

AP 354 - PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION OF STUDENTS

Background

In alignment with the Ministry document *Provincial Guidelines – Physical Restraint and Seclusion in School Settings*, our District believes:

- Every effort should be made to structure learning environments and to provide learning supports that make physical restraint and seclusion unnecessary.
- School personnel will implement effective supports and interventions to
- prevent and de-escalate potentially unsafe situations.
- There is no evidence that using restraint or seclusion is effective in reducing the
- occurrence of the problematic behaviours that frequently precipitate their use. There is a
- growing body of knowledge that shows that continued use can cause harm.
- The overarching goal of learning environment design is the creative use of space to facilitate and support positive student learning experiences and will align with AP 104 – District Code of Conduct, which is based on educative, restorative, and preventative practices.
- Staff will work collaboratively to maintain a safe environment and 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.
- Effective implementation of preventative school-wide programs is 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).
- Neither restraint nor seclusion are to be used as a punishment, discipline, or to force compliance in an educational/ learning setting. If patterns of restraint or seclusion develop, behaviour intervention strategies must be revised in a timely manner.

Definitions

Behaviour: actions by which an individual adjusts to their environment. It is commonly understood that behaviour is communication.

Physical restraint: immobilization through direct, temporary contact with the resisting student in a controlled manner for the purpose of preventing the student from injuring themselves, others.

The provision of a 'physical escort', i.e., temporary touching or gentle 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: involuntary confinement of a person, alone in a room, enclosure, or space from which the person is physically prevented from leaving.

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

Time-out: removal of a child from an apparently reinforcing setting to a presumably non-reinforcing setting for a specified and limited period. 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 quiet time in an alternate location in the school. Breaks are often a more positive term or approach to time-out strategy. Typically, time-out/breaks are used in tandem with positive interventions that can maximize student learning and assist in the acquisition of replacement behaviours.

Preventative Expectations

1. Staff members are expected to speak and act towards students with respect and dignity.
2. Behaviour management interventions emphasize prevention and positive supports, and every effort is made to preclude the need for restraint.
3. Every effort must be made to employ preventative actions that preclude the need for the use of physical restraint or seclusion.
4. Positive educational/behavior interventions and mental health supports are provided for students in a safe and least restrictive environment.
5. Students whose behavior could potentially pose danger to self or others, must have regularly reviewed safety plans. It is expected, parents, and (where appropriate) students are provided consultation opportunities in the development of all plans.
6. The District will encourage all staff to participate in training opportunities in positive behavior interventions and supports and de-escalation strategies.
7. The District will encourage specialized staff to participate in training opportunities in positive behavior interventions and supports, conflict de-escalation, crisis de-escalation, and non-violent crisis intervention techniques to enable them to defuse conflict and crisis situations and safely use physical restraint and seclusion.

Procedures

1. Physical restraint or seclusion is used only in crisis situations, which include:
 - Physical aggression towards staff or students;
 - Self-harming behaviour which endangers the student;
2. Restraint or seclusion is immediately discontinued once the immediate danger of serious physical self-harm or harm to others has dissipated.

3. Any restraint or seclusion should be in alignment with the District's identified non-violent crisis intervention processes and be conducted by trained individuals to the greatest extent possible.
4. Any restraint or seclusion should provide the greatest dignity possible to the student and utilize the least amount of force necessary.
5. Follow up after the incident (by the end of the school day on which it occurred) must include notification including a description of the incident to:
 - School Principal;
 - Parents/guardians by the Principal;
 - Inclusive Learning Administrator;
 - Superintendent (or designate) as soon as possible.
6. Written documentation and follow-up of every instance where physical restraint and/or seclusion of a student occurs shall include statements describing the incident and naming all individuals involved, including witnesses.
7. Debriefing is to occur for the student who was restrained or secluded, the staff involved and students who witnessed the restraint or seclusion incident. The purpose of debriefing is to re-establish and maintain a safe learning environment.
8. The completion of a District Threat Violence Report form (Form 171-1) and/or a WorkSafe Form 6A, if necessary, which is forwarded to the Occupational Health and Safety Manager and Inclusive Learning Director via sss-1@sd79.bc.ca.
9. Physical restraint or seclusion is to be applied in the spirit of in loco parentis; that is in a fair, judicious, and kind manner and only to prevent harm to self or others.
10. Emergency procedures and resources are required when staff determine that physical restraint or seclusion is not a safe option.

Reference:

Provincial Guidelines – Physical Restraint and Seclusion in School Settings (June 2015)
Safe, Caring, Orderly Schools: A Guide (2008)
Special Education Services – A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines (2016)
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.

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