

AP 338 – Seclusion and Restraint

Background

This procedure is to ensure Abbotsford schools are learning environments that are as safe as possible for all children and adults.

It is expected that school personnel implement pro-active, positive, non-punitive supports and interventions that make the use of seclusion and physical restraint unnecessary.

Procedures

1. Definitions

- 1.1 Seclusion – the involuntary confinement of a person, alone in a room, enclosure or space which the person is physically prevented from leaving. The term seclusion does not apply to the following situations:
 - 1.1.1 When a student has personally requested to be in a different/secluded location/space;
 - 1.1.2 When a student is outside of the regular classroom and possibly alone (but supervised) for a calm or quiet break if these breaks are behaviour strategies which are proactive and are part of the student's daily routine.
- 1.2 Physical Restraint – 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 term physical restraint does not apply to the following situations:
 - 1.2.1 The provision of gentle physical guidance or prompting of a student when teaching a skill, redirecting attention or providing comfort.
 - 1.2.2 A temporary, gentle touch on a student's arm, shoulder or back for the purpose of guiding a student to a safe location. (Be mindful of a student's safety plan. A gentle touch to some students can be a physical trigger for them to act out violently.)

NOTE:

Physical Restraint and Seclusion may only occur when behaviour of a student poses imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others including school personnel, and where less restrictive measures have been ineffective of ending the threat of serious physical harm.

2. General Guidelines

- 2.1 In cases where an individual student could potentially cause harm to self or others the following plans should be collaboratively developed with the principal, teachers, support staff, parents/guardians and, when appropriate, the student:
 - 2.1.1 A Safety Plan detailing the student's triggers, patterns of escalation and appropriate adult responses is collaboratively developed and implemented by all staff* working directly with the student
 - 2.1.2 Based on the data from a Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA) a formal positive Behaviour Support Plan or Behaviour Intervention Plan describing positive behaviour intervention supports and conflict de-escalation procedures is collaboratively developed
- 2.2 A review/revision of prevention/intervention strategies/plans within a school or classroom must occur in cases where there is:
 - 2.2.1 Repeated use of physical restraint or seclusion for an individual student
 - 2.2.2 Multiple use of physical restraint or seclusion occurring within the same classroom
 - 2.2.3 Repeated use of physical restraint or seclusion by an individual staff member
- 2.3 It is the principals responsibility to ensure that staff such as bus drivers, clerical, custodians and all casual staff read the plans and understand the importance of adhering to these plans for their own and others safety.

3. Guidelines for Physical Restraint

- 3.1 The Abbotsford School District maintains that a "hands off policy" is the best practice in dealing with students who are acting out. Physical restraint and seclusion must not be common practice and are used only in exceptional circumstances where a student is in imminent danger of causing serious harm to self or others.
- 3.2 Physical Restraint will only be employed until the imminent danger of serious harm to self or others has dissipated.
- 3.3 Any time physical restraint is necessary a "Student Safety Incidence or Threat Report" must immediately be filed with the Occupational Health and Wellness Manager and the Director of Learning Support Services. Parents/Guardians must also be informed about the incident immediately.
- 3.4 Physical Restraint is always conducted in a safe manner by a person who is trained in the proper methods of physical restraint. This training will ensure that:

- 3.4.1 Students' breathing is not restricted
 - 3.4.2 Student is not in a prone position (facing down on their stomach)
 - 3.4.3 Student is not in a Supine position (on their back, face up)
 - 3.4.4 Mechanical restraint devices are never used
- 3.5 The need for staff to be trained in the use of physical restraint for a student will be determined by the Director of Learning Support Services in consultation with district staff, school administrator, school staff and the students' parents.
4. Guideline for Seclusion
- 4.1 The space used for seclusion must not jeopardize the students' health and safety – emotionally or physically. Seclusion should only be employed in exceptional circumstances where a student is in imminent danger of causing serious harm to self or others.
 - 4.1.1 Seclusion will only be employed until the imminent danger of serious harm to self or others has dissipated.
 - 4.1.2 Any time seclusion is necessary a "Student Safety Incidence or Threat Report" must be filed with the Occupational Health and Wellness Manager and the Director of Learning Support Services. Parents/Guardians must also be informed about the incident immediately.
 - 4.1.3 A student must never be locked into any room in the school.
 - 4.1.4 Any room that is to be used for seclusion must have an observation window and the secluded student must be under continuous visual observation. The student's behaviour is recorded at regular intervals by the observing adult throughout the period of seclusion.

Reference: Provincial Guidelines – Physical Restraint and Seclusion in School Settings, British Columbia Ministry of Education, June 3, 2015