

# THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

## Resource Teacher Participant Booklet

Strengthening adult posture and co-regulation to help students feel safe, regulated,  
engaged, and ready to learn



### Purpose

Use this booklet to reflect, apply, discuss, and plan. The goal is not to complete every page during the session; choose the activities that best support your learning and return to the others with your team.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School / Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# How to Use This Booklet

Reflect individually. Think collaboratively. Translate ideas into everyday practice.

## Learning Path

- |          |                                             |                                                       |
|----------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Moving Upstream</b>                      | Safety → Regulation → Engagement → Learning           |
| <b>2</b> | <b>The Resource Teacher Lens</b>            | From “fixing” the student to strengthening the system |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Adult Posture &amp; Co-Regulation</b>    | Regulated, curious, relational responses              |
| <b>4</b> | <b>MTSS in Practice</b>                     | Universal, targeted, and individualized supports      |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Planning for Prevention &amp; Safety</b> | Plans that travel across adults and environments      |
| <b>6</b> | <b>From Insight to Action</b>               | Commitments for practice and team capacity            |

## PART 1

# Moving Upstream

Before we ask for engagement, consider safety and regulation.



### Core idea

When engagement is low, the first question is not simply “How do I get this student to participate?” Move upstream: Is the student regulated enough to engage? Do they experience enough safety to regulate? What is adult posture contributing?

### SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS: My default starting point

- When a student is not engaging, what do I tend to notice first?
- Which do I tend to address first: learning, engagement, regulation, or safety?
- What might change if I deliberately moved one step upstream before intervening?

## INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE: A Different Lens



### How to use this activity

Choose one student situation that has been difficult or repetitive. Reframe the situation from compliance to curiosity.

|                                                                                                        |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>What I see:</b> Describe observable behaviour without interpretation.                               |  |
| <b>My first interpretation:</b> What story do I automatically tell myself?                             |  |
| <b>Possible need / barrier:</b> What may be overloaded, unclear, threatening, or inaccessible?         |  |
| <b>What the student may need:</b> Connection? clarification? movement? scaffolding? reassurance? time? |  |
| <b>My next response:</b> What can I change in my posture, task, or environment?                        |  |

## SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY: From “What’s wrong?” to “What can we do?”



### Discuss

Choose one common referral statement (e.g., “won’t work,” “always leaves,” “disrupts group work”). Rewrite it as a collaborative inquiry.

1. Identify language that locates the problem entirely within the student.
2. Generate at least three questions about conditions, demands, skills, and adult responses.
3. Choose one question the team could investigate this week.

### GROUP NOTES:

## PART 2

# The Resource Teacher Lens

Observe → Understand → Collaborate → Build Capacity



### Role shift

The Resource Teacher is not simply another service delivered to the student. The role includes connecting information, people, environments, and practices—and strengthening the system around the student.

## INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE: Look Beyond the Student



### How to use this activity

Use the three-part lens before selecting an intervention.

|                                                                                                                       |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>STUDENT:</b> What strengths, needs, communication, regulation, or skill factors matter?                            |  |
| <b>TASK:</b> What cognitive, language, executive-function, sensory, or performance demands matter?                    |  |
| <b>ENVIRONMENT:</b> What about routines, peers, timing, noise, transitions, expectations, or adult responses matters? |  |
| <b>INTERACTION:</b> Where do these factors meet?<br>What pattern emerges?                                             |  |
| <b>FIRST ADJUSTMENT:</b> What is the smallest useful change we could test?                                            |  |

## **SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS: Direct support vs. capacity building**

- Where does most of my time currently sit—direct support or capacity building?
- Which direct supports should remain direct?
- Which supports could become more embedded in the student’s everyday environment?
- How could I help another adult become more confident or effective rather than becoming the student’s only safe adult?

## SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY: Make the recommendation usable



### Discuss

A recommendation only becomes useful when adults know what it looks like in real life. Select one common recommendation such as “provide breaks,” “chunk work,” “use co-regulation,” or “reduce demands.”

1. Define what it looks and sounds like during an ordinary class period.
2. Identify who can realistically implement it and when.
3. Name what would make it sustainable across elementary or secondary settings.
4. Decide how you would know whether it is helping.

### GROUP NOTES:

## PART 3

# Adult Posture & Co-Regulation

The more dysregulated the student becomes,  
the more intentional the adult posture needs to become.

### SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS: My posture under pressure

- What student behaviours are most likely to activate me?
- When I become activated, what changes first—my voice, pace, body, language, expectations, proximity, or thinking?
- Which shift do I want to practise: judgment → curiosity, control → calm authority, confrontation → connection, rigidity → flexibility?

## INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE: The Pre-Response Pause



### How to use this activity

Use a recent challenging moment. Slow the sequence down and identify a different choice point.

|                                                                                                          |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>NOTICE:</b> What was happening in the student?<br>What was happening in me?                           |  |
| <b>REGULATE:</b> What could help me become slower, quieter, and more grounded?                           |  |
| <b>INTERPRET:</b> What might the behaviour be communicating?                                             |  |
| <b>BOUNDARY + RELATIONSHIP:</b> What limit still matters, and how can I preserve dignity and connection? |  |
| <b>RESPOND:</b> What is the next best step—not every step?                                               |  |

## SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY: Less language, more regulation



### Discuss

In groups, rewrite adult responses for a student whose regulation is deteriorating.

1. Create a “too many words” response that adults commonly use.
2. Reduce it to one short, concrete, predictable statement.
3. Add a nonverbal adjustment: proximity, stance, processing time, or environmental change.
4. Discuss when the teaching/problem-solving conversation should happen instead.

GROUP NOTES:

## SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS: The small stuff matters

- How do I give directions when I am rushed?
- How do I correct without shaming?
- What does repair look like after I make a mistake?
- How do I communicate that the relationship is bigger than the altercation?

## PART 4

# MTSS in Practice

Tier 1 is the foundation. Tier 2 and Tier 3 are layered—not replacements for it.

### INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE: Map My Resource Teacher Role Across the Tiers



#### How to use this activity

Identify where your current practice is strong and where greater clarity is needed.

|                                                                                                                                                                                             |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>TIER 1 — Consultant &amp; Capacity Builder:</b> How do I observe classroom conditions, model practices, support differentiation, and strengthen routines/accessibility?                  |  |
| <b>TIER 2 — Collaborator &amp; Problem Solver:</b> How do I identify patterns, clarify needs, develop targeted supports, model strategies, monitor, and adjust?                             |  |
| <b>TIER 3 — Team Partner &amp; Coordinator:</b> How do I contribute to individualized planning, identify triggers/protective factors, align adult responses, and coordinate implementation? |  |
| <b>TIER 1 CONTINUITY:</b> How do we ensure targeted/intensive supports do not disconnect the student from universal classroom instruction and belonging?                                    |  |

## SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY: Catch it earlier



### Discuss

Choose a predictable Tier 2 difficulty: task avoidance, transition difficulty, assessment anxiety, shutdown, peer conflict, or escalating frustration.

1. Map the reactive pathway: Trigger → Stress → Escalation → Crisis → Intervention.
2. Map the preventive pathway: Trigger/Demand → Early Signs → Targeted Adult Support → Regains Capacity → Returns to Engagement.
3. Identify the earliest point where a realistic adult action could change the trajectory.
4. Name what information should be monitored to decide whether support is helping.

GROUP NOTES:

## SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS: Tier 1 check

- What universal classroom condition could reduce the number of students needing targeted support?

- Where might pull-out or individualized support unintentionally replace core instruction or belonging?

- What could I strengthen with classroom teachers before adding something new?

## PART 5

# Planning for Prevention & Safety

The plan is useful only when it can be understood and implemented across people, settings, and moments.

### INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE: Student Preventive Action Plan (from understanding to lasting impact)



#### How to use this activity

Use a current or hypothetical student. Keep the focus proactive, realistic, and sustainable.

|                                                                                                                 |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>OBSERVE:</b> What needs, strengths, triggers, successful moments, and patterns do we see across settings?    |  |
| <b>UNDERSTAND:</b> What underlying capacity, barrier, task demand, or environmental factor needs support?       |  |
| <b>COLLABORATE:</b> What do the student, family, classroom teacher, support staff, and specialists each know?   |  |
| <b>PLAN:</b> What objective and proactive practice would directly address the identified need?                  |  |
| <b>PLAN B:</b> What will adults notice and do during a predictable difficult time/day?                          |  |
| <b>BUILD CAPACITY:</b> How will the support travel so it does not depend on the Resource Teacher being present? |  |
| <b>MONITOR:</b> What evidence will tell us to maintain, fade, intensify, or change the support?                 |  |

## SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY: Does the plan travel?



### Discuss

Review a support plan you know (without identifying the student). Test it for implementation across environments.

1. Could a new staff member understand what to do from the plan?
2. Does it describe observable cues rather than labels?
3. Are the supports realistic in the classroom and other school environments?
4. Does the student have a voice in what helps?
5. What depends too heavily on one person? Redesign that part.

GROUP NOTES:

## INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE: Student Safety Plan — Match the Response to the State



### How to use this activity

Build a response continuum. The aim is consistency before, during, and after escalation.

|                                                                                                                           |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>REGULATED &amp; RECEPTIVE:</b> What does this student look like? What maintains safety, connection, and participation? |  |
| <b>TENSE / FRUSTRATED:</b> What are the earliest observable signs? What should adults do now?                             |  |
| <b>ACTIVATING / ESCALATING:</b> What language, proximity, demands, choices, and regulation supports help?                 |  |
| <b>FULLY ESCALATED:</b> What is essential for safety? Who responds? What should adults avoid?                             |  |
| <b>RECOVERY / RE-ENTRY:</b> What supports reconnection, repair, reflection when ready, and return to learning?            |  |
| <b>TEAM COHERENCE:</b> Who needs to know the plan? What roles must be clarified in advance?                               |  |

## **SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS: After an incident: review without blame**

- Were there earlier signs we missed?
- What helped? What made things harder?
- Did adult responses match the student's state?
- Was the plan followed consistently?
- What should we change before the next difficult moment?

## PART 6

# From Insight to Action

Small changes. Big possibilities.

### SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY: The shared ecosystem of regulation



#### Discuss

Draw the people around one student: family, classroom teacher(s), Resource Teacher, specialists/providers, support staff, administrators, and other key school staff.

1. Name the unique contribution of each person or group.
2. Identify one gap, duplication, or mixed message in the current system.
3. Decide where the Resource Teacher can act as connector rather than owner.
4. Choose one communication or coordination practice that would increase consistency.

GROUP NOTES:

## INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE: My 30-Day Practice Experiment



### How to use this activity

Choose one small, observable change to test rather than a broad goal.

|                                                                                          |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>PRACTICE I WILL TEST:</b> Be specific: what will I do differently?                    |  |
| <b>CONTEXT:</b> Where, when, and with whom will I test it?                               |  |
| <b>WHY THIS MATTERS:</b> What student/adult need or barrier does it address?             |  |
| <b>WHAT I WILL NOTICE:</b> What would early improvement look like?                       |  |
| <b>WHO I WILL INVOLVE:</b> Who can help implement, observe, or give feedback?            |  |
| <b>REVIEW POINT:</b> When will I review and decide: continue, adapt, fade, or intensify? |  |

## SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS: Closing reflection

- One idea that challenged my thinking...
- One practice I want to stop or reduce...
- One practice I want to strengthen...
- One conversation I need to have with a colleague/team...
- One way I can build capacity rather than dependency...

**Closing thought**

The goal is not for the Resource Teacher to become indispensable to one student. The goal is to help create conditions, relationships, practices, and coordinated supports that make success increasingly possible across the student's everyday environments.

**Notes & Ideas****Questions to Bring Back to My Team**