

Strategies to Overcome and Prevent Difficult Moments

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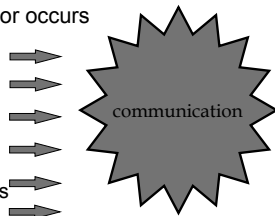
Behavior Basics

- Behavior always occurs for a reason
- Children and youth with ASD have difficulties detecting how they feel and do not know how to calm themselves down
- The ability to *verbalize what they are to do* and *doing it* are two different skills
- Behaviors are generally not on purpose

Identify Behavior Function

Brainstorm why behavior occurs

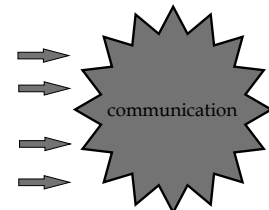
to gain attention
to escape/avoid
need for control
does not understand
confused
to meet sensory needs



Identify Behavior Function

Other reasons

cannot ask for help
does not have enough
time
lack of predictability
something doesn't make
sense



Top 10 Situations that Trigger Insistence on Sameness

- Annoying behavior
- Activity interrupted
- Losing a game
- Object breaks
- Event cancelled
- Event delayed
- Materials run out
- Item misplaced
- Sequence changed
- Momentary separation

Green, Sigafoos, Pituch, Itchon, O'Reilly, & Lancioni (2006). *Assessing Behavioral Flexibility in Individuals with Developmental Disabilities*. Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 21(4) 230-236.

Circumstances that Influence Problem Behaviors

- Physiological Factors
 - Sickness/allergies
 - Side effects of medication
 - Fatigue
 - Hunger or thirst
 - Increased arousal due to a fight, missing the bus, a disruptive routine

Circumstances ...

- Classroom Environment
 - High noise level
 - Uncomfortable temperature
 - Over- or understimulation
 - Poor seating arrangement
 - Frequent disruptions

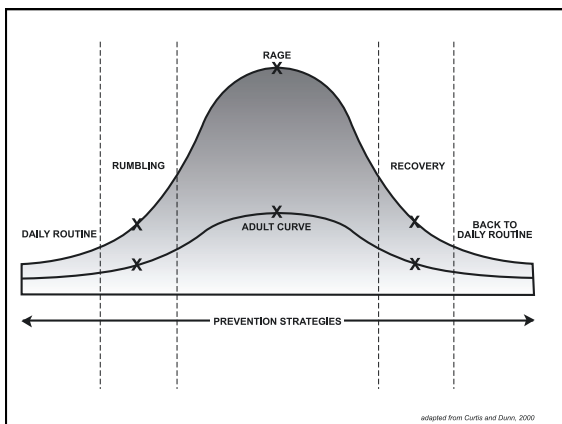


What Can I Do If My Child Has Meltdowns

- Provide social skills support
 - Social skills instruction
 - Social skills interpretation
 - Social skills coaching
- Provide academics at the appropriate level
- Address sensory and stress issues
- TEACH AND MODEL!!

The Rage Cycle

- Rumbling
- Rage
- Recovery



This is important!

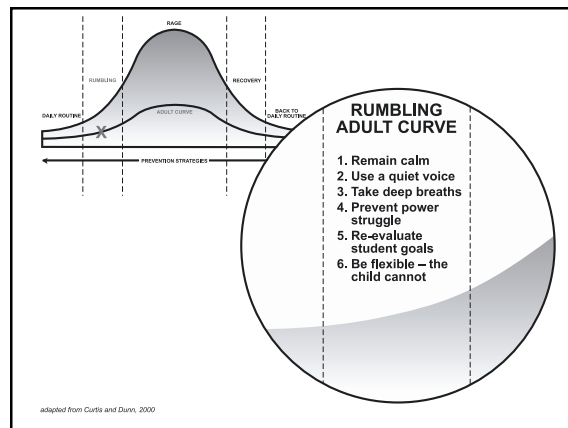
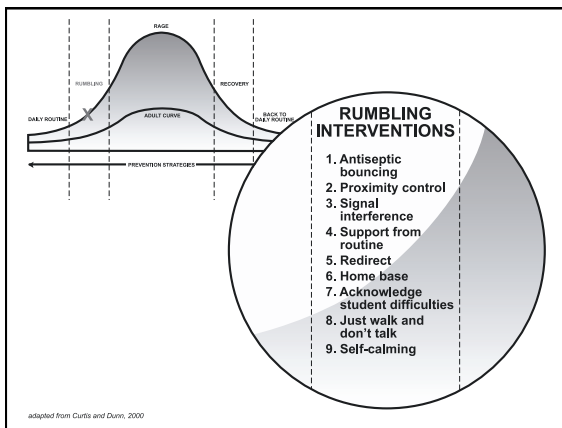
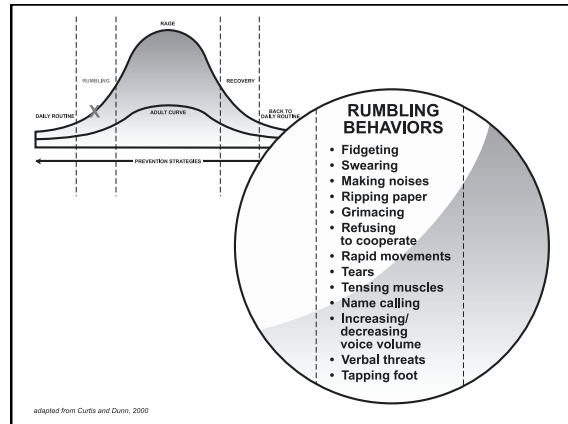


- The minute the rage cycle hits, all opportunities for learning are gone (perhaps for the rest of the day)!

Rumbling Stage

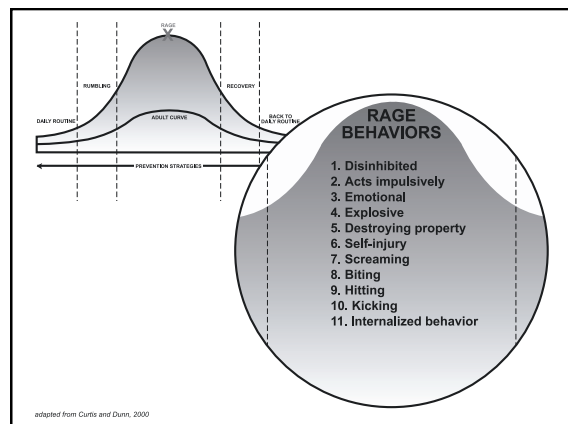
- Most important stage
- Building up to rage
- Some thinking ability still intact
- Individual children have their own patterns of “rage behavior”

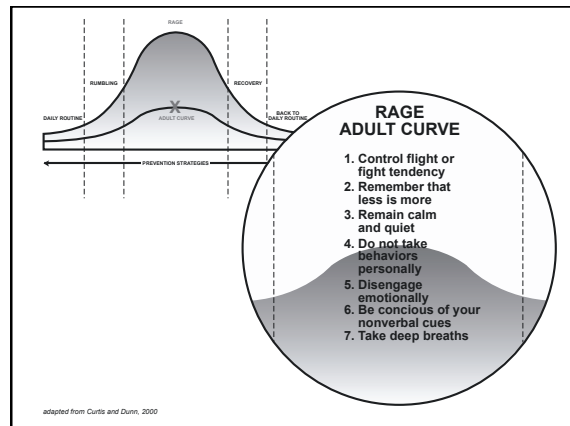
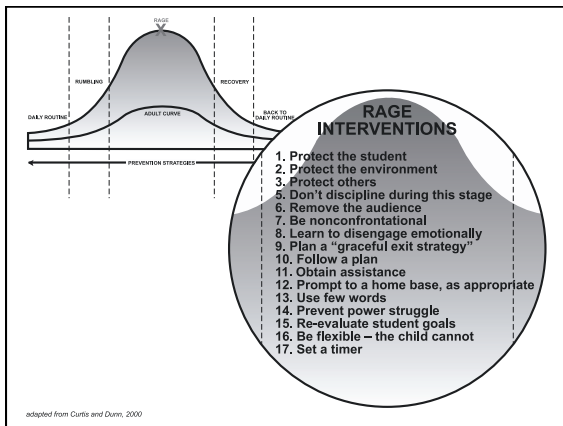
Note: The role of verbalizations in escalation.



Rage Stage

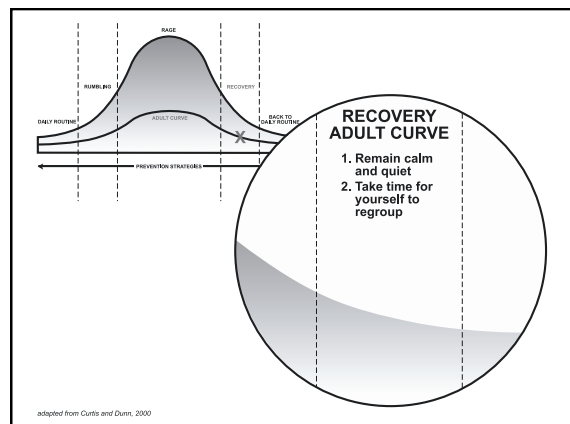
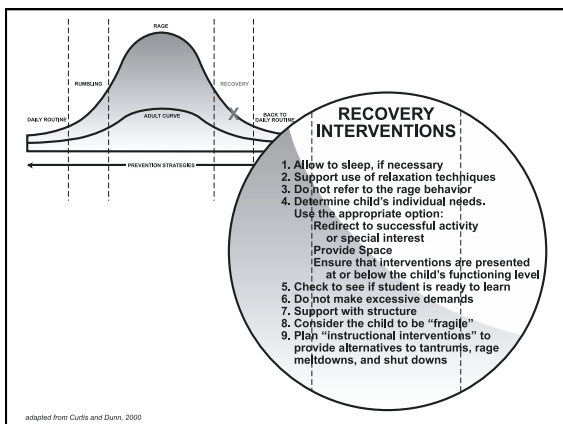
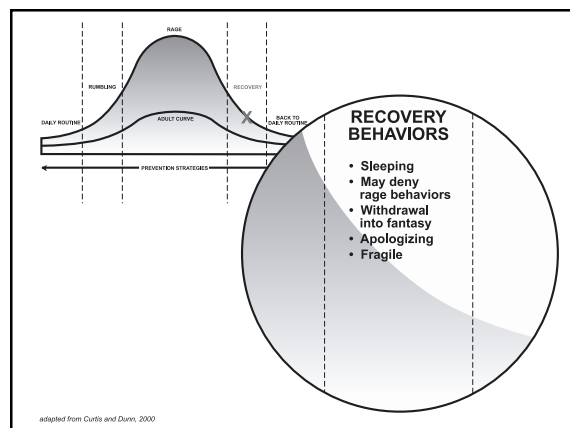
- This is the lightening stage when the neurotransmitters are not working correctly.
- The child or youth may shout, swear, kick, or hit.
- He or she is clearly out of control.

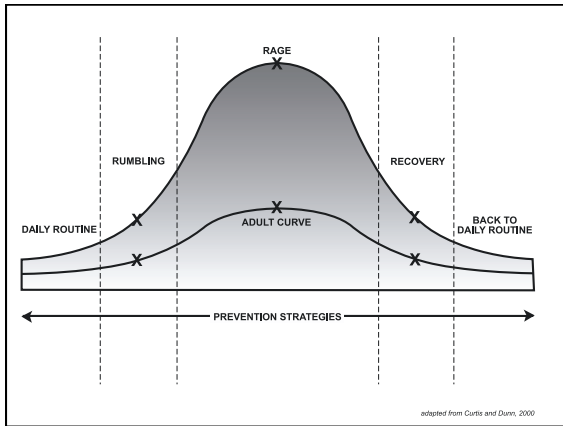




Recovery Stage

- The child or youth may sleep for awhile.
- He/she may apologize or be contrite.
- Withdrawal may occur; a fantasy world may be the target.
- The student may deny meltdown.
- Some do not remember what happened during the Rage Stage.





The Incredible 5 Point Scale

Kari Dunn Buron & Mitzi Curtis

5	
4	
3	
2	
1	

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The Incredible 5-Point Scale

5	YELLING
4	LOUD
3	CONVERSATION
2	WHISPER
1	NO SOUND

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CHECK IN

5	
4	
3	
2	
1	

Poster-size, 2-sided, laminated
Check In/Anxiety (Buron, 2009)

ANXIETY CURVE

Poster-size, 2-sided, laminated Check In/Anxiety (Buron, 2009)

Sometimes I worry way to much, like when I think I am going to recess and it gets cancelled.

This might make me scream, or even hit someone. This is a 5. Now my autism is TOO BIG.

When My Worries Get Too Big! Buron, 2004

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