



PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

**A GUIDELINE FOR THE USE OF
PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

May 2002

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GUIDELINES REGARDING THE USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

A. INTRODUCTION:

In a school community formed by Catholic beliefs and traditions, our Mission is to educate students to their full potential by providing:

- ❑ a safe and welcoming environment that is an example of Christian community;
- ❑ a role model of Gospel Values and Catholic doctrines, teachings and beliefs

The safety and security of all members of our school community is guided by this Mission statement and The Safe Schools Act, 2000 which in part states:

"All students, parents, teachers and staff have the right to be safe and feel safe, in their community." With this right comes the responsibility to be law-abiding citizens and to be accountable for actions that put at risk the safety of others or oneself.

Members of the school community are expected to use non-violent means to resolve conflict. Physically aggressive behaviour is not a responsible way to interact with others."

In addition, the Toronto Catholic District School Board's Discipline Policy (V.P. 04) #1, 2, 3 states that:

1. In matters of discipline, the dignity and rights of all students are to be preserved and respected as participating members of a Catholic community.

The Toronto Catholic District School Board, while recognizing the authority and responsibility for discipline as defined in the Education Act and its regulations, approves the establishment of a Discipline Policy which shall:

- a) establish and maintain a climate within student activities which allows students to learn without unnecessary distraction or disruption;
 - b) assist students in the recognition of and respect for the rights of other persons;
 - c) assist students in the development and practice of academic honesty and integrity;
 - d) assist students in the development of and respect for property;
 - e) assist students in the achievement of self - control and self - discipline.
2. Each school shall establish a **Plan of Action** that outlines the policy and expectations as well as the consequences for violating the School Code of Behaviour.
 3. The Toronto Catholic District School Board supports its staff in dealing with any student who is involved in acts, which are seen to threaten the safe and harmonious environment of the school community.

B. GENERAL PROCEDURES

The initial step in using this document is the development of a **plan of action** that will direct schools in how to proceed in implementing the recommendations of this document.

A School Plan of Action For The Use Of Physical Restraint

Should include the following:

September/October:

Principal reviews the TCDSB document **A Guideline for the Use of Physical Restraint** - April 2002 with all school staff. This review should include adequate time and opportunity for staff to become knowledgeable of the contents of the document including:

- ❑ all staff rights and responsibilities in the workplace with regard to their safety and the safety of students in the school.
- ❑ the choices that each staff member has in providing the safest environment to themselves and the students.
- ❑ the opportunities that the TCDSB can offer staff in maximizing safety in the workplace.

Principal will coordinate with the school staff a **plan of action for staff intervention** in a student crisis of aggressive and/or violent behaviour. This plan should include:

- ❑ a review of the school code of behaviour, including all **school rules** and the consequences for the breaking of these rules.
- ❑ a review of procedures that staff will follow when the school codes have been broken.
- ❑ a review of the procedures identifying those student behaviours that lead to the suspension/expulsion of students.

The TCDSB understands and supports the idea that maintaining discipline is a process that emphasizes a positive prevention approach. The discipline policy reflects the need to assist all students in achieving self - discipline.

While it is recognized that preventative interventions can often lead to long-term reinforcement of desired behaviours, in some situations, violent or acting- out behaviours can lead to crises in the school community and may require adult intervention using physical contact or restraint.

A physical restraint policy is intended to provide schools with a procedure for managing the physical aggression of all students requiring physical restraint, including students with special needs.

This policy states the Toronto Catholic District School Board's position on restraining students in order to ensure a safe environment.

Staff Response to Student Crisis

It is recognized that staff response to a situation depends upon stages of student behaviour. There are times when a student's behaviour may escalate into crisis. These are distinct and identifiable levels of student behaviour that may lead to a crisis situation (acting-out displays of aggression). Each level requires a specific response from staff to effect de-escalation.

Whenever possible and practical, attempts to engage the student in positive intervention techniques are recommended.

C. STAGES OF CRISIS AND APPROPRIATE STAFF RESPONSE

Stage One: Anxiety

This stage is defined as a loss of ability to focus, attend to directions and successfully participate in the demands of a classroom. Staff response should be one of:

- ❑ empathy.
- ❑ active listening.
- ❑ verbal support.

Stage Two: Defensiveness

This stage is defined as a loss of rational control characterized by a challenge to staff authority and often belligerent behaviour. Staff response should:

- ❑ verbally identify behavioural limits clearly and concisely;
- ❑ identify choices for the student;
- ❑ outline consequences for the student in a non-threatening and objective manner.

CAUTION - Resistance does not always lead to a crisis that involves the use of physical intervention. However, physical redirection may be used.

Stage Three: Loss of Self-Control

This stage is identified as a loss of control and characterized by a lack of ability to self-control by:

- ❑ attempts at physical assault of another person.
- ❑ attempts at self-injury.
- ❑ attempts at property damage which may result in injury to self or others.

Staff Response Should Lead To:

- ❑ a decision to apply physical restraint and/or
- ❑ obtaining assistance as soon as possible.

NOTE: All staff must attempt to ensure a safe environment

D. IS RESTRAINT MANDATORY? - RESTRAINT IS NOT MANDATORY

However, when a decision has been made to apply restraint, all staff shall be guided by one's educated judgement in maintaining a safe environment as well as the level of confidence felt at the time of the incident. Confidence and judgement may be influenced by:

- ❑ other crisis management techniques that have been attempted whenever possible.
- ❑ the availability of support to the adult.
- ❑ individual training, skill and confidence to intervene.
- ❑ the relationship to an individual student.
- ❑ physical characteristics of staff/student (e.g., age, size, gender, etc.).
- ❑ logistics of the physical environment.

In the event that physical restraint is required, the following procedures shall be used:

- ❑ **Physical restraint should only be used if the safety of the individual or others is endangered.**
- ❑ The use of force when applying physical restraint should not exceed what is reasonable under the circumstances.
- ❑ Physical restraint is never to be used as a form of punishment for non-compliance.

E. PARENTAL/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

It is recommended that information contained in the **School Discipline Code** be reviewed with the parent/guardian on a regular and timely basis, through parent interviews, the C.I.P.R.C. Annual Review and as part of the Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.) as soon as possible, and through newsletters and communication to parents. The parent/guardian shall be made aware of all incidents where restraint has been used as soon as possible.

F. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Incident Reporting:

When physical restraint has occurred, the following steps shall be taken:

- ❑ The principal shall be notified as soon as possible. All off-site principals are to be notified by forwarding the Incident Report form to the student's school of registration.
- ❑ The parent/guardian shall be notified by the staff or administration **BEFORE** the student returns home, or as soon as possible thereafter. Returning the student home in a safe manner shall be given first priority.
- ❑ Staff shall complete a Physical Restraint Incident Report within 24 hours of the incident.
- ❑ Staff shall complete a Violent Incident Report within 24 hours of the incident.
- ❑ If injury occurs to staff a Workplace Safety Insurance Board claim should be completed at the time of the incident.
- ❑ The Physical Restraint Incident Report shall be retained in the O.S.R. and removed when the incident is deemed no longer relevant to the improvement of instruction.
- ❑ The information in the Physical Restraint Incident Report shall be made available to the parent/guardian upon request of the parent/guardian.
- ❑ **The principal shall ensure that reporting procedures of this policy are complete and filed.**

G. RESOLUTION/FOLLOW-UP:

After an incident requiring physical restraint has occurred, staff should attempt to re-establish positive rapport and communication with the student. Strategies should include a review and discussion of events, a recognition of feelings involved and a discussion of possible alternative course of action.

H. REVIEW PROCESS:

In addition to filing an Physical Restraint Incident Report, staff and administration shall review each incident to establish patterns of behaviour that could lead to intervention by the School Based Support Team. Discussion/planning with the parents/guardian and Special Services staff could also take place. A written record of these events shall be kept in the O.S.R.

POSITIVE INTERVENTION PLANNING

The first step in promoting a climate of appropriate student conduct is to develop a **DISCIPLINE CODE** that:

- ❑ is available to all students, staff, parents and school community.
- ❑ has expectations and consequences clearly stated.
- ❑ is incorporated into the individual student I.E.P. (Individual Education Plan) as behaviour management plans for special needs students.
- ❑ has parent/guardian involvement for students deemed at risk for aggressive behaviour.
- ❑ involves cooperative planning for individual students by principal/Joint Team/staff.

Other necessary components of positive planning include the use of problem-solving strategies, social reinforcement principles, a supportive child-centred climate in the classroom and sound management techniques.

Intervention principles indicate that a supportive approach that may prevent the escalation of negative behaviour is always desirable before the use of more intrusive techniques of physical restraint.

POSITIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

Stages one and two of a student crisis generally require a non-intrusive and supportive approach by staff. In addition to specific responses of both stages, the following approaches have been found effective in reducing the need for physical restraint and should be attempted whenever possible:

- ❑ time out from routines
- ❑ cooling off; space/time
- ❑ active listening
- ❑ understanding/empathy
- ❑ modeling effective resolutions; social skills group
- ❑ problem-solving strategies/conflict resolution
- ❑ anger management/de-escalation
- ❑ conferencing with other staff/students
- ❑ physical redirection by guiding by hand or shoulder
- ❑ clarifying expectations
- ❑ restructuring the environment
- ❑ identifying choices
- ❑ outlining consequences in a non-threatening objective manner
- ❑ isolation of the student by removing others
- ❑ call for assistance

GUIDELINES FOR PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

In the event that physical restraint is considered, the following guidelines may be used:

1. Before physical restraint is used, other appropriate crisis management techniques have been attempted.
2. **Physical restraint is not to be used as a form of punishment for non-compliance.**
3. Physical restraint should only be used if the safety of the individual or others is endangered.
4. The use of force when applying the physical restraint should not exceed what is reasonable under the circumstances.

When a decision is made to apply physical restraint, all staff will be guided by one's educated judgement in maintaining a safe environment as well as the level of confidence felt at the time of the incident. Confidence and judgement may be influenced by:

1. the availability of support to the adult.
2. individual training, skill and confidence to intervene.
3. the relationship to the individual student.
4. the physical characteristics of staff/student (e.g., age, size, gender etc.).
5. the logistics of the physical environment

A Team Approach (see appendix C) **is** the safest approach to physical restraint. It reinforces professional conduct, provides witness to events and can function as de-escalation to confrontation.

TEAM APPROACH

A team approach is recommended whenever possible in carrying out a physical restraint of a student in crisis. This approach is considered the safest way to intervene physically when a student is out of control.

Rationale for a team:

- ❑ **Promotes safety** - teamed and coordinated intervention techniques generally require less physical exertion and promote efficient restraint strategies.
- ❑ **Encourages Professionalism** - staff members are more likely to act in a professional and orderly manner when paired or in a team.
- ❑ **Has the ability to call upon one or more witnesses** - staff members working on a team should rely on other members for recollection of events and encourage proficient recording of the events of the crisis.
- ❑ **Supports the concept of maintaining professional conduct** - staff working on a team should rely on other team members to model appropriate language and professional behaviour, while effecting moral support in a time of crisis.

Team planning in a crisis or critical incident requires an orderly, organized and workable intervention.

The team approach suggests the following **ad hoc** formulation of a team intervention in a student crisis. **All staff members are encouraged to follow this approach.**

Team Approach

The school **Plan of Action for Implementing Physical Restraint** should include the following outline for developing a team approach:

Make-up of the Team

- ❑ Team leader
- ❑ Responding member(s)

Roles of the Team Members

Team Leader:

- ❑ is the first staff member on the scene of the crisis;
- ❑ is the staff member who is the most directly involved with the student and incident.
- ❑ is the staff member with the strongest rapport with the student in crisis.
- ❑ is the staff member who is the most confident or centred to the crisis at that time.
- ❑ should coordinate the intervention (restraint) with other team member(s).
- ❑ assesses the situation and plans intervention.
- ❑ summons and directs and coordinates the team.

Supporting Team Member(s)

- ❑ accept(s) direction from the leader.
- ❑ remove(s) on-lookers from the scene of the crisis.
- ❑ assist(s) the leader directly with the intervention (restraint).
- ❑ communicate(s) to the leader and other adults that the restraint is occurring and expresse(s) the need for aid.

Note: Changing Leaders - When the situation arises that requires a change in the team leader, the change should be explained to any and all other members of the team as well as the student who is being restrained.

STAFF TRAINING

The following training will be offered to all staff:

1. TRAINING FOR CRISIS MANGEMENT (EXCLUDING PHYSICAL RESTRAINT)

The primary focus in this intervention is **non-physical**. As physical restraint is viewed as a last resort, NON-PHYSICAL CRISIS MANAGEMENT assumes an important role in staff training. This training which emphasizes anger management and the management of volatile situations, is available to staff through the Special Services department at the CEC.

2. TRAINING FOR PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

All staff involved in behaviour programs will be offered training in specific techniques of physical intervention. In schools where there are no behaviour programs, initially two staff will be trained in these techniques.

Training is provided by the Canadian Training Institute and shall be made available by the board through the Special Services department.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT INCIDENT REPORT

SCHOOL _____ LOCATION # _____

STUDENT INFORMATION

Name _____ Age _____

Gender M F Grade _____ Student # _____

TYPE OF INCIDENT

Hurt Self (specify) _____

Hurt Others (specify) _____

Damaged Property (Specify) _____

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

Date _____

Day _____ Time _____ Location _____

DESCRIBE STAGE 3 INCIDENT (What the student did) (see page 4)

BEHAVIOUR EXHIBITED BY STUDENT

Events Preceding Stage 3 Incident

Staff Member(s) Applying Restraint

_____ Title _____

_____ Title _____

Witness(es), if any

Follow-up

Report to Administration Date _____ Time _____

Parent/Guardian Contact Date _____ Time _____

Completed by

Name _____

Position _____ Date _____

Signature of Principal

Date

**A GUIDELINE FOR THE USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINTS
APRIL 2002**

**The Toronto Catholic District School Board/Toronto
Elementary Catholic Teachers Joint Committee for**

MEDICAL/PHYSICAL PROCEDURES

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