

# Unpacking the Rage Cycle

## *A Tool to Assist in Identifying Support*

Use the Unpacking the Rage Cycle tool to identify signals that the youth is in danger of becoming dysregulated and may not be able to maintain safe behavior without support and co-regulation from others. Review the guidance below for the Unpacking the Rage Cycle tool before completing the tool. Working with a team that is familiar with the youth can result in a more robust plan, however the tool can be used by a single team member, reviewed with others, and revised as needed. When possible, include the youth in the planning.

Prior to completing the Unpacking the Rage Cycle tool, it is helpful to first use the How Behaviors Develop: What Lies at the Core tool to discuss and identify contributing factors to the development of behavior. This information can guide the team to consider a broad range of supports that will address multiple factors that may be causing behaviors to develop and escalate. The How Behaviors Develop: What Lies at the Core tool can be found in the “Learn” section of the [Understanding Behaviors: A Framework for Intervention Navigation Essentials](#) toolkit.

### Guidance for Completion of Unpacking the Rage Cycle Tool

- 1. Describe the Dysregulated or Rage Behavior.** Explain what the behavior looks like. Use words that describe the behavior such as kicking furniture, hitting self, hitting others, running out of the room, or screaming. Avoid words such as tantrum, melt-down, aggression, etc. These words can be interpreted in a variety of ways.
- 2. Describe Rumbling.** Provide a description of what it looks like when the youth begins to Rumble. Be descriptive about how their face and body may look or what they may say. Describe actions or reactions that may be observed. The earlier that you can identify Rumbling, the more successful you will be in preventing an escalation.
- 3. Describe the Daily Supports.** Explain what helps keep the youth regulated throughout the day. These are the supports that should be available at all times and in all environments. If there are times when these are not available, that may be a time when the youth is at high risk to begin to Rumble and become dysregulated.
- 4. Identify Supports for Rumbling.** Once a youth begins to show signs of dysregulation and Rumbling, what supports need to be available? How should others act? What daily supports might need to be enhanced? This stage of the Rage Cycle is the time to take action quickly. It is your opportunity to avoid intense dysregulation and concerning behaviors.
- 5. Identify Supports During Rage.** If the supports provided in the Rumbling stage are not sufficient and the youth has intense dysregulation or Rage, support is still needed. Identify supports that will be provided, including what others will or will not do.
- 6. Identify Supports for Recovery.** Once the youth shows signs of moving through the Rage, supports may need to change or modified. Identify the supports that will help the youth become regulated, Recover, and be able to gradually return to their daily routine.

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## Regulated

Daily Supports that help  
avoid the Rage Cycle

## Rumbling

(Beginning to Dysregulate)

Describe Rumbling:

Strategies for Rumbling

## Rage

(Completely Dysregulated)

Describe the Dysregulated  
Behavior

## Recovery

Supports During Rage  
(Dysregulation)

Strategies to Assist to Regain  
Regulation and Recover

