

USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINTS, TIMEOUT AND SECLUSION

Background

HPSD is committed to providing inclusive environments that are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe. It is recognized that for certain students, on rare occasions, the use of physical intervention on the part of staff may be required to protect students or themselves from physically injurious behaviour. Only staff members trained in applying an approved physical restraint should apply this response.

Student behaviour in rare circumstances may result in the use of temporary seclusion in order to ensure the student is able to de-escalate the behaviour and return to an inclusive setting. Staff members shall use the least restrictive method of intervention to prevent a student from harming self, or others. The use of physical restraint and/or seclusion shall only be used as a last resort.

A key concept in positive behaviour support is prevention. Safety or crisis management strategies are to promote the rights of all children/students to be treated with dignity and respect. Behaviour interventions for all students must emphasize prevention and positive behaviour supports. Every effort shall be made to use preventative actions that preclude the need for the use of physical restraint or seclusion. In order to reduce the need for physical restraint or seclusion, it is necessary to anticipate, prevent and review the potentially harmful behaviour(s) and to evaluate and review the team response on an ongoing basis. *Neither restraint nor seclusion are to be used as a punishment, discipline or to force compliance in an educational/learning environment.* All staff members shall attempt to resolve disruptive or out-of-control behaviour by using the least intrusive means possible.

Definitions

Physical Restraint – a method of restricting another person’s freedom of movement or mobility when the person is exhibiting “out of control” behaviour that poses a threat to self or others. Physical restraints are used as a last resort when less intrusive measures have not served to de-escalate the individual.

The provision of physical escort as in temporarily touching or holding a student’s hand, wrist, arm, shoulder or back for the purposes of accompanying a student who is acting out to walk to a safe location, does not constitute physical restraint.

Seclusion – the involuntary confinement of a person, alone in a room, enclosure or space, which the person is physically prevented from leaving and is used to prevent injury to self or others. Behaviour strategies, such a timeout, used for social reinforcement are not considered “seclusion” nor are occasions where a student has personally requested to be in a different/secluded location or space.

Timeout – is the removal of a student from an apparently reinforcing setting to a presumably non-reinforcing setting for a specified and limited period of time.

Contingent Observation or Non-exclusion Timeout – the student is removed from the reinforcing activity, but is still allowed to observe the activity.

Exclusion Timeout – the student is excluded from the reinforcing activity and is not allowed to participate or observe the activity.

Seclusion Timeout – the student is removed from the reinforcing activity area, placed in a separate room and supervised during the entire seclusion timeout.

Procedures

1. Use of Physical Restraint

Physical restraint is used only in exceptional situations where the behaviour of a student poses imminent danger of physical harm to self or others. Restraint is discontinued once imminent danger of physical self-harm or harm to others has dissipated.

- 1.1. If proceeding to the use of a physical intervention, responders shall have current training in *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*® with demonstrated competence in the application of physical interventions.
- 1.2. Each elementary and secondary school shall have a minimum of three staff members trained in *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*® inclusive of the use of physical interventions. HPSP employees who are trained instructors will provide training. The following practices shall be followed:
 - 1.2.1. Physical restraint shall be conducted in the presence of another adult.
 - 1.2.2. Only safe, effective physical intervention strategies approved by HPSP may be used with students. These strategies are referred to as *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*® *Physical Interventions*.
 - 1.2.3. Physical restraint shall not exceed that which is required to control the student and shall only be employed until the student has gained self-control or is within a safe environment.
 - 1.2.4. The use of physical restraint shall be documented on *Administrative Form 346A - Physical Restraint/Seclusion Incident Report* by the staff members involved in the restraint and submitted to the school Principal on the day of occurrence. A copy will be provided to the parent and HPSP Supervisor of Inclusion.
 - 1.2.5. The Principal shall notify the parent/guardian of the incidents prior to the student returning home or as soon as practical.
 - 1.2.6. A debriefing with involved school personnel (and parents and student when possible/applicable) shall take place following an incident, to examine what happened; what caused the incident and what could be changed. This process shall be recorded on *Administrative Form 346B – Physical Restraint Debrief*.
 - 1.2.7. If the behaviour is deemed likely to reoccur, a behavior support plan will be developed and shared with the parent/guardian.

2. Behaviour Support Plans Involving the Inclusion of Physical Restraints

When the use of physical restraint or seclusion of a student is deemed likely to occur on a repeated basis, a Behaviour Support Plan will be developed.

- 2.1. The Behaviour Support plan will be developed in consultation with the parent, administration and learning support team
- 2.2. The following will be included in the student's Behaviour Support Plan:
 - 2.2.1. In specific behavioural terms, when and how physical restraint procedures are to be used;
 - 2.2.2. Details for communication with parents/guardians about the occurrence of all physical restraints; and
 - 2.2.3. A minimum of two review dates to evaluate the effectiveness of the Behaviour Support Plan.
- 2.3. A copy of the plan will be maintained in the Student Record.
- 2.4. All staff members who may be required to use physical restraint procedures must be properly trained in the appropriate procedures prior to implementation of the program and participate in regular review and practice of these procedures.

3. Timeout

The use of timeout, if deemed appropriate, requires well-defined procedures, routines and interventions to prevent and modify problem behaviour. Timeout lies within a continuum of behavioural interventions and exclusion and seclusion timeout should only be used when less restrictive interventions have not been successful.

- 3.1. If timeout is used, strategies must be systematically planned, delivered, supervised and evaluated to determine their effectiveness with individual students.
- 3.2. There must be documented attempts to establish the cause of the behaviour leading to the timeout.
- 3.3. Timeout procedures for specific behaviours must be included as part of the student's behaviour plan and will be communicated to the student, parent, staff and administration.

4. Seclusion

If a student presents behaviours that compromise the safety of others and the student has not presented such behaviours before, the use of seclusion timeout may occur.

- 4.1. Parental permission must be obtained in order to utilize seclusion timeout as a strategy in the behaviour management of their children. If consent is not given, parents must be involved in determining alternate strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviours.
- 4.2. All seclusion environments shall be safe, humane and abide by all building, safety and fire codes.
 - 4.2.1. Any space used for the purpose of seclusion will not jeopardize the student's safety and must:
 - 4.2.1.1. not be used if the student is engaging in self-injurious behaviours;
 - 4.2.1.2. not be locked from either the outside or inside;
 - 4.2.1.3. meet Fire Marshall Standards;
 - 4.2.1.4. not contain items or fixtures that could be harmful to students;
 - 4.2.1.5. be well ventilated and at a suitable temperature;
 - 4.2.1.6. allow students to exit if an emergency occur; and
 - 4.2.1.7. provide the means where adults can visually monitor the student at all times.
- 4.3. A staff member, who is physically present throughout the period of seclusion continuously, visually observes any student placed in seclusion.
- 4.4. The incident shall be documented using *Administrative Form 346C – Seclusion Record* and the parent must be informed.
 - 4.4.1. The staff member shall document the time of entry and time of exit using the documentation log.
- 4.5. The Principal shall notify the parent/guardian of the incidents prior to the student returning home or as soon as possible.

HPSD Forms

[Administrative Form 346A - Physical Restraint/Seclusion Incident Report](#)

[Administrative Form 346B - Physical Restraint Debrief](#)

[Administrative Form 346C - Seclusion Record](#)

Cross Reference

[Administrative Procedure 209 - Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments](#)

[Administrative Procedure 212 - Inclusive Education](#)

References

Seclusion and Physical Restraint in Alberta School Standards, Ministerial Order #42/2019

Standards for Seclusion and Physical Restraint in Alberta Schools

Guidelines for Time-out in Alberta Schools