

The Hidden Curriculum

The role of the **Resource Teacher** in strengthening adult posture and co-regulation to help students feel safe, regulated, engaged, and ready to learn.



Presented by Catherine Korah, CEBM



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Small Changes. Big Possibilities.

How Resource Teachers Help Create the Conditions for Safer, More Regulated and More Successful Learners



PEOPLE
Build relationships.



PRACTICE
Strengthen systems.



POSSIBILITIES
Support every learner.

2

We often begin at the end of the sequence



We want students to *learn*, so we try to increase their *engagement*.

But when engagement is low, the question may not simply be, "*How do I get this student to participate?*"





We need to move upstream:

- 1** Is the student sufficiently ***regulated*** to engage?
- 2** Do they experience enough ***safety*** to regulate?
- 3** And what is ***my posture*** contributing to that experience of safety?

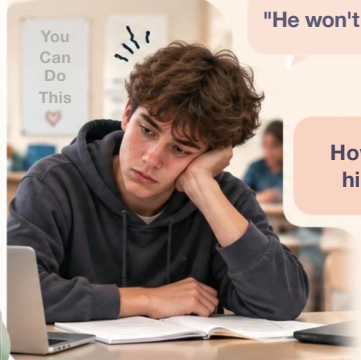


When we understand what comes before engagement and learning, we can respond with more compassion, effectiveness, and impact.

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A Different Lens Makes a Difference

✗ Instead of...



"He won't do the work."

↓

How do I make him comply?

✓ The framework encourages...

"He isn't engaging." →

And then the teacher considers the ***first variable*** they can influence immediately:

↓

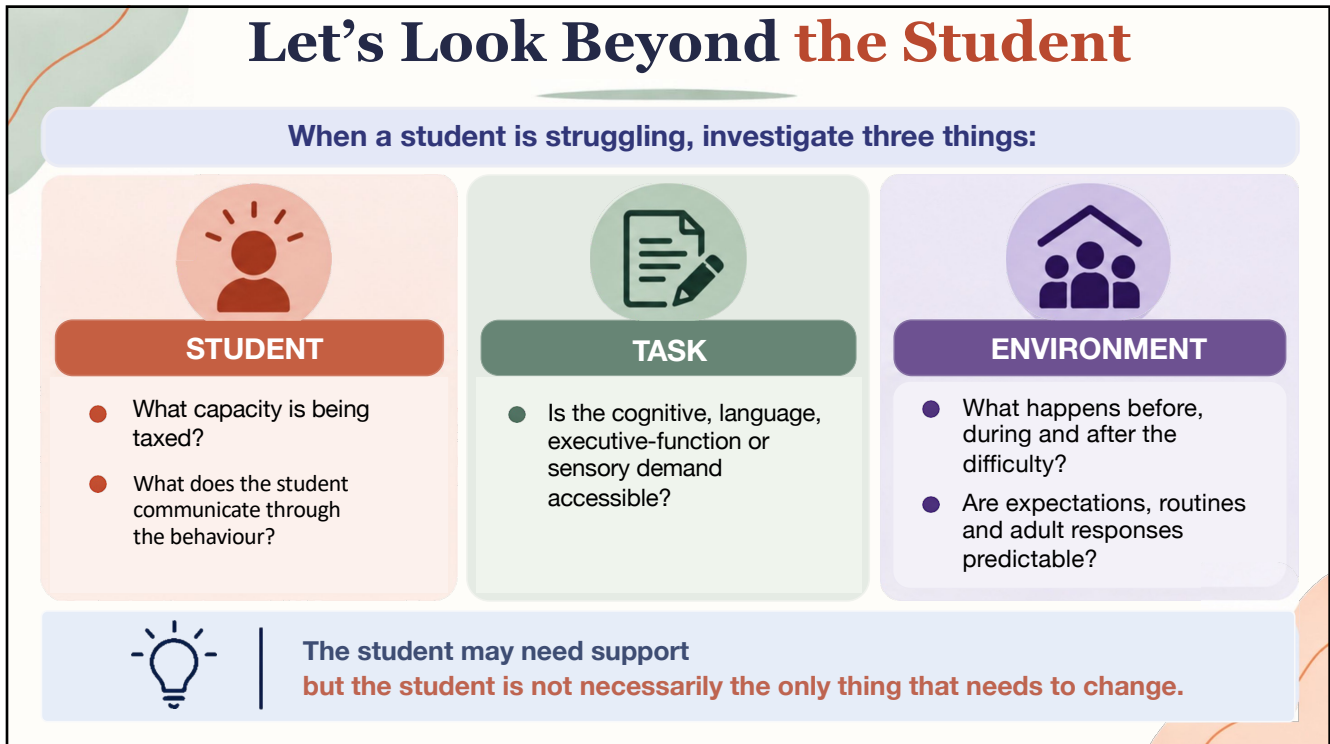
"What does this student need from me right now?"

-  Is the task overwhelming?
-  Is he frustrated?
-  Is he worried about failing?
-  Does he need clarification?
-  Does he need connection?
-  Does he need scaffolding?
-  Does he need movement?
-  Does he need reassurance?
-  Or simply a little more time?

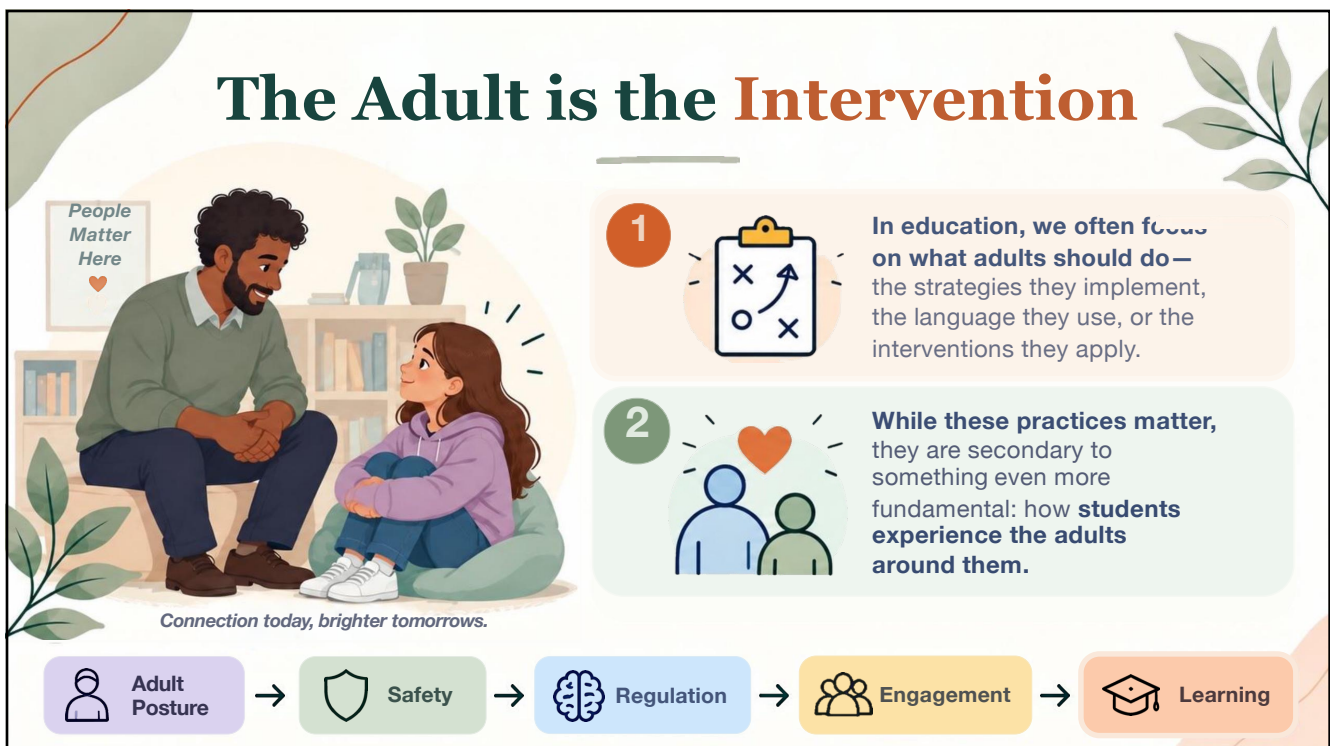


When we shift from compliance to curiosity, we create the conditions for connection, regulation, and learning.

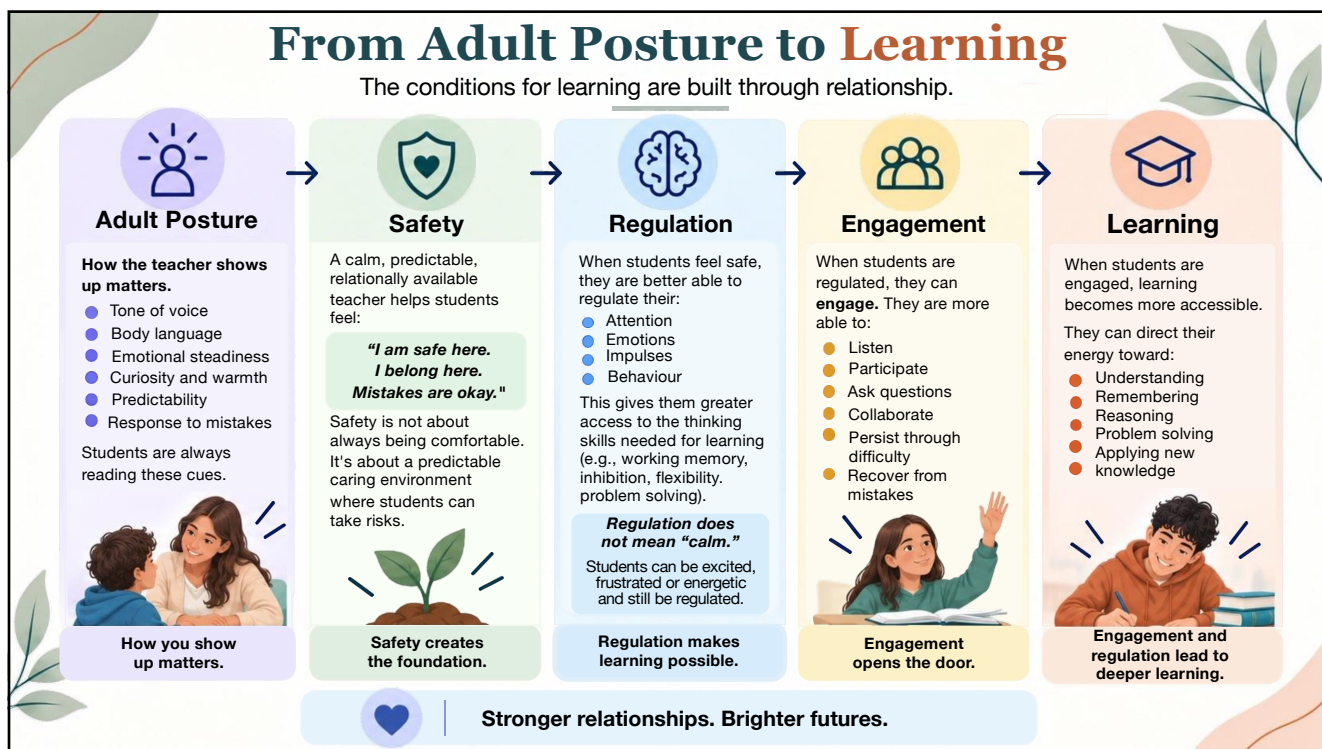
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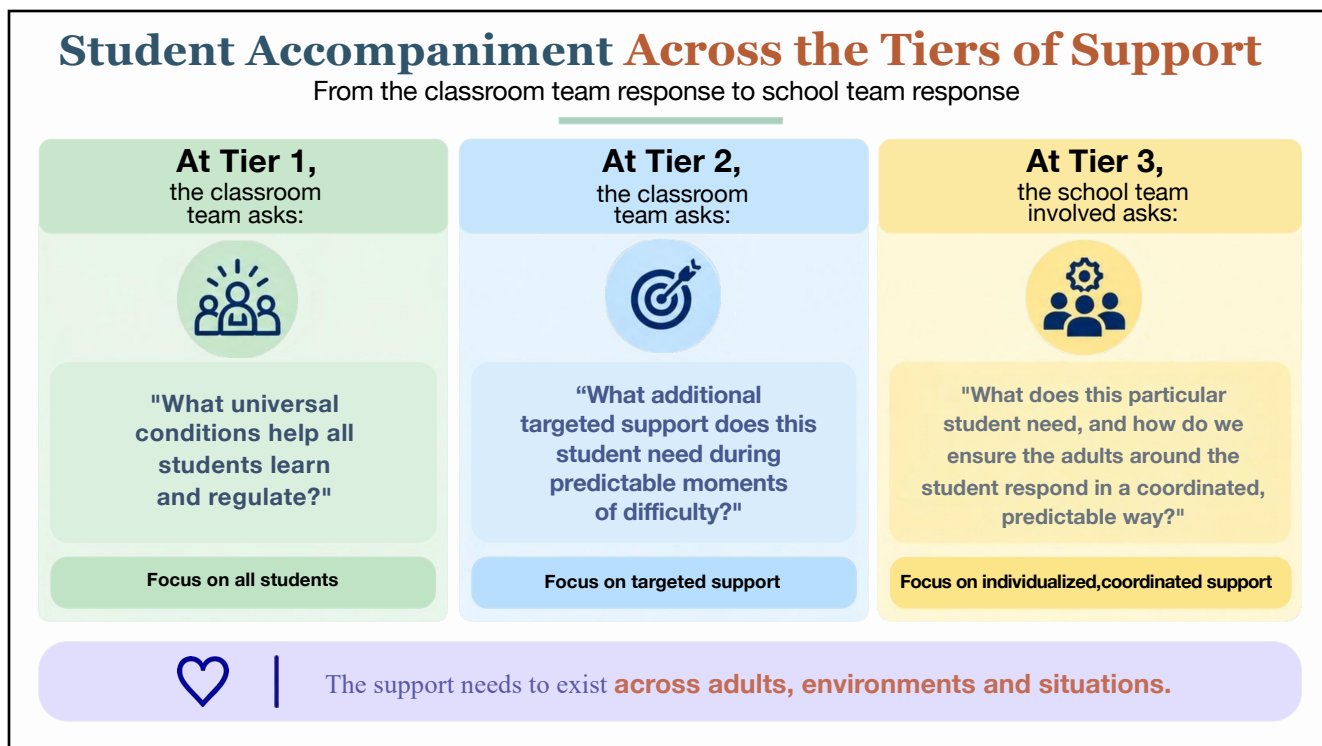
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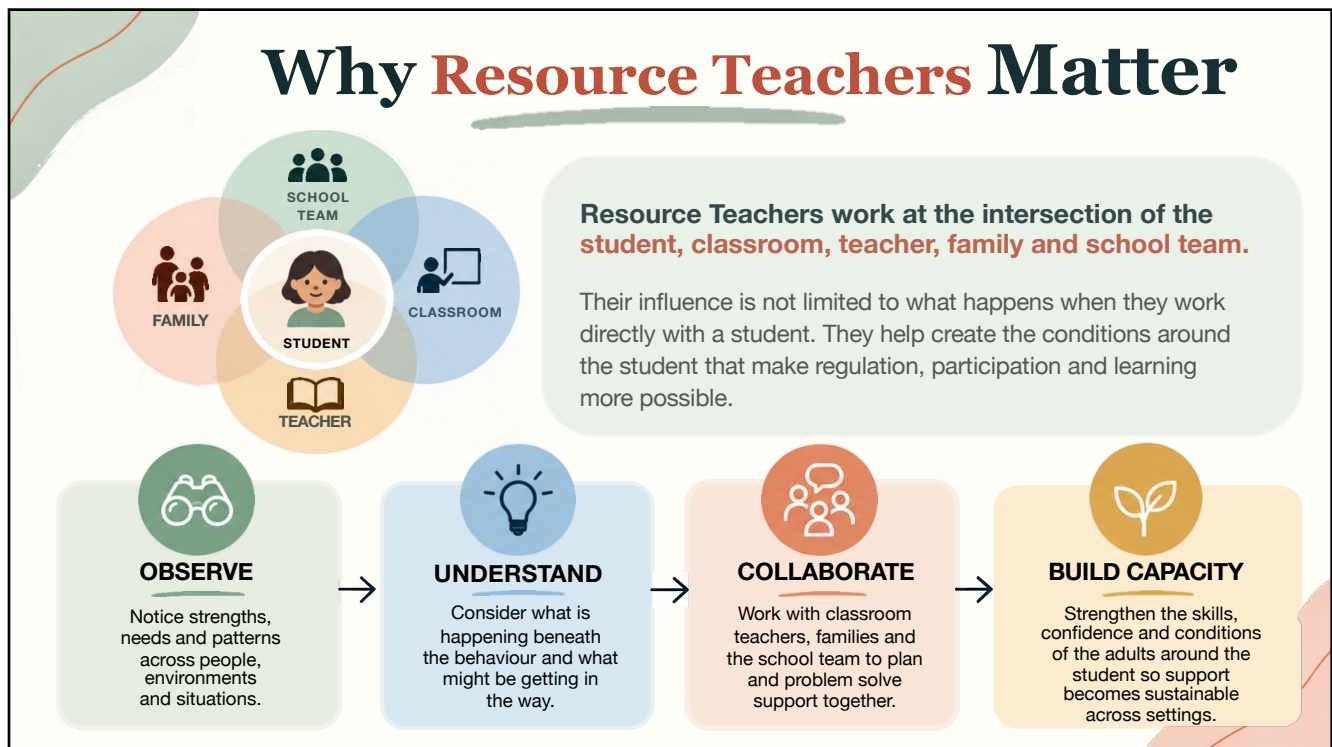
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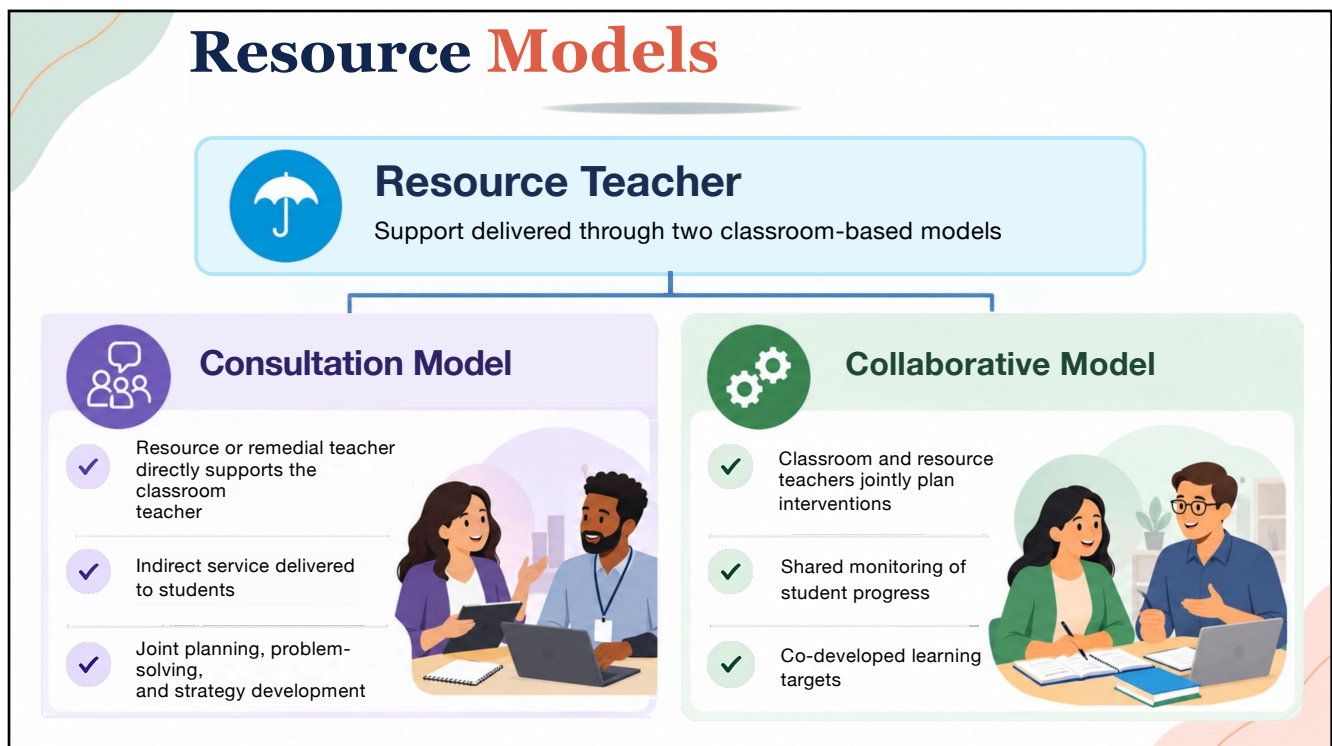
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Push-In Resource Models

In-Class Support

- ✓ Resource teacher works directly within the regular classroom
- ✓ Students remain integrated with peers
- ✓ Targeted academic support provided during instruction



Co-Teaching Approaches

Six evidence-based co-teaching structures

- ✓ One Teacher, One Support
- ✓ One Teacher, One Observer
- ✓ Parallel Teaching
- ✓ Station Teaching
- ✓ Alternative Teaching (Small Targeted Group)
- ✓ Team Teaching



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Pull-Out Resource Models

Resource Room

- ✓ Students leave class temporarily for targeted intervention
- ✓ Individual or small-group instruction
- ✓ Focus areas: literacy, numeracy and executive functioning

Remedial Services

- ✓ Short-term targeted intervention
- ✓ Academic support tailored for students at risk
- ✓ Re-teaching or pre-teaching core curriculum content

Individual Intervention

- ✓ One-to-one support specialists
- ✓ Resource or special education teacher
- ✓ Speech-Language Pathologist, Psychologist, Psychoeducator or Special Education Technician



These resource models can be used in both **Elementary** and **Secondary** settings.

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Specialized Class Models



Specialized Support Classroom

Self-contained setting tailored for intensive academic and developmental needs.



Low Student-Teacher Ratio

Provides intensive, personalized instruction and specialized behavioral or developmental support within a structured classroom setting.



Flexible Classroom Integration

Students may be integrated into the regular classroom for specific subjects or parts of the school day to foster social and academic inclusion.

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Small Group Service Models



Targeted Intervention Groups



Reading

Structured decoding and comprehension skill groups



Numeracy

Foundational math principles and problem solving



Social Skills

Guided peer interactions and emotional regulation



Executive Functioning

Organization, planning and focus strategies



Response to Intervention (RTI/MTSS)

TIER 1

Universal classroom supports for all students



TIER 2

Targeted small-group intervention for students at risk

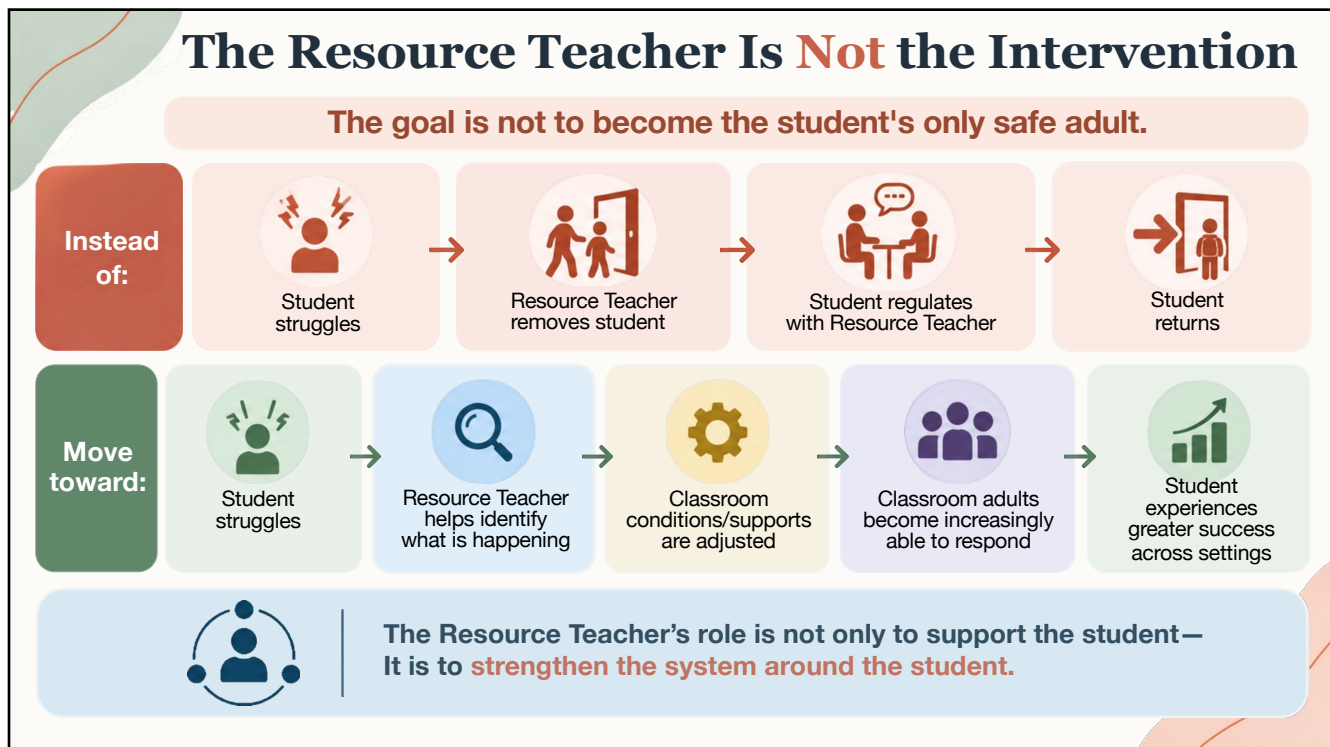


TIER 3

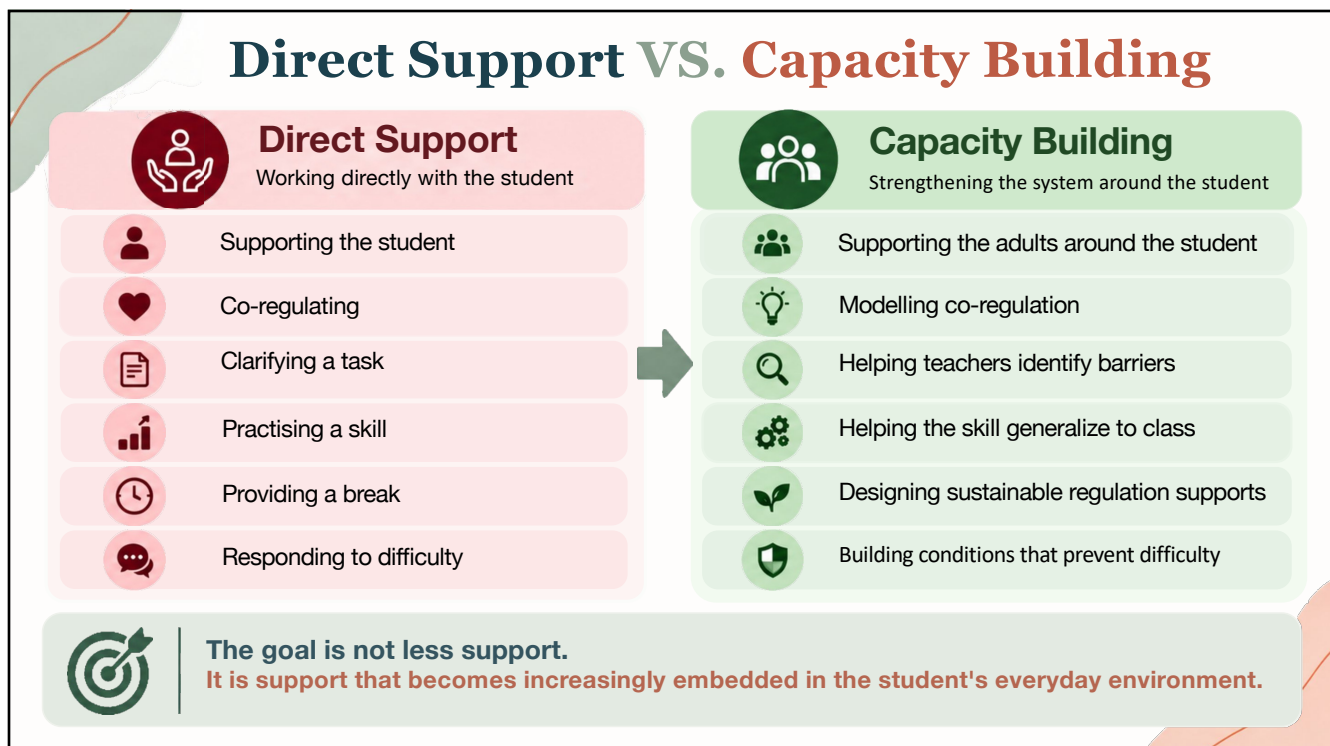
Intensive individualized intervention for students with high needs



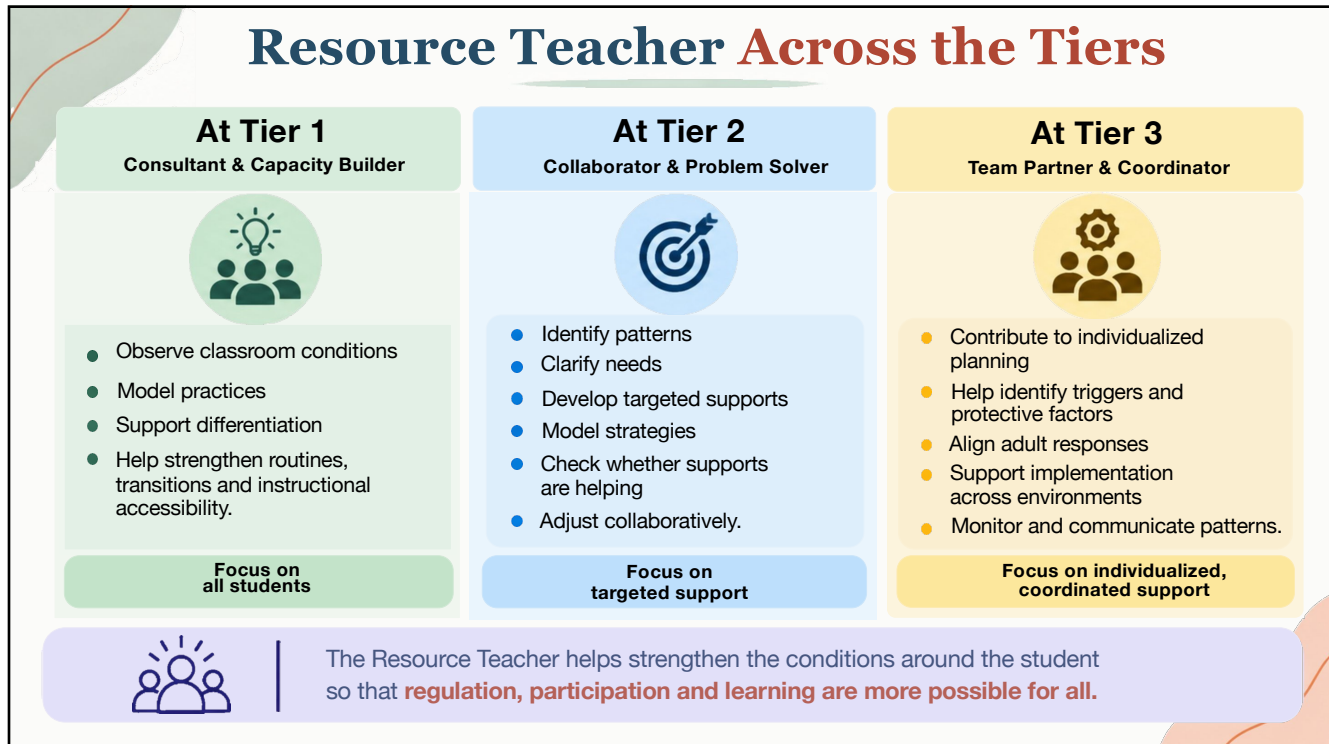
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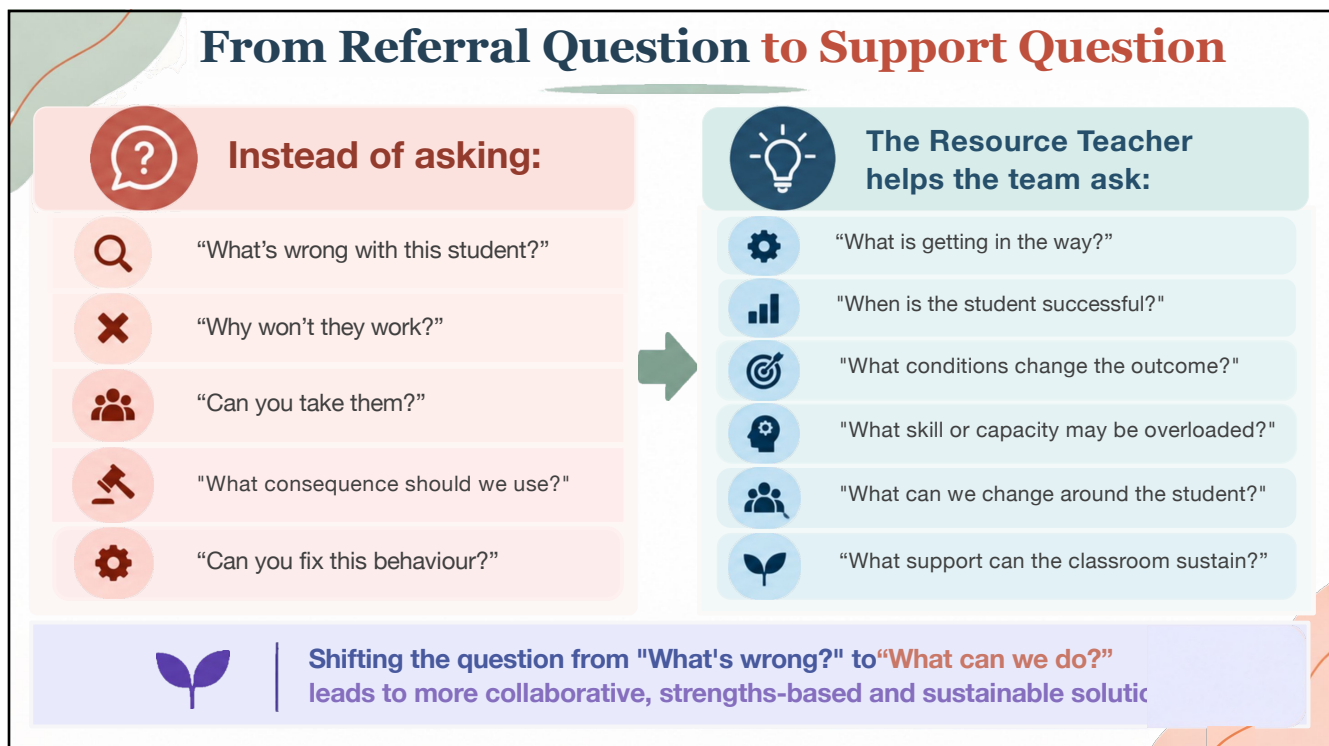
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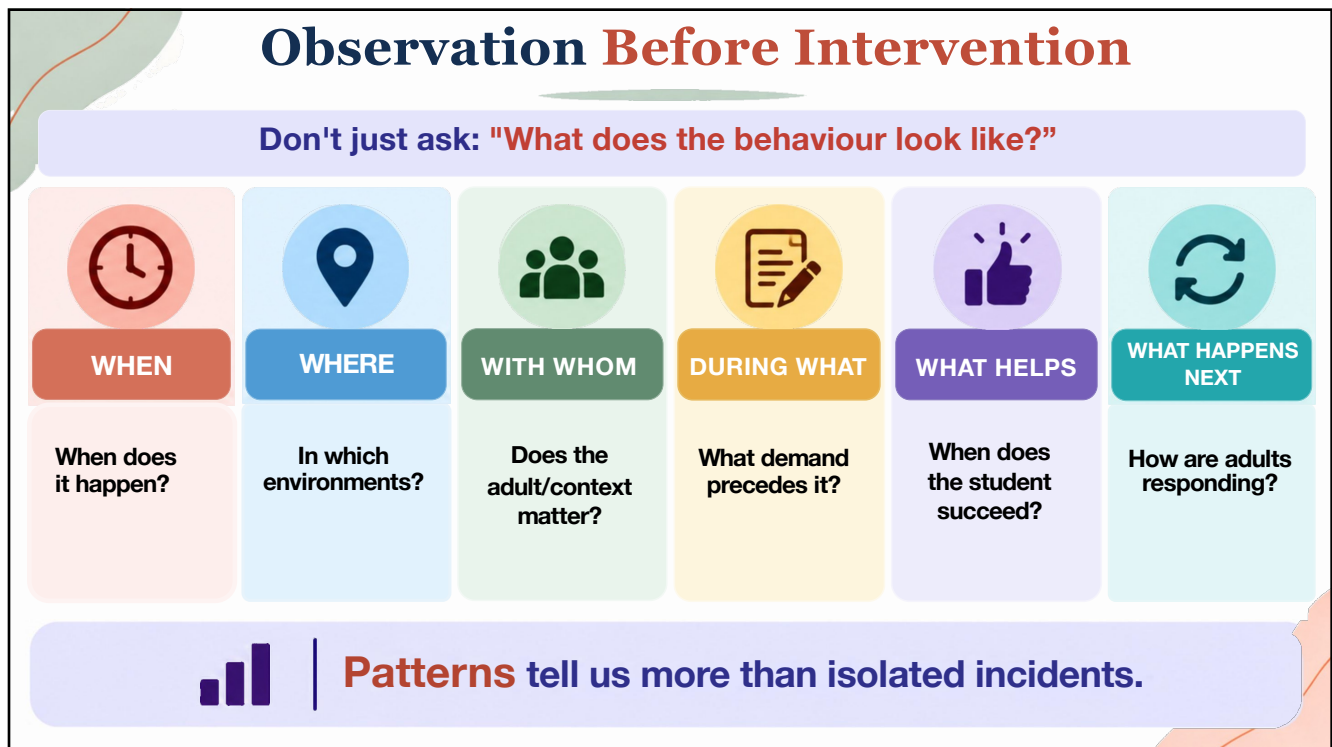
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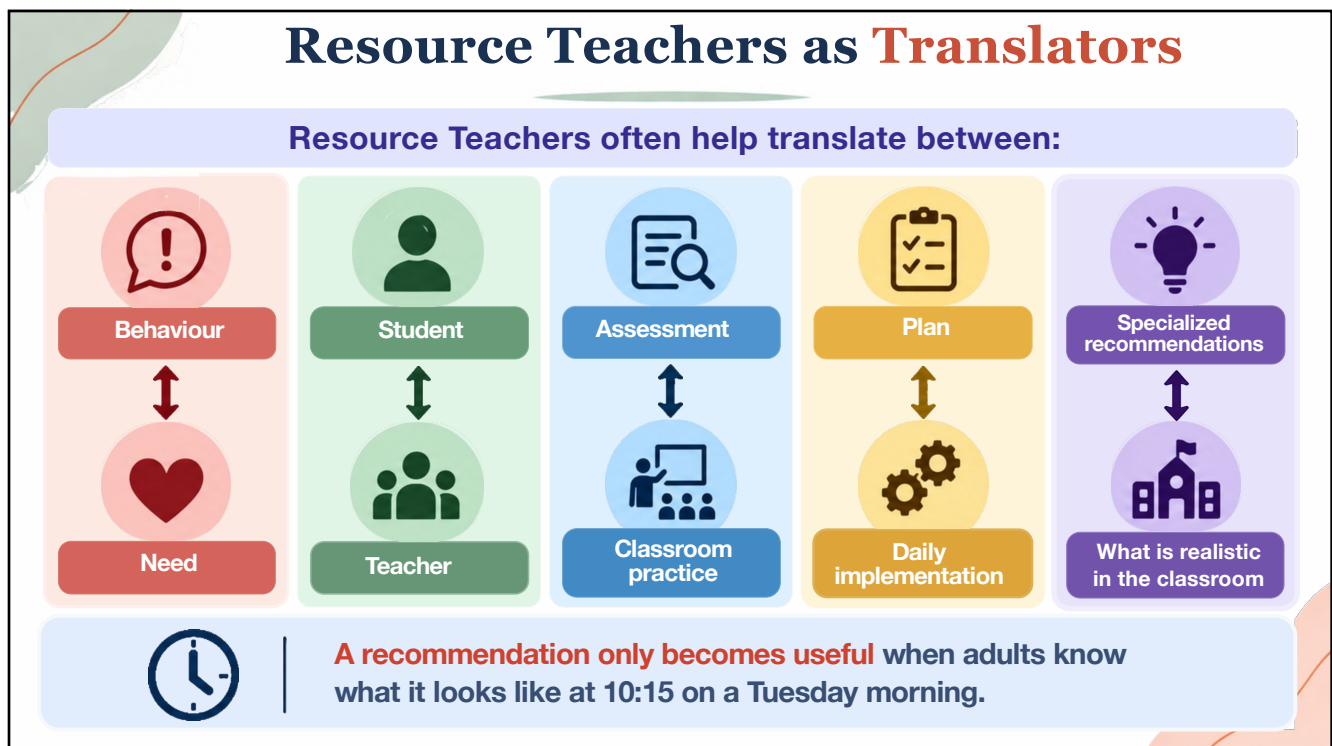
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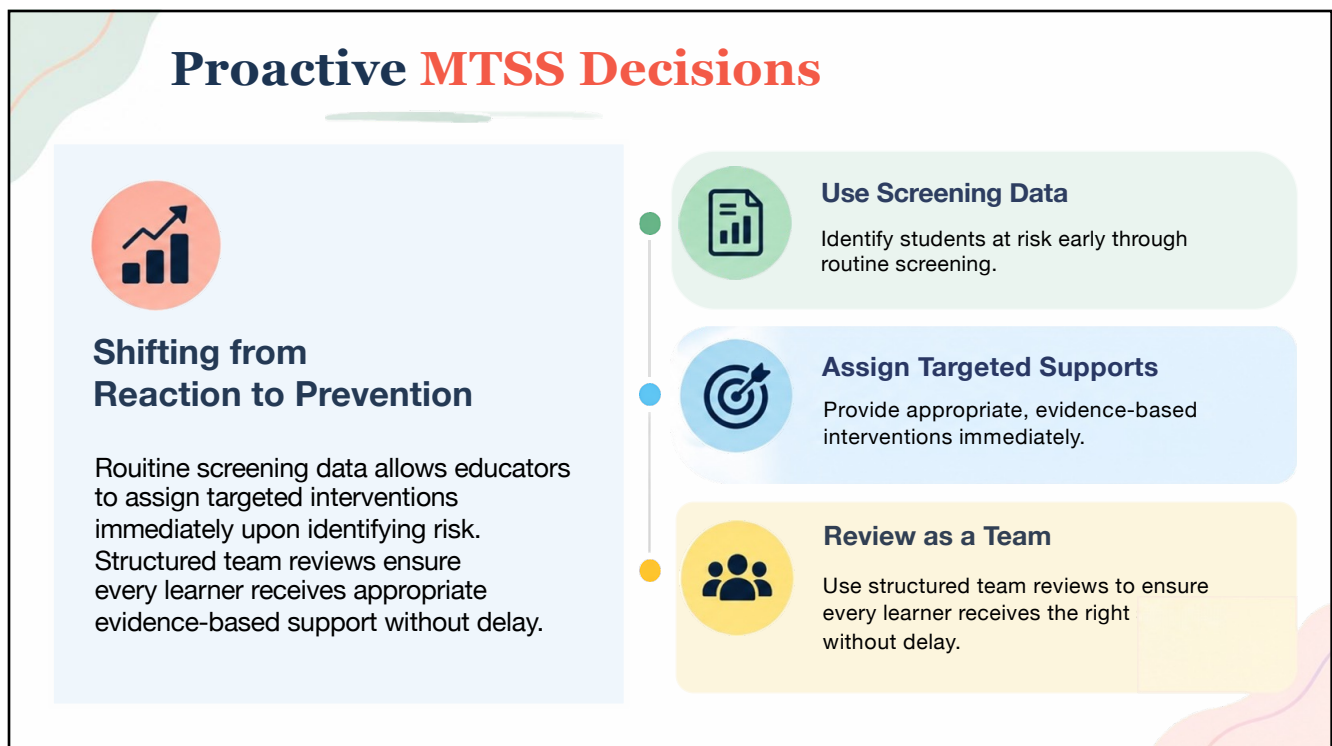
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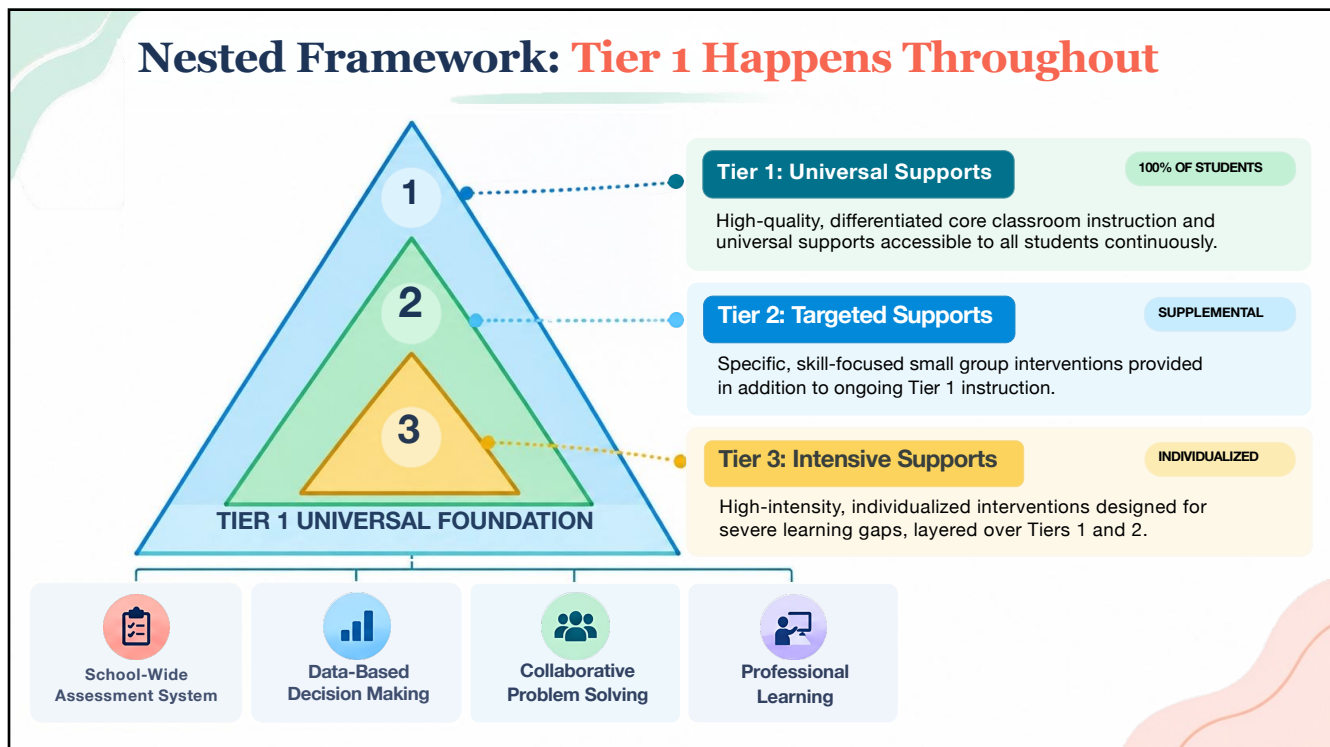
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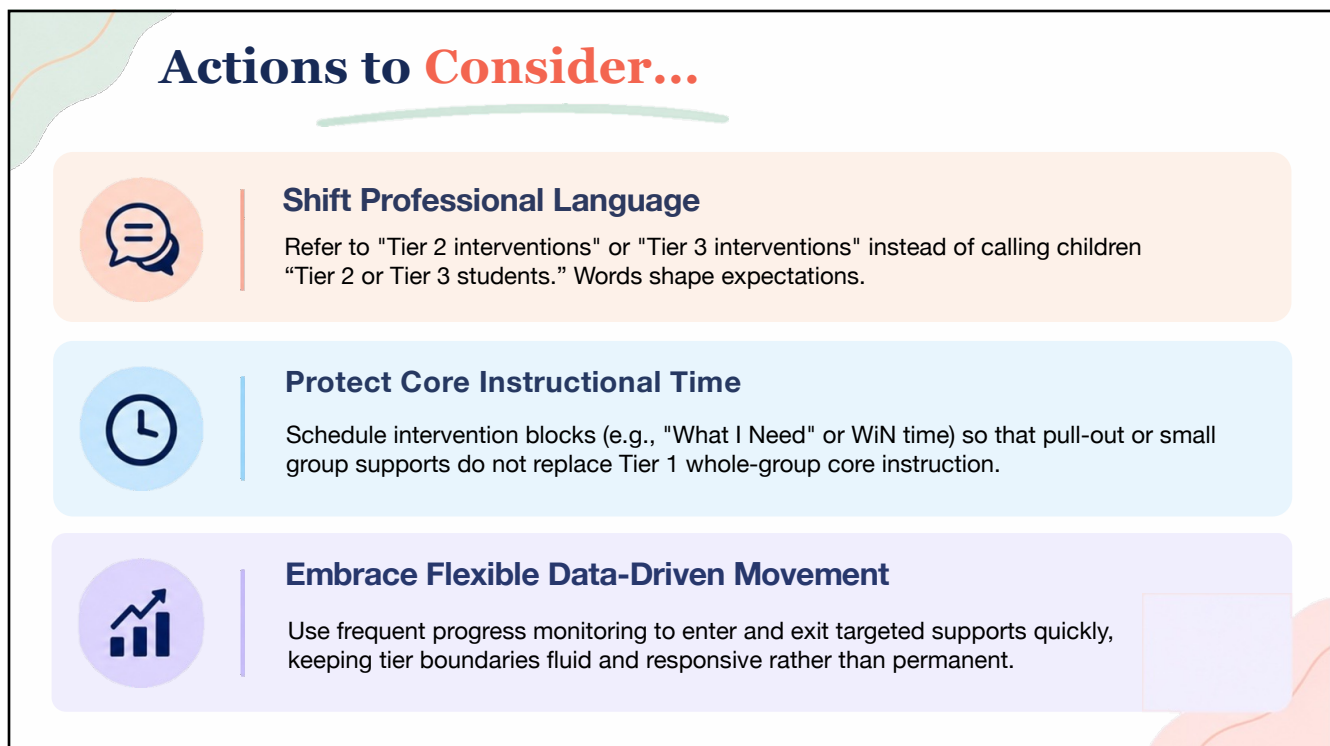
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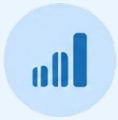


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Why Tier 1 Must **Remain Universal**



1. Core Instruction Right

Tier 1 represents grade-level academic standards and essential social-emotional learning. Withholding core instruction creates compounding learning debt for students receiving intervention.



2. Layered, Not Subtracted

Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports add targeted time and specialized strategies to accelerate growth, but they function as a supplement to, rather than a replacement for, primary core instruction.



3. Inclusive & Fluid

When tiers are viewed as concentric layers of support, students can seamlessly access or step down targeted interventions without losing connection to their classroom peer community.

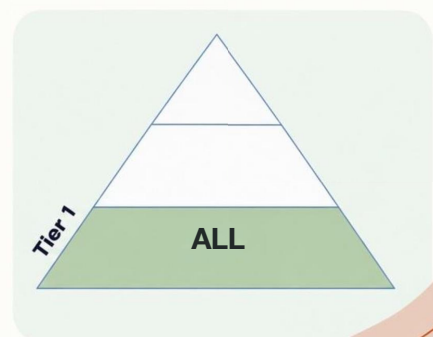
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UNIVERSAL Practices for **ALL** Students at Tier 1

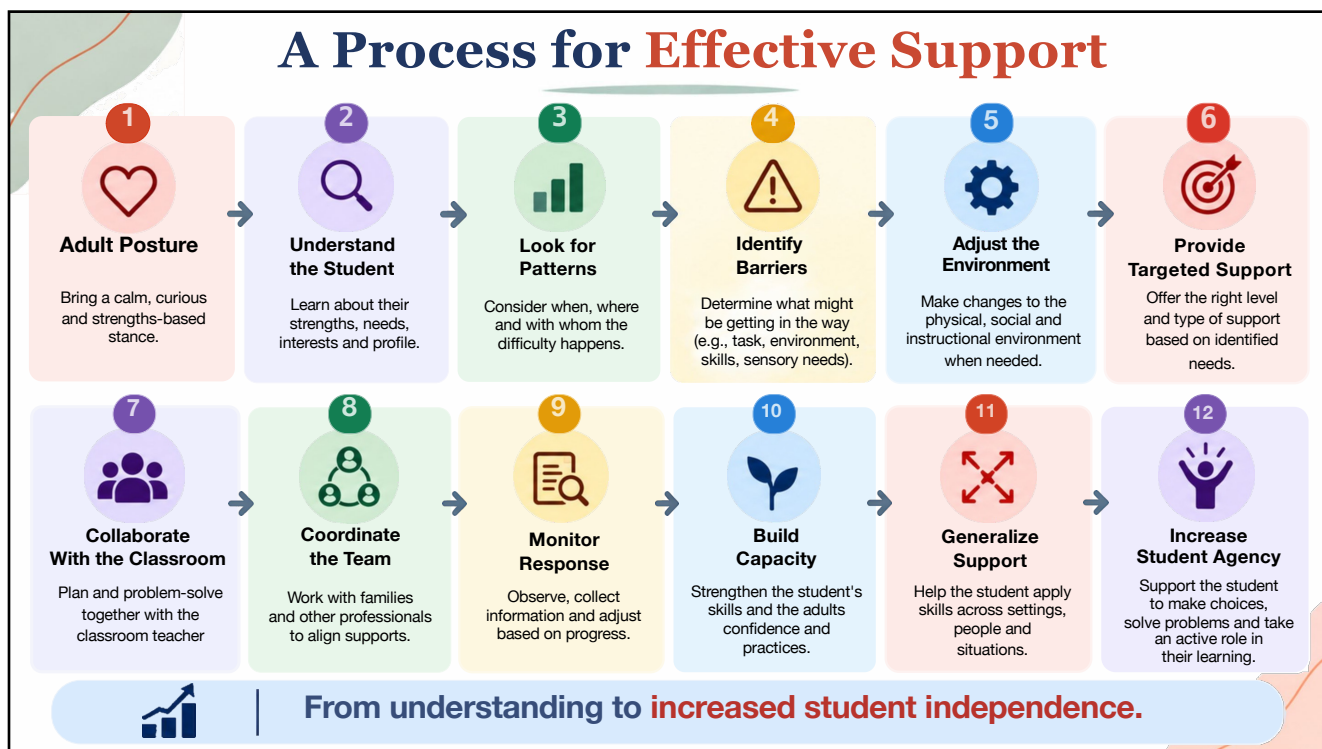


A Foundation for Every Learner

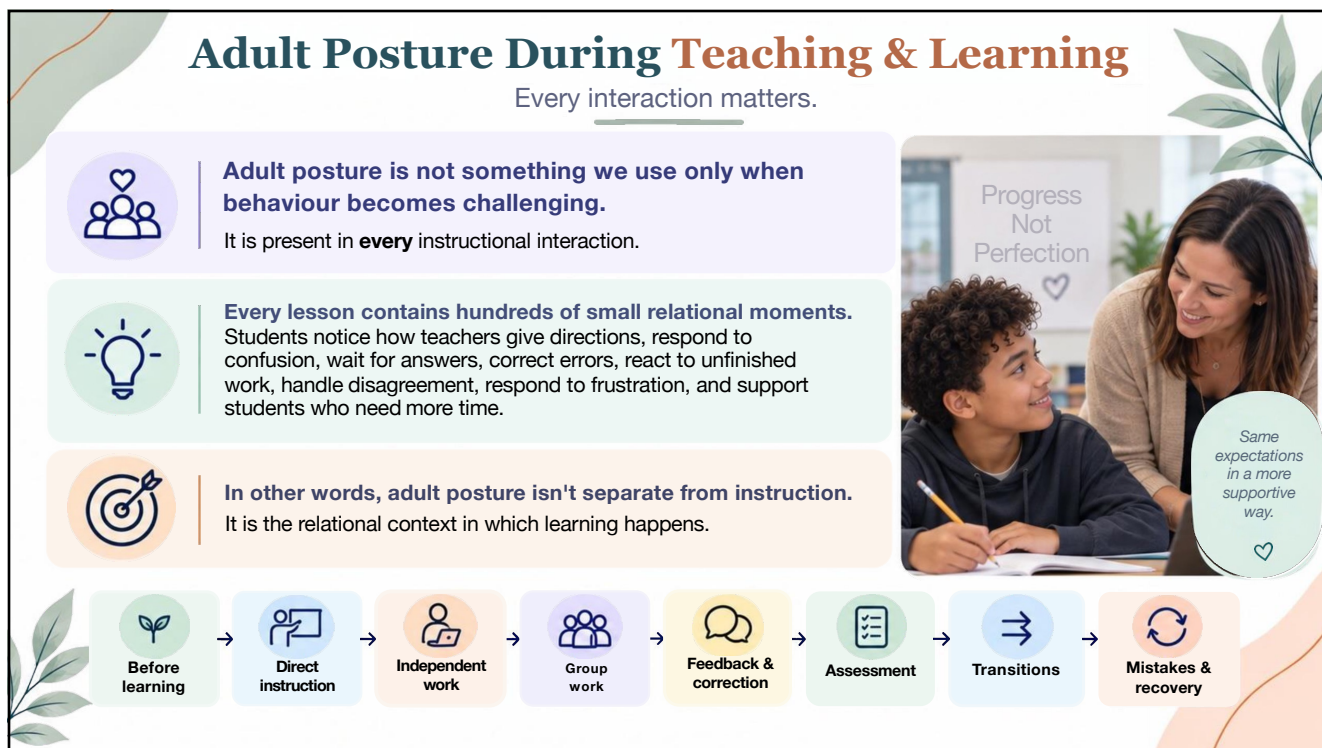
Proactive, consistent practices that create safety, belonging, and the conditions for learning for all students at Tier 1.



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Attunement Versus Technique

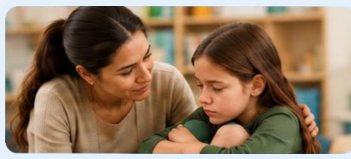
The difference isn't just what we do-it's how we show up.



Attunement means accurately noticing and responding to another person's emotional state while remaining **grounded ourselves**.



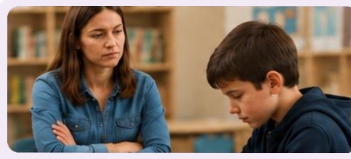
It is different from **simply following a protocol**.



One statement may feel deeply **comforting**.

Two adults may say exactly the same words:

“I can see that you’re upset.”



The other may feel **dismissive** or **mechanical**.



One statement may feel deeply **comforting**.



The difference is not the script-it is the **relationship** and the **authenticity** behind it.

Attuned adults:



notice subtle changes in behaviour



adjust their expectations to the student's current state



remain flexible



communicate genuine curiosity



respond rather than react



Students do not need perfect adults.
They need adults who are emotionally present enough to notice them.

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Adult Posture During Teaching & Learning

Same learning. A more supportive experience.

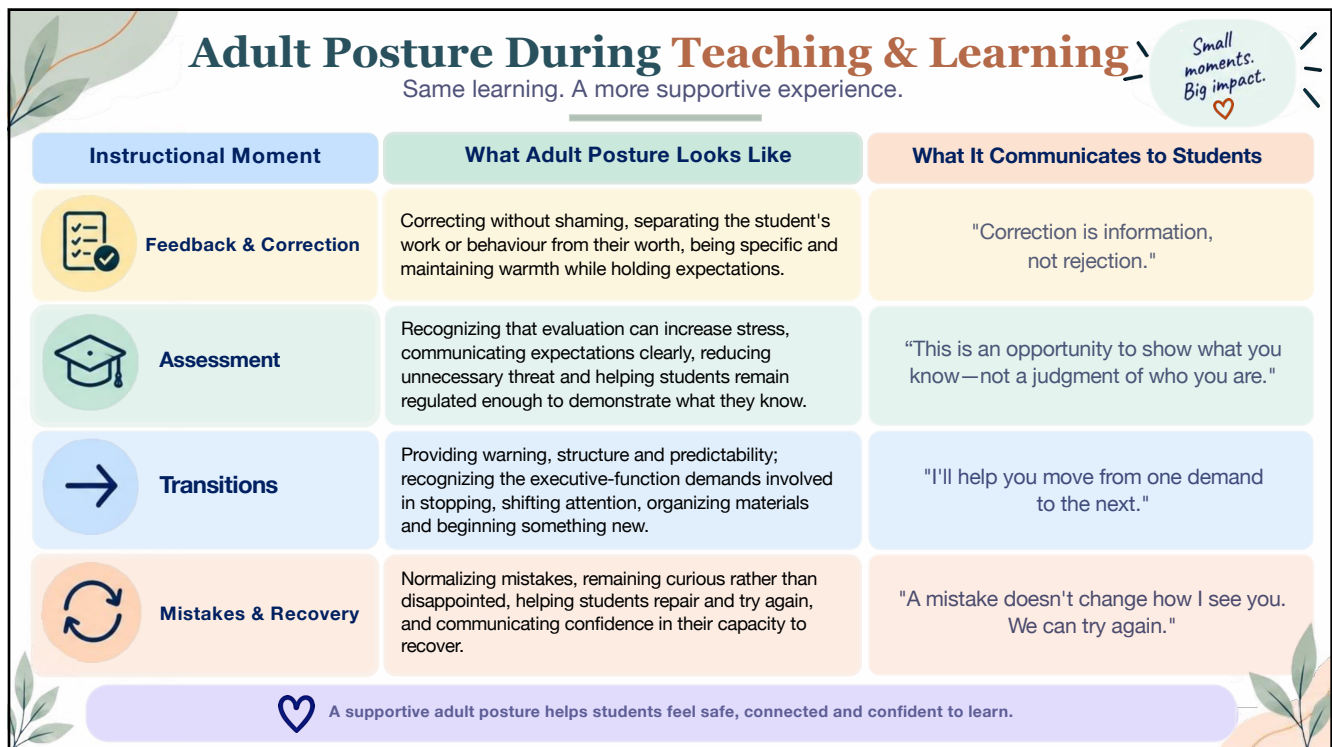
Small moments.
Big impact.

Instructional Moment	What Adult Posture Looks Like	What It Communicates to Students
 Before Learning	Welcoming students, establishing predictable routines, noticing emotional states, communicating expectations calmly and preparing students for what is coming.	“You belong here. You know what to expect.”
 Direct Instruction	Using a calm pace and tone, checking understanding without judgment, noticing confusion, allowing processing time and adjusting explanations when needed.	“You don't have to understand immediately. I will help you get there.”
 Independent Work	Distinguishing between won't and can't yet, noticing frustration or overload, scaffolding without taking over and allowing appropriate movement, breaks or additional processing time.	“Struggling doesn't mean you can't do this. I'm here if you need support.”
 Group Work	Monitoring belonging and participation, supporting students who struggle socially, responding to conflict without humiliation and creating space for different ways of participating.	“Your voice matters here, and you are part of this group.”

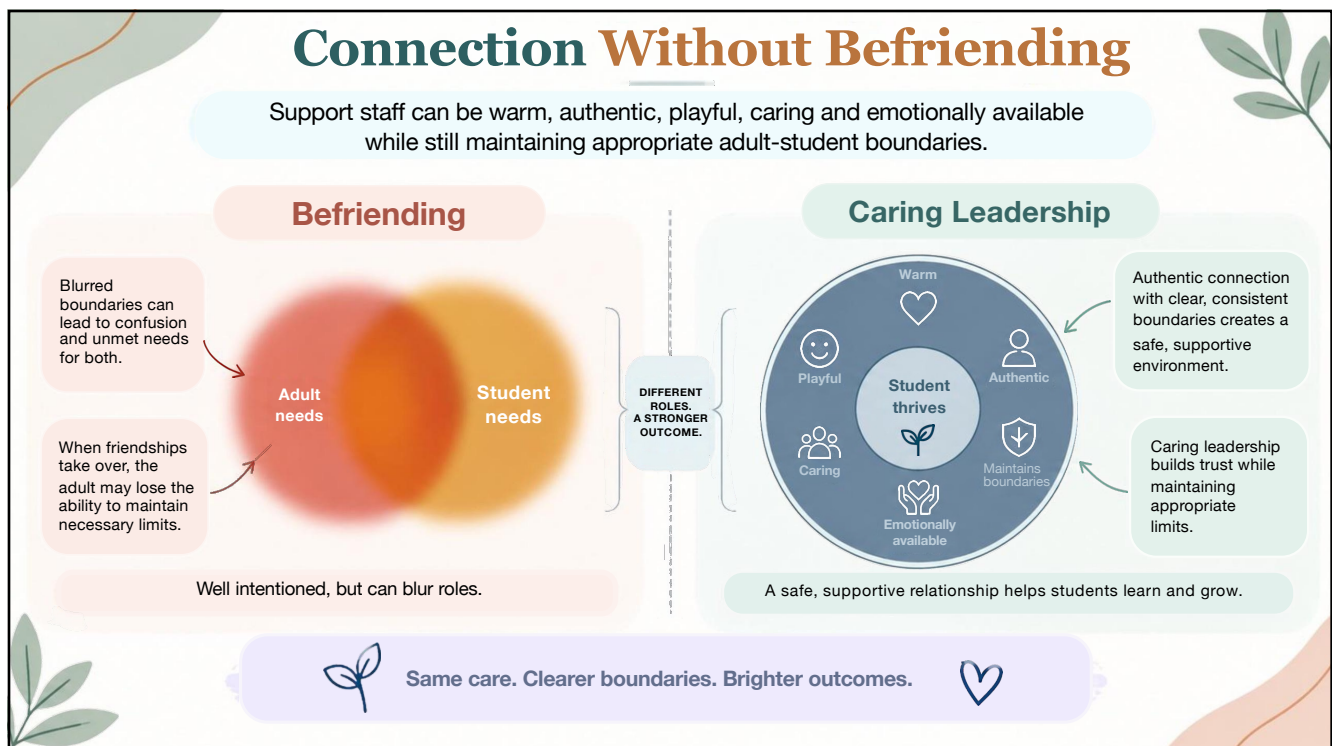


A supportive adult posture helps students feel safe, connected and confident to learn.

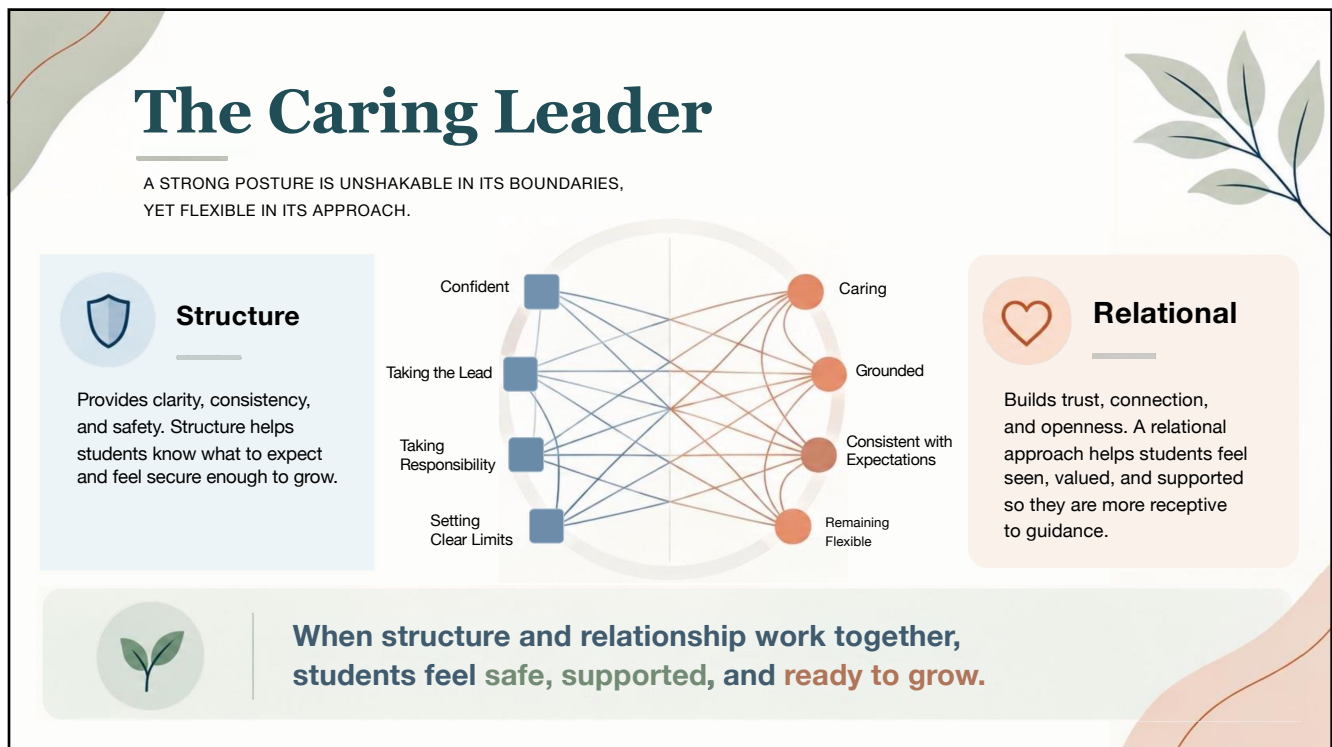
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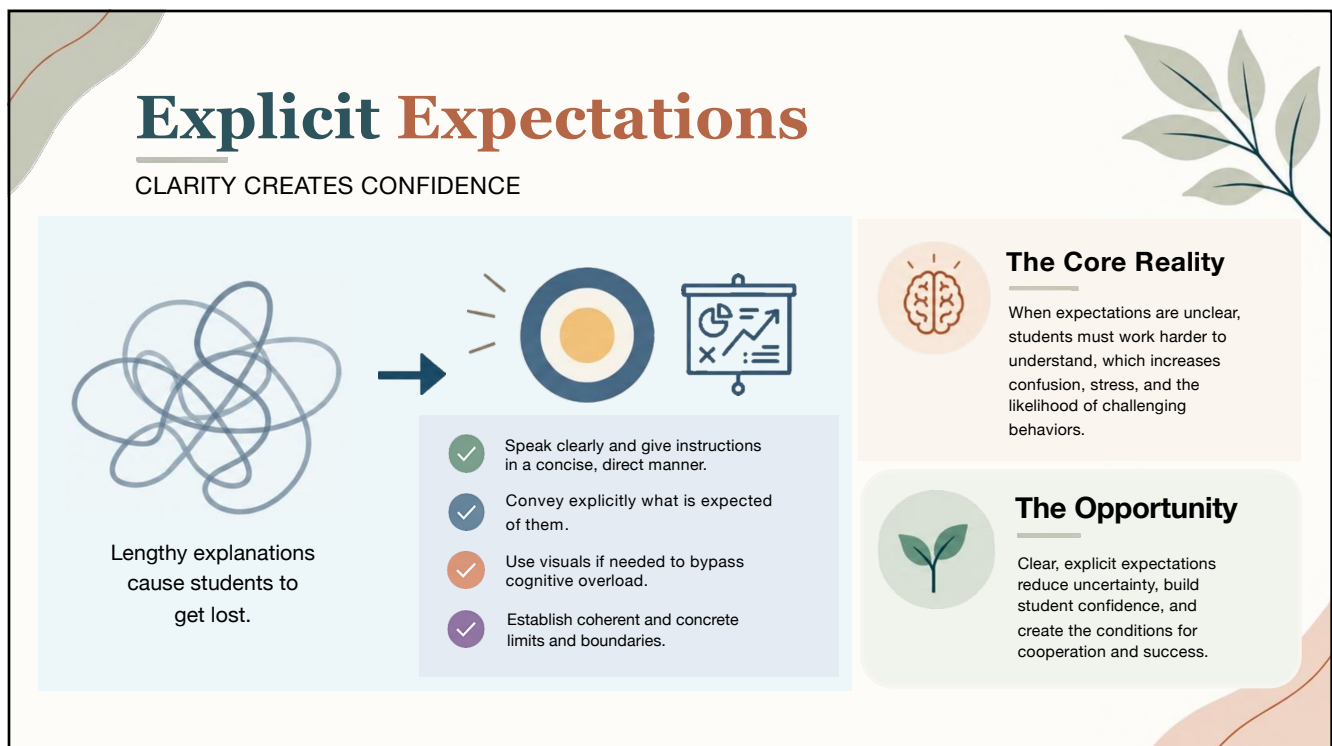
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Firm Care



Boundary

"The answer is still no."

"You can't have the iPad right now."

"That language is not okay."

"You need to stay in the classroom."



Regulation

"I'm going to help you through the no."

"I know it's hard to wait. I'm here with you until it's time."

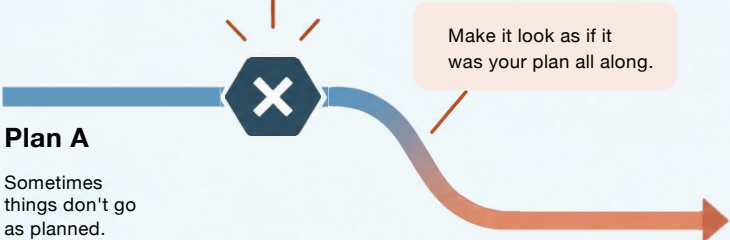
"I won't let you use that language. Let's find a calmer way to say it."

"I see that you don't want to go. I'll walk with you and help you get started."

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The Art of the Pivot

ADAPT WHEN NEEDED. KEEP STUDENTS MOVING FORWARD.



Plan A
Sometimes things don't go as planned.

Plan B
Adjust flexibly and keep going.



The Core Reality

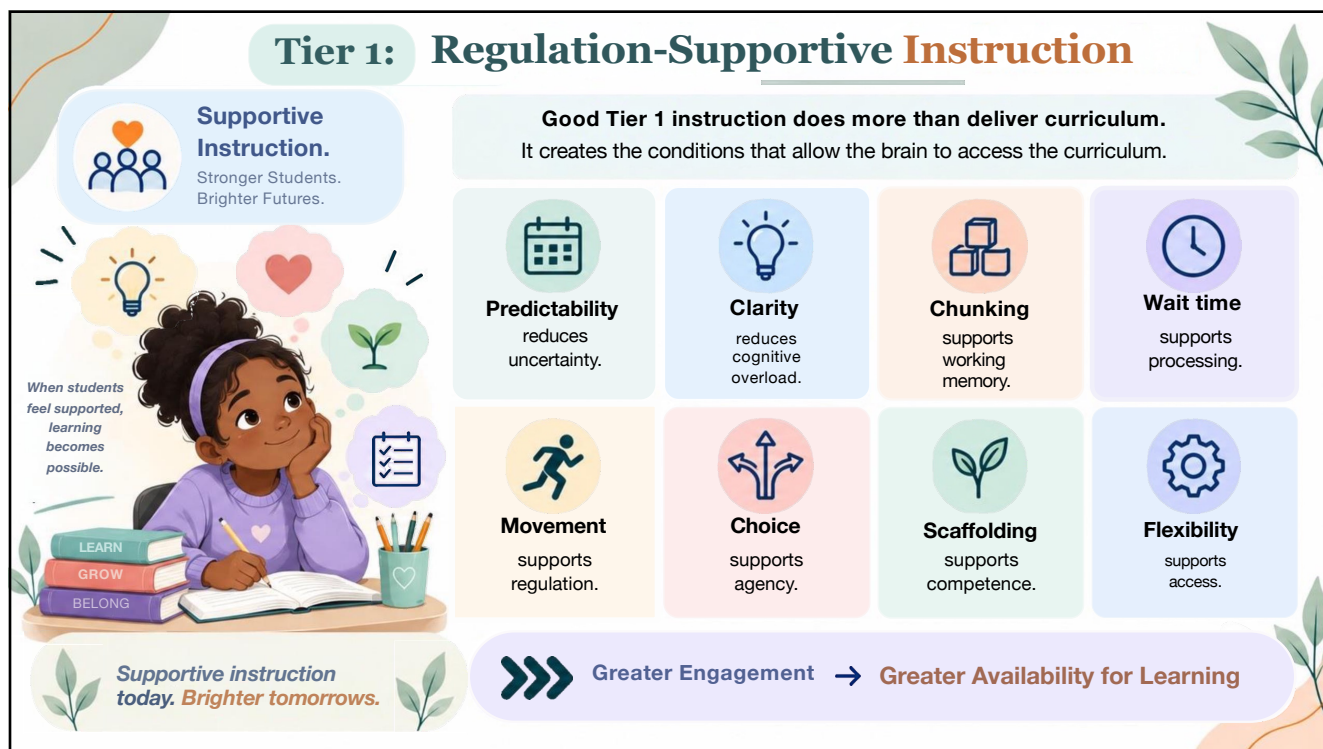
Plans rarely go exactly as expected. Flexibility helps adults stay regulated and models problem-solving for students.



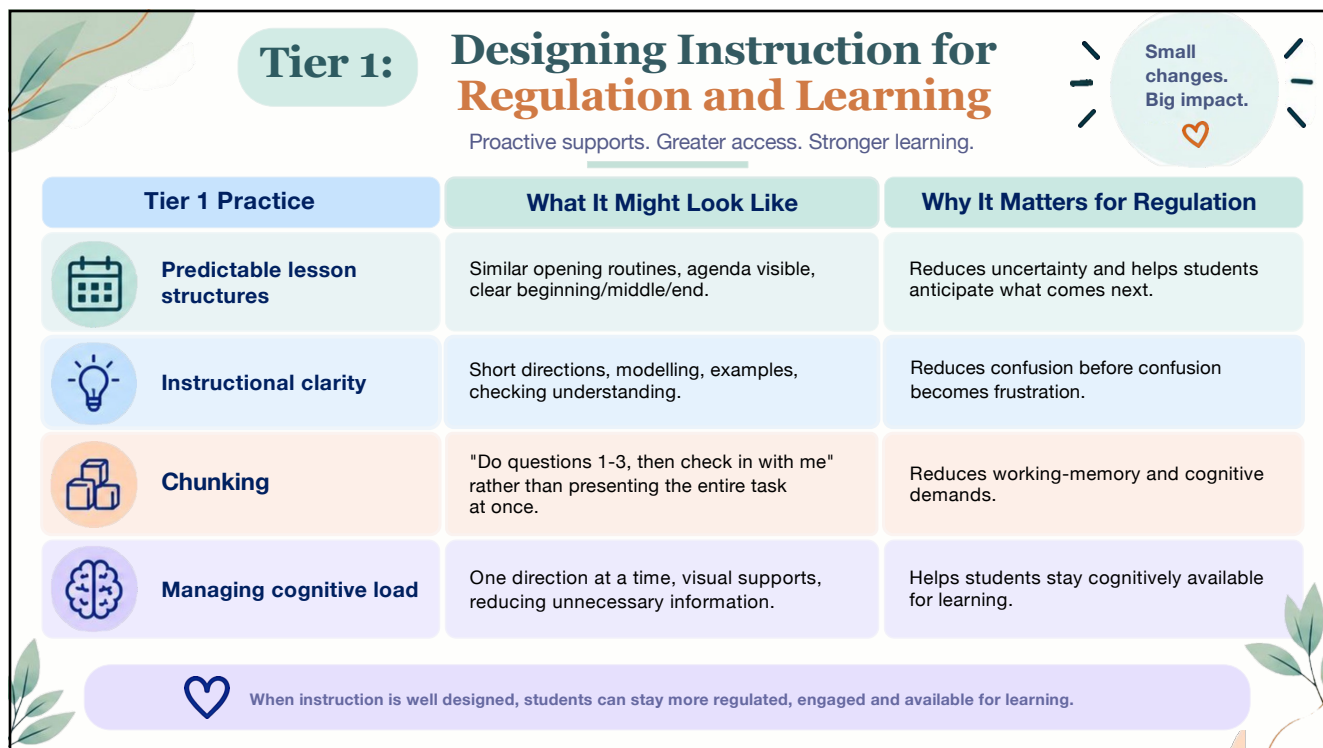
The Opportunity

Have a backup plan, stay calm, and adjust in a way that maintains momentum and safety for all.

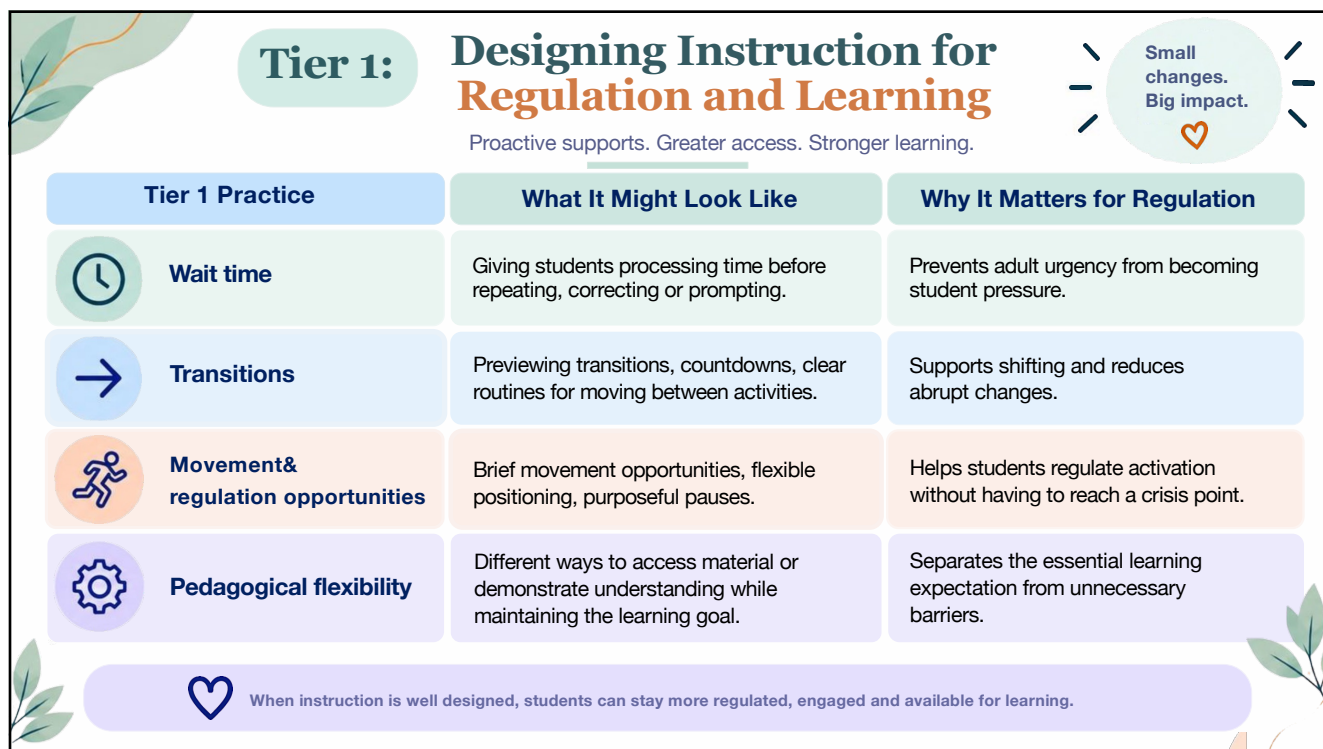
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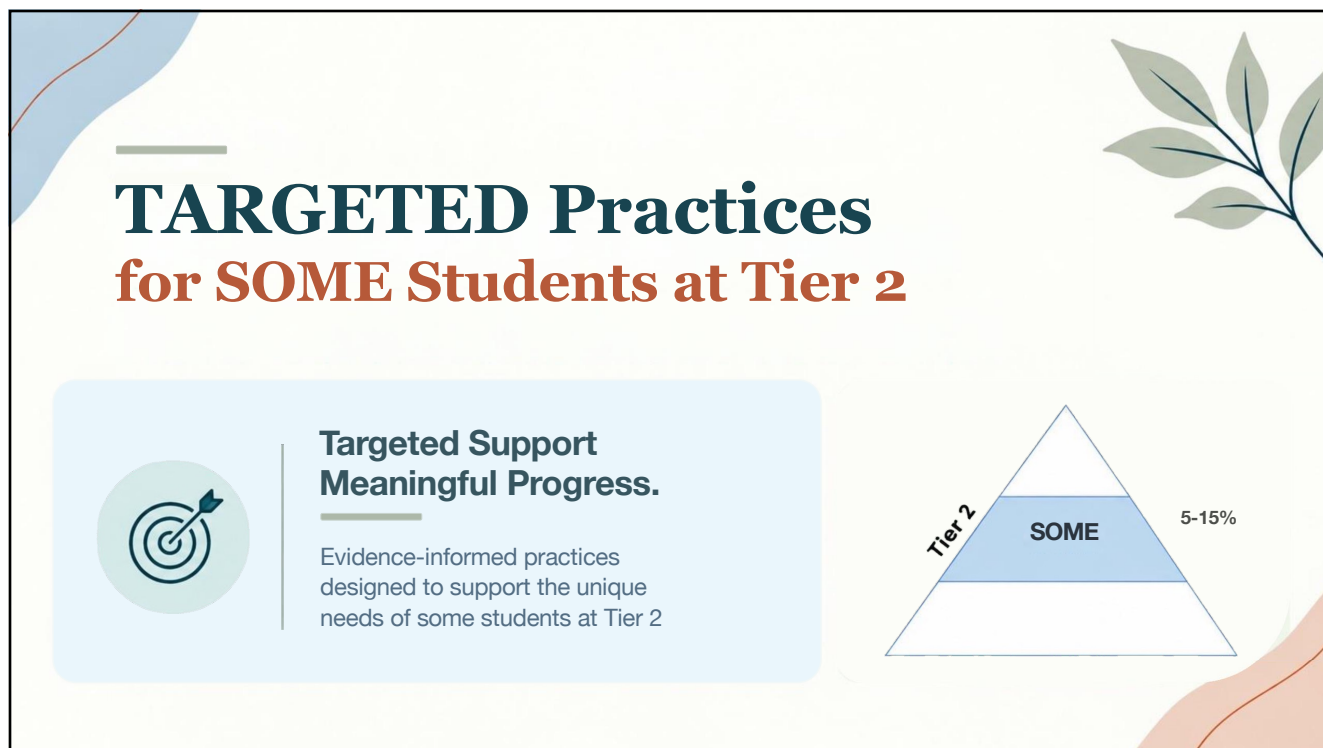
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Different challenges. Same potential. With the right support, students can succeed.

Tier 2: Tier 2 Does Not Necessarily Mean Severe Behaviour

Targeted Support for Individual Needs

Not every student needs the same level of support.

A student may be functioning adequately much of the day but repeatedly struggle in a particular context.

 Math → shutdown	 Writing → avoidance	 Tests → anxiety	 Group work → conflict	 Transitions → escalation	 Unstructured periods → dysregulation
--	--	--	--	---	---

Notice the patterns

A Tier 2 lens asks:

"What predictable situations are exceeding this student's current capacity, and what additional scaffolding can we put in place before the student becomes overwhelmed?"

Tier 2 is preventive rather than reactive.

The goal is to recognize patterns early, provide targeted support, and help the student stay regulated, engaged and successful.

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Patterns vs. Isolated Incidents

Look for patterns. Look beneath the behaviour. Respond with support.

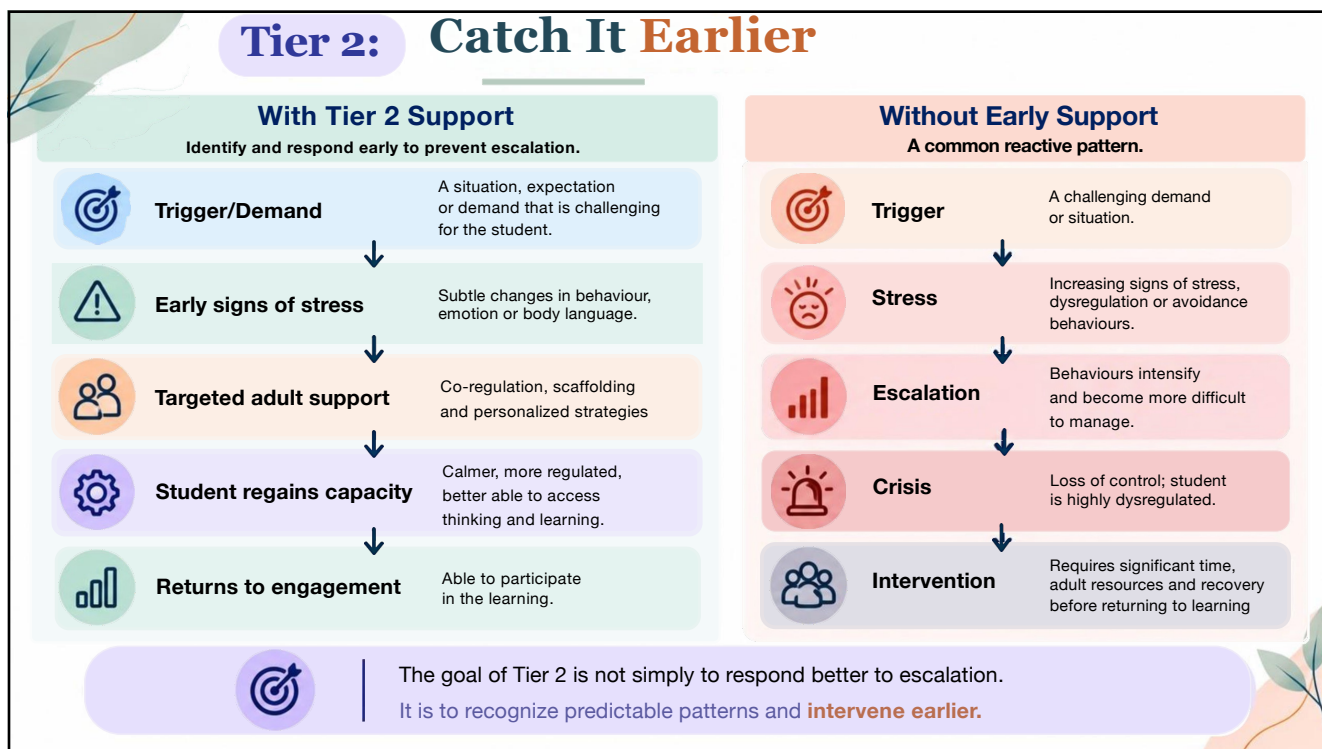
Look beyond the event. moment.

An Isolated Incident	A Tier 2 Lens Asks
 A single difficult math class doesn't necessarily indicate a need for Tier 2 support.	 What happens immediately before this pattern?
 But if a teacher notices: <i>"Every time independent math work begins, this student asks to go to the bathroom, sharpens their pencil repeatedly, bothers another student, refuses to begin and eventually becomes angry when I redirect them..."</i> that is a pattern.	 What demand is present?
	 What does the student seem to be trying to escape, obtain or communicate?
	 When does this not happen?
	 What helps the student remain engaged?



Patterns give us **information**. They help us respond with **understanding** and **support**.

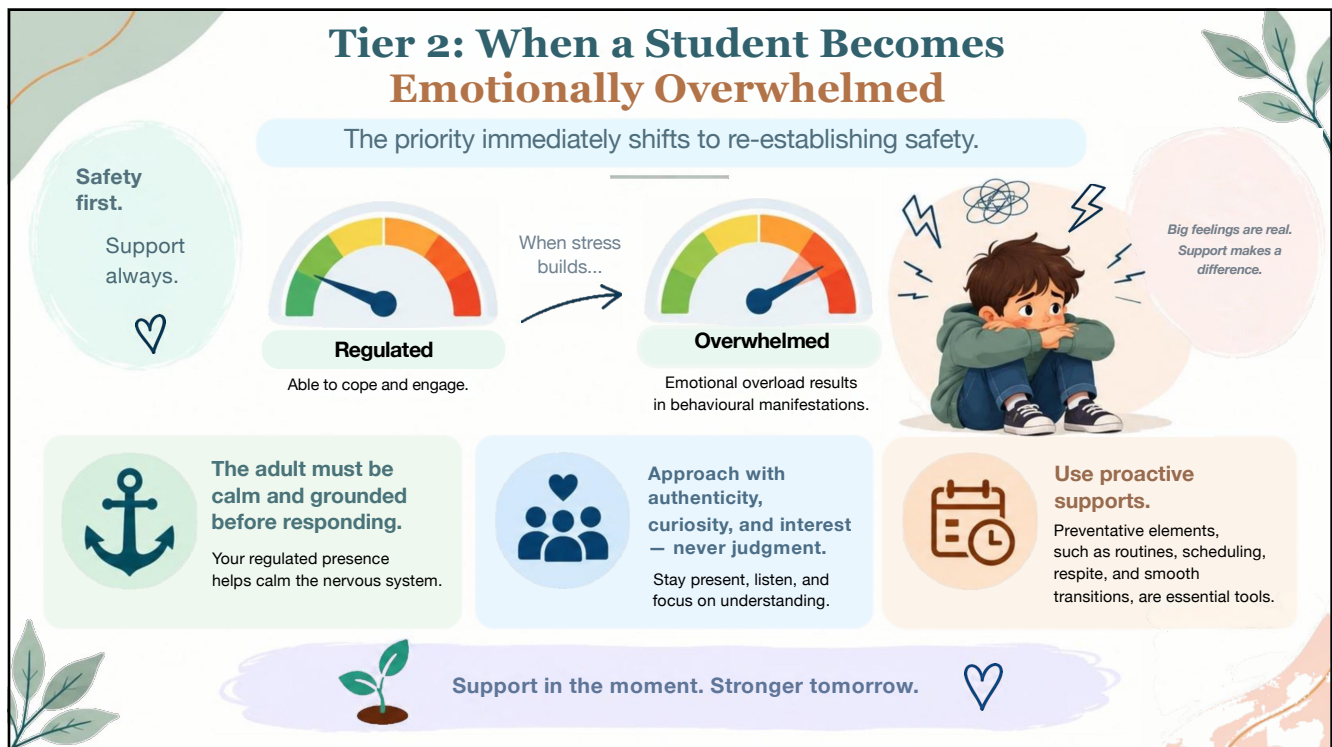
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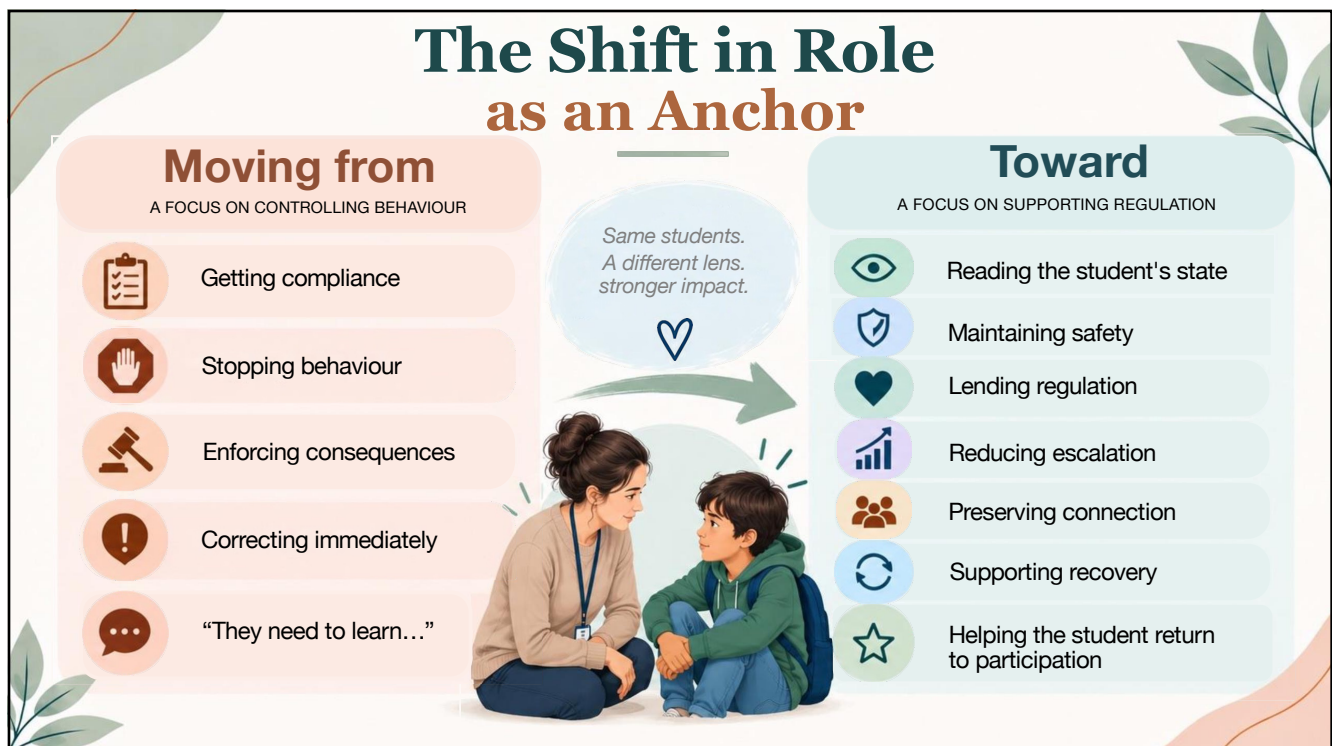
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The Pre-Response Pause



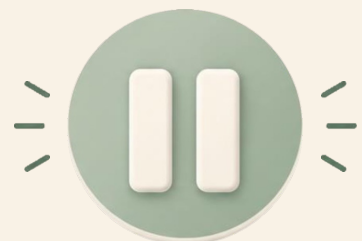
You cannot co-regulate a student if you are dysregulated.
The deliberate pause is where the strong posture is maintained.

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The Educator's Pause: A Diagnostic Tool

WHEN CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR OCCURS, HIT PAUSE AND ASK YOURSELF:

- 1 What might this student be **communicating** through this behaviour?
- 2 Is this student giving me a hard time, or having a hard time?
- 3 What **need, emotion, or skill deficit** might be contributing to this situation?
- 4 How can I maintain the **boundary** while strictly preserving the relationship?
- 5 What **specific support** does this student need to be successful right now?



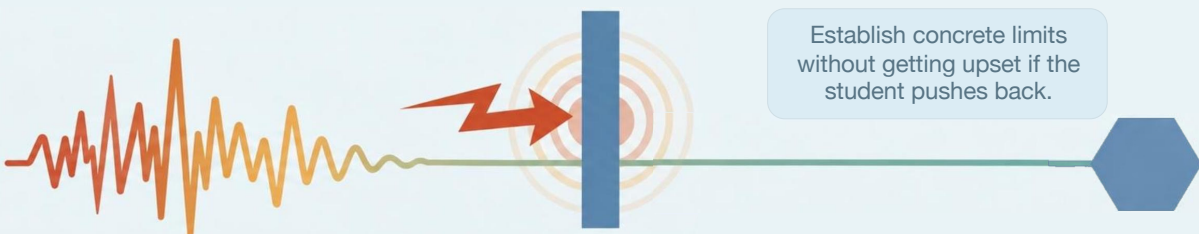
**Pause to respond
with purpose.**

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Tier 2: What Tier 2 Might Actually Look Like in a Teacher's Classroom Notice the whole picture.		
Different challenges. Deeper understanding. Targeted support.		
What the teacher sees	What may be happening underneath	Possible Tier 2 response
 Task avoidance	Task feels overwhelming; fear of failure; difficulty initiating; working-memory demand.	Preview the task, reduce the visible workload, chunk the first steps, provide a starting prompt, brief teacher check-in.
 Escalating frustration during difficult work	Cognitive overload; frustration tolerance exceeded; repeated experience of failure.	Notice early signs, temporarily slow the pace, validate difficulty, scaffold without removing the challenge.
 Repeated shutdown	Overwhelm, threat response, inability to access language/problem solving in the moment.	Reduce verbal demands, allow processing time, provide a predictable regulation option, reconnect before problem-solving.
 Assessment anxiety	Evaluation is being experienced as threat, fear of failure or embarrassment.	Preview expectations, increase predictability, break assessment into manageable portions, establish a check-in/regulation plan.
 Transition difficulties	Difficulty shifting attention or expectations; uncertainty about what comes next.	Individual advance warning, visual cue, transition routine, brief adult connection before the transition.
 Peer conflict	Social interpretation difficulties, emotional activation, rejection sensitivity, impulsivity.	Adult proximity, pre-correction, structured peer interaction, co-regulation before conflict resol
 Understand the why. Provide the support. Keep the learner engaged.		

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The Grounded Pushback Response

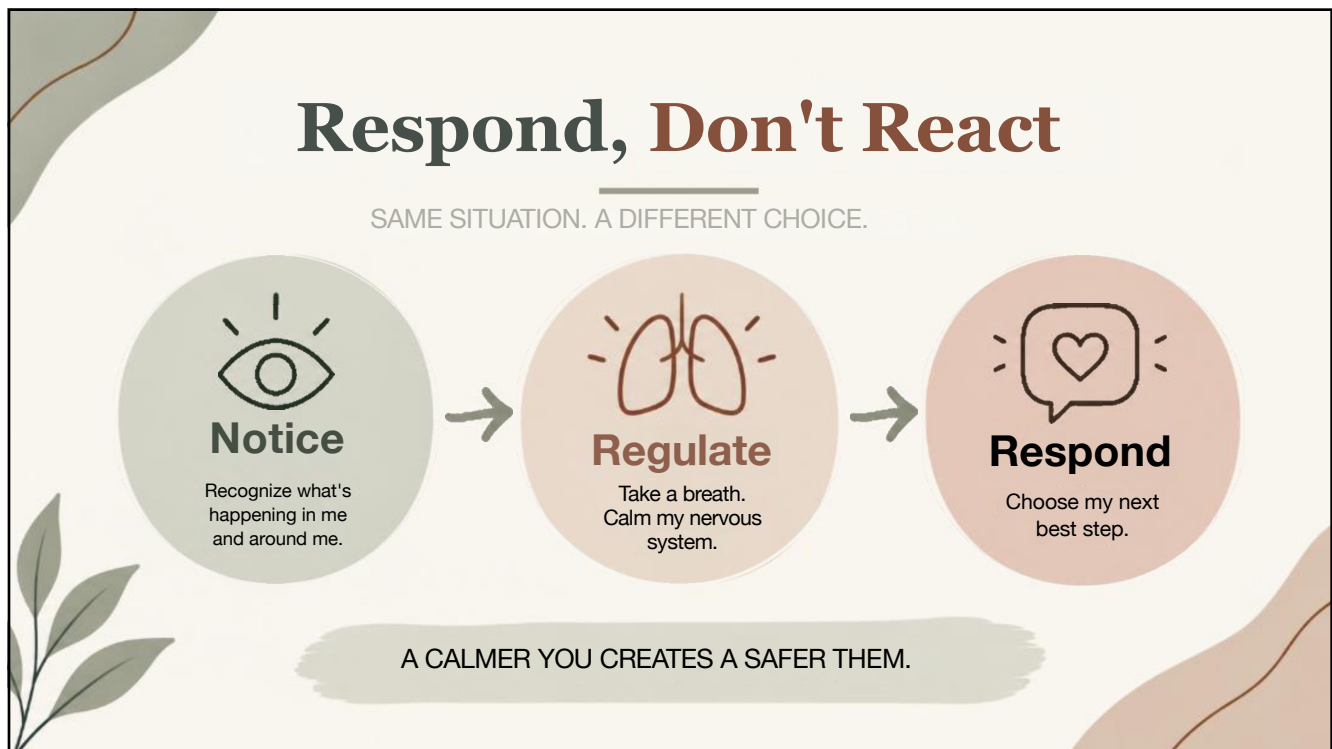


Pushback is a data point, not a personal attack.
Manage the environment through co-regulation rather than emotional reaction.

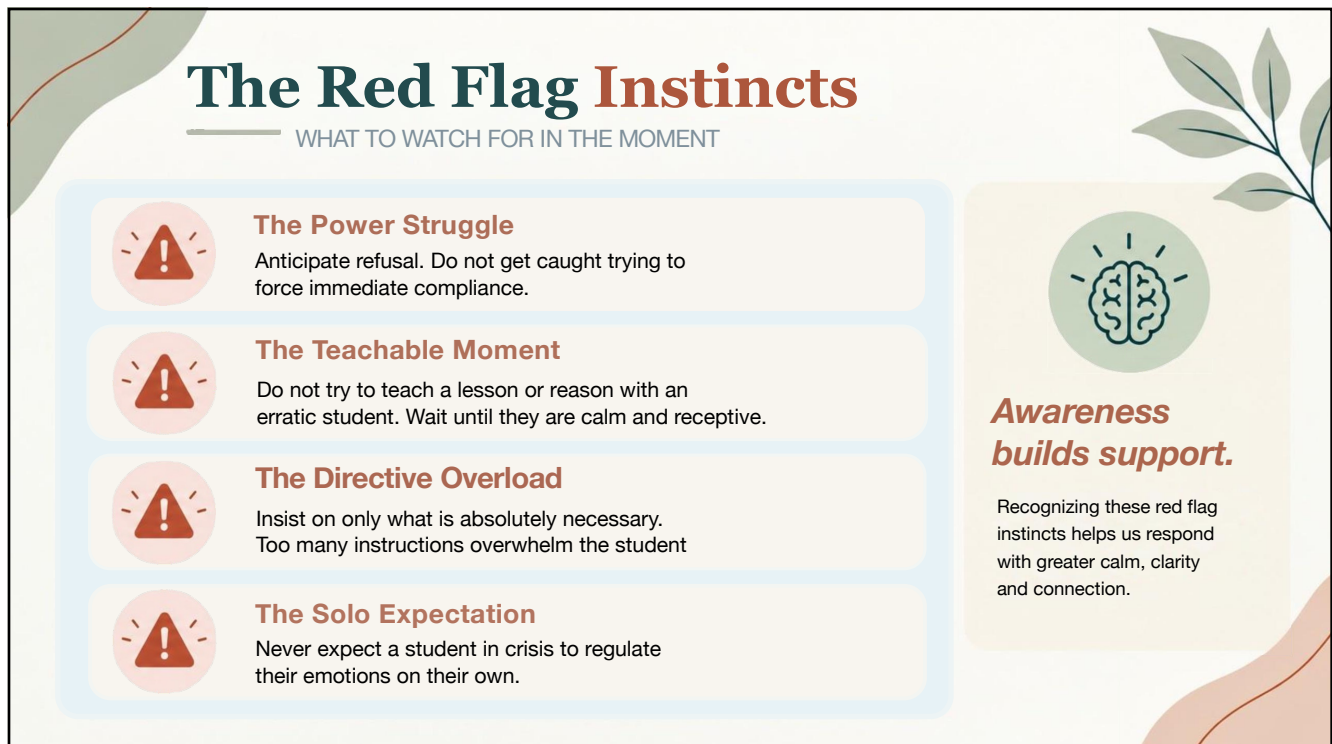


You cannot co-regulate a student if you are dysregulated.
The deliberate pause is where the strong posture is maintained.

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Student Preventive Action Plan

A proactive tool to support student success.

Identify needs
Understand triggers and challenges.

Plan ahead
Use proactive strategies and supports.

Promote success
Build safety, confidence, and independence.

STUDENT ACTIVE PREVENTION/SAFETY PLAN (giving priority to prevention)

Student name: _____ DOB: _____
School/Board: _____ Grade Level: _____ Homeroom Teacher: _____

Student's needs/challenges/triggers	Specific objectives* related to the needs/challenges/triggers	Best practices/approaches* related to the objectives	Selected tools/support measures related to the practices
Plan B for a difficult time or activity		Plan B for a difficult day	

* The objectives are meant to be anchored in the adult posture and the selected support measures to scaffold/compensate for the needs and challenges
** The practices are meant to be preventive/proactive rather than waiting for the problem to arise to intervene. The division of adult roles and responsibilities must be clearly defined

Prevent challenges.
Build brighter days.

Same template.
Greater possibilities.

Access the template here:
<https://www.cebmmember.ca/tier-2-targeted-practices>

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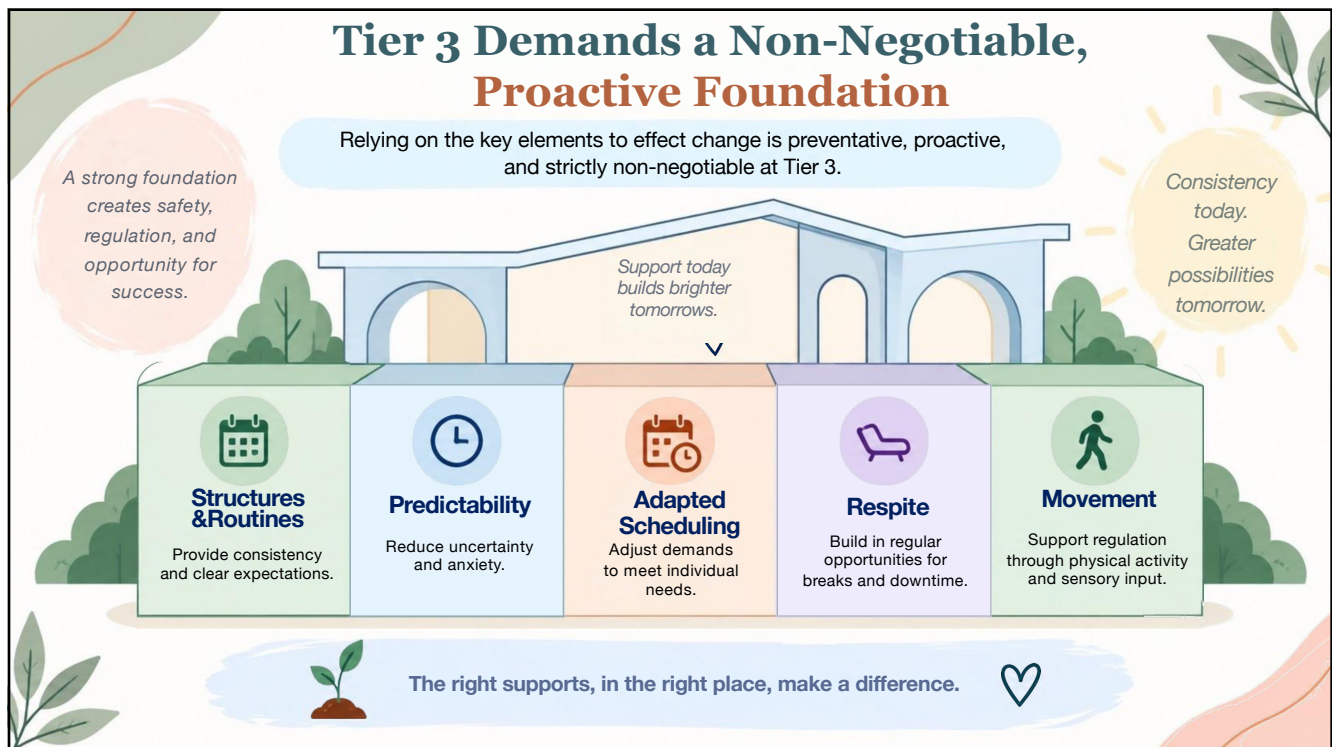
INDIVIDUALIZED Practices for FEW Students at Tier 3

**Personalized Support.
Meaningful Impact.**

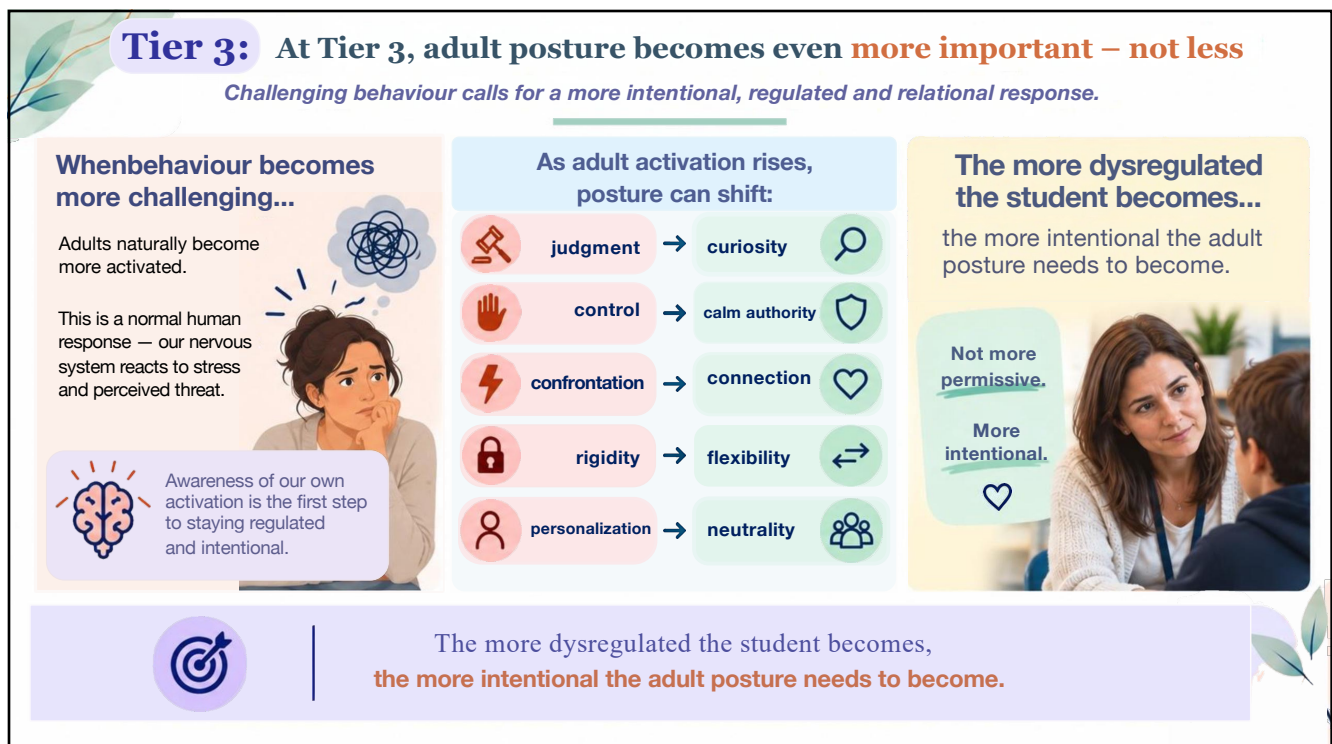
Individualized, intensive practices designed to meet the unique and complex needs of a few students at Tier 3.

Tier III
FEW
1-7%

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The teacher's role changes at Tier 3

From individual efForts to a coordinated team approach.

Teacher's role	What this means
Know the student	Understand the student's profile, triggers, early warning signs, strengths, communication patterns and effective supports.
Implement the plan	Consistently use agreed accommodations, prevention strategies, regulation supports and safety procedures.
Observe and communicate	Notice patterns and share useful classroom information with the support team.
Maintain connection	Continue communicating belonging, dignity and relational safety, particularly after difficult incidents.
Collaborate	Work within a coordinated team rather than independently trying to "fix" increasingly complex behaviour.

| A coordinated approach leads to **better support** and **better outcomes**.

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Tier 3: Know the Student **Before** the Difficult Moment

Preparation leads to better support and safer outcomes.

Before difficulties occur, the teacher should ideally understand:

- What tends to trigger this student?
- What are the earliest signs that regulation is deteriorating?
- What does this student look like when regulated?
- What does increasing activation look like?
- What helps?
- What tends to make things worse?
- Which adult relationships are particularly regulating?
- What sensory/environmental factors matter?
- How does the student communicate distress?
- What is the agreed response when safety becomes a concern?

That is different from simply knowing:

"This student has behaviour problems."

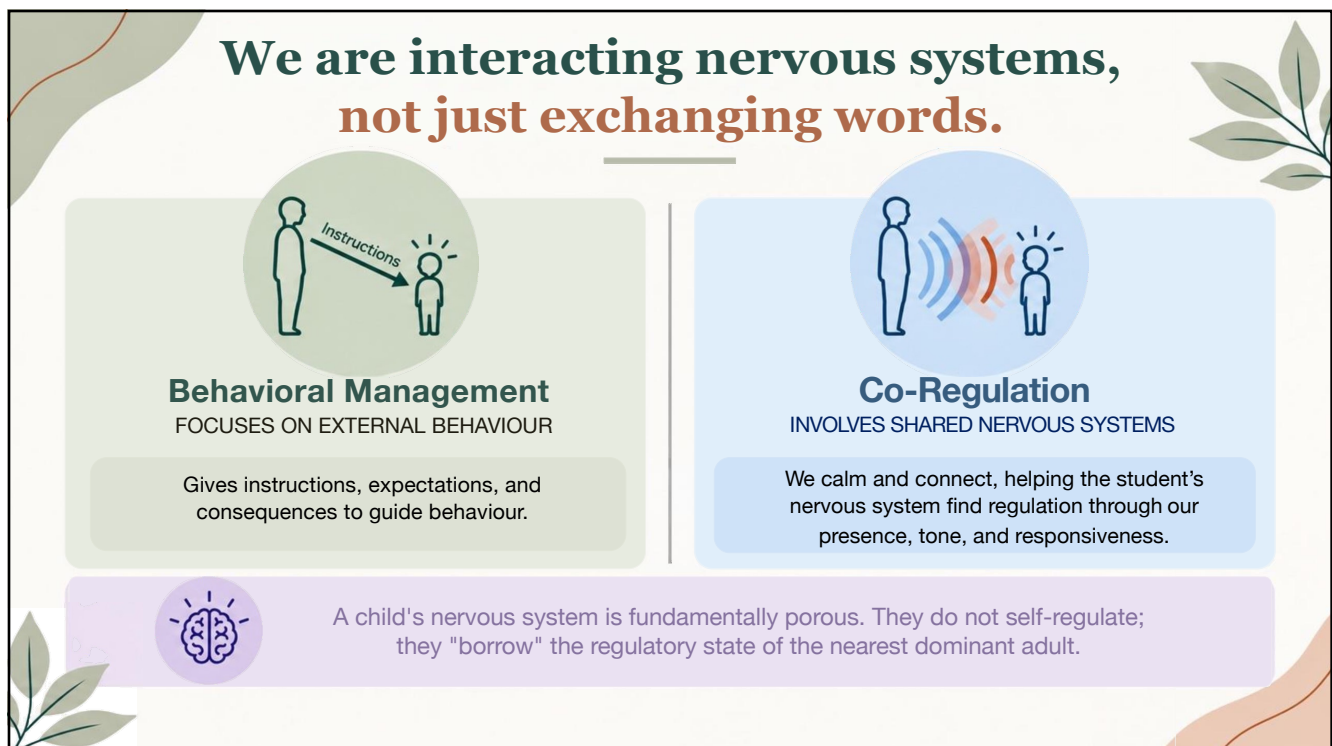
Knowing the whole student leads to more effective support, stronger relationships and better outcomes.

| The more we know about the student, the better we can **anticipate, prevent and support**.

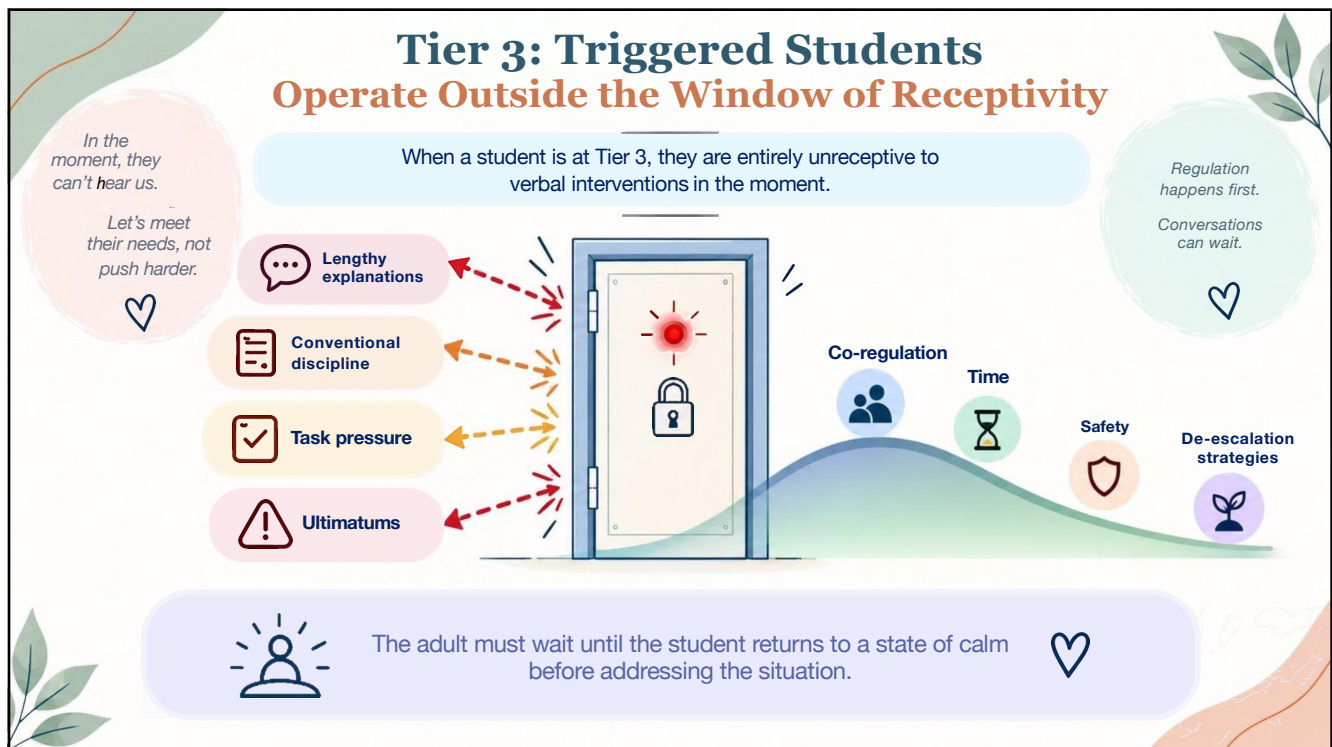
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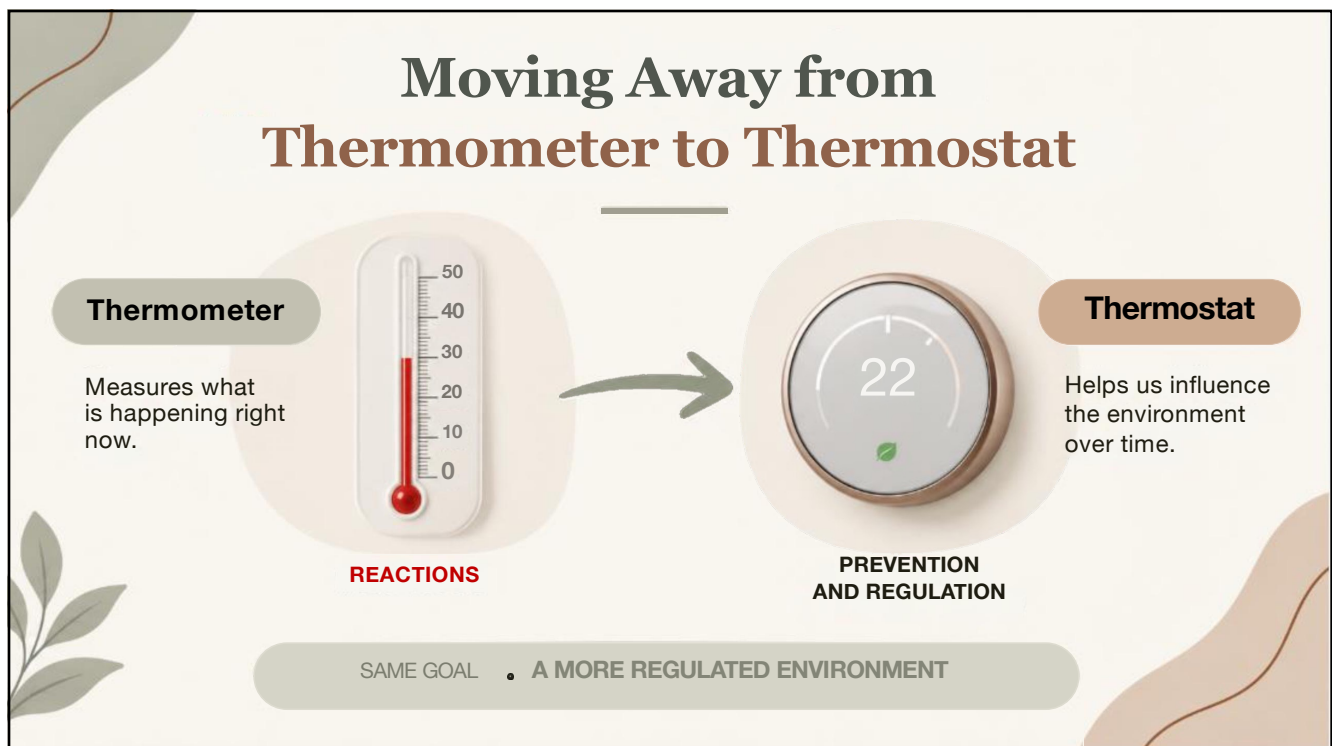
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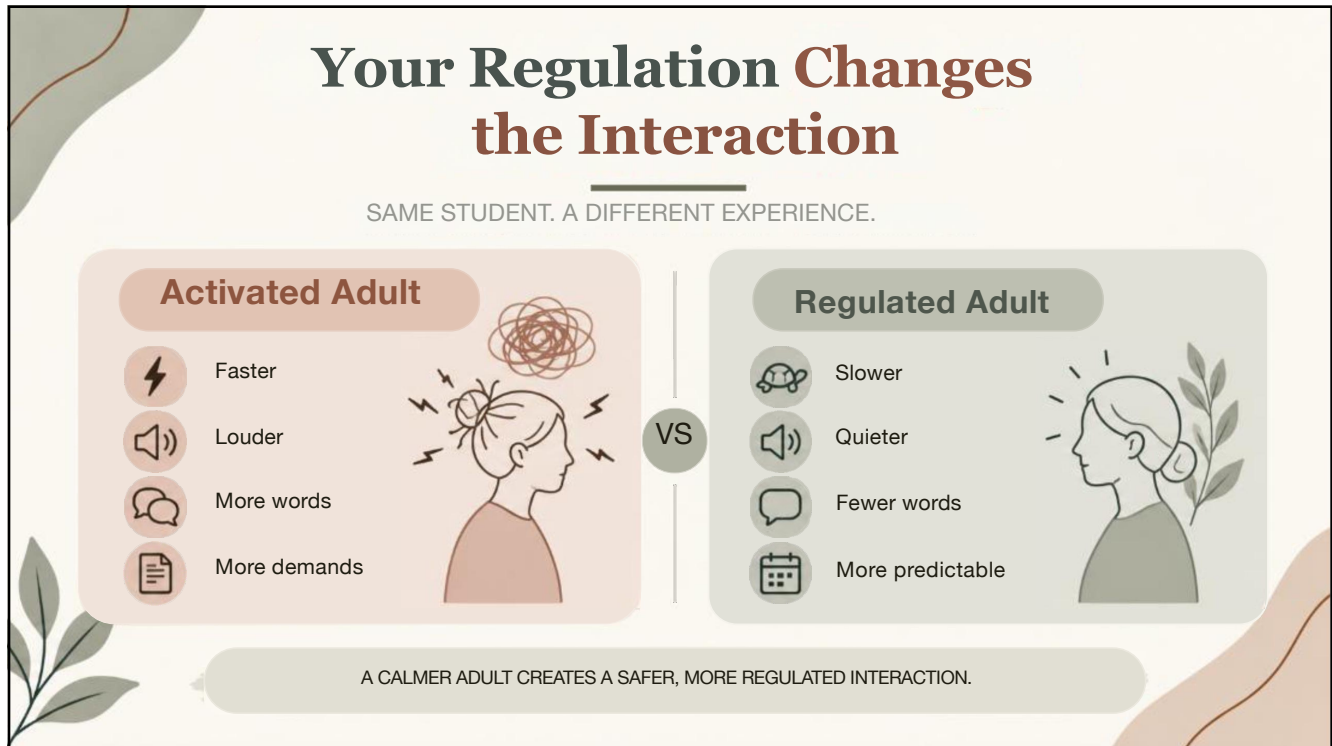
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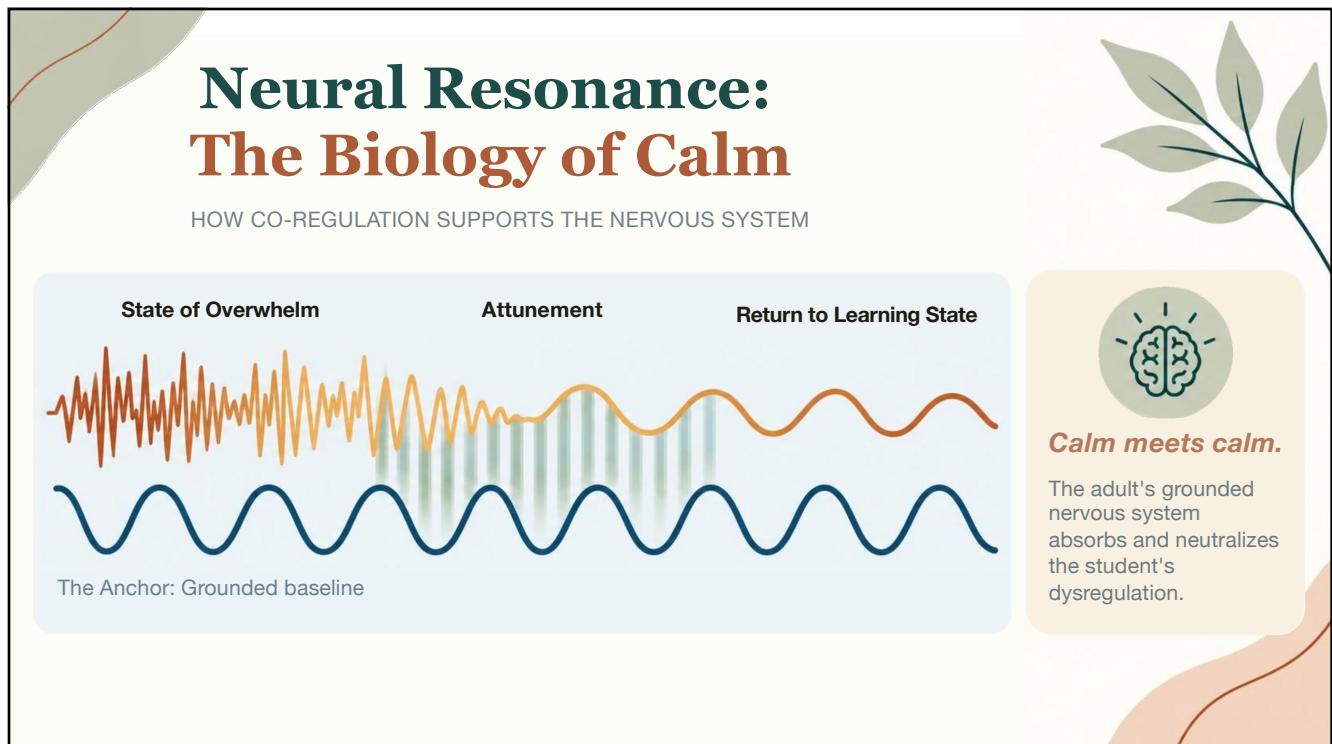
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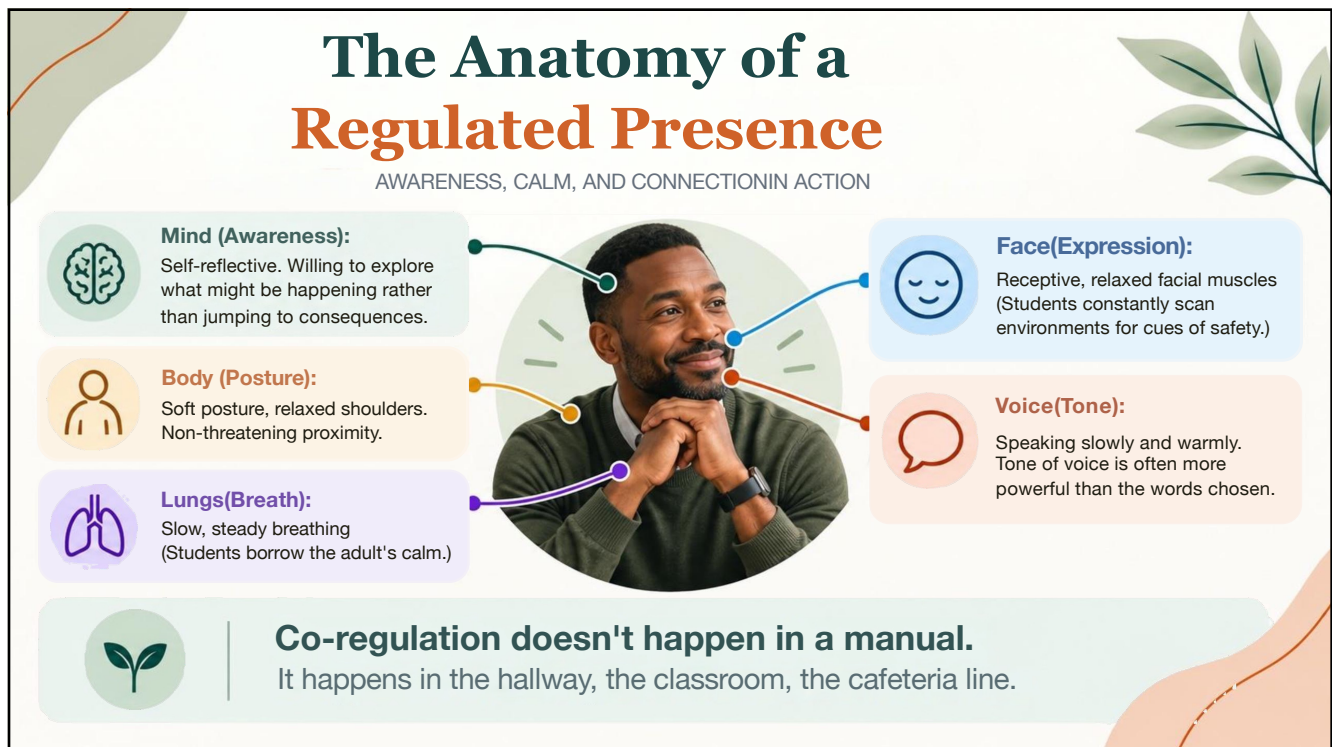
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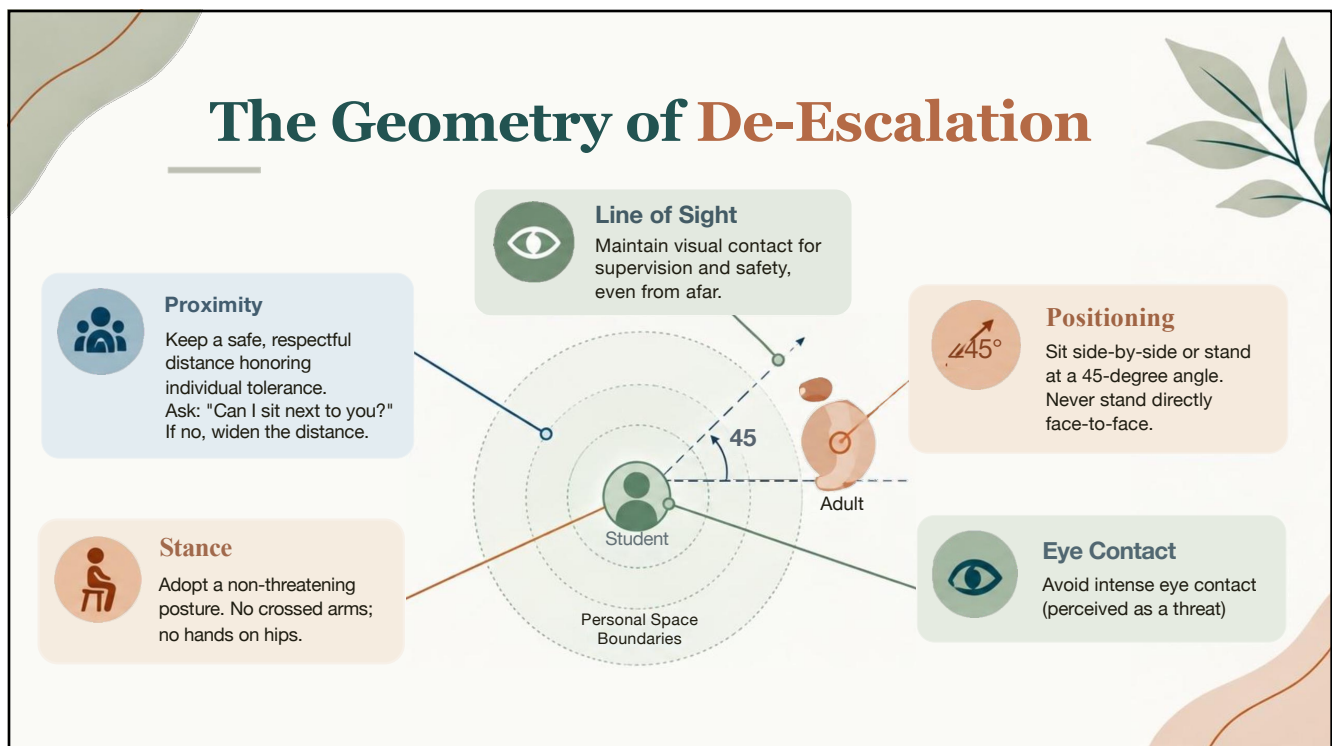
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Tier 3: Reduce Language as Dysregulation Increases

Less words. More regulation. A calmer, safer connection.

When a student is highly dysregulated, that is generally not the moment for:

- ✗ lecturing
- ✗ reasoning
- ✗ processing consequences
- ✗ asking multiple questions
- ✗ demanding explanations
- ✗ requiring apologies
- ✗ debating what happened

Instead, the teacher's communication becomes:

- shorter
- slower
- calmer
- more concrete
- more predictable

A calm presence speaks louder than a long explanation.

For example:

Instead of:

"We've talked about this before. You know you're not allowed to leave your seat and speak to me that way. Why are you doing this again?"

Move toward:

"You're having a hard time right now. I'm here."
or
"I'm going to give you some space. We'll talk when you're ready."

The processing comes later, once the student is again available for it.

Support in the moment. Learning for the long term.

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Narrate, Don't Interrogate

Different words. A calmer tomorrow.

1

During dysregulation, avoid questions that require reflection or explanation.

Questions like "Why did you do that?" can increase pressure and escalate distress.

2

Instead, try narrating what you observe:

- "I can see your body is working really hard right now."
- "Something feels really overwhelming."

3

Observation reduces pre while communicating understanding.

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Validate the Emotion



1 Validate the Emotion.

Validation tells students: "Your feelings make sense."
Examples include:

- "That was really disappointing."
- "I can understand why you're frustrated."
- "Anyone might feel overwhelmed in that situation."

Validation does not mean approving inappropriate behaviour.
It simply acknowledges the emotional experience before teaching alternative responses.

2 Help Students Find Words.

Many students experience emotions before they can describe them. Adults can gently help by saying

- "It sounds like you felt left out."
- "I wonder if that felt unfair."
- "Your body looks frustrated."

Naming emotions helps organize the nervous system.

All feelings are welcome here.

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Offer Grounding Statements

Simple words can make a big difference.



1 Use simple, calming statements.

During moments of distress, fewer words are often more effective.

2 These brief statements communicate safety

more effectively than lengthy explanations.

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The Small Stuff **Matters**



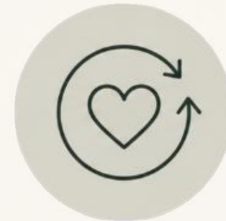
How we give
a direction
matters.



How we
correct
matters.



How we respond
to mistakes
matters.

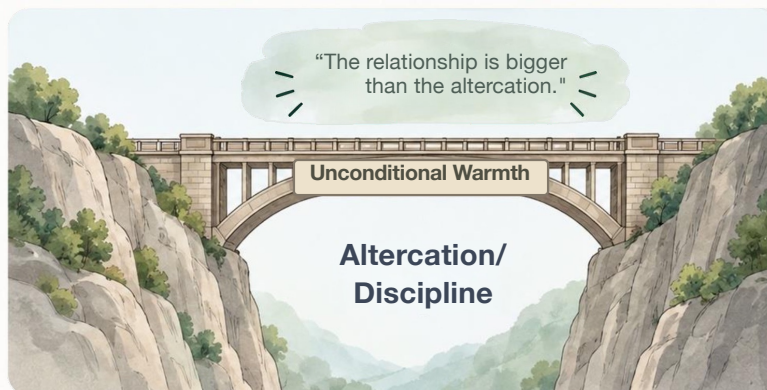


How we
repair
matters.

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The Relationship Bridge

"The relationship is bigger than the altercation."



Unconditional Warmth

Creating an invitation into relationship means letting students know that even when they mess up, you still care.



Bridge the Discipline

Bridge the discipline by empathizing with **where they are**, rather than just telling them where they should be.



When students feel **your care**, they are more open to guidance, more willing to reflect, and more likely to grow.

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Student Safety Plan

A proactive tool to support safety, regulation, and success.

Plan for success
Identify early signs and triggers.

Use proactive strategies
Support regulation before challenges escalate.

Keep it collaborative
Involve the student, family, and school team.

STUDENT ACTIVE PREVENTION/SAFETY PLAN

Student name: _____ Date: _____
 School/Board: _____ Grade Level: _____ Homeroom Teacher: _____

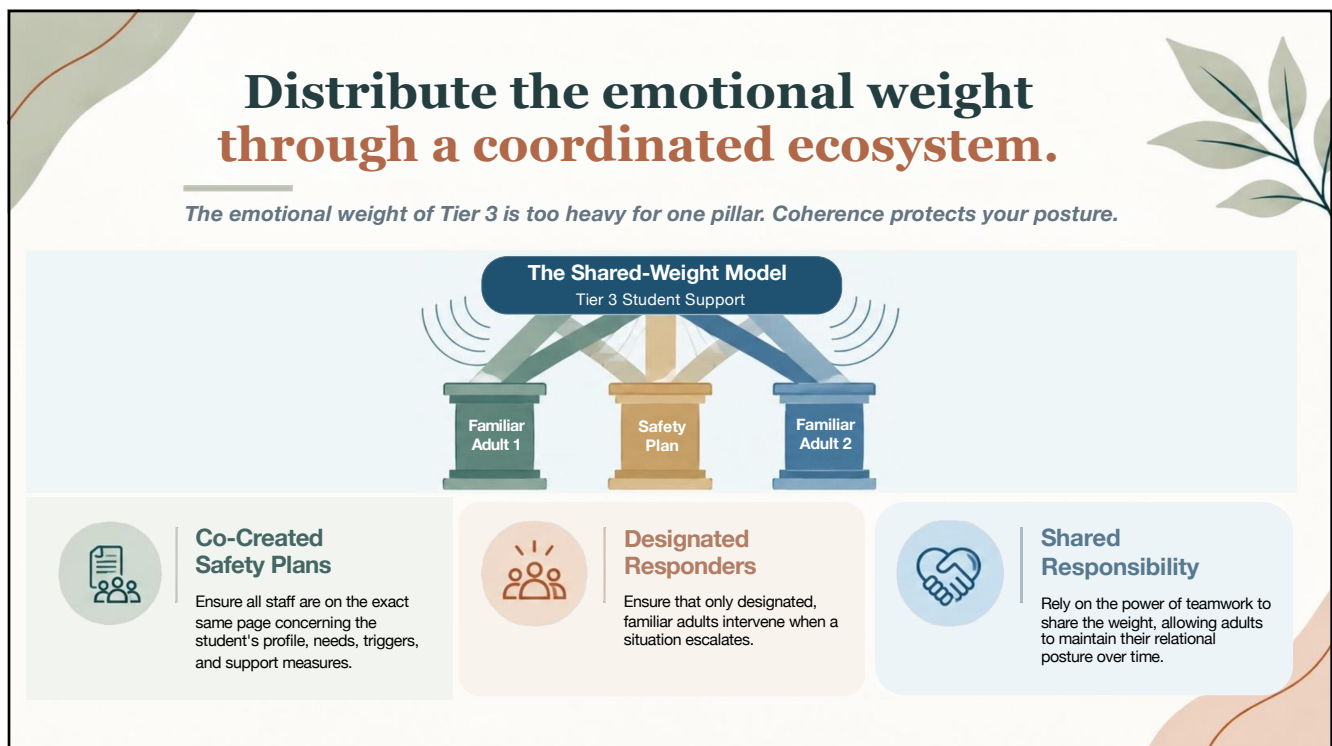
Student stress level	Observable signs	Adult posture and practices suggested	Adult posture and practices to avoid
When the student is regulated, engaged, and receptive			
When the student appears to be tense, annoyed, or frustrated			
When the student's stress response or frustration level is activated and beginning to escalate			
When the student's stress response has fully escalated and is disorganized. No longer receptive towards the adult.			
Post-intervention following an acting-out episode			

Safety today
Brighter tomorrows.

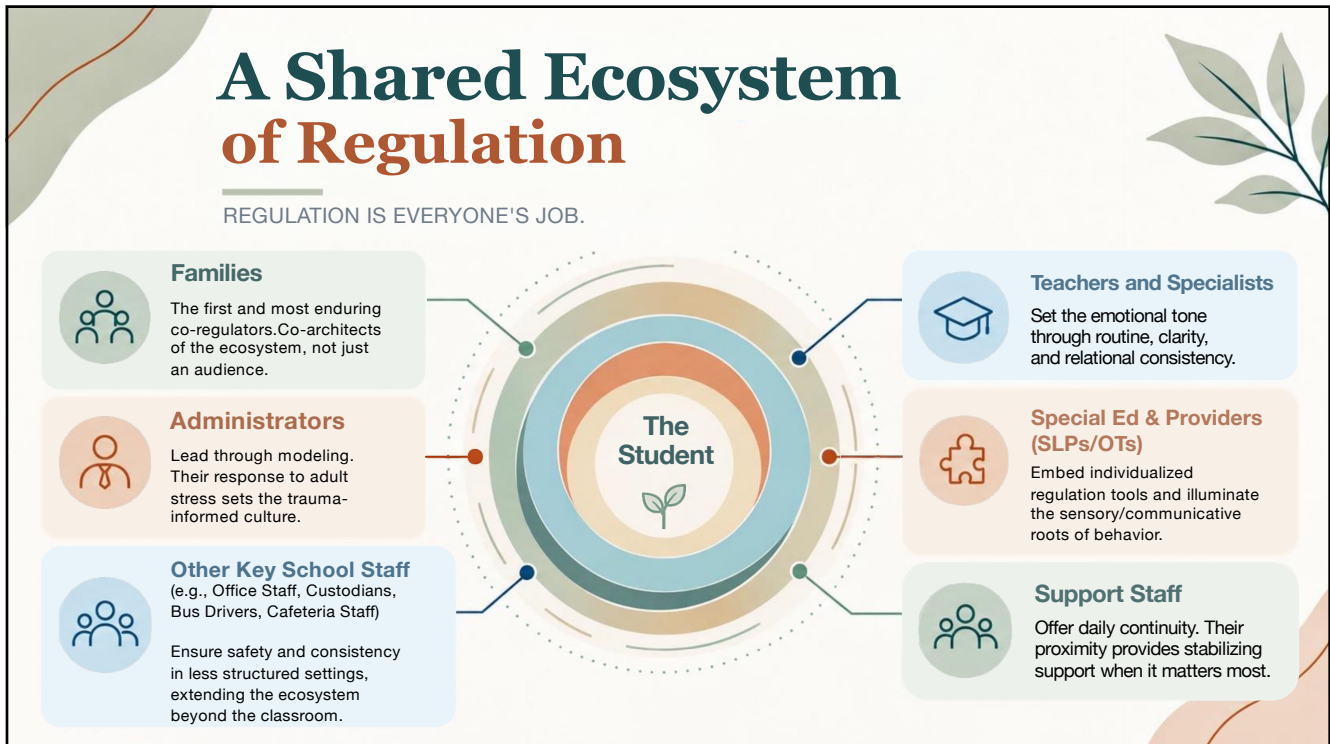
Support that grows at every stage.

Access the template here:
<https://www.cebmmember.ca/tier-3-individualized-practices>

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Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Management

www.cebm.ca

Practical resources for real challenges.

Supporting Quebec's English school boards.

Also visit the CEBM Resource Center
<https://www.cebmresource.ca/>

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