

# Use de-escalating behaviour strategies

A suggestion for implementing the strategy  
'Respond safely to challenging situations'  
from the Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

- 
- Includes:**
- Recognise stages in behaviour
  - Consider safety first
  - Take a stepped approach
  - Think ahead checklist
  - Reflective questions
  - Useful resources

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From

Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

Strategy: [Respond safely to challenging situations](#)

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Date

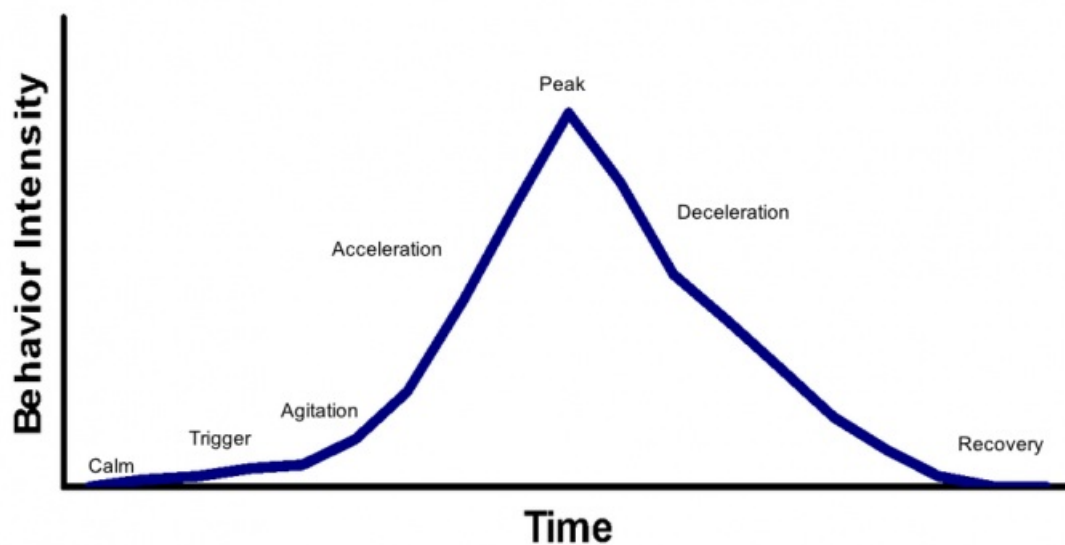
19 September 2021

Link

[inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/behaviour-and-learning/use-de-escalating-behaviour-strategies](https://www.inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/behaviour-and-learning/use-de-escalating-behaviour-strategies)

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## Recognise stages in behaviour



Source: [Responding to non-responders: Managing escalations](#)

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[Responding to non-responders: Managing escalations](#)

<https://www.inclusive.tki.org.nz/assets/inclusive-education/resource-documents/Responding-to-non-responders-Managing-escalations.pdf>

[View full image \(67 KB\)](#)

Colvin and Sugai describe each behavioural phase and suggest specific strategies for intervention as student behaviour escalates.

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## Consider safety first

Create space and time.

- ▲▲ Remove the audience – ask other students to take their work and move away.
- ▲▲ Give the student physical space.
- ▲▲ Name the emotion in a calm even voice: “You look really angry”, “I can see that you are very frustrated”...
- ▲▲ Wait.

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# Take a stepped approach

If the student becomes more agitated, show patience and give them your guidance and direction to increase their sense of security.

Ensure your language is concise and short:

- Calmly and clearly tell them what to do (avoid arguing with them).
- Where possible and appropriate, give them a choice, then some time to respond.
- If necessary, redirect them to another activity, move them to another [de-escalation space](#), or remove them from the activity or room to calm down. Follow your school's policies in such instances.

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## Think ahead checklist

Take a “no surprises” approach and be prepared.

- ▲▲ If escalation occurs, move further away.
- ▲▲ Make sure you have an exit plan.
- ▲▲ Constantly reassess the situation.
- ▲▲ Send for help if necessary.

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## Reflective questions

Adapt for your own context.

What de-escalating approaches do you regularly use?

What de-escalating spaces do you have available to you?

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## Useful resources



### Guidelines for registered schools in New Zealand on the use of physical restraint

Read time: 28 min

Publisher: Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

[Download](#) PDF



### Responding to non-responders: Managing escalations

Publisher: OSEP Centre on Positive Behavioural Intervention & Support

[Download](#) PDF (692 KB)



### De-escalation spaces: Helping students manage emotions

Publisher: Edutopia

[Visit website](#)

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