

# Crisis Prevention & De-escalation

Strategies for preventing and managing behavioral crises

classroompulse.io

## Prevention: Before Escalation

- Know student's triggers and warning signs
- Visual schedule in place and referenced
- Transitions previewed in advance
- Sensory needs proactively addressed
- Reinforcement systems active
- Environmental triggers minimized
- Relationship and rapport established

## Early Warning Signs

Watch for precursor behaviors - signs that escalation may be coming. These vary by student but commonly include:

- Changes in voice (louder, faster, higher pitch)
- Physical tension (clenched fists, pacing)
- Verbal warnings ("I'm going to...")
- Withdrawal or avoidance
- Increased stimming or self-soothing

## De-escalation Strategies

### Environmental

- Reduce audience/remove peers if safe
- Lower lights/reduce stimulation
- Increase physical space
- Remove triggering materials

### Communication

- Lower voice volume and slow pace
- Use simple, clear language
- Offer limited choices
- Validate feelings ("I can see you're frustrated")
- Avoid "why" questions
- Use student's name calmly

### Physical/Behavioral

- Model calm body language
- Position yourself at student's level
- Give processing time (wait 5-10 seconds)
- Offer break or safe space
- Use prearranged calming strategies

## What NOT to Do

### Important

- Argue, threaten, or use sarcasm
- Invade personal space
- Touch without consent (unless safety requires)
- Raise your voice or match intensity
- Issue ultimatums
- Bring up past incidents
- Take behavior personally

## Post-Crisis

- Allow full recovery time before processing
- Restore relationship when calm
- Reteach replacement behaviors
- Document incident objectively
- Debrief with team
- Review for prevention opportunities

### Pro Tip

The goal is not to "win" - it's to help the student regain self-regulation. Your calm is contagious.

## Track Incidents & Identify Patterns

Classroom Pulse helps you document incidents and identify triggers to prevent future crises.

[classroompulse.io/signup](https://classroompulse.io/signup)