



BEHAVIORS ARE COMMUNICATION!

HOW THE SLP CAN
SUPPORT STUDENTS

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OBJECTIVES



01

Understand what happens when a child is in crisis



02

Best ways to support a student and team in a crisis



03

Strategies to deescalate and plan for the future



04

Learn ways to educate staff and parents to create a neurodiversity supporting culture

A BIT ABOUT ME.....

I have been an SLP for 16 years and have worked in 3 different states and several settings. I was trained in therapeutic crisis intervention (TCI) for 5 years and instructed in seclusion and restraint in two different states due to the programs I provided services in, and most recently in the Handle with Care training.

Financial Disclosure: Compensation for this presentation

Non Financial: I am a member of ASHA, NYS Licensed SLP, currently employed by a local public school system and work with Ablenet for AAC devices



I have two wonderful children of my own and love the Buffalo Bills

HOUSE KEEPING

Autistic- Neurodiversity affirming language

Gender- He/She used interchangeably

Generic Presentation- Basic overview of
brain and examples given




FACTS

Behavior is communication

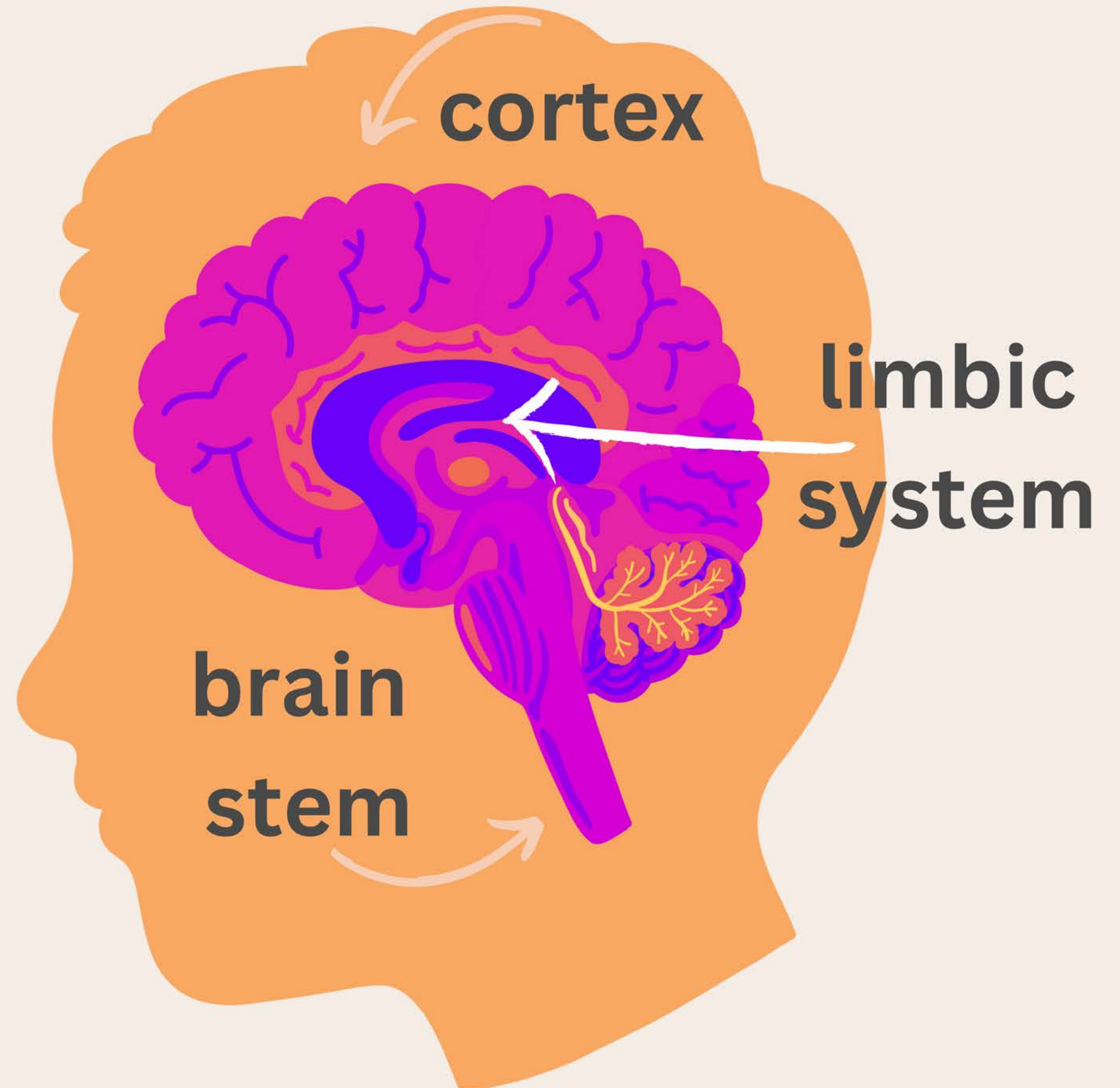
~Nearly 20% of children and young people ages 3-17 in the United States have a mental, emotional, developmental, or behavioral disorder, and suicidal behaviors among high school students increased more than 40% in the decade before 2019.

~Behaviors can change frequently and rapidly, making it difficult for teachers and parents to detect mental, behavioral, or emotional disorders early. About 9% of youth are estimated to require help with emotional problems.



Neurology

(Dr. Dan Siegel)



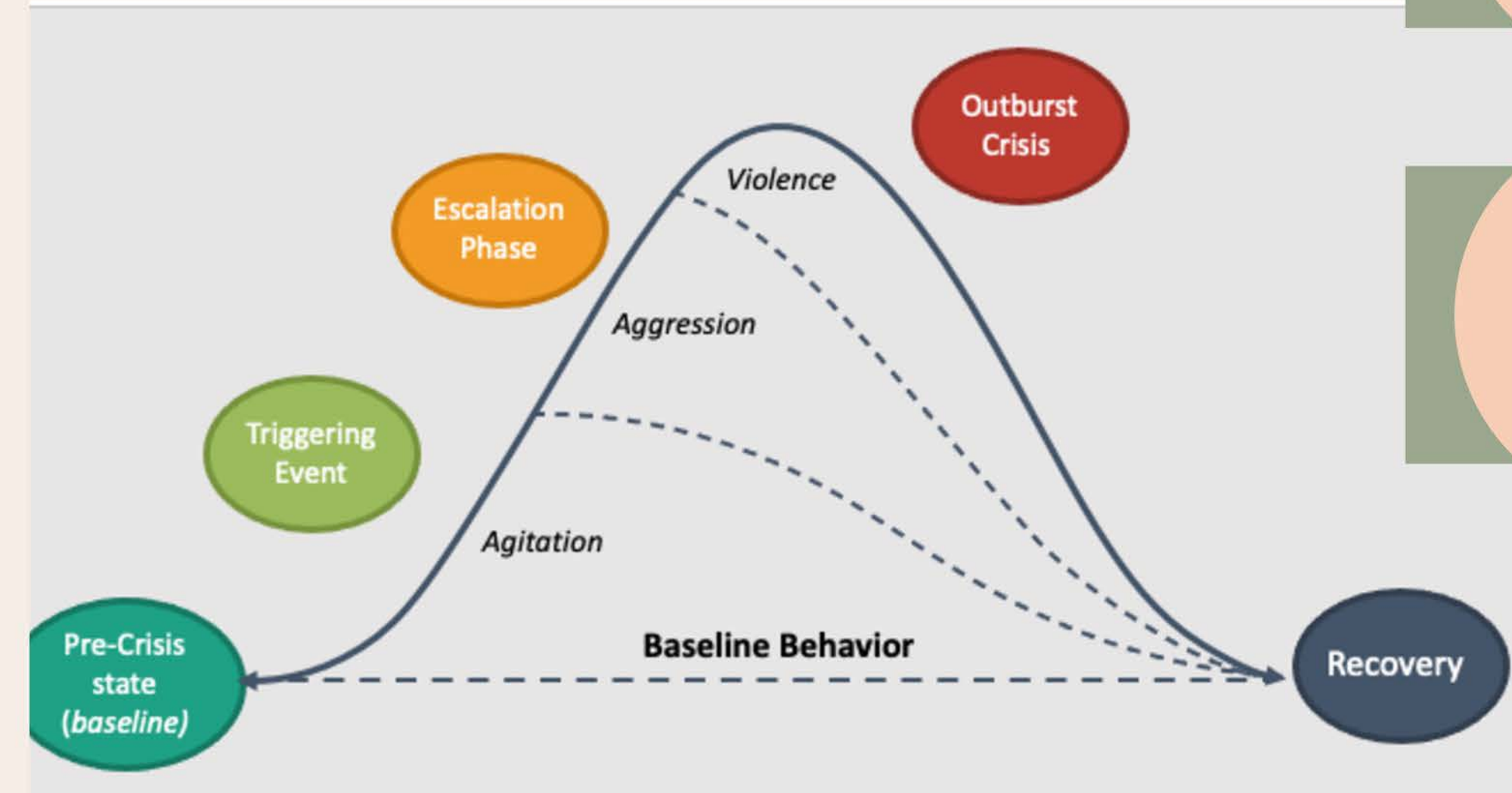


Neurology in a crisis

Stress Signal
from Amygdala

Sympathetic
center activated

Hypothalamus activates
the stress response system
(HPA axis)



AUDITORY PROCESSING



Auditory processing happens in the frontal and temporal lobes
this is not able to communicate in times of crisis





THE NEURODIVERGENT BRAIN



01.

Abnormal brain growth in first two years of life

02.

Abnormal levels of various hormones and neuroactive substrates such as serotonin, oxytocin, vasopressin, cortisol, and dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA) ([Lam et al. 2006](#)).

03.

One study suggests increased reactivity of the HPA axis to stress and novel stimuli

Remember the age you are working with and how developed a brain may be

ANXIETY/ PDA

**Anxiety can trigger
flight or fight
response**



WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH YOU?

- Be understanding and empathetic
- CONTROL YOURSELF

*An elevated adult cannot calm down
an elevated child*

SAFETY FIRST



CRISIS MODE

- REMOVE HARMFUL ITEMS
(AAC, CHROMEBOOKS,
SCISSORS, PENS)
- KEEP STUDENTS SAFE
- CO-REGULATION
 - (CHECK YOUR ENERGY)

*TEACHING WILL COME LATER
(DONT START LISTING
CONSEQUENCES/PUNISHMENTS)
GOAL IS TO KEEP CHILD CALM AND
REGULATED

DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES

SLOW DOWN

speech and movements

Decrease language

Stick to facts

Safety Reminder

non-threatening stance

Relationships Matter

Reflect later that day

*20-30 min to come
down after de-
escalation*



KEEP CALM

- Practice calming techniques when at baseline so student already knows it prior to crisis
- Practice advocacy prior to crisis (modeling no, stop, or needs on device or vocally)

01. Tell myself to STOP

02. Count to 10

03. Take 3 deep breaths

01. Give myself a hug

01. Say I am calm

VIDEO MODELING

- Great way to teach and show skill prior to and during/after crisis
- Research shows it is effective in teaching new skills





EDUCATION

1. Teach your staff/parents about neurodiversity
2. Teach your students about their brains and how to help control situations
3. Keep boundaries similar





PLANNING AHEAD

*Transitions

*Triggers

*The 5 W's



RESOURCES

Sturm R, Ringel JS, Bao Y, Stein BD, Kapur K, Zhang W, Zeng F. Mental Health Care for Youth: Who Gets It? How Much Does It Cost? Who Pays? Where Does the Money Go? Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2001. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB4541.html. Accessed October 4, 2022.

Koppelman J. Children With Mental Disorders: Making Sense of Their Needs and the Systems That Help Them. NHPF Issue Brief. 2004 Jun 4;(799):1–24. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK559784/>. Accessed October 4, 2022. [PubMed]

Enhanced Cortisol Response to Stress in Children in Autism

Eve G. Spratt,(1) Joyce S. Nicholas,(1) Kathleen T. Brady,(1) Laura A. Carpenter,(1) Charles R. Hatcher,(1) Kirk A. Meekins,(1) Richard W. Furlanetto,(2) and Jane M. Charles(1)

Courchesne, Erica,c; Redcay, Elizabethb; Kennedy, Daniel Pa. The autistic brain: birth through adulthood

Howard E. LeWine, MD. Understanding the stress response Chronic activation of this survival mechanism impairs health. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/understanding-the-stress-response>



THANK YOU!

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