

# Managing Misbehavior in Young Children: Foundations for Change

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Why do children  
start misbehaving?

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# Why Do Children Start Misbehaving?

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- Normal Development - Without Guidance
- Modeling
- Adjustment Reaction
- Poor Impulse Control
- Mood Disturbance
- Attachment Problems
- Cognitive Delays
- Language Delays
- Social Delays

- Can result from both normal & abnormal development. 3

Why do children  
keep misbehaving?

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# Why Do Children Keep Misbehaving?

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- Because it works.
  - Sensory
  - Attention
  - Escape
  - Tangibles
  - Power
  - Communication
- Because they don't have a better way.
  - Skills Deficit
  - Misunderstanding

How do you help  
change  
misbehavior?

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# How Do You Help Change Misbehavior?

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- Indirect Services
  - Consultation
  - Parent Training
  - Family Therapy
  - Problem Solving
- Hard or impossible to talk a child into good behavior.
- Change with you usually doesn't generalize to other settings.

# Child Misbehavior

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Behavior Management  
Considerations

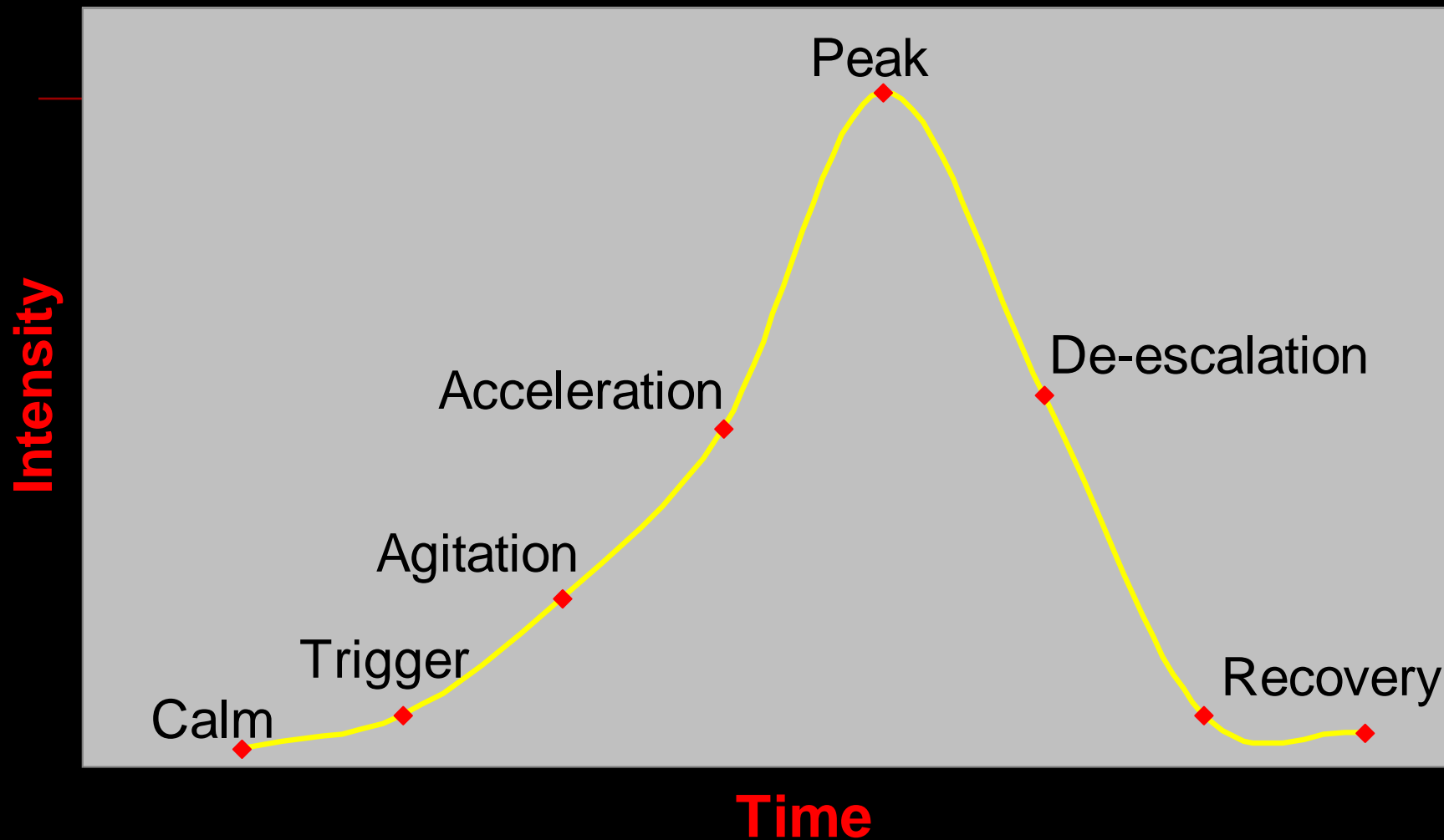
# Child Misbehavior: Behavior Management Consideration #1

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## ■ Crisis Management

- Out-of-Control Behavior
- Danger to Self, Others, or Surroundings
- “When bad things happen to good people.”
- Improves confidence when dealing with lesser behaviors.
- Enables you to stop tiptoeing around misbehavior because you fear a blow up.

# Phases of Escalating Behavior



# Crisis Management - Continued

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- Signs of an Approaching Crisis
  - noncompliance and defiance
  - verbal abuse
  - disruption
  - destruction of property
  - whining and crying
  - limit testing
  - threats and intimidation

# Crisis Management - Continued

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1. Lose the crowd.
  - Remove the audience.
  - 2 person rule.
  - If mad at you, bow out.
  - If possible move the target child.
2. Be aware of your body language.
  - Arms down, shoulders relaxed, hands open.
3. Approach slowly and from the side.
  - Never corner or move too quickly.
4. Speak softly and say little.
  - Use a very low voice. Maybe even a whisper.

# Crisis Management - Continued

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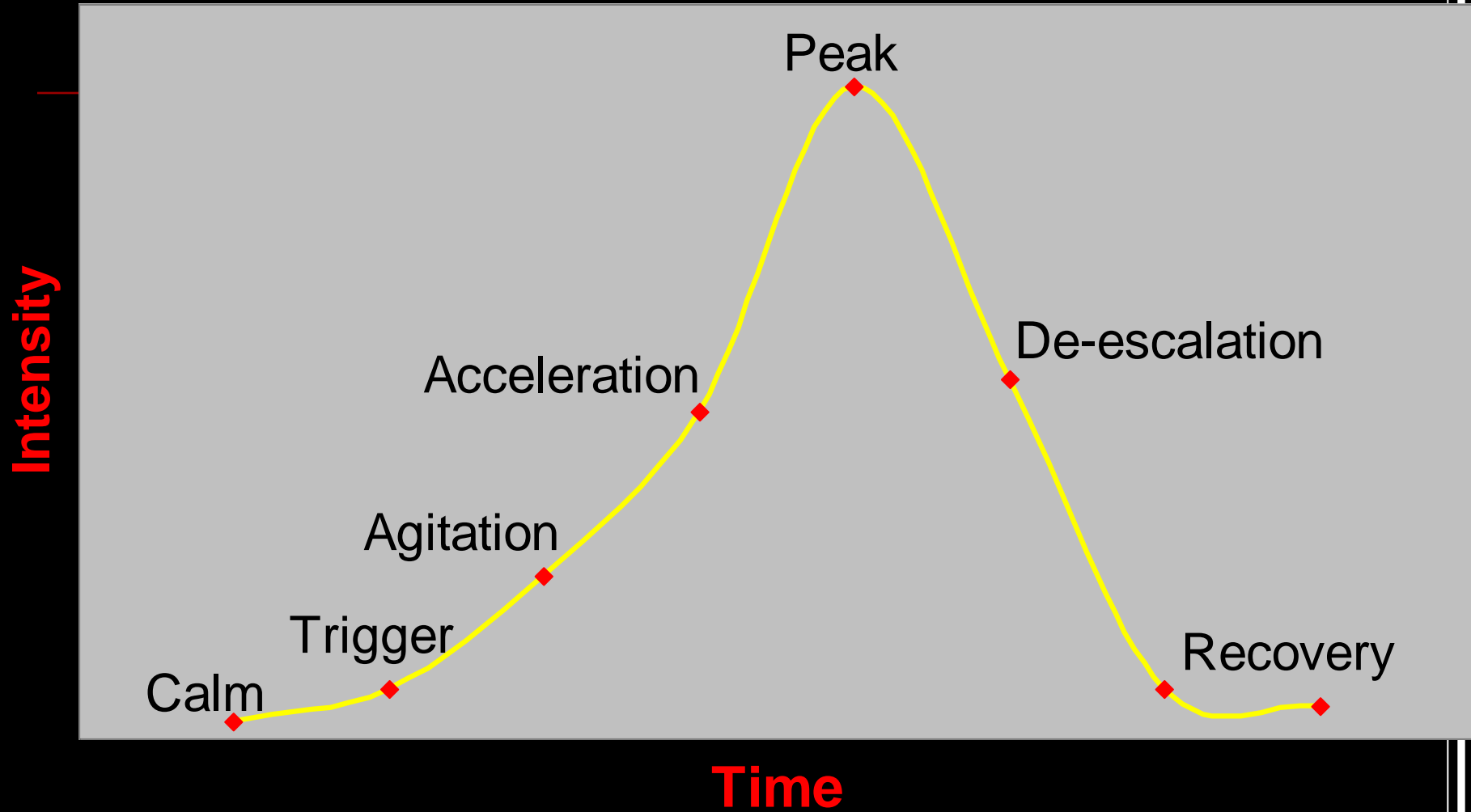
5. Just listen and show understanding.
  - Don't try to solve the problem.
  - Don't try to teach right from wrong.
  - There will be time to process later.
6. Take your time.
  - Be patient. Time is your secret weapon.

# Crisis Management - Continued

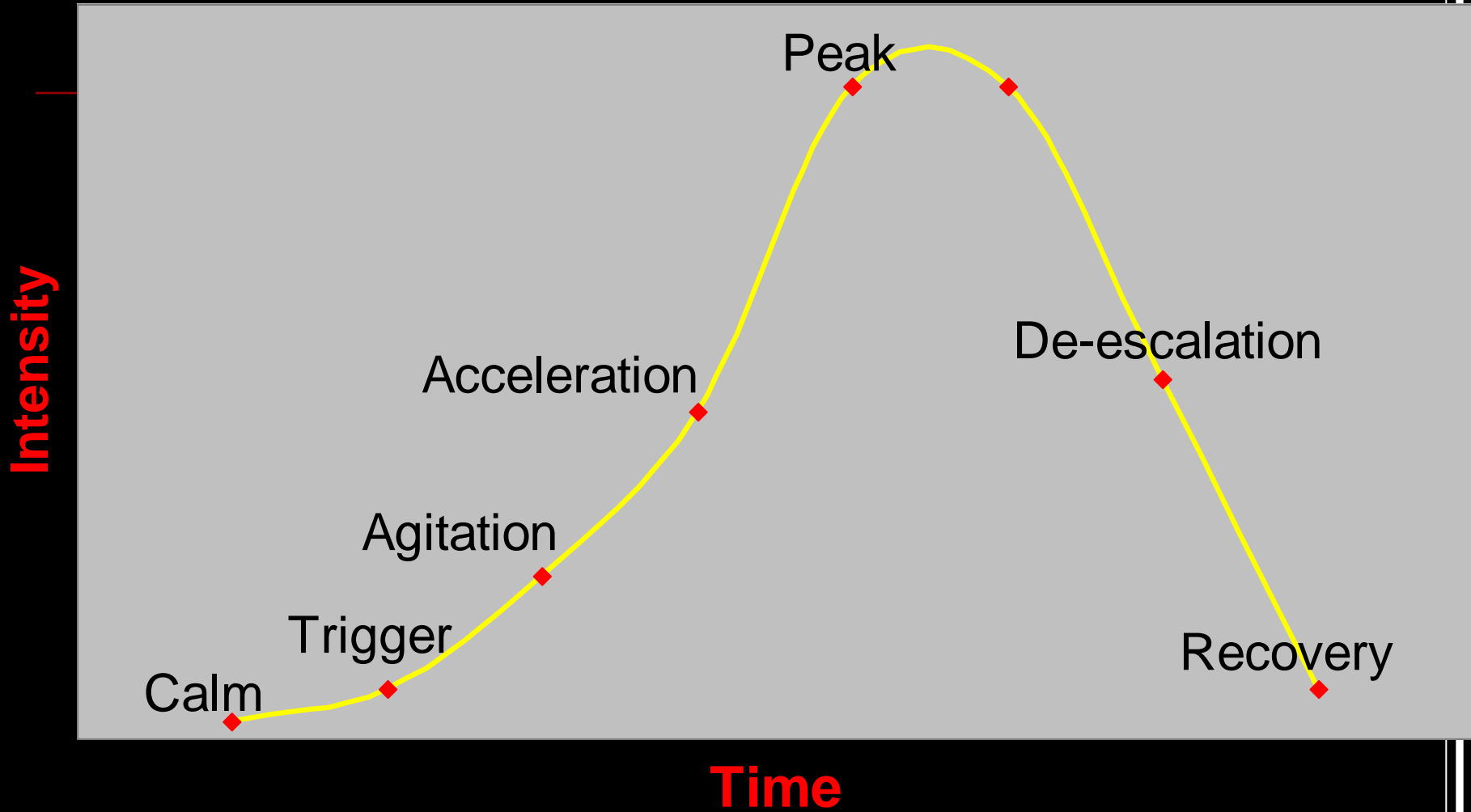
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- What happens if you don't manage effectively?
  - See next slides.

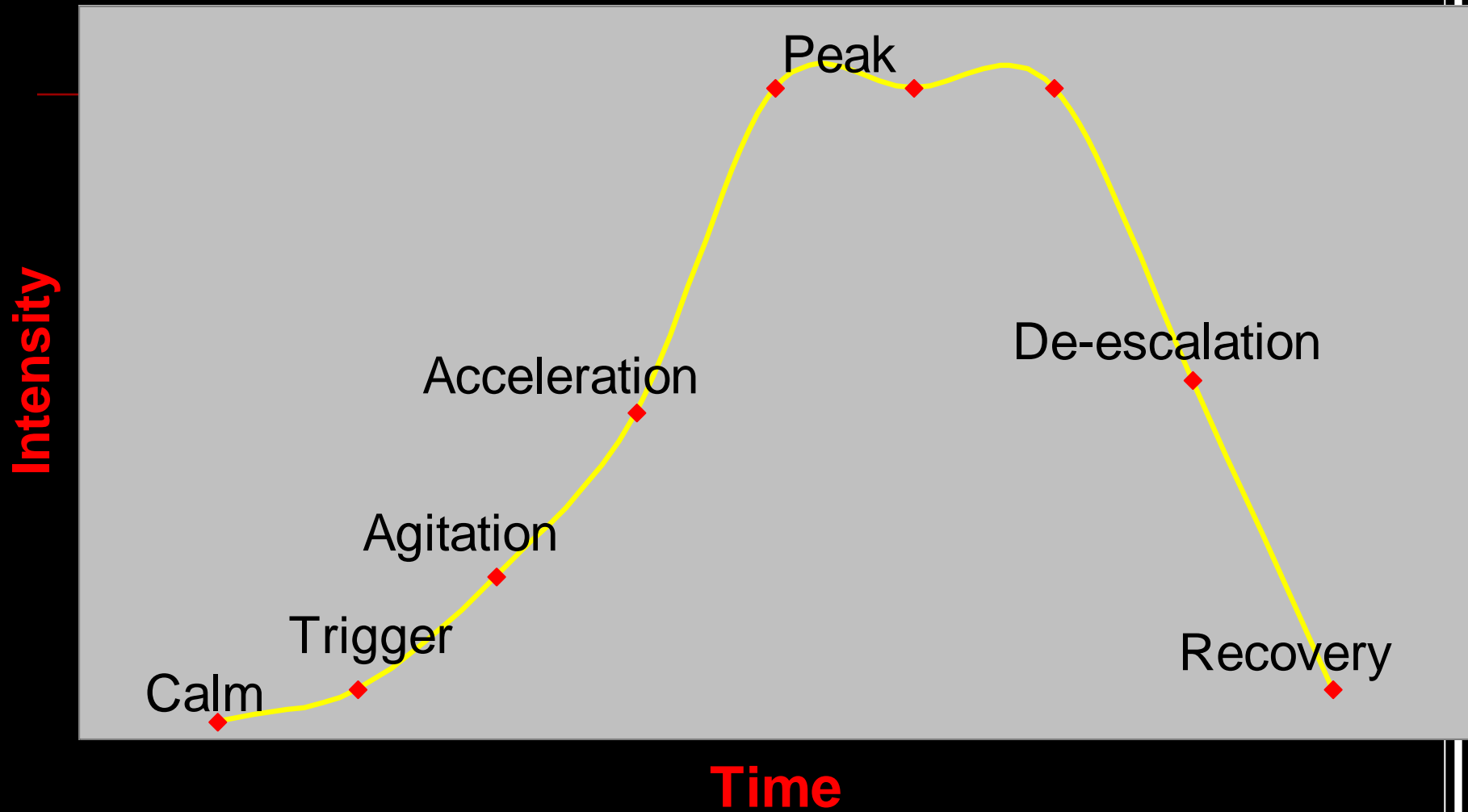
# Phases of Escalating Behavior



# Phases of Escalating Behavior



# Phases of Escalating Behavior



# Child Misbehavior: Behavior Management Consideration #2

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- Identify and address good behavior.
  - Noticing and reinforcing good behaviors is most important thing you can do to limit behavior problems.
  - Builds relationship – “Money in the Bank”
  - Mutually inclusive behaviors.
  - 4 to 1 ratio

# Child Misbehavior: Behavior Management Consideration #3

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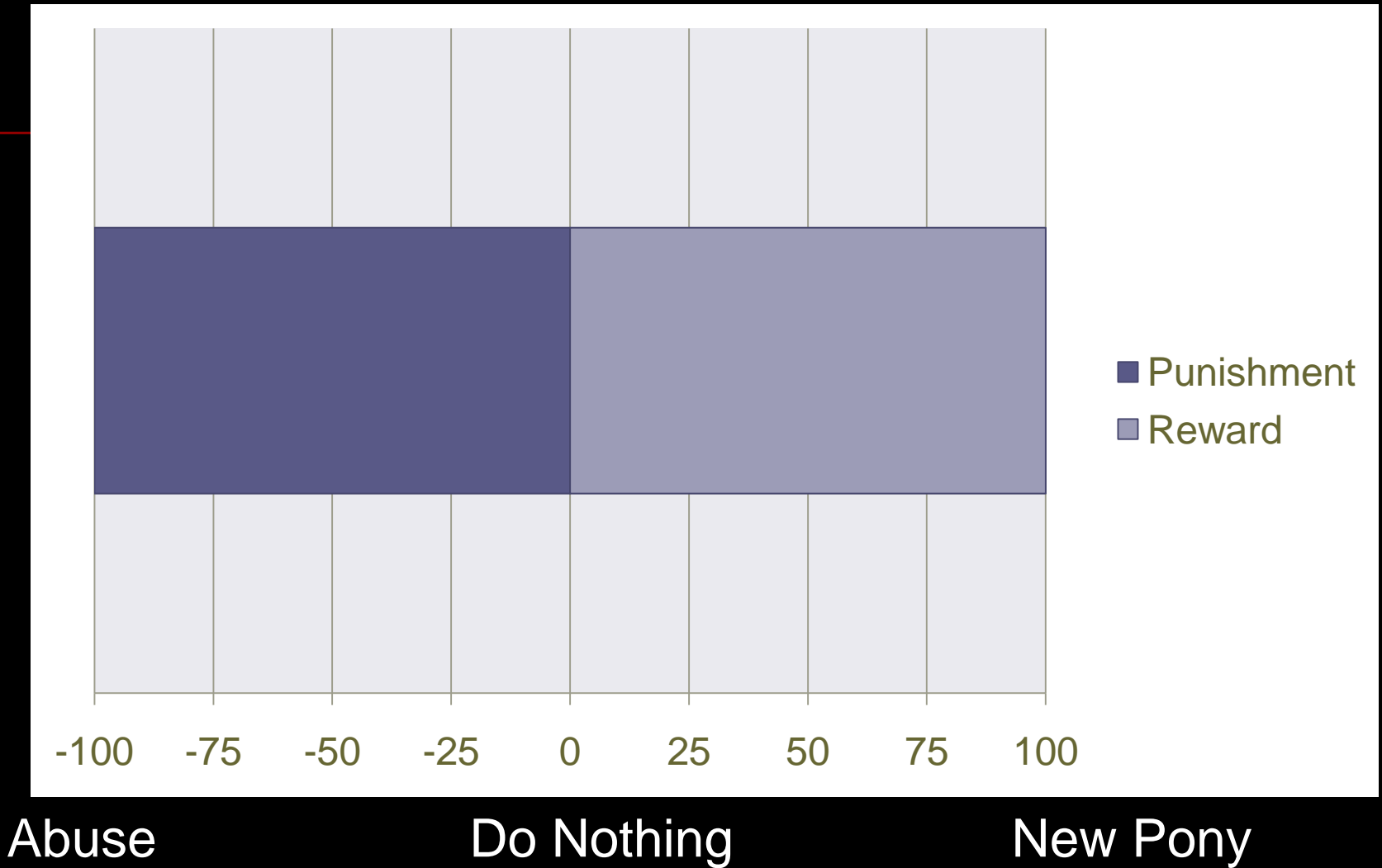
- Identify and Address Skills Deficits While Maintaining Appropriate Expectations
  - Accommodation versus Accountability
  - One without the other is useless.
  - Must start with accommodations then add in accountability.
    - Learning, Language, Mood, ADHD, Family Circumstances, etc.
  - I want the child to control whatever he or she can in regard to behavior. Even if it is only 50%.
  - Clearly defined limits and preplanned consequences for behavior.

# Child Misbehavior: Behavior Management Consideration #4

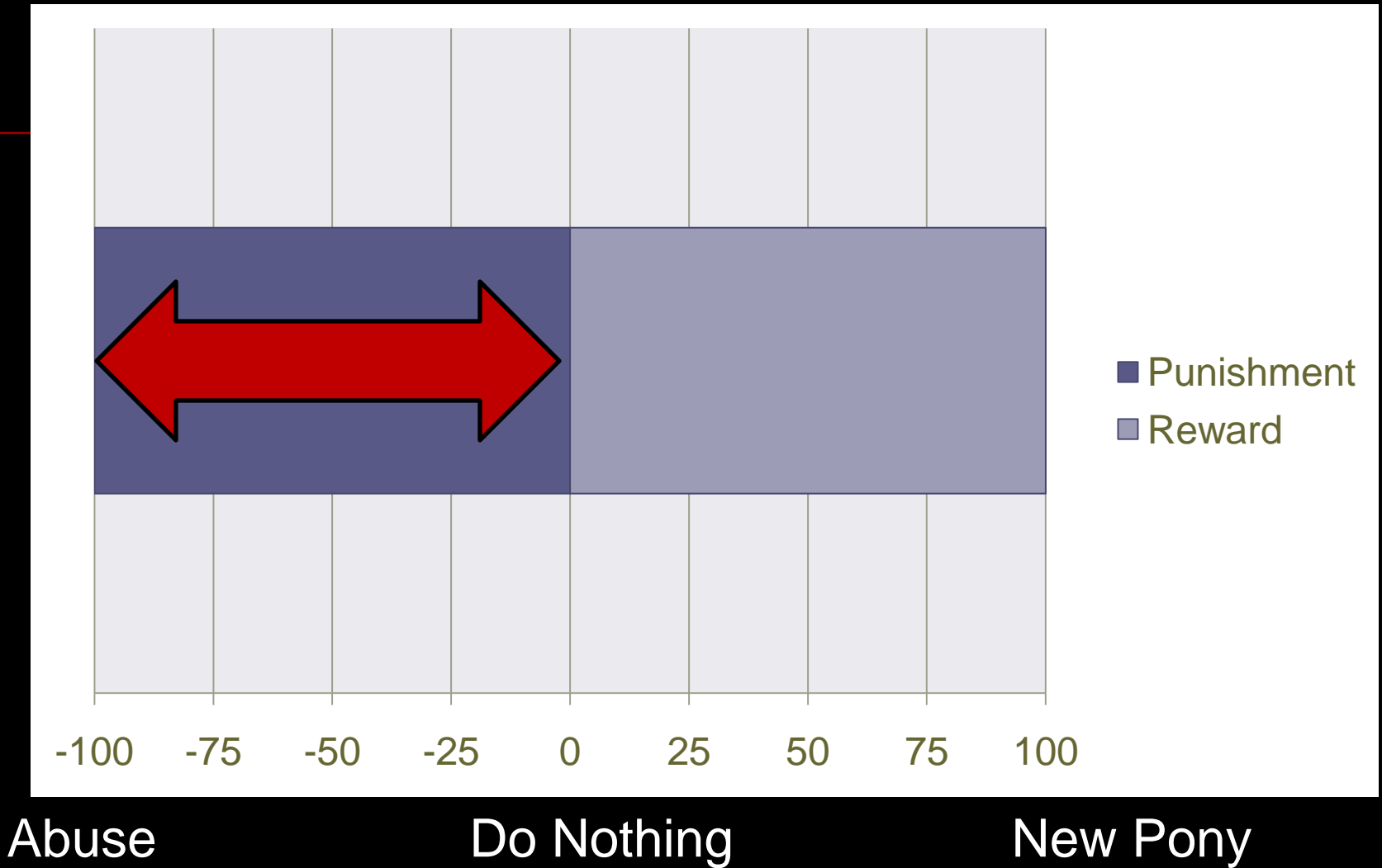
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- How the child perceives the world should be very different depending on his/her behavior.
  - No shades of gray early in behavior change process.
  - See next slides
  - Barriers:
    - Guilt
    - Anger/Grudge
    - Personal Desires
    - Fairness to other children
    - Love

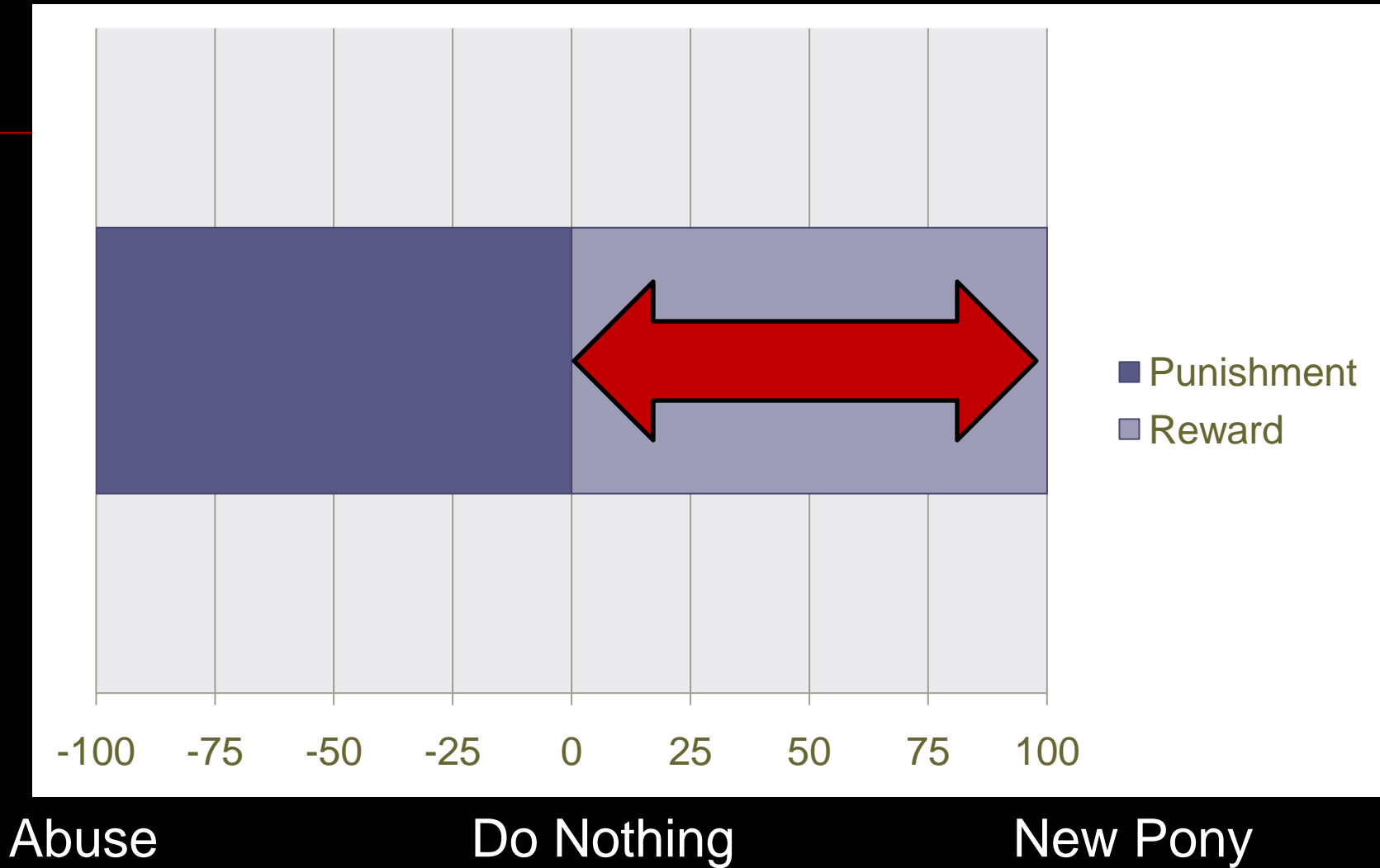
# Child's Perception: +/- Consequences



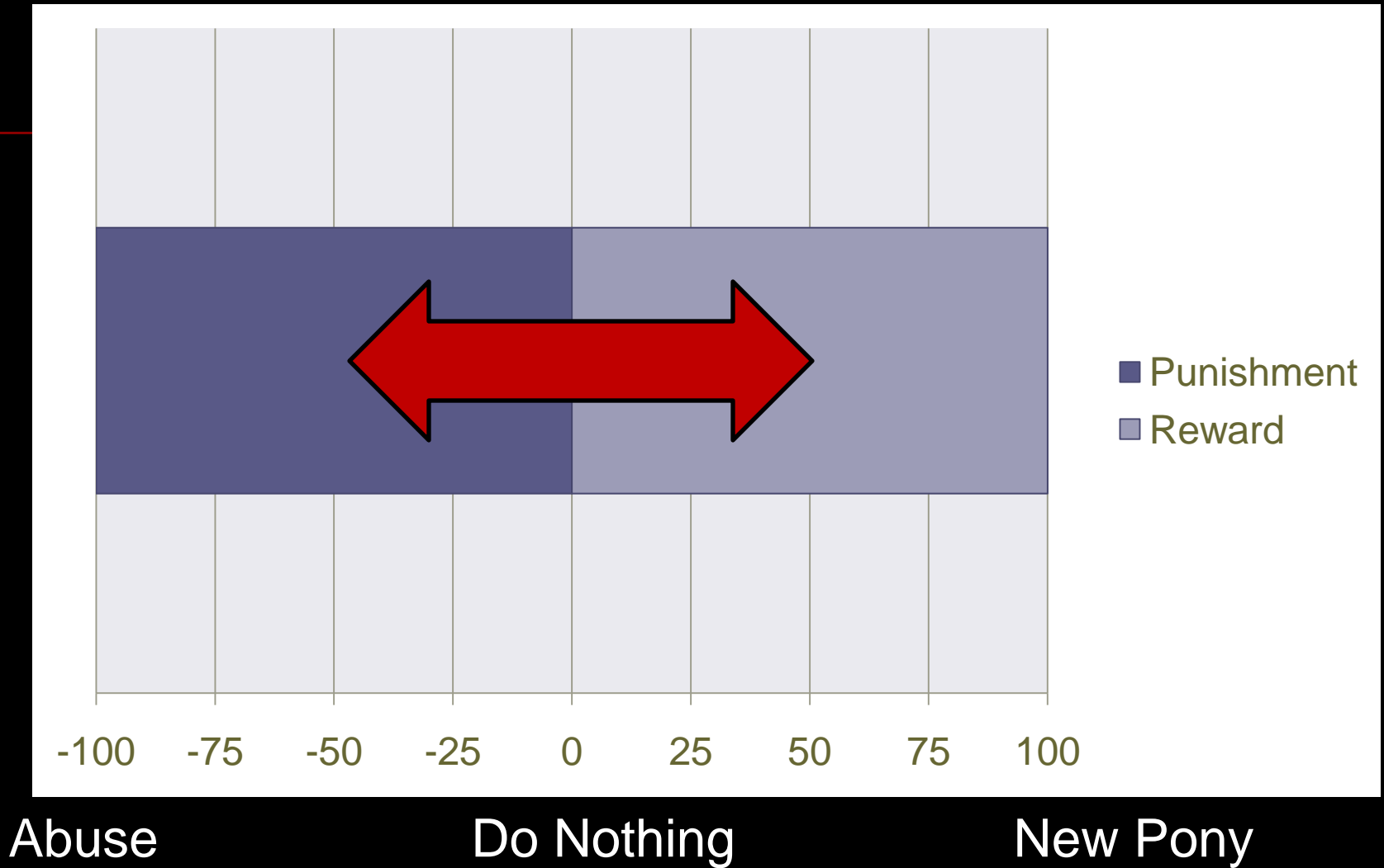
# Child's Perception: +/- Consequences



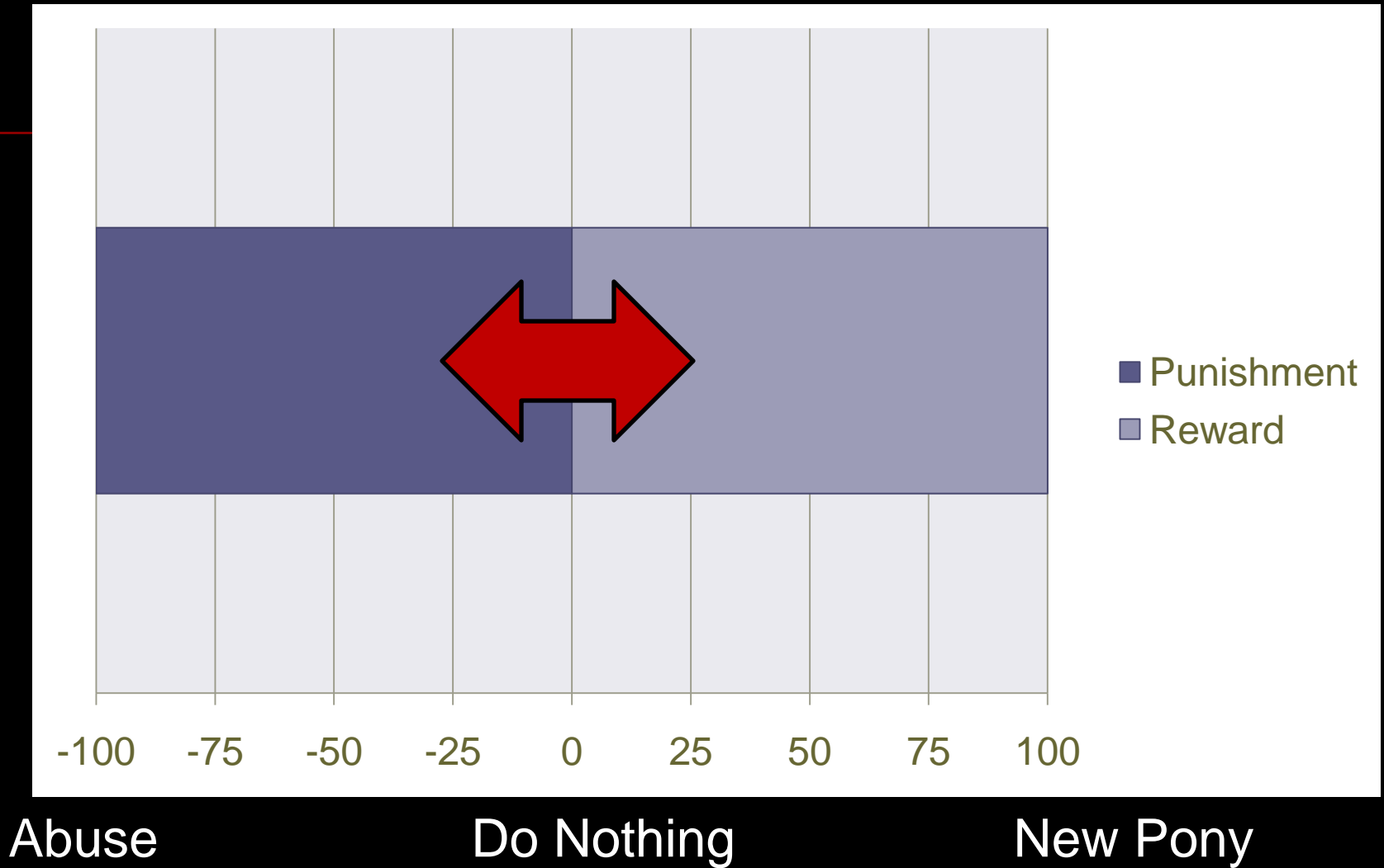
# Child's Perception: +/- Consequences



# Rewards Versus Punishment



# Rewards Versus Punishment



# Child Misbehavior: Behavior Management Consideration #5

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- Immediacy of Consequences – Good and Bad Ones
  - Soap box issues.
  - Children often do not fully associate delayed consequences to their own behavior.
    - “Mom got made.”
    - “I got lucky.”
  - Delayed consequences waste learning opportunities and cloud the message.
  - 1,2,3 Magic
  - Check marks can be used to bypass.

# Child Misbehavior: Behavior Management Consideration #6

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## ■ Small Consequences

- Large consequences may be overwhelming.
- All about learning opportunities – large consequences limit the number of learning opportunities.
- May end up with the same size pile of consequences but # of opportunities to learn has increased.

## ■ Both Small and Immediate are Necessary!

- Small and immediate consequences are the key.
- Not small or immediate consequences.
- Survey of children following blow-up – personal attributions are frequent.

# Child Misbehavior: Behavior Management Consideration #7

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- Limit Emotional Responses to Child's Behavior
  - Calm, even response.
  - Your emotion clouds the message.
  - Child can't be expected to control behavior if teachers are out of control. – Modeling Effect
  - “Dirty Harry Parenting” – Not exactly accurate but memorable.
  - “Say Less, Do More” – Charlie Brown's Teacher
  - “Use your feet, not your mouth.”
  - Language is extremely important. Don't leave room for assumptions.
    - “I wish you could play with that toy, but .....
    - “I think you are a great kid, but .....

# Child Misbehavior: Behavior Management Consideration #8

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- Don't Take Misbehavior Personal
  - You aren't that important.
  - Most children rarely think of you outside of school.
  - They have other concerns that are more important to them.
  - Rarely is misbehavior personal.
  - If it is, something needs to change.

# Child Misbehavior: Behavior Management Consideration #9

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- Child Misbehavior Can't Be Changed Without Changing Your Behavior First.
  - If you behave the same old way toward the child, they will behave the same old way toward you.
  - Misbehavior in the home/classroom has to be changed in the home/classroom.
  - No one can take a child out and “fix” them.
  - ***Sad But True.***

# Child Misbehavior: Behavior Management Consideration #10

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- Work toward engaging parents in the behavior change process.
  - Acknowledge Difficulty
    - Parenting a defiant child is extremely hard.
    - Acknowledge the desire to have you fix the child.
  - Give Hope
    - Be hopeful yourself.
    - Magnify change and/or maintenance.

# Child Misbehavior: Behavior Management Consideration #10 - Continued

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- Work toward engaging parents in the behavior change process.
  - Set Appropriate Expectations
    - Parent Role
    - Child's Role
    - The future
  - Manage guilt early and often
    - “You didn't cause this but have to deal with it.”

# Child Misbehavior: Behavior Management Consideration #10 - Continued

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- Work toward engaging parents in the behavior change process.
  - Keep it simple.
    - “Shampoo Bottle”
    - Simple language – “Rinse and Repeat”

# Child Misbehavior: Behavior Management Consideration #11

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- Understand the limitations of parent involvement in school problems.
  - Don't expect parent involvement to save the day.
    - It won't .....
      - Delayed consequences are typically ineffective – remember earlier slides.
    - .... and it doesn't have to.
      - Stimulus Discrimination

# Child Misbehavior: Behavior Management Consideration #12

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- Understand what function behavior serves.
  - Every behavior has a purpose/function.
    - May be hard to tell which one(s).
    - May be multiple functions.
  - Different functions of behavior require different responses.
  - Sometimes a hug is what is needed.
  - Not everything requires a consequence.
  
- Most behaviors don't require a FBA.
  - Only those that don't respond well to the basics we have talked about today.

# Questions and Answers

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