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## PHYSICAL RESTRAINTS AND SECLUSION

### Background

Grande Yellowhead Public School Division (GYPSD) is committed to providing inclusive environments that are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe. It is recognized that students, on rare occasion, may require the use of physical intervention. Staff may be required, as a last resort, to protect students or themselves from physically injurious behaviour. Only staff members trained in applying an approved physical restraint may apply this response.

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

### Definitions

**Physical restraint** – is any method of using physical contact for restricting or immobilizing another person’s freedom of movement, physical activity or normal access to their body.

**Seclusion** – is 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.

**Seclusion room:** a room, structure or enclosure in a school where the primary purpose or use of which involves the involuntary confinement or isolation of a student where the student is prevented or incapable of evacuating from the room or enclosure without assistance because the security measures are not under the students’ control.

**Timeout** – a behaviour intervention for the purposes of reducing or stopping challenging behaviour in the long term. It involves reducing or limiting the amount of reinforcement that is available to an individual for a brief period of time in order to decrease or stop the predefined challenging behavior.

**Contingent Observation or Non-exclusion Timeout** - the student is removed from the reinforcing activity, but is still allowed to observe the activity. This is the least restrictive form of timeout.

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

### Procedures

A key concept in positive behaviour support is prevention. Behaviour interventions for all students must emphasize prevention and positive behaviour supports. Every effort must 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.

**Seclusion and physical restraint are emergency procedures and measures of last resort.** They may only be used as a last resort when a students' behaviour poses significant imminent danger of serious physical harm to themselves or to others.

The following practices will be followed:

Only safe, effective physical intervention strategies approved by GYPSD may be used with students. These strategies are referred to as *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Physical Interventions*. It is a positive and proactive means of engaging students with a focus on de-escalation strategies to defuse students with challenging behaviors. Only staff trained in NonViolent Crisis Intervention (NVCI) may use physical restraint once granted approval by the Director of Inclusive Learning for certain student cases.

1. Physical restraint will not exceed that which is required to control the student and will only be employed until the student has gained self-control or is within a safe environment.
2. The use of physical restraint will be documented in the Student Information System (SIS) by the staff members involved in the restraint, using Form 346A
3. The principal will notify the parent/guardian of the incidents prior to the student returning home or as soon as practical.
4. A debriefing with involved school personnel (and parents and student when possible/applicable) will take place following an incident. (Form 346B for staff, Form 346 B-1 for parents/students)
5. If the behaviour is deemed likely to reoccur, a behavior support plan will be developed and shared with the parent/guardian.

### **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, the following will be included in the student's Behaviour Support Plan:

1. The plan will be developed in consultation with the parent, administration and learning support team.
2. The Behaviour Support Plan will define when and how physical restraint procedures are to be used. The plan will include details for communication with parents/guardians about the occurrence of any and all physical restraints.
3. Each Behaviour Support Plan will include a minimum of two review dates to evaluate the effectiveness of the Behaviour Support Plan.
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.

### **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. If timeout is used, strategies must be systematically planned, delivered, supervised and evaluated to determine their effectiveness with individual students.

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.
2. There must be documented attempts to establish the cause of the behaviour leading to the timeout.
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. If a student presents behaviours that compromise the safety of others and the student has not presented such behaviours before, the use of timeout may occur. The incident must be documented in the SIS and reported to the parents, using Form 346A.

### **Seclusion**

1. Any space used for the purposes of seclusion will not jeopardize the student's safety and must:
  - 1.1 Not be locked from either the outside or inside;
  - 1.2 Meet Fire Marshall Standards;
  - 1.3 Not contain items or fixtures that could be harmful to students;
  - 1.4 Be well ventilated;
  - 1.5 Allow students to exit if an emergency occurs; and
  - 1.6 Provide the means where adults can visually monitor the student at all times.
2. Any student placed in seclusion is continuously, visually observed by a staff member who is physically present throughout the period of seclusion.
3. The staff member will document the time of entry and time of exit using the documentation log (Form 346C).
4. The principal will notify the parent/guardian of the incidents prior to the student returning home or as soon as practical.

Reference: Section 8,11,31,32,33,35.1,36,37,52,53,196,197,222,257 Education Act  
Standards for Seclusion and Physical restraint in Alberta Schools

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