

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

Background

The District is committed to providing a safe, personally secure and respectful environment for students and employees. All students and employees are expected to contribute to and maintain this environment. Safety is compromised when a student's behaviour is dangerous to self or others.

Prevention is the best method of maintaining a safe, personally secure and respectful environment and positive educational/behavioural interventions are provided to students routinely.

District employees routinely use a variety of progressive interventions to respond to a range of disruptive student behaviours and every effort will be made by employees to use preventative actions that preclude the need to use physical restraint. In exceptional circumstances when student behaviour presents an imminent danger to self or others, including school employees, and where less restrictive interventions have been ineffective in ending imminent danger of serious physical harm, it may be necessary for employees to use reasonable physical restraint. Restraint is never used as a punishment, discipline, or to force compliance with respect to educational learning outcomes.

The decision to use reasonable physical restraint is guided by the professional judgement of District employees. Employees 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 and District policy and procedures governing the physical restraint of students.

Definitions

Physical Escort: is 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. Physical escort does not constitute physical restraint.

Physical Guidance: is the prompting of a student when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, or providing comfort. Physical guidance does not constitute physical restraint.

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.

Seclusion: is the involuntary confinement of a person, alone in a room, enclosure or space from which the person is physically prevented from leaving. Behaviour strategies, such as time out (removal from an apparent reinforcing setting to a presumably non-reinforcing setting for a specified and limited period of time), 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 or space.

Procedures

1. District Responsibilities

The District shall:

- 1.1. Provide opportunities for District and school staff to acquire the training necessary to conduct Functional Behaviour Assessments, write Individual Education Plans, Positive Behaviour Support Plans and Employee Safety Plans.
- 1.2. Provide opportunities for District and school staff to acquire the training necessary to work with students in situations where there is a potential for behaviour that presents a danger to self or others.
- 1.3. Have procedures in place to notify the Superintendent when physical restraint has been used by a school employee in response to an incident which may require additional District support.
- 1.4. Have a process and schedule for regular review of the physical restraint procedures to ensure alignment with current research/practice.

2. School Responsibilities

The school based case manager and classroom teacher(s) together with other members of the team (e.g. administrator(s), support staff, members of the Learning Services team) will:

- 2.1. Investigate underlying causes of behavioural incidents (e.g., Functional Behaviour Assessment, analysis, interview).
- 2.2. Develop an appropriate plan of intervention (e.g., Individual Education Plan, Positive Behaviour Support Plan, Employee Safety Plan); this may also involve an Inter-Ministerial Case Meeting.
- 2.3. Monitor the plan of intervention on an ongoing basis, and revise as necessary.
- 2.4. Notify the Director of Instruction (Learning Services and/or Field Services), as soon as possible after physical restraint has been used by a school employee and additional District support is required.
- 2.5. Inform parent(s) as soon as possible after the restraint has occurred.

3. Guiding Principles

- 3.1. Staff members are expected to speak and act towards students with respect and dignity. There is a continuum of progressive interventions in the management of disruptive behaviours, which may include:
 - 3.1.1. Verbal and non-verbal direction to stop or alter behaviour
 - 3.1.2. Verbal de-escalation strategies
 - 3.1.3. Re-stating expectations
 - 3.1.4. Redirection
 - 3.1.5. Changing group composition and dynamics
 - 3.1.6. Providing choices
 - 3.1.7. Setting limits and providing consequences
 - 3.1.8. Allowing the individual time to de-escalate (e.g. vent verbally, movement break)
 - 3.1.9. Removing the student to an alternate location

- 3.1.10. Utilizing physical escort
 - 3.1.11. Removing others, thereby isolating the individual
 - 3.1.12. Calling for assistance from other employees
 - 3.1.13. Physically restraining the student until the student is regulated.
- 3.2. Prevention and de-escalation is the first step in developing and implementing proactive strategies to minimize physical aggression or threats of a physical nature. Prevention and de-escalation strategies may not always have the desired effect and in certain situations it may be necessary, in the opinion of staff, to apply reasonable physical restraint.
- 3.2.1. Physical restraint is to be applied in the spirit of *in loco parentis*; that is in a fair, judicious, and kind manner. Physical restraint may only occur when the behaviour of the 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.
 - 3.2.2. Physical restraint may never be used as a punishment, discipline, or to force compliance in an educational learning setting.
 - 3.2.3. All school members involved in implementing physical restraint protocols are to be trained in positive behaviour intervention supports, preferably Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Training (CPI), to ensure that positive behaviour interventions, supports, and de-escalation techniques are used.
 - 3.2.4. Physical restraint must be discontinued once imminent danger or serious self-harm or harm to others has dissipated and the student is self-regulated.
 - 3.2.5. Where the use of physical restraint may be a potential part of the educational program of a student with diverse needs, procedures will be clearly laid out in that student's IEP and/or Positive Behaviour Support Plan, and all other procedures stated in this Administrative Procedure shall be followed.
 - 3.2.6. In cases where a student's behaviour could potentially cause harm to self or others, the student's educational planning includes development of a formal behaviour support plan, and an employee safety plan detailing physical restraint procedures. This information will be shared with the parent, any staff working with the student, and the student as applicable and appropriate.
 - 3.2.7. In cases of repeated use of physical restraint for an individual student a review of prevention/intervention strategies will be conducted. When staff determine that the use of physical restraint is not a safe option, emergency services need to be accessed by contacting 911.

4. Restraint Process

4.1. Physical Restraint

Physical restraint must be conducted in accordance with CPI principles, and:

- 4.1.1. With calm, reassuring verbal and non-verbal communication.
- 4.1.2. With brief neutral and reassuring statements that give reasons for the restraint and describe the necessary behaviour for ending the restraint.
- 4.1.3. With the least amount of physical force to protect the student and the restrainer.

4.1.4. With the least amount of physical, emotional or psychological impact on others.

4.1.5. In the presence of another adult when practical.

4.2. Notification

Notification of the restraint must be made as soon as possible (normally before the end of classes on the school day on which the incident has occurred) to the Principal and the parents. The Principal will contact applicable District personnel, including the Directors of Instruction, and /or the District Principal of Student Support Services as required.

4.3. Debriefing

A debriefing process is to occur for the student who was restrained, the staff involved and students who witnessed the restraint incident. The purpose of the debriefing process is to re-establish and maintain a safe learning environment and supportive relationships.

4.4. Documentation follow-up

An incident of physical restraint must be documented appropriately and is to include some of the following:

4.4.1. Written statements describing the incident and naming the people involved.

4.4.2. A meeting with concerned parties, including parents of the student, and where possible with the student to discuss the restraint incident and strategies for preventing a reoccurrence, including a review of the student behaviour plan.

4.4.3. The completion of current District documentation (i.e. Violent Incident Investigation Report form/ Behaviour Log) if staff were injured or threatened, in accordance with WCB regulations.

5. The District does not support the use of seclusion or the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room, enclosure, or space which the student is physically prevented from leaving.

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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