



Title	Physical Restraint and Seclusion of Students
Effective Date:	September 2016
Approval Date:	
Approving Body:	Board
Supersedes:	

The School Board strives to ensure a safe, orderly and caring school environment for all students and staff.

The Board believes that behaviour interventions for all students emphasize prevention and positive behaviour supports, as well as the implementation of interventions to de-escalate potentially unsafe situations. The purpose of this policy is to develop guidelines that protect the dignity, well-being, and safety of the individual and others (the students, staff, and other individuals) when physical restraint or seclusion is used as a last resort when someone's safety is at risk.

The Board recognizes that the use of emergency physical restraint or seclusion procedures may be necessary when a student presents an imminent danger to themselves or others.

Definitions

1. **Physical Restraint** is defined by the Ministry of Education as "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".

Physical Restraint is not:

- The provision of '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.
- The provision of physical guidance or prompting of a student when teaching a skill or redirecting attention.
- The provision of comfort to a student.

2. **Seclusion** is defined by the Ministry of Education as "the involuntary confinement of a person, alone in a room, enclosure, or space which the person is physically prevented from leaving".

Seclusion is not:

- When a student has personally requested to be in a different/secluded location/space.
- Use of a behaviour strategy, such as time-out, used for social reinforcement as part of a behaviour plan.

3. **Time-out** is the removing of a child from an apparently reinforcing setting to a presumably non-reinforcing setting for a specified and limited period as a consequence of a specific undesired behaviour. 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. Typically, time-out is used in tandem with positive interventions that can maximize student learning and assist in the acquisition of replacement behaviours.

Principles

1. Physical restraint and seclusion procedures are emergency, not treatment, procedures and are used only in exceptional circumstances where a student is in imminent danger of causing harm to self, students, school personnel, or others.
2. All incidents of physical restraint and seclusion or the use of “time out” outside of a classroom that has occurred is documented.
3. All incidents of physical restraint and seclusion will be reported to the school administrator/ designate.
4. All school personnel will be provided with opportunities to participate in training in positive behaviour interventions and supports and de-escalation techniques.
5. All school personnel who work directly with a student in situations where there is a potential for imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others must be trained in crisis intervention and the safe use of physical restraint and seclusion.
6. Parents and, where appropriate, students are offered opportunities to be consulted in the development of positive behaviour supports and interventions, behaviour plans, emergency or safety plans.
7. Prevention/intervention strategies are reviewed and revised in situations where:
 - Repeated use of physical restraint or seclusion for an individual student occurs
 - Multiple use of physical restraint or seclusion occurring within the same classroom
 - Physical restraint or seclusion is repeatedly used by an individual staff member
8. This policy will be reviewed on an as-needed basis by Administration and/or those responsible for developing policy, but no less frequently than once a year to ensure alignment with current research and practice.

Procedures and Guidelines for the use of Physical Restraint and Seclusion in School Settings:

1. Physical restraint and seclusion are used only in exceptional circumstances where a student is in imminent danger of causing harm to self or others.
2. Where a student’s behaviour could cause harm to self or others, restraint or seclusion may be required until such time as the imminent danger of serious harm to self or others has dissipated. Physical restraint and seclusion is to be discontinued once imminent danger or serious self-harm or harm to others has dissipated.
3. Physical restraint and seclusion procedures are only used as an emergency, not treatment procedures. Neither physical restraint nor seclusion procedures are used as punishment, discipline or to force compliance.
4. School personnel will make every effort to structure learning environments, and to provide a variety of learning supports that make physical restraint and seclusion unnecessary.
5. School personnel will implement effective supports and interventions to prevent and de-escalate potentially unsafe situations.
6. All school personnel will be provided with opportunities to participate in training in positive behaviour interventions and supports and de-escalation techniques.
7. The School has on staff, individuals who are trained in positive behaviour intervention supports, conflict de-escalation, and crisis de-escalation, and non-violent crisis intervention techniques to enable them to defuse conflict and crisis situations.
8. All school personnel who work directly with a student in situations where there is a potential for imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others must be trained in crisis intervention and crisis intervention and the safe use of physical restraints.
9. A positive behaviour support plan and a safety plan will be developed for each student whose behaviour could potentially pose imminent danger of harm to self or others. Development of the behaviour plan may include a functional behaviour assessment. These plans are attached to the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP), and are reviewed at least annually.

An **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** outlines the student’s learning outcomes, required learning support services, and instructional and assessment methods.

A **Functional Behaviour Assessment** or other educational assessments are provided for all students whose pattern of behaviour impedes their learning or the learning of others - to inform the development of behaviour plans.

A **Positive Behaviour Support Plan** (behaviour plan) describes positive behaviour intervention supports and conflict de-escalation procedures that are in place. These plans incorporate positive behaviour interventions and include instruction in appropriate behaviour and strategies that will help students learn to de-escalate their behaviour.

A **Safety Plan** is a plan developed by an interdisciplinary team to provide parents and educators guidance for interrupting and redirecting potentially harmful behaviours. A safety plan details emergency and safety procedures which may include the use of physical restraint and seclusion as a last resort when there is a danger to the student, self or others.

10. Parents and, where appropriate, students are offered opportunities to be consulted in the development of positive behaviour supports and interventions, behaviour plans, emergency or safety plans.

11. **Physical restraint** will:

- Follow all health and safety policies or regulations, including WorkSafeBC regulations.
- Be controlled and only undertaken with only as much force as is necessary to avoid harm
- Use the approved restraining techniques
- Never be used in a manner that could, in any way, cause harm to the student, including but not limited to:
 - Restricting the student's breathing;
 - Placing the student face down on the student's stomach or face up on the student's back; or
 - Using mechanical devices;
- Be conducted in the presence of another staff member whenever possible

12. **Seclusion** will:

- Follow all health and safety policies or regulations, including WorkSafe BC regulations.
- Never be used in a manner that could, in any way, cause harm to the student, including but not limited to:
 - Restricting the student's breathing;
 - Placing the student face down on the student's stomach or face up on the student's back; or
 - Using mechanical devices;
- Be conducted in the presence of another staff member whenever possible

Any student placed in **seclusion** will be:

- placed in a safe space free of all items that could cause harm and will not jeopardize the student's health and safety
- continuously visually observed by an adult who is physically in close proximity throughout the period of seclusion
- supported by an adult who is able to communicate in the student's primary language or mode of communication

13. The school will make reasonable efforts to ensure:

- appropriate positive behaviour intervention supports and conflict de-escalation procedures are in place;
- development, by the school-based team, of positive behaviour supports and interventions, behaviour plans, emergency or safety plans for each student whose behaviour could potentially pose imminent danger of harm to self or others; and
- opportunities for parents and, where appropriate, students to be consulted in the development of these plans.

14. All incidents of physical restraint and seclusion will be reported to the school administrator/ designate. This includes the completion of the 'Physical Restraint/Seclusion Incident Report' form.

15. Use of 'time out' outside of a classroom, where a student is sent to an administrator or to another location such as a 'time out' room will be recorded in the '**Time Out Log**'.

16. If a staff member is injured during physical restraint or seclusion, a 'Staff Injury Incident Report' must be completed and given to the Principal in accordance with WorkSafe regulations. This includes the completion of the following forms:

- **Staff Injury Incident Report**
- **Worker's Report of Injury or Occupational Disease to Employer (Form 6A)**
- **Employer's Report of Injury or Occupational Disease**
- **Workplace Violence Risk Assessment (WVRA)**

17. If a student is injured during physical restraint or seclusion, the injury must be documented in the '**Physical Restraint/Seclusion Incident Report**' and given to the Principal.
18. A review/revision of prevention/intervention strategies will occur in cases where there is:
 - Repeated use of physical restraint or seclusion for an individual student
 - Multiple use of physical restraint or seclusion occurring within the same classroom
 - Repeated use of physical restraint or seclusion by an individual staff member
19. This policy will be reviewed on an as-needed basis by Administration and/or those responsible for developing policy, but no less frequently than once a year to ensure alignment with current research and practice.

Guidelines for Communication with School Staff:

1. Follow-up after each incident involving the use of physical restraint or seclusion:
 - a. School staff will notify the principal or designate as soon as possible after an incident and prior to the end of the school day on which the incident occurred.
 - b. The principal or designate will notify the administrator responsible for student support services, as soon as possible after an incident and prior to the end of the school day on which the incident occurred.
2. School staff are required to document every instance of the use of physical restraint or seclusion. Documentation will include the date, time and place of the use of restraint or seclusion; persons involved in the incident and the name of any witnesses to the incident; a description of the incident; and any other pertinent facts.
 - a. School staff is required to use the "Incident Report; Physical Restraint and Seclusion" form
 - b. Completed forms will be will be forwarded to the principal or designate as soon as possible.

Guidelines for Communication with Parents:

1. The school principal or designate will notify parents/guardians as soon as possible after an incident and prior to the end of the school day on which the incident occurred.
2. There will be debriefing scheduled with involved school personnel; parents/guardians of the student; and where possible, with the student – to examine what happened, what caused the incident, and what could be changed (e.g. Preventative and response actions that could be taken in the future, to make the use of physical restraint or seclusion unnecessary).

Regular review of the physical restraint and seclusion policy is done to ensure alignment with current research/practice. The Ministry of Education's new [guidelines on the use of physical restraint and seclusion in schools](#) was used to develop this policy and any updates to this document will initiate a review of this policy.