

## **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION OF STUDENTS**

### **Background**

The District is committed to providing a safe, personally secure and respectful environment for all students and staff. All students and staff members are expected to contribute to and maintain this environment. Physical aggression or threats of a physical nature by students compromise safety.

Prevention is the best method of maintaining a safe, personally secure and respectful environment. The responsive provision of positive educational/ behavioural interventions and mental health supports for all students who need them in a safe and least-restrictive environment is considered best practice. It may be necessary, in some very exceptional emergent circumstances where the behavior of the student poses imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others, including school personnel, for trained staff members to actively manage the physically aggressive behaviour of students by using reasonable physical restraint or seclusion.

The decision to use reasonable physical restraint or seclusion is guided by professional judgment of staff in exceptional emergent circumstances not as an intervention or treatment procedure. The restraint or seclusion process shall involve four (4) basic steps: physical restraint or seclusion, notification, debriefing, written documentation and follow up.

Staff will have the full support of the District in their efforts to maintain a safe environment to the extent that their actions comply with relevant legislation, *Provincial Guidelines –Physical Restraint and Seclusion in School Settings* and District administrative procedures governing the physical restraint or seclusion of students.

### **Definitions**

Behaviour: The actions by which an individual adjusts to his or her environment. It is commonly understood that behaviour is communication. It is the impact of the behaviour that dictates whether a behaviour is negative or positive.

Understanding that behaviour is communication, the purpose of these guidelines is to promote a response that protects both the individual and other's safety and well-being.

Physical Restraint is a method of restricting another person's freedom of movement or mobility – in order to secure and maintain the safety of the person or the safety of others. The provision of a 'physical escort', i.e., temporary touching or holding of a student's hand, wrist, arm, shoulder or back for the purpose of accompanying and inducing a student who is acting out to walk to a safe location, does not constitute physical restraint.

The provision of physical guidance, or prompting of a student when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, or providing comfort also does not constitute physical restraint.

Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a person, alone in a room, enclosure, or space which the person is physically prevented from leaving.

Behaviour strategies, such as ‘time out’, used for social reinforcement as part of a behaviour plan, are not considered ‘seclusion’.

The term seclusion does not apply where a student has personally requested to be in a different/secluded location/space.

Time-out is the removal of a child from an apparently reinforcing setting to a presumably non-reinforcing setting for a specified and limited period of time. Time-out involves removing a student from sources of positive reinforcement as a consequence of a specific undesired behaviour.

Time-out is only one option along a continuum of behaviour interventions supporting behaviour change. Time-out can be implemented on several different levels, ranging from quiet time in the regular classroom to a time-out room in the school.

Typically, time-out is used in tandem with positive interventions that can maximize student learning and assist in the acquisition of replacement behaviours.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Gerrig, Richard J. & Philip G. Zimbardo. *Psychology And Life*, 16/e. Published by Allyn and Bacon, Boston, MA. Copyright (c) 2002 by Pearson Education. Information found on American Psychology Association (APA) website July 10, 2014:  
<http://www.apa.org/research/action/glossary.aspx>

From: pg. 1 Provincial Guidelines—Physical Restraint and Seclusion in School Settings

## **Procedures**

1. Staff members are expected to speak and act towards students with respect and dignity.
2. There is a continuum of interventions in the management of disruptive behaviours.
3. Effective implementation of school-wide programs that support positive behavior, such as Positive Behaviour Intervention Supports (PBIS), are linked to greater academic achievement among students, significantly fewer disciplinary problems, increased constructive instructional time, and to increased perception of safer teaching and learning environments (pg. 2 *Provincial Guidelines—Physical Restraint and Seclusion in School Settings*)
4. Behaviour interventions for all students emphasize prevention and positive behavior supports. Prevention is the first step in developing and implementing proactive strategies to minimize physical aggression or threats of a physical nature. Every effort must be made to employ preventative actions that preclude the need for the use of physical restraint or seclusion.
5. For students whose pattern of behavior impedes their learning or the learning of others, a functional behavior assessment is recommended to inform the development of behavior intervention plan. These plans incorporate positive behavior interventions, and include instruction in appropriate behavior and strategies that will help students to learn to regulate

and de-escalate their behavior. Opportunities for parents and where appropriate, students to be consulted in the development of these plans must be offered.

6. Positive educational/ behavior interventions and mental health supports are provided routinely for all students who need them, and they are provided in a safe and least restrictive environment. School and District staff are aware of and engage the assistance of additional program, supports, and services that may be available in our community.
7. For each student whose behavior could potentially pose imminent danger of harm to self or others, the school-based team or the student's individual education planning team must develop positive behavior supports and interventions, behavior plans, emergency or safety plans to be attached to the student's individual education plan (IEP), reviewed regularly, and at least, annually. Opportunities for parents and, where appropriate, students to be consulted in the development of these plans must be offered.
8. Prevention may not always be successful and in given exceptional and emergent situations it may be necessary, in the opinion of staff, to apply reasonable physical restraint or seclusion.
9. Physical restraint or seclusion is used only in exceptional circumstances where the behavior of a student poses imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others, including school personnel, and where less restrictive interventions have been ineffective in ending imminent danger of serious physical harm. Restraint or seclusion is discontinued once imminent danger or serious physical self-harm or harm to others has dissipated. (pg. 3 *Provincial Guidelines—Physical Restraint and Seclusion in School Settings*)
10. Neither restraint nor seclusion are used as a punishment, discipline, or to force compliance in an educational/ learning setting.
11. Physical restraint or seclusion is to be applied in the spirit of in loco parentis; that is in a fair, judicious, and kind manner.
12. Emergency procedures and resources are required when staff determine that the use of physical restraint or seclusion is not a safe option.

Reference: Sections 6, 7, 17, 20, 22, 65, 85 School Act  
Civil Rights Protection Act  
Human Rights Code  
Youth Criminal Justice Act  
WorkSafe BC Regulation  
ERASE Level 1, 2, 3 Pullouts  
Provincial Guidelines – Physical Restraint and Seclusion in School Settings  
Safe, Caring, Orderly Schools  
Special Education Services – A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

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