



Examples of a *Strong Adult Posture* at Tier 2

Tier 2 targeted practices

Intentional, responsive strategies for students who need some extra support to feel safe, regulated and successful.



1  **Understanding** that when a student at **Tier 2** is overwhelmed emotionally, which results in behavioural manifestations, the first step and priority of the adult should be to re-establish a sense of **safety for the student** (whether by managing the circumstances and environment, or by **co-regulating** with the student).

2  **Relying on the key elements to effect change:** structures, routines, predictability, respite, movement, being preventive/proactive, etc., including adapted scheduling if needed (these are **essential at Tier 2**).

3  Being careful with **applying pressure** towards a task accomplishment, which could be triggering the student.

4  Being **calm and grounded** before responding to an upset student, and not taking their behaviour personally.

5  Being mindful about displaying **neutral/gentle** facial expressions, a non-threatening stance, a stable voice volume, tone, speech rate, or talking too much.

6  When a student is upset, **waiting until a more appropriate time** to address the situation (when the student has returned to a regulated state and is open and receptive) – Relying on **co-regulation**, as well as **de-escalation strategies**, if needed, to defuse the situation.

7  **Conveying to other students** that you are aware the student in question is upset, that you are handling the situation, and they can focus on their own task at hand.

8  Actively engaging the student in **communicating their needs** and where they are at in their emotional regulation process, while understanding students at **Tier 2** may require **co-regulation support** to do so.

9  **'Bridging'** by making the **relationship** (not the behaviour) the bottom line and restoring the connection following any fallouts.

10  **Reassuring** the student that you are there for them and they can always come to you for help.



A strong adult posture is grounded in **connection, consistency and compassion**.
*It's not about perfect responses, but about a **purposeful presence**.*



SAFETY



RELATIONSHIP



STRUCTURE



REGULATION



Examples of de-escalation strategies



Removing any audience. If possible, taking the student for a walk or accompanying them to a safe and private space.



Honouring the student's personal space (needing to consider individual differences in terms of tolerance for physical proximity).



Being mindful of our verbal, non-verbal and paraverbal cues (e.g., triggering language, tone/volume of voice, speech rate, body positioning, facial expression, sudden gestures, walking fast towards the student, etc.)



Being aware of our level of stress, affect, emotional intensity, and type/level of energy reflected.



Avoiding intense eye contact (this can feel quite threatening to some students). Sitting side-by-side or standing at an angle can help with this.



Demonstrating active listening; reducing the amount of talking and allowing for moments of silence.



Being empathetic and non-judgmental; focusing on the emotion(s) experienced by the student rather than their behaviour.



Offering support or a pause; trying to accommodate and reassure the student.



If possible/available, providing a space for them to let off steam.



Examples of de-escalation strategies



Avoiding getting caught in a power struggle, anticipating potential refusal from the student and perceiving their challenging questions/comments as needing to vent.



Moving away from trying to teach a lesson or reason with the student, especially when their behaviour appears erratic and irrational.



Setting simple, concise, and realistic limits by offering options/alternatives in a supportive manner; being careful to not overload with too many directives.



Allowing time/space for decision making (not pressuring for an immediate response) and choosing wisely what is insisted upon.



Coming alongside the student's frustration, by naming and validating it.



Sometimes, using humour, when appropriate, can be helpful to diffuse the situation.



Not taking it personally; being careful to not overreact (lenses and mirrors).



Ensuring that adults passing by don't step in and impose themselves in an ongoing intervention.



Having another adult support or step in if the situation is not defusing. It's okay for the adult to tap out if they are being triggered.