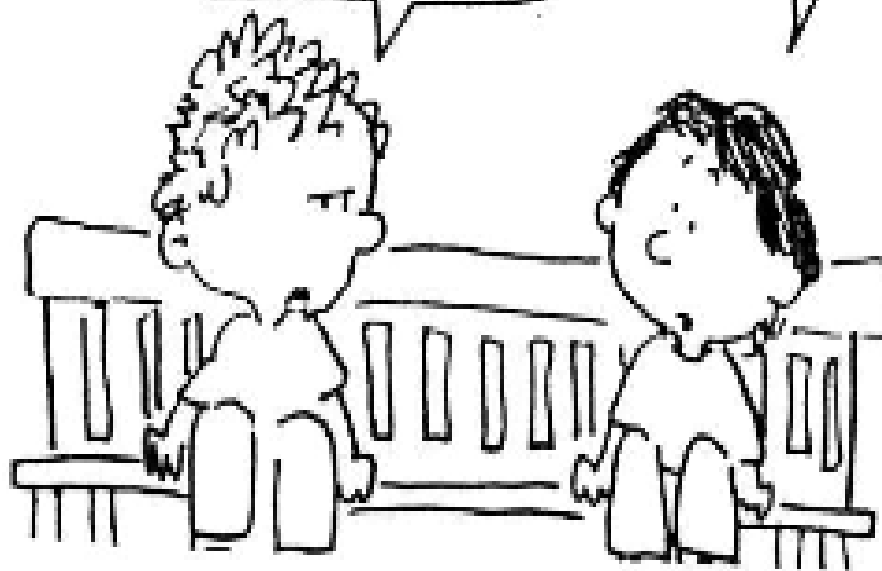
Response to Intervention

Continuum of School-Wide Instructional & Positive Behavior Support

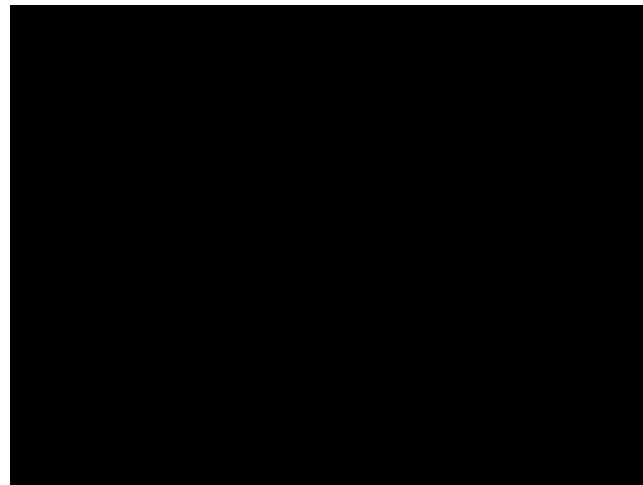


I STARTED A FIRE IN
THE LAB—ON PURPOSE!
HOW ABOUT YOU?

I TAPPED MY
PENCIL ON MY DESK
DURING STUDY TIME.

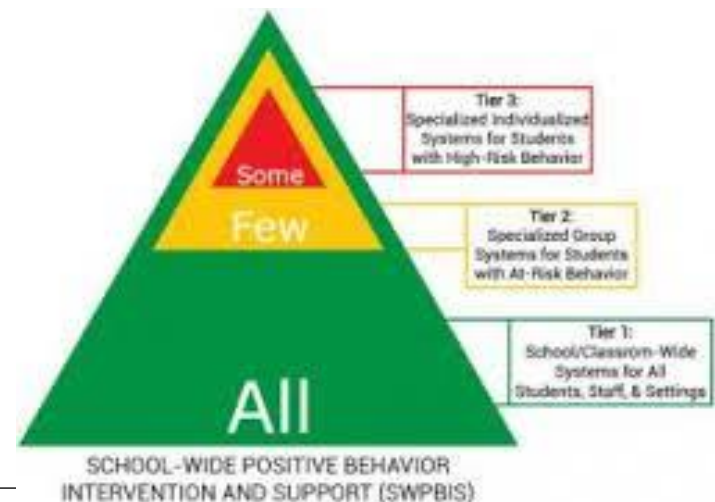


What are the Rules Video



School-Wide Positive Behavioral Intervention & Support (SW-PBIS)

- Common practice and approach to discipline
- Clear set of positive expectations and behaviors
- Consistent teaching and reinforcing of positive behavior
- Common procedures for discouraging problem behavior
- Use of data for progress monitoring



Universal Referral Form

- Tracks office referrals and Pre-Referral Interventions
- Supported by student information system (AERIES)
- Pilot launched in January with 10 schools for full roll-out to 86 schools in 2014-15

Why a Universal Discipline Referral Form?

- ❑ Standardize data reporting across all sites
- ❑ Shift focus to prevention
- ❑ Promote pre-referral interventions
- ❑ Collect referral data for decision-making
- ❑ Identify students with chronic behavioral problems for tiered interventions
- ❑ Reduce racial bias in discipline

Pre-referral Interventions

Academic support plan
Behavior support plan
Community service
COST Referral
Drug Counseling
Daily progress report
Detention
Loss of privilege
Mediation

Mental Health Counseling
Mentoring
Parent consultation
Reparation/Restitution
Restorative Justice
Conference/Mediation
Student Support Team
Written reflective process

2012-2013 Suspensions Way Down

- **3,036** OUSD students were suspended once or more in 2011-12 vs. **2,071** in 2012-13 – cut by one-third in one year.
- The district **suspension rate** dropped from 8% to 6%.
- **1,254** African American male students were suspended once or more in 2011-12. vs. **794** in 2012-13 – cut by more than a third.
- The **suspension rate** for African American male students dropped from **21%** to **14%** in one year.

Trauma Informed Practices



What do we mean by a Trauma?

An event that poses an immediate, severe threat of injury, harm, or even death to the person or someone critically important to them.

Most Common Childhood Traumatic Events

Child abuse (*shaking, burning, sexual abuse, neglect, malnutrition, assault*)

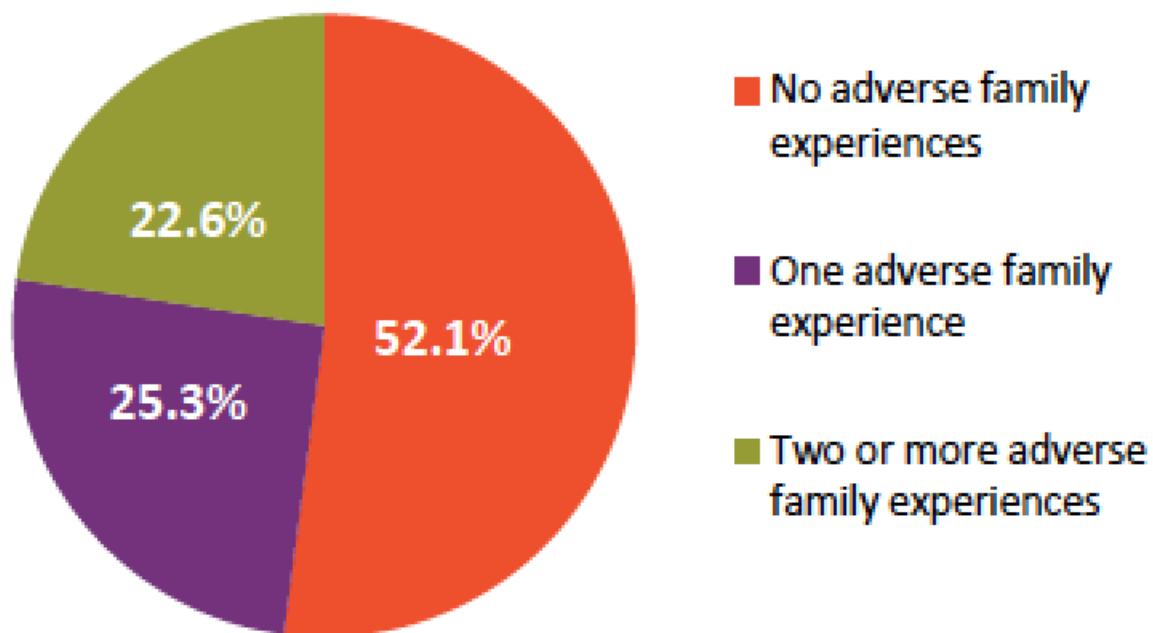
Witnessing Family and Community Violence

Types of Traumatic Stress

- **Acute trauma** is a single traumatic event that is limited in time.
- **Chronic trauma** refers to the experience of multiple traumatic events.
- **Complex trauma** describes both exposure to chronic trauma—usually caused by adults entrusted with the child's care—and the impact of such exposure on the child.

How Common is Trauma?

Figure 1. Prevalence of Adverse Child and Family Experiences among US Children Age 0-17 years



Source: 2011/12 NSCH

How can I tell if a child has a trauma history?

Some warning signs are

- Unregulated emotions
- Hard time putting feelings into words
- Impossible to tell what 'triggered' them
- Sees threats or insults where there are none
- Cannot seem to calm down from upsets
- Finds it difficult to shift from one activity to the next
- Easily over-stimulated

Adolescent Development and Trauma

- In response to trauma, **adolescents** may feel:
 - That they are strange, different or “going crazy”
 - Embarrassed by their inability to control their fears, emotions, and behavior
 - Isolated and alone in their pain and suffering
 - Anxiety and depression
 - Intense anger
 - Low self-esteem and helplessness

Children with Disabilities

Incidence per 1,000	Children w/out Disabilities	Children w/ Disabilities
Physical Abuse	4.5	9.5
Sexual Abuse	2.0	3.5
Emotional Abuse (Goldson, 2002)	2.9	3.5

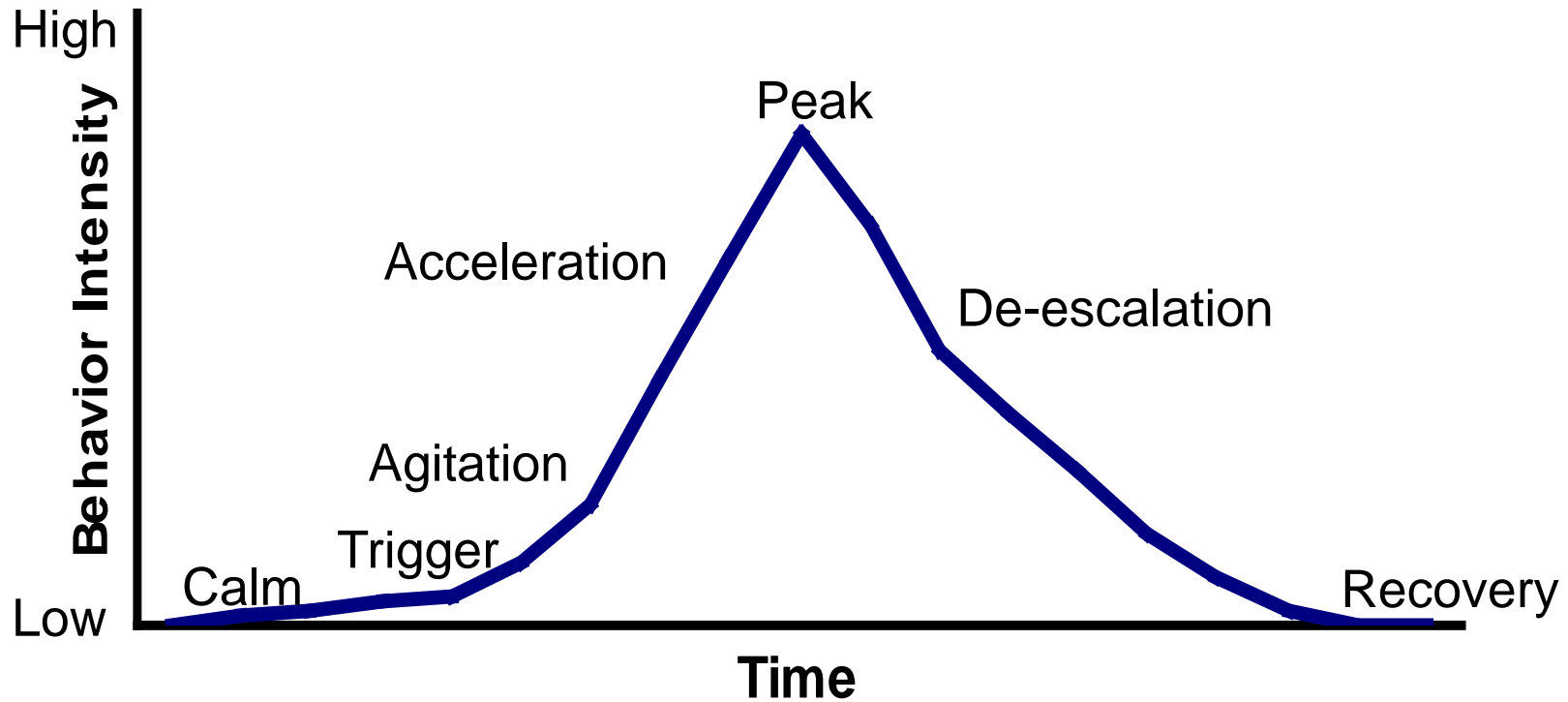
Neglect, physical abuse, and emotional abuse are most often perpetrated by immediate family members. Sexual abuse is largely perpetrated by extrafamilial members (Sullivan and Knutson, 2000).

Joe V. - Impact of Trauma

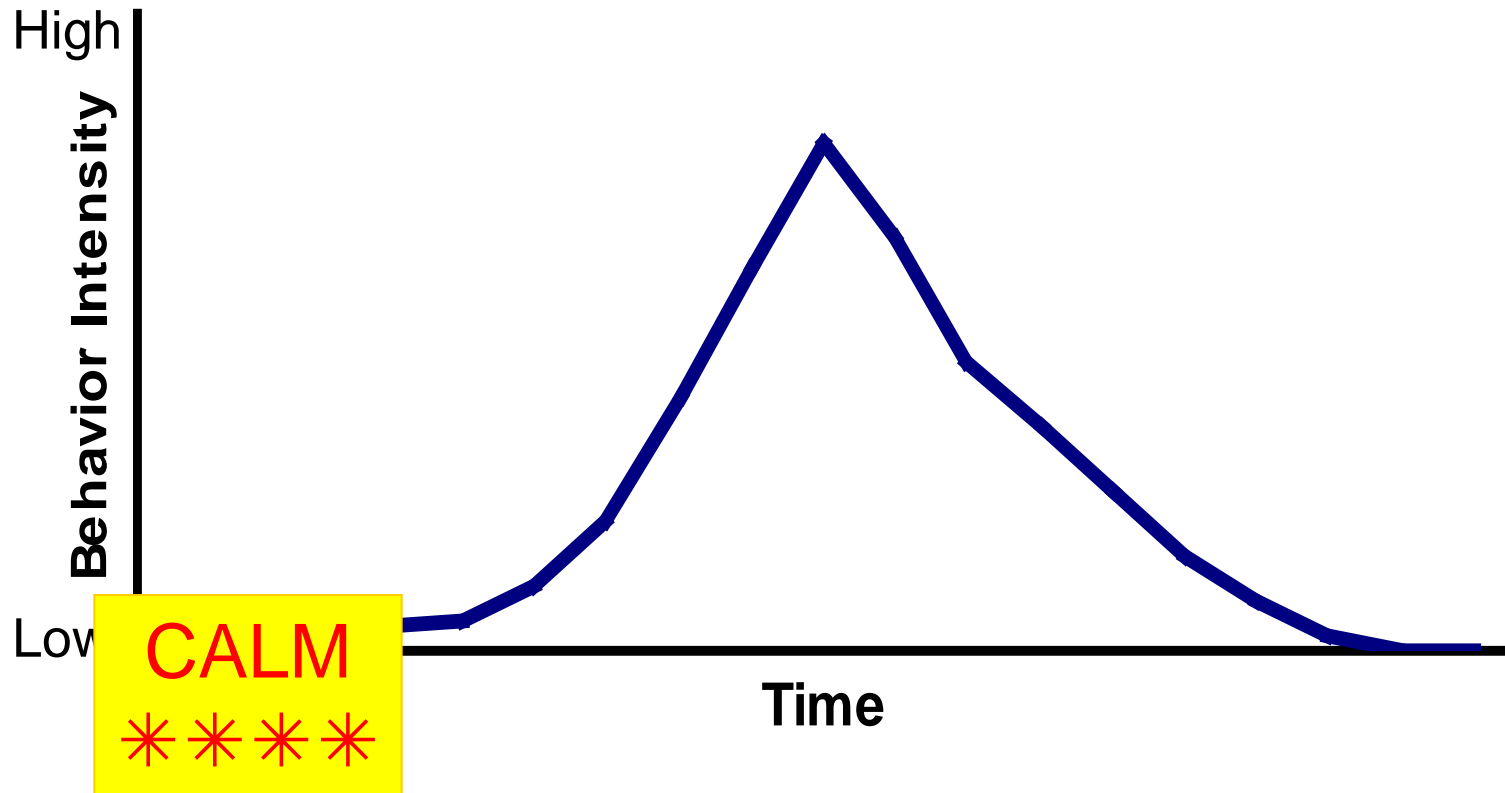
Student Perspective



How does Trauma impact behavior?



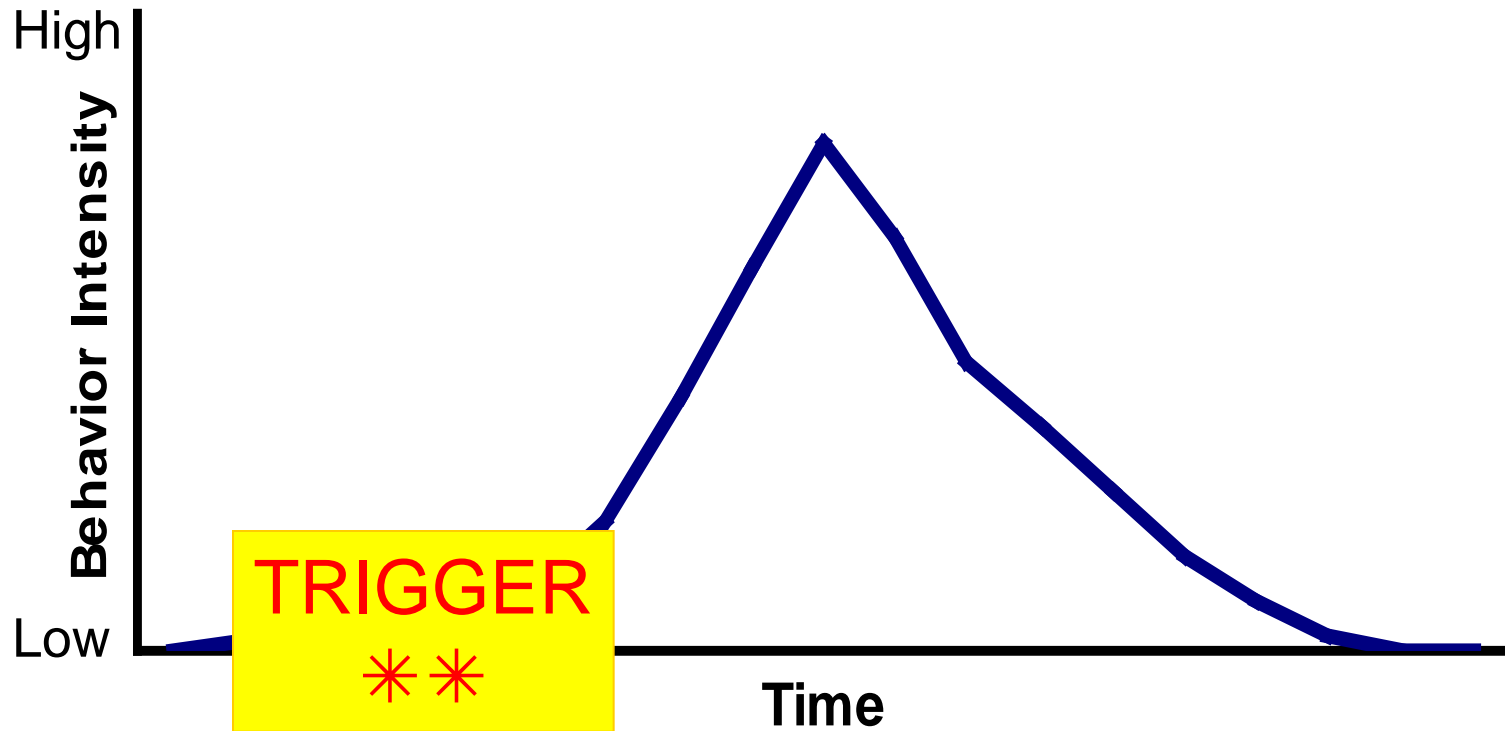
How does Trauma impact behavior?



1. Calm

- Student is cooperative.
 - Accepts corrective feedback.
 - Follows directives.
 - Sets personal goals.
 - Ignores distractions.
 - Accepts praise.

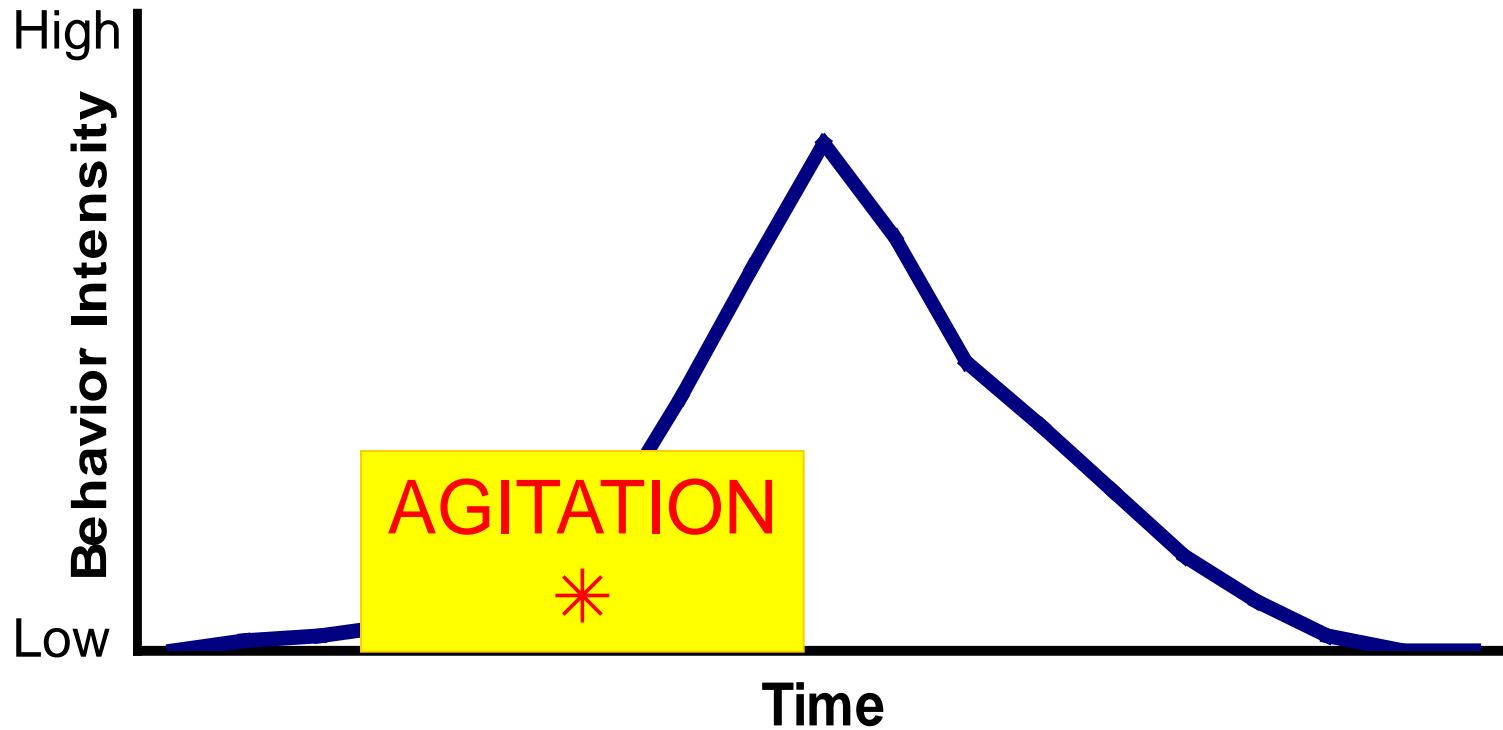
How does Trauma impact behavior?



2. Trigger

- Student experiences a series of unresolved conflicts.
 - Repeated failures
 - Frequent corrections
 - Interpersonal conflicts
 - Deadlines
 - High rates of negative feedback

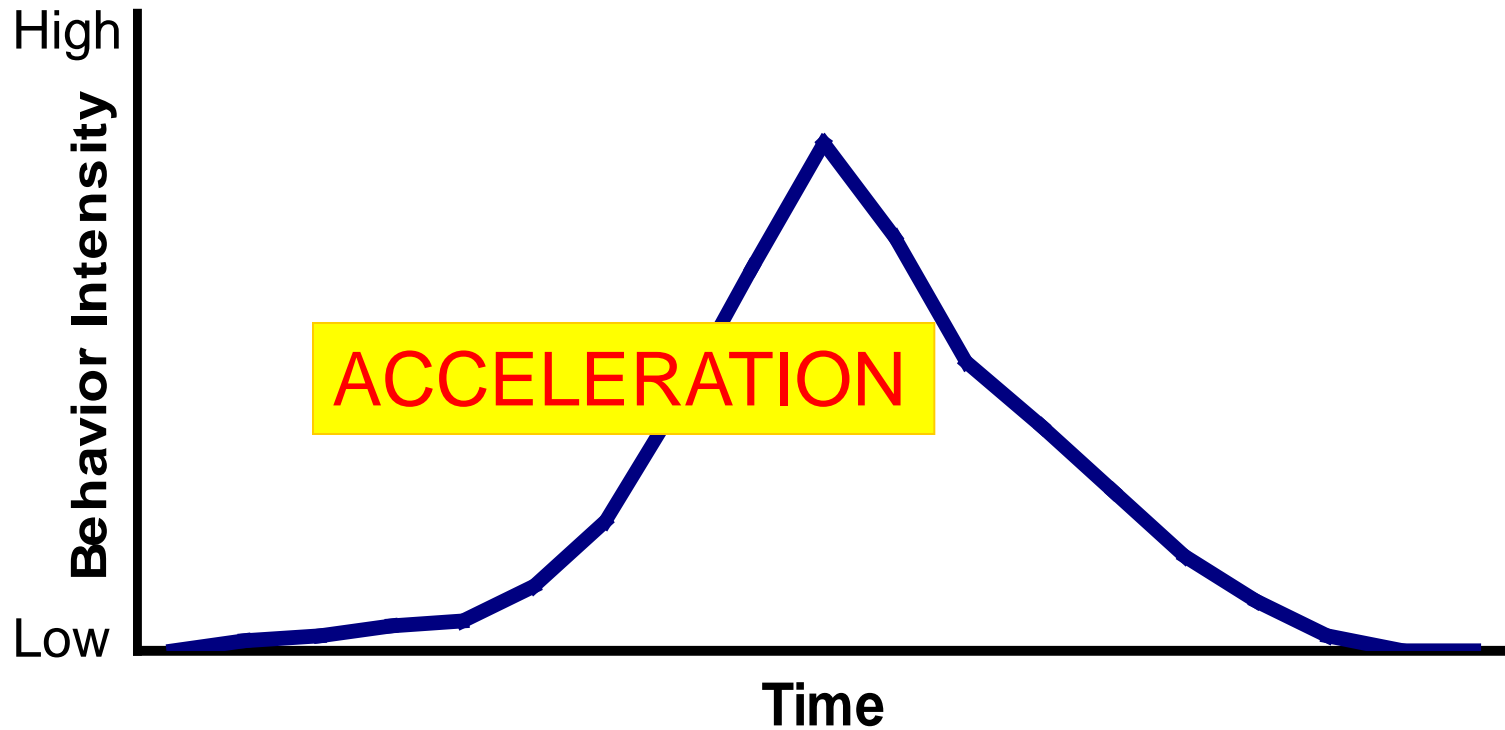
Stages of Trauma Reaction



3. Agitation

- Student exhibits increase in unfocused behavior.
 - Off-task
 - Frequent start/stop on tasks
 - Out of seat
 - Talking with others
 - Withdrawn

How does Trauma impact behavior?



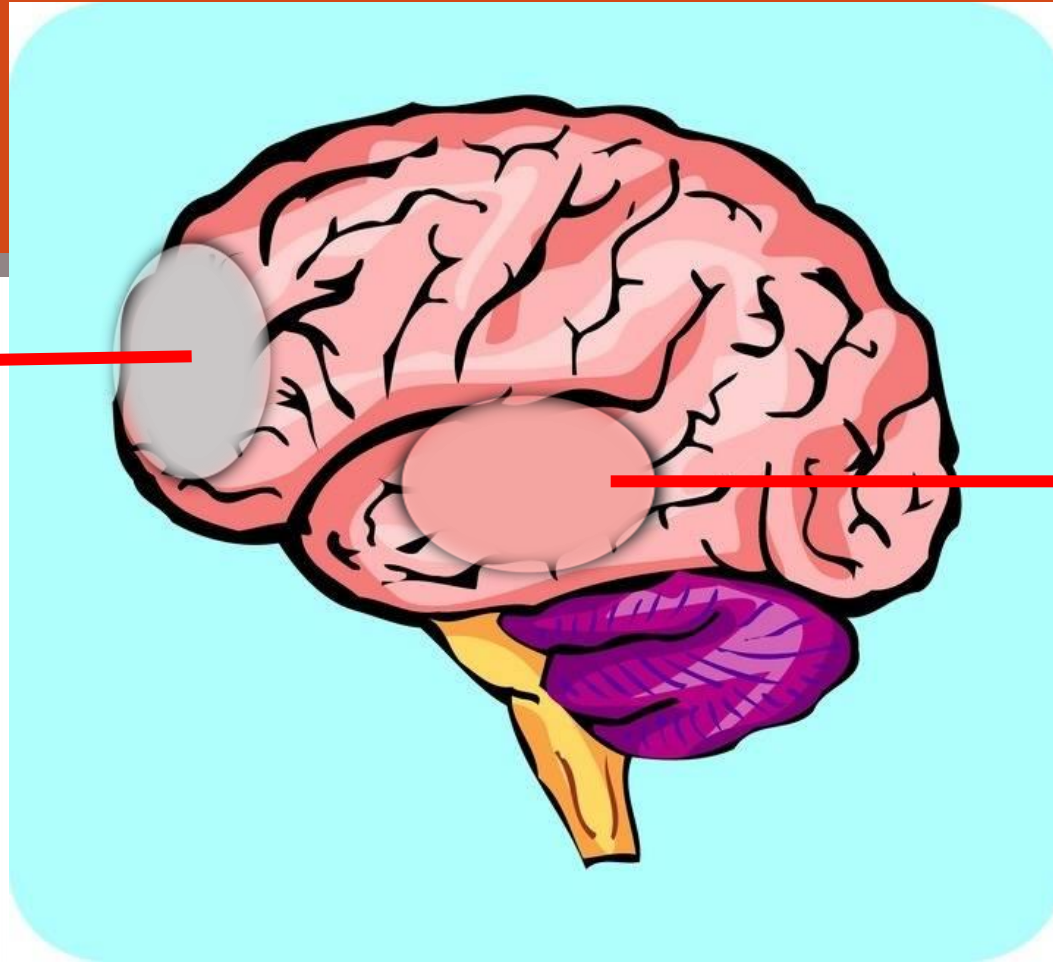
4. Acceleration

- Student displays focused behavior.
 - Provocative
 - High intensity
 - Threatening
 - Personal

Survival Mode: Fight/Flight/Freeze

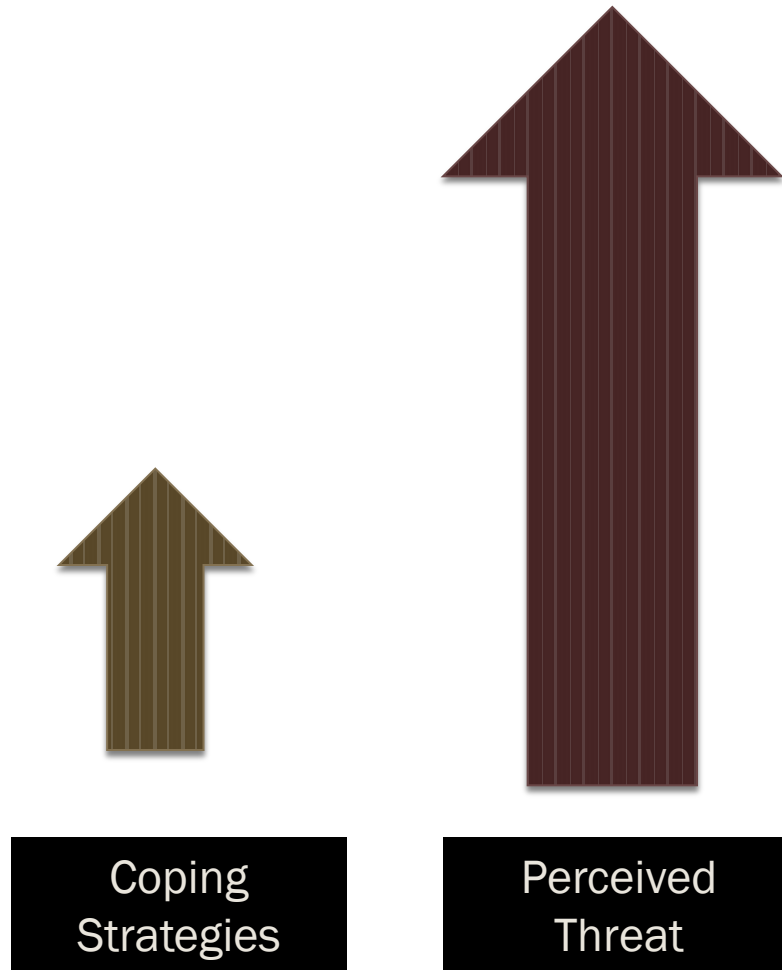
The Learning Brain shuts down
and the Survival Brain take over

**Learning/
Thinking
Brain**
(Prefrontal
Cortex)



**Survival/
Emotion
Brain**
(Limbic
System)

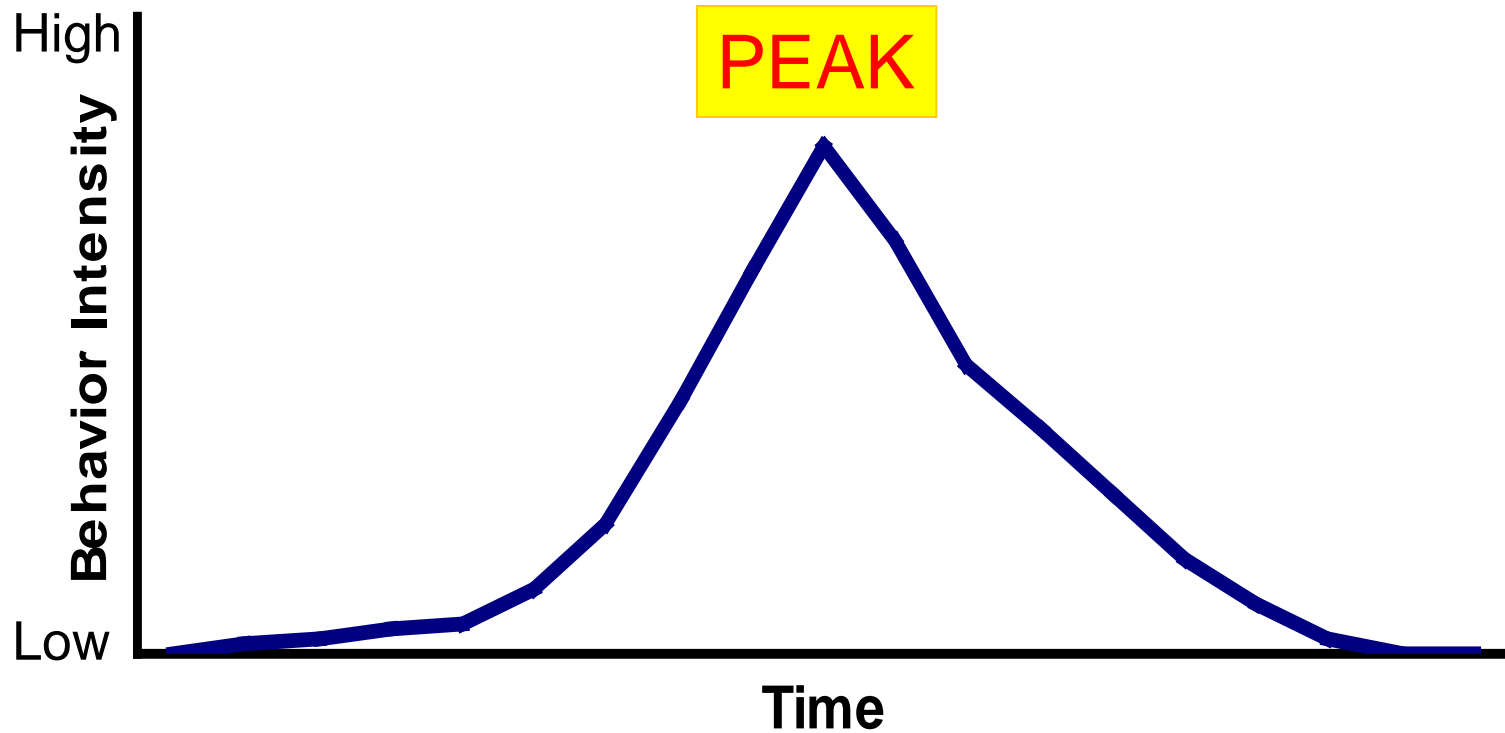
Trauma Reaction



Defusing the Acceleration Phase

- Consciously **avoid responses** that lead to more serious behaviors:
 - Shouting
 - Engaging in power struggles
 - Moving into the student's space
 - Touching the student
 - Sudden or very quick movements
 - Criticizing
 - Becoming defensive and arguing
 - Threatening posture

How does Trauma impact behavior?



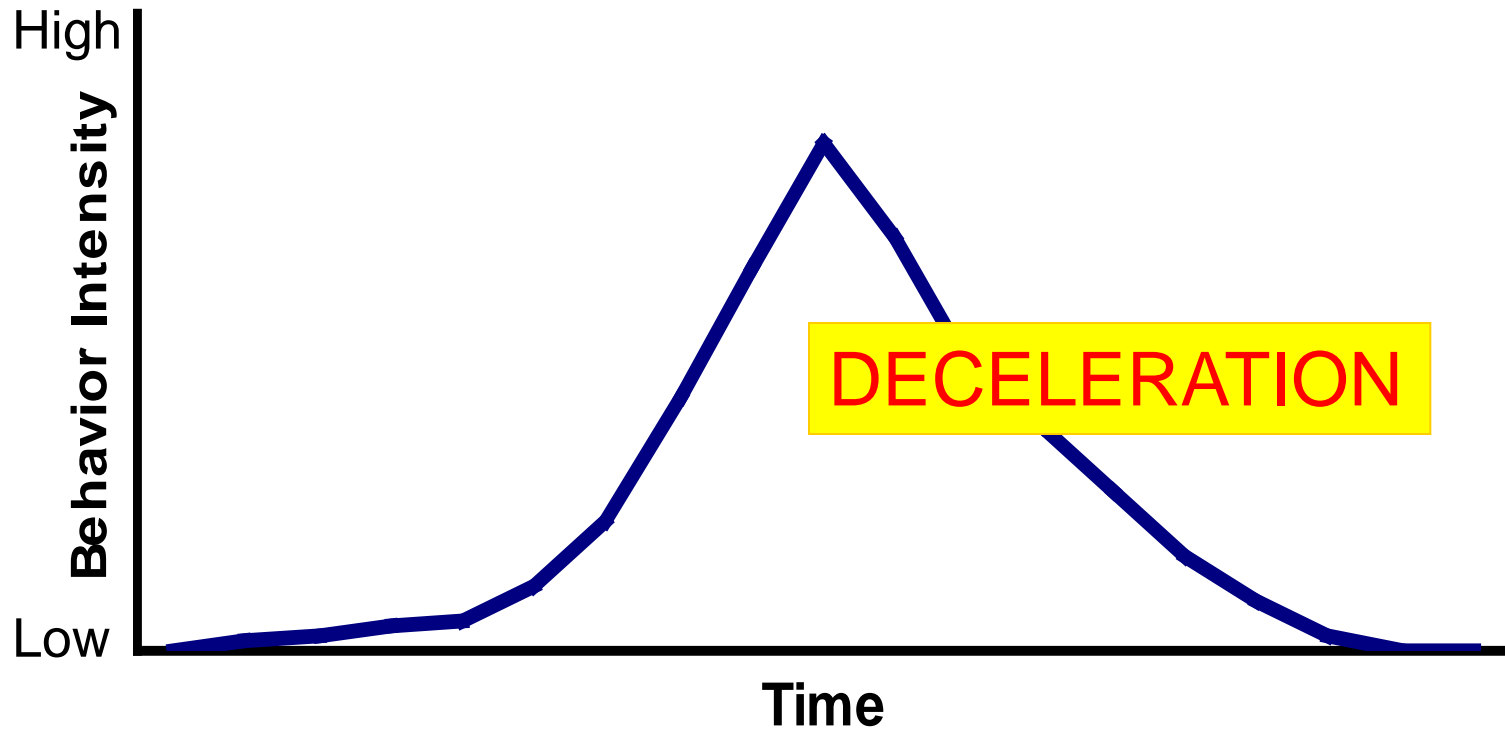
5. Peak

- Student is dis-regulated and may engage in
 - Physical aggression
 - Property destruction
 - Self-injury
 - Escape/social withdrawal
 - Hyperventilation

Peak

- Intervention is focused on safety.
 - focus is on de-escalation strategies

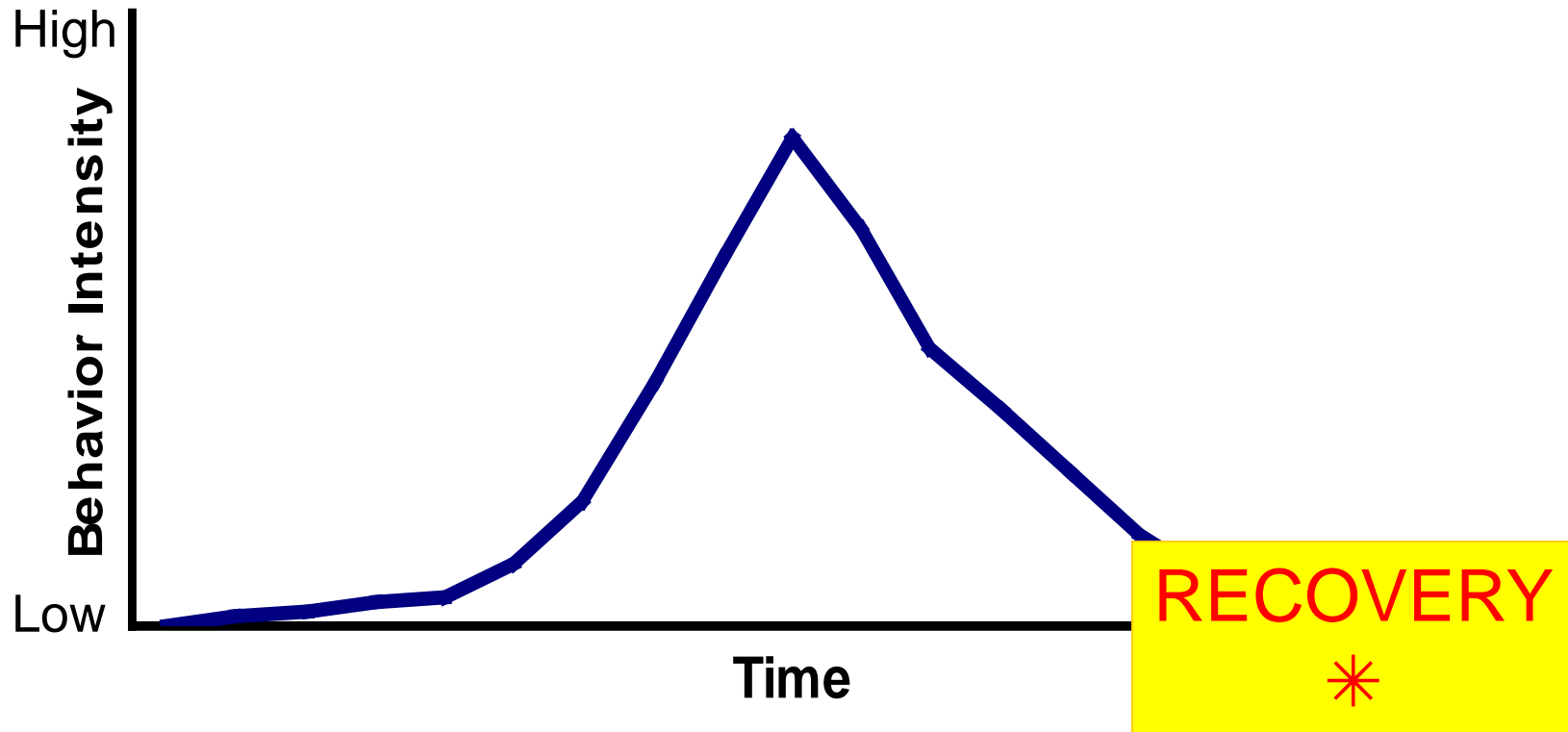
How does Trauma impact behavior?



6. De-escalation

- Student displays confusion but with decreases in severe behavior.
 - Social withdrawal
 - Denial
 - Blaming others
 - Minimization of problem

How does Trauma impact behavior?



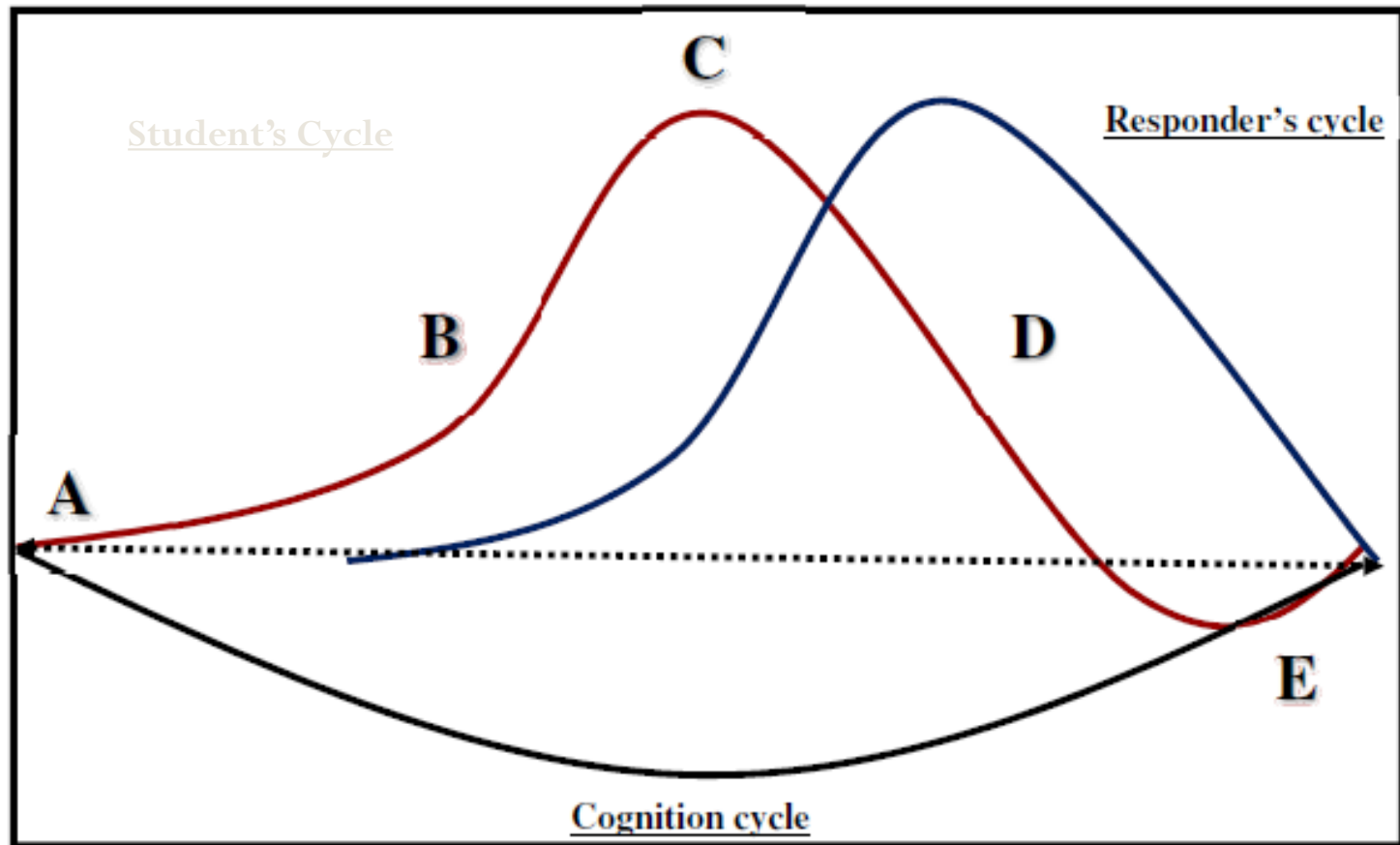
Recovery

Help student to reflect and repair:

- What happened, and what were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
- What about this has been hardest for you?
- What do you think you need to do to make things as right as possible?

International Institute for Restorative Practices

Avoid Re-escalation: Where Are You in the Cycle?



Adapted from SFGH Safety Management and Response Techniques (SMART) Training

J. Dorado (2014), UCSF HEARTS, Child & Adolescent
Services, UCSF/SFGH

- De-Escalating Problem Behavior



OUSD RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

How Circles Work

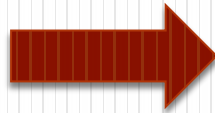
- Only the person with the talking piece may speak. Everyone else should be actively listening to them.
- Follow the guidelines
- Pass the talking piece in one direction around the circle, not across.
- Everyone answers the same question from their own perspective.

Questions for Circles

1. If you had a superpower, what would it be?
2. What triggers you in this work?
3. What do you need in the moment to be able to handle the situation without escalating it?
4. What skills do you call internally to not get sucked in?
5. How do you sustain yourself in this work over time?
6. Name an intention you want to set for yourself going into next year.

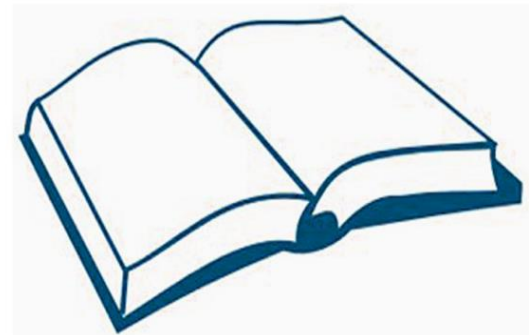
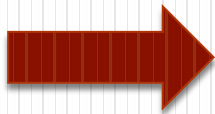


Fight, Flight, Freeze



**Safe environment, caring adults,
academic, social-emotional, &
behavioral supports**

Executive function



Engaged Learning