

Restraint Prevention: A Behavioral Analysis and Some Best Practices

David B. Lennox, Ph.D.

***QBS*, INC.**

&

Simmons College, Boston, MA

Dlennox@QBSCompanies.com

www.QBSCompanies.com

PH: 866-429-9211

FX: 508-429-9212

Goals of Presentation

1. Review essentials of safety training
 - Goals and content
 - Training methods
 - Maintenance concerns
2. The Role of ABA in Safety Management
 - Traditional Role of Behavior Analysts
 - Potential Contributions
3. Recommendations

GAO Seclusion & Restraints, 2009

Goals of the Report

- Overview of seclusion & restraint laws in schools
- Determine whether allegations of abuse are widespread
- Examine facts & circumstances of cases involving either abuse or death

Methodology

- Reviewed federal & state laws and abuse allegations from groups, parents, media over last 2 decades
- Examined documents related to closed cases including police & autopsy reports, and school policies
- Interviewed parents, attorneys, school officials

GAO Selected Findings

1. No *federal* laws restricting [regulating] use of seclusion & restraints in public and private schools
2. Existing state laws are widely divergent
3. “Hundreds of cases of alleged abuse and death ... with these methods.”
4. No single source (web site, agency, etc.) that collects information on use of these methods

Examples of 'Divergent' Practices

- From 1-2 paragraphs to 15-20 pages of regulations
- “*Impedes learning by other students*” to “*To prevent severe injury to self or others*”
- “*Training in de-escalation*”, to officially approved multi-day programs with required content
- No reporting requirement, to reporting of any use of ‘limiting’ procedure.
- No ‘authorization’ mechanism, to specific procedures and individuals must authorize.

Commonalities of Abuse & Fatalities

1. Involved restraint and/or seclusion where no physical aggression occurred
2. “Restraints that block air to the lungs can be deadly”
3. Teachers & staff not trained in the use of seclusions and restraints
4. Involved restraint and/or seclusion in the absence of parental consent

General Consensus re: Policy

- Only if serious & imminent risk of self-injury or harm to others
- Only as last resort, after less restrictive techniques have failed
- Only as long as the serious & imminent risk is present
- Never for threat, punishment, compliance, control, convenience, low-staffing ratios
- Only by individuals trained & competent and trained in prevention
- Immediate de-briefing and analysis by participants

'Safe' Assumptions About Restraint

1. Restraint is always risky
2. Restraint, in and of itself, doesn't directly teach [desirable] skills, alternative behaviors
3. The more effective the restraint, probably a higher *abuse potential*
4. Restraint is probably physically, emotionally traumatic
5. If restraint has unpleasant, aversive effects on the student, then a wide array of side-effects are likely
6. Restraint is 'elicitive' and/or evocative

Goals of Safety Training Curricula

1. Prevent behavioral crises.
2. Reverse the momentary escalation and intensity of crisis behaviors.
3. Safely and therapeutically manage crises without injury and trauma.
4. Terminate crises as quickly as possible.
5. ***Evoke, teach, and strengthen behaviors that are incompatible with crisis behaviors.***
6. ***Reduce the future likelihood of behavioral crises.***

Essentials of a Safety Curriculum

✓ **Regulations, Philosophies, Policies**

Federal & state regulations, organizational philosophy regarding use, policies, procedures, practices

1. Incident Prevention

Environmental, social, staffing, and activity methods to decrease the likelihood of challenging behavior.

2. Incident Minimization

Strategies for early anticipation and detection of challenging behavior and methods to stop, minimize, and reverse the progression of challenging behavior.

3. Incident Management

Strategies and techniques for the safe, therapeutic management, termination, and future prevention of challenging behavior.

✓ **Reporting and Analysis**

Immediate recording of event and surrounding variables, reporting of outcome, injuries, recommendations

Essentials of *Incident Prevention*

1. Significant focus upon environmental features and safety
2. Basic staff safety 'habits' such as interaction skills, clothing, proximity, materials, etc.
3. Verbal and non-verbal (i.e., 'body language') communication
4. Avoiding power struggles, conflicts, etc.

Essentials of *Incident Minimization*

1. Clarifying classes or categories of behaviors – crisis *vs.* non-crisis
2. Identification and analysis of antecedents – ‘Triggers’ and ‘Signals’
3. Planning and teamwork – identifying a “leader”, etc.
4. De-Escalation model applicable to verbal and non-verbal individuals

Essentials of *Incident Management*

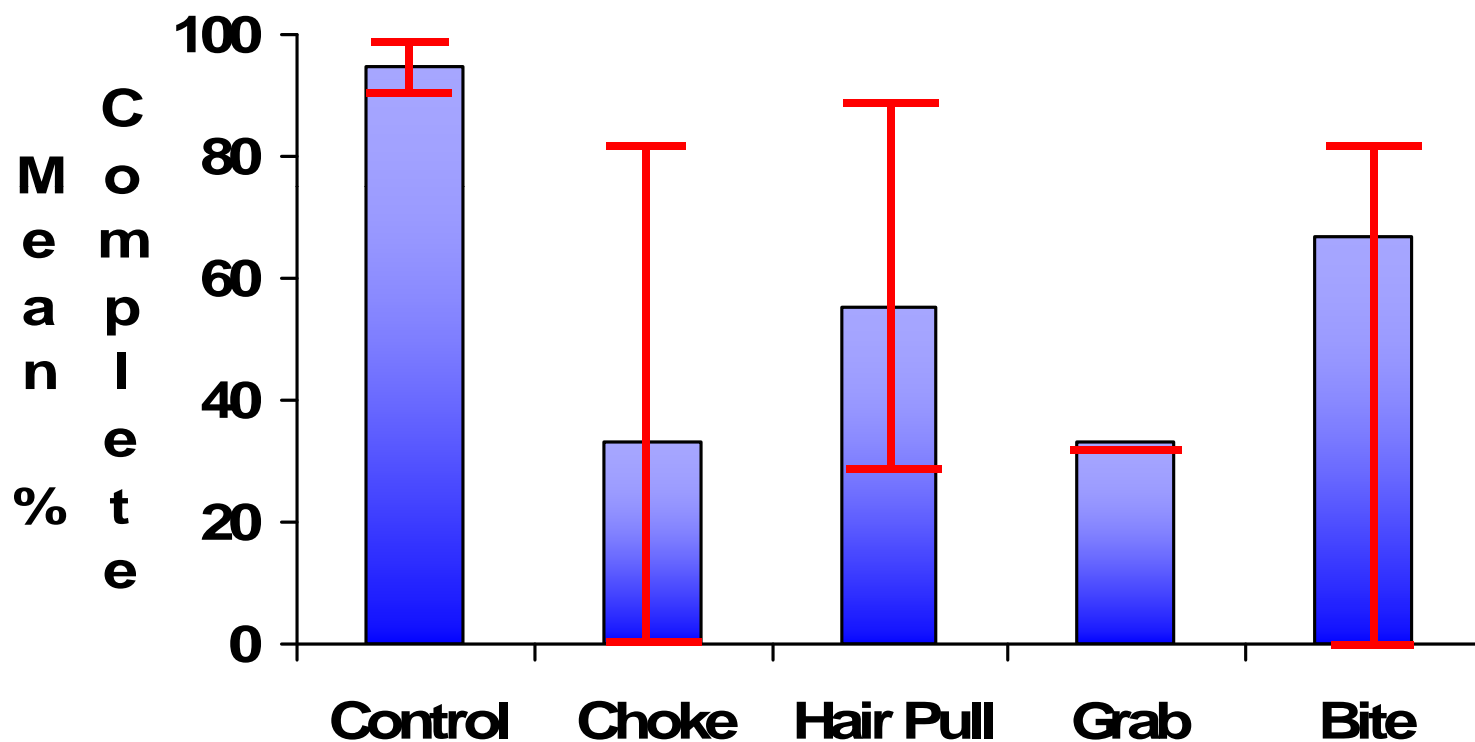
1. Non-invasive protection skills – safety-stance, blocking, etc.
2. Releases for commonly encountered grabbing – e.g., wrist, hair pull, etc.
3. Physical hold procedures specific to target students and target staff
4. When, how to release and recover

Reporting and Analysis

1. Immediate de-briefing and documentation
2. Review sequence of events leading to incident
3. Identification of mistakes, errors and/or possible alternatives
4. Recommendations regarding future actions

Performance at 6 month follow-up

Accuracy of Steps

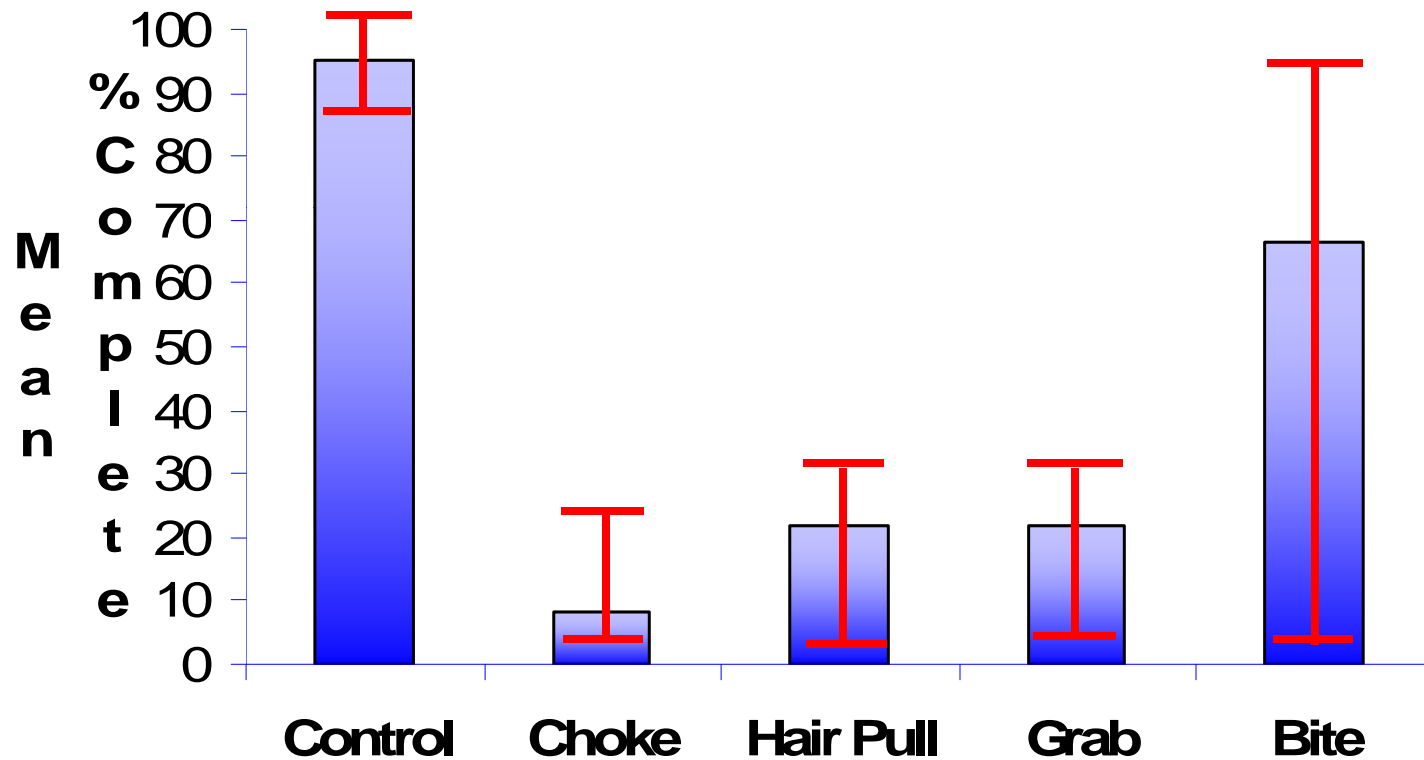


Shapiro, 2005

A QBS Presentation

Performance at 1 year follow up

Accuracy of Steps



Shapiro, 2005

A QBS Presentation

Maintaining Safety Skills

1. Annual re-certification with rigorous correction procedures
2. Regularly scheduled competency assessments
e.g., “Technique-of-the-Week”
3. Training review after every use
 - ✓ Of utilized techniques
 - ✓ Preventive, antecedent strategies
4. Develop Peer Observers-Trainers
 - ✓ Peer Trainers (van den Pol, Reid, Fuqua, 1983)
 - ✓ Peer Feedback (Alvero & Austin, 2004)

'Framing' Restraint Prevention Efforts

- Consider the continued use of physical intervention as a *treatment failure*
- Reducing use of physical restraint requires a proactive management strategy & plan
- Routinely require external review & recommendations of sample or all restraints
- Even rigorous training in prevention and de-escalation does not constitute a restraint prevention program.

Traditional Role of Behavior Analysts

Marginally involved in crisis management.

1. Trainers' credentials – BCBA vs. ??
2. Safety Techniques for use in BSP
e.g., 'Brief contingent restraint' (Rolider, et al., 1991)
3. Analysis of reinforcing effects (Favell, et al., 1978)
4. ABA not integrated into crisis curricula
5. BSP include 'Emergency Procedures', often not treatment or analytic element of intervention

Potential ABA Contributions

1. Understanding of reinforcers supporting 'crisis'– Why do crisis behaviors occur?
2. Understanding reinforcement supporting the use of crisis interventions, restraint.
3. Additional antecedent analyses
4. Utilizing empirically-based procedures within crisis management framework
5. Evaluation & measurement of efficacy

Positive Reinforcement

If, under certain antecedent stimulus conditions, a response occurs which is followed by a positive, desirable consequence,

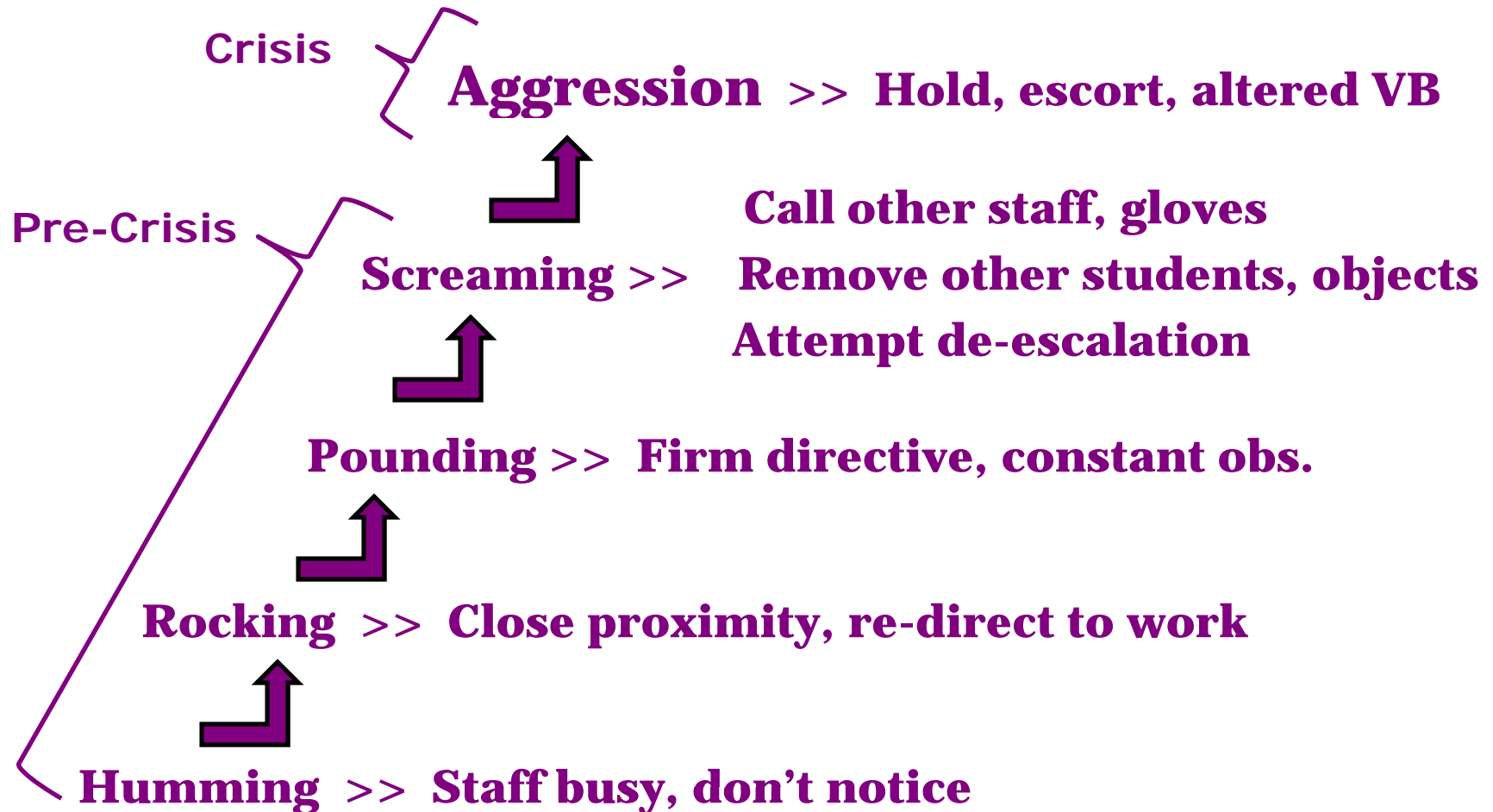
...then, the next time the antecedent stimulus conditions are present, the response is more likely:

Antecedent → Behavior → Consequence

“Stand Up → Student stands → “Great.. thanks so much!”

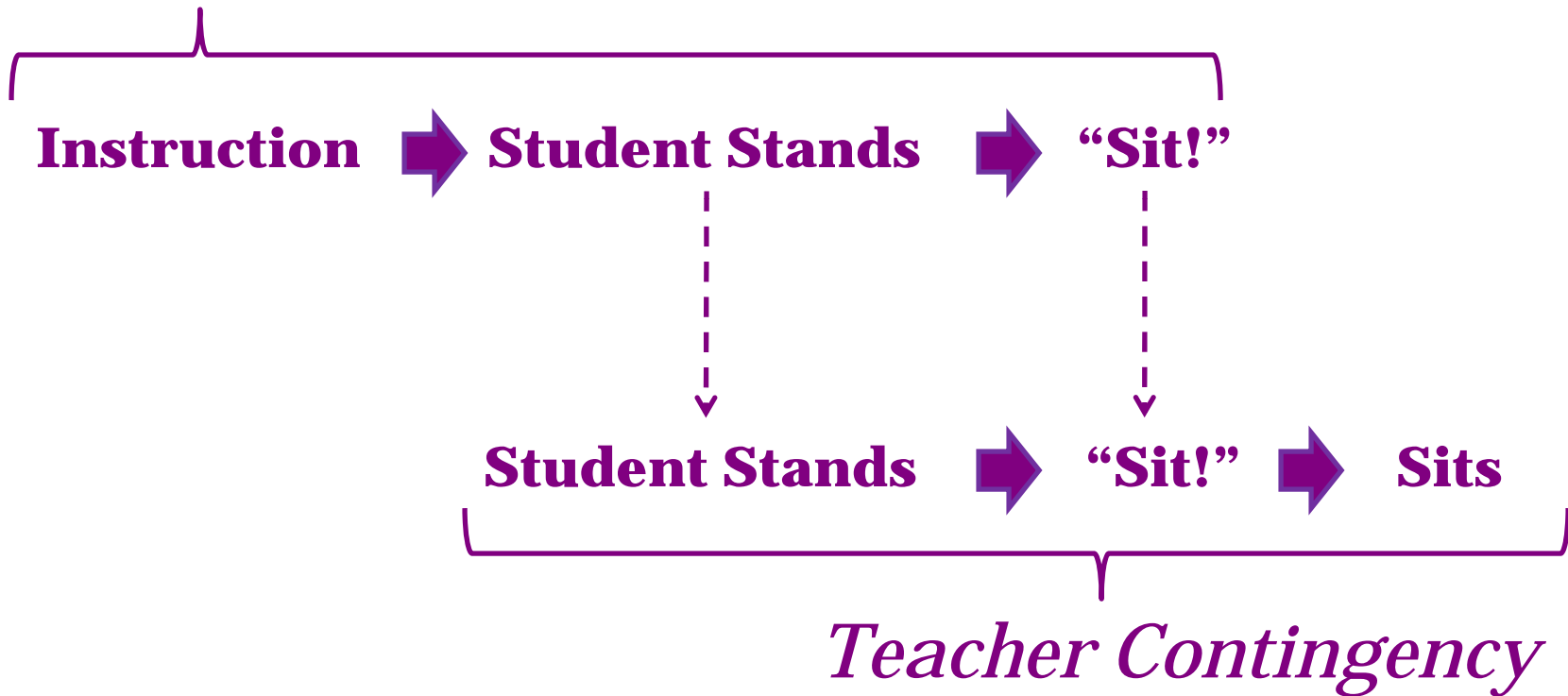

0-2 minutes

Analysis of Crisis Events



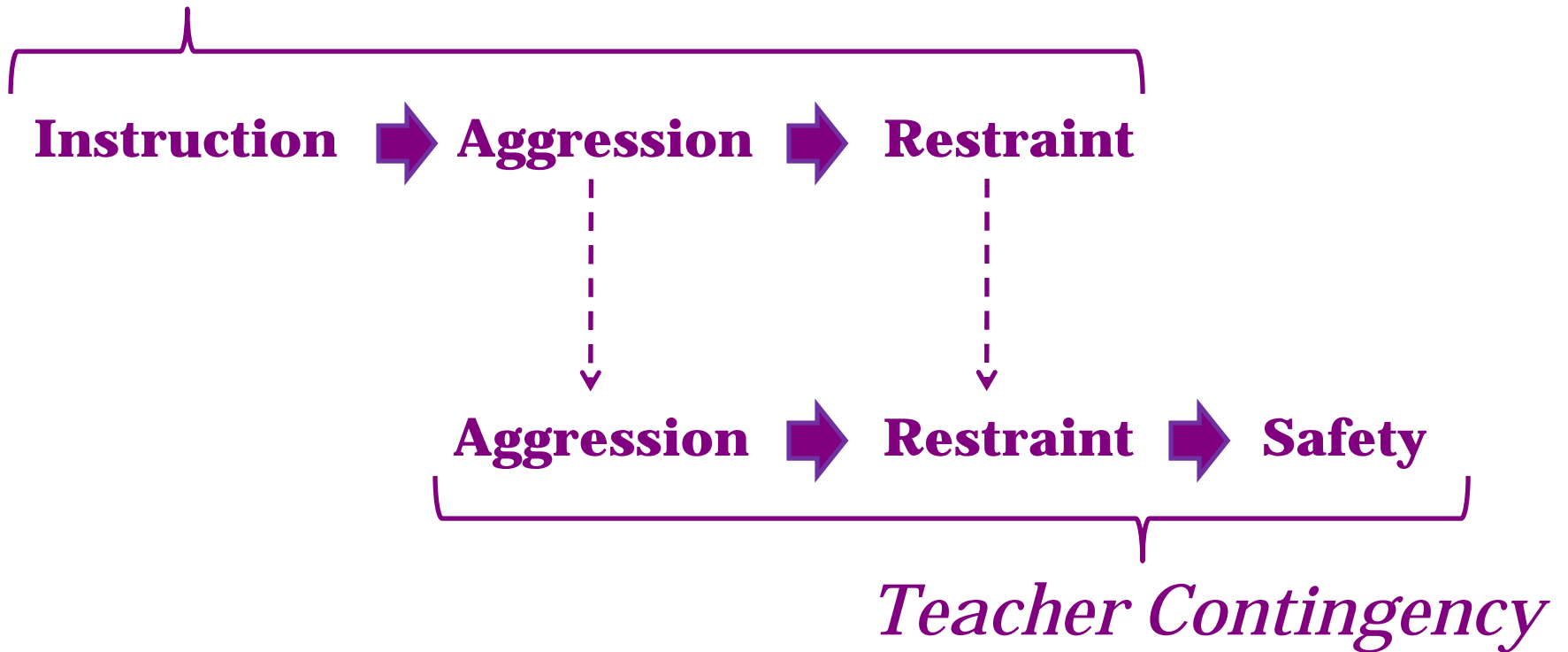
A Classic Behavioral Trap

Student Contingency



A "Restraint" Trap

Student Contingency



Motivational Analysis of Restraint

For the Recipient (Student)

- Possible negative reinforcement effects
- Possible sensory reinforcement effects

Task presented > Aggression > Restraint, Task Ended

Aggression >> Restrain >> Risk is suppressed, safety

Sterile environment >> Aggression >> Restraint, tactile

Aggression >> Restrain >> Thanks from co-workers

Aggressive student >> Restraint >> Adrenalin, other biochemical

"If I anticipate aggression & restrain student, things will be safer"

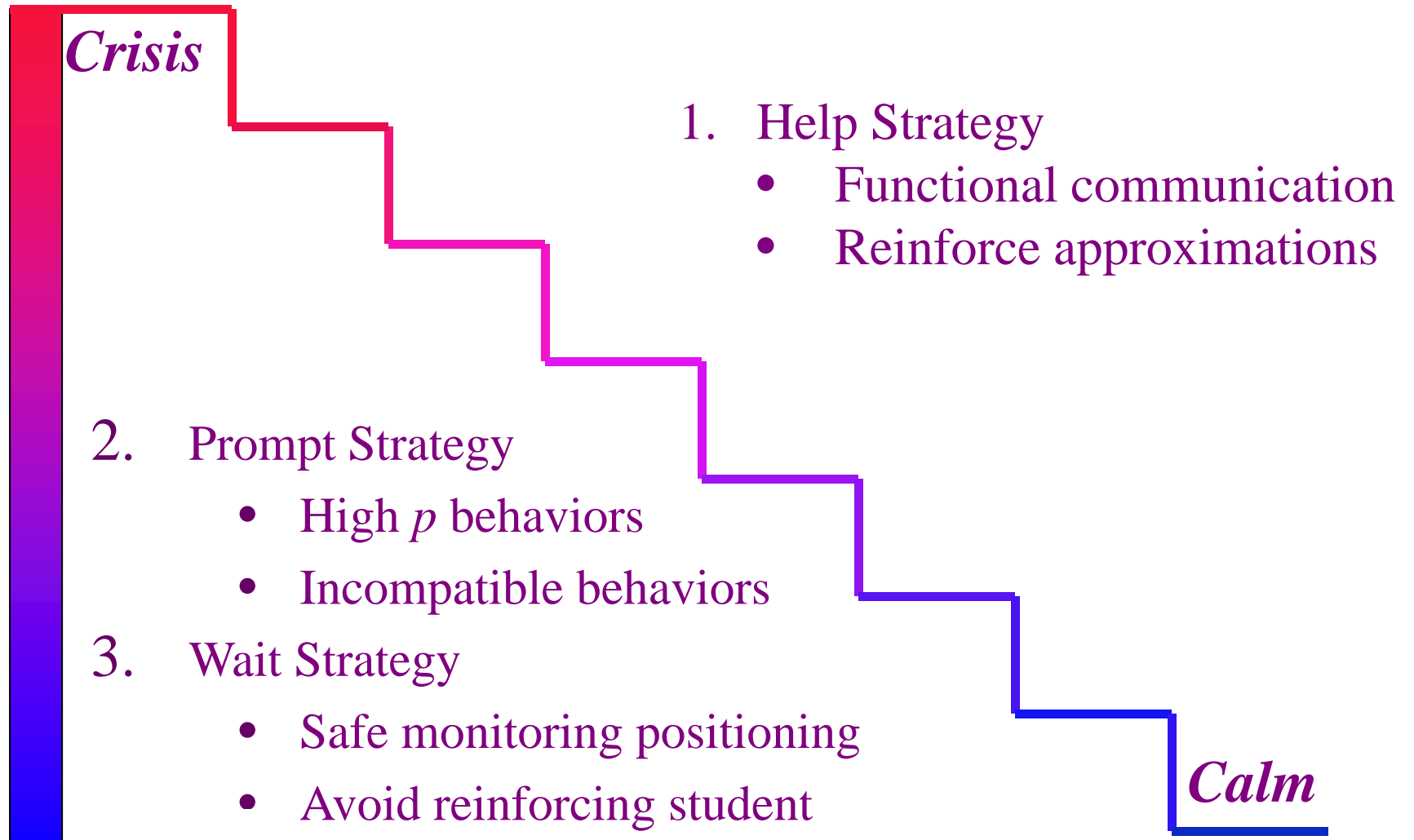
- Possible sensory reinforcement effects
- Possible faulty & inaccurate RGB/CSS

Evidence-Based Enhancements

(to/within safety procedures)

- 1. Motivationally-based alternatives**
e.g., Functional Communication Training
(Luiselli, et al, 2000)
- 2. Reinforcement of incompatible behaviors**
e.g., DRI, DRO
- 3. Generating compliance of *high p* behaviors**
e.g., Behavioral Momentum
- 4. Reinforcement for ‘progress’ during emergency hold procedures**
e.g., Differential Reinforcement of ‘Calm’

De-Escalation Strategies



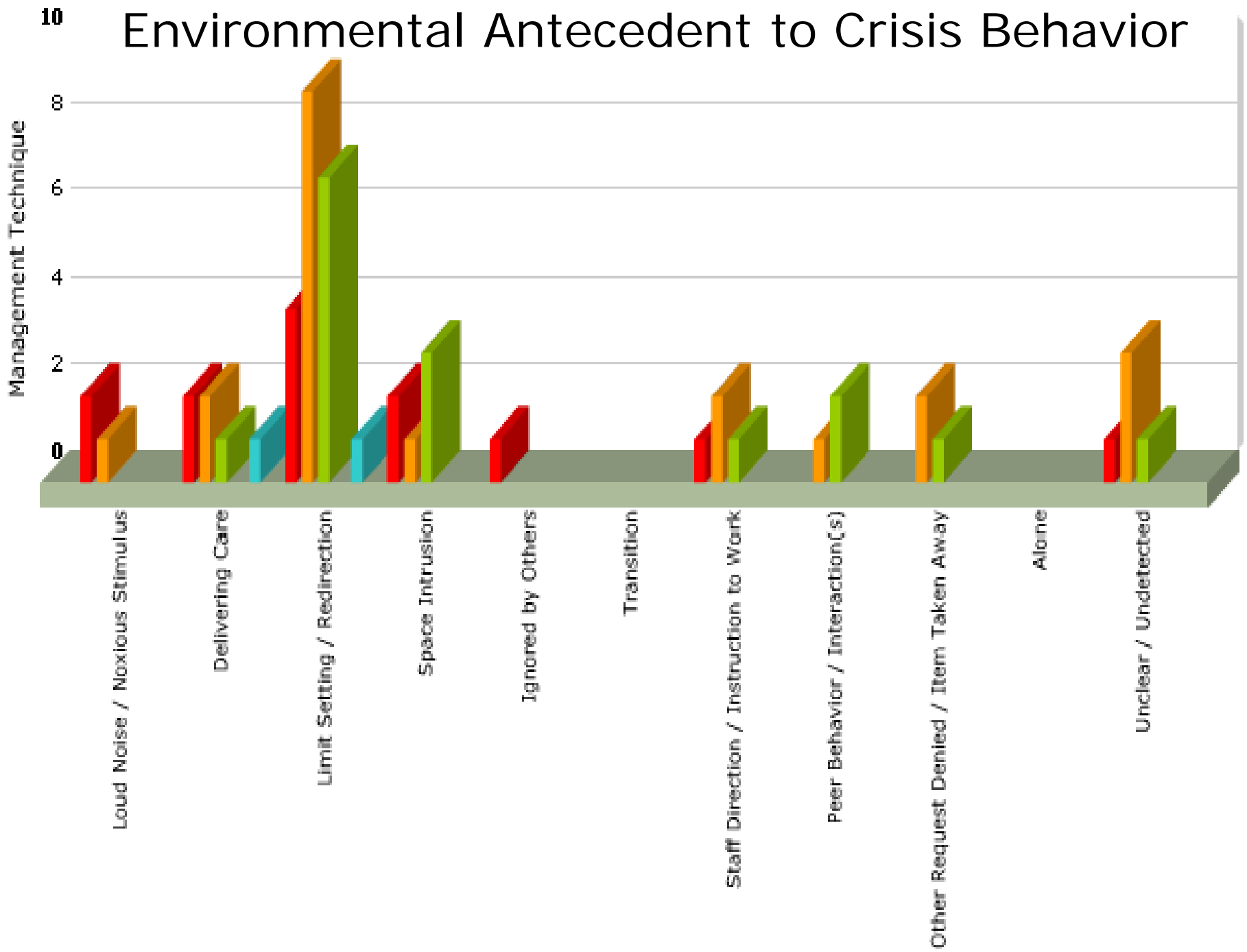
Comprehensive Behavioral Safety System

1. Create Behavioral Safety Culture – ala SW-PBIS
2. Ensure competency-based behavioral staff training
3. Establish rigorous criteria for & after use to reduce need for safety procedures:
 - ✓ Operationally-defined criteria for application (Luiselli, et al., 2000)
 - ✓ Mandatory behavioral consultation (Donat, 1998)
 - ✓ Allowable # of holds (Singh, et. al., 1999)
4. Behavioral Trend Review
 - ✓ Systems-based, not exclusively student-based
 - ✓ Measurement and Trending
 - ✓ Plans of correction

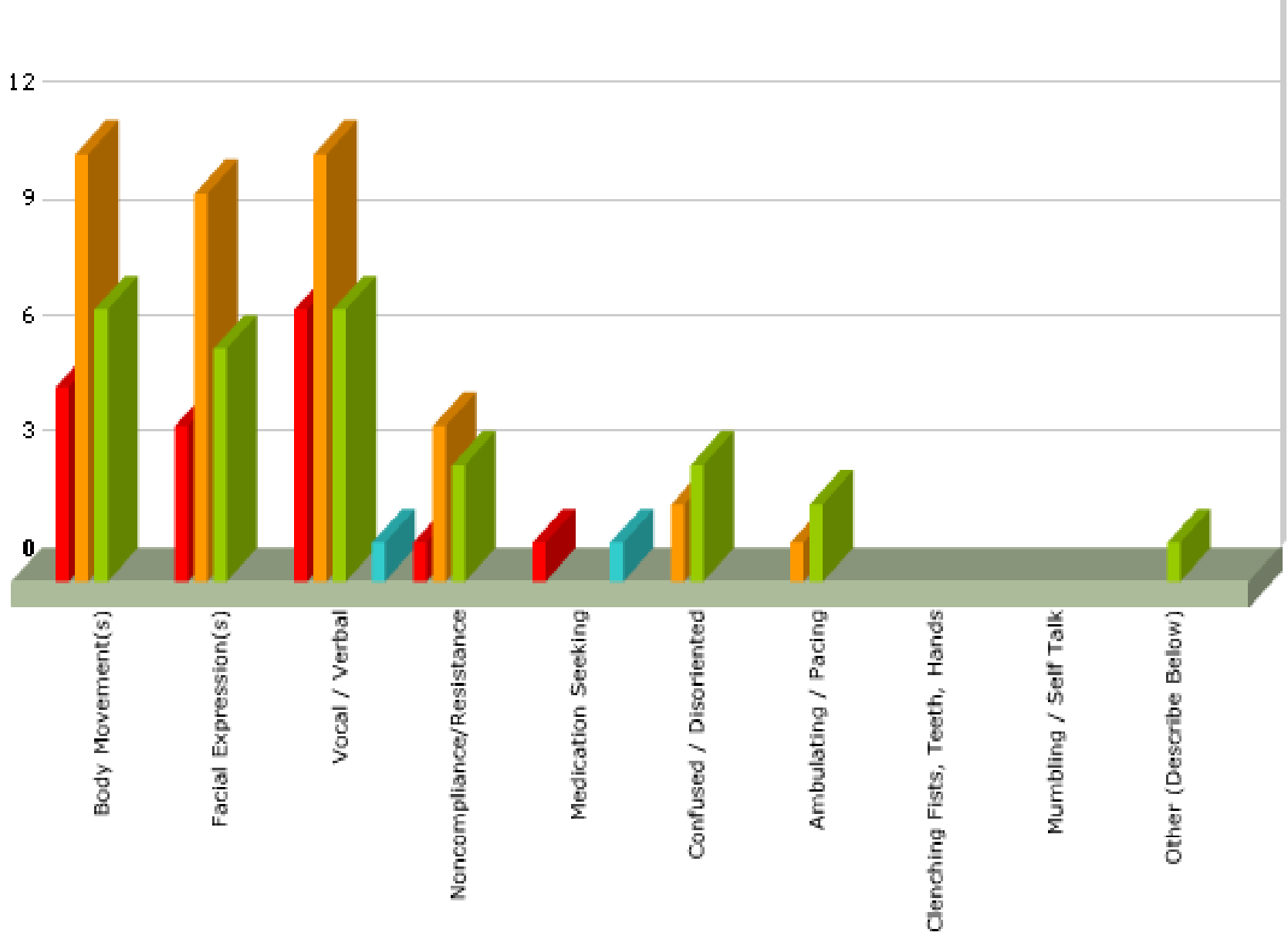
Creating a Behavioral Safety Culture

- **Restraint reduction, elimination, or non-use linked to organizational goals**
- **Continuous involvement by all levels of the organization**
- **Processes within organization that support (frequent) the issue through data collection and sharing, trending, etc.**
- **Job Roles linked to goals – the reduction and/or elimination of ...**

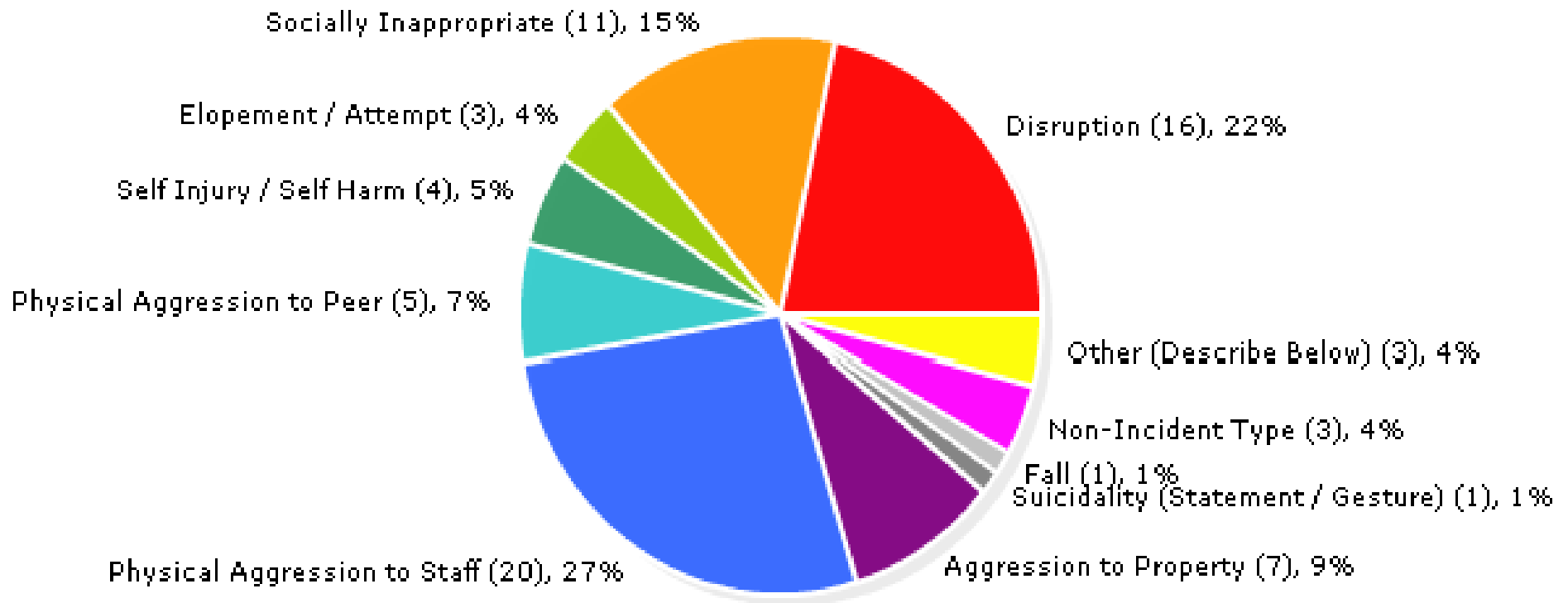
Environmental Antecedent to Crisis Behavior



15 Behavioral Antecedent to Crisis Behavior



Behavior(s) Initiating Physical Management



Additional Recommendations

1. Review each procedure regarding each student prior to need to use
2. Obtain prior “*informed*” acknowledgement that emergency procedures may be necessary
3. Non-participating BCBA observer during restraint
4. Functional analyses of each restraint event:
 - ✓ Behavioral Observer for descriptive account
 - ✓ Confirmation of analysis after event

Beware of the
'Military Industrial Complex'
D.D.E.