



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



Preventative Behavioural Intervention Continuum

Behaviour Support Team

Please contact any of the following members of the Behaviour Support Team for additional support.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | PAGE |
|---|-------------|
| PREAMBLE..... | 1 |
| PREVENTATIVE CLASSROOM INTERVENTIONS | 3 |
| PREVENTATIVE COMMUNICATION INTERVENTIONS..... | 7 |
| PHYSICAL RESTRAINT RATIONALE | 9 |
| APPENDIX A: Use of Restraint – Reporting Form | |
| APPENDIX B: Debriefing | |



Preventative Behavioural Intervention Continuum

MEMBERS

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Laura McAlister, Principal of Special Education
Marina Saulig, Elementary Principal
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Paul Hines, Elementary Vice-Principal
Fraser Blackwell, Social Worker
Linda Rakus, Special Education Behaviour Support Teacher

Preamble

Positive reinforcement techniques are essential as a means of facilitating change in behaviour. Sensitivity and respect directly impact upon the safety and dignity of students and staff. The collaboration of office, custodian, teaching, administrative staff as well as, special support personnel and parents/guardians is essential for maintaining discipline in schools in the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board. This team approach, in conjunction with the Safe Schools Initiative, works to create an environment that respects the individual and their differences so that all students and staff feel comfortable and part of their school.

Introduction

The purpose of this behavioural intervention continuum is to effectively manage behaviours of students in schools. The focus is on interventions that will elicit positive behaviour and assist staff members to prevent and if necessary de-escalate a crisis.

Prevention is the key to managing physical aggression. The focus is on increasing appropriate behaviour and decreasing inappropriate behaviour that can lead to verbal and physical aggression by students. Interventions must be implemented consistently.

For the majority of students, effective discipline is delivered by verbal prompts to assist them in making choices between socially acceptable and unacceptable behaviours. Students are encouraged to self-correct and assume the responsibility and consequences for their actions.

More intrusive interactions are used only after less intrusive ones have failed

Preventative Classroom Interventions

Stating Clear Expectations

It is necessary to provide a concise, clear outline of what is expected of students. Rules are the backbone of any group management plan. Students do not select their own rules but can help in defining and fine-tuning them. Teachers should have a maximum of five rules which are simply stated.

- keep the wording of the rules positive and specific
- post the rules
- check for understanding
- identify negotiable and non-negotiable items
- be proactive by anticipating the problems and plan for them
- err on the side of structure
- pay special attention to transition times and to work periods
- create an open, caring and supportive environment

Stating Clear Consequences/ Limit Setting

Use concise, concrete, clear and consistently applied consequences. Tie the rules of the classroom to the consequences. Negative consequences are consequences given when the rules are not followed. Some consequences may be mutually agreed upon, while others must be left to the individual situation.

Positive Reinforcement (Consequences)

Positive consequences are applied when the rules are followed.

Positive reinforcement:

- involves the provision of positive rewards following a desirable behaviour
- is more powerful when it follows the behaviour closely
- may be tangible or social
- must be seen as positive by the student
- must also be motivating and sufficient to potentially evoke a behavioural change

Negative (Consequences)

Consequences are used when a pre-established rule is broken and/or when a student does not comply with a precise request. Consequences must be listed in a hierarchical order and must be applied consistently and in a manner that separates student from behaviour. Consequences should be tailored to individual needs and activities. Students must be aware of the continuum of consequences, e.g. verbal warning from the teacher, loss or delay of desired activity, loss or delay of the use of objects or equipment, denied interactions with other students, required interactions with school personnel, parents.

Rearranging the Classroom / Environment

The re-arranging of classroom and/or student placement in the classroom may help some students. The use of a good role model in close proximity may also prove to be effective.

Moving and Pacing

The teacher must move around the classroom. This allows the teacher to anticipate problems and handle them quickly and quietly. Time needs to be balanced to ensure the maximum effort from the students. The length of time students can attend to a teacher-directed lesson should be monitored. Can the teacher balance the time the students spend working on difficult assignments, with easier more routine tasks? Do students have time to organize themselves?

Use of Choice

Providing options and consequences if the situation permits, enables students to choose with knowledge. This promotes the student's autonomy and facilitates problem solving. The use of choice is dependent on the situation. In the height of a crisis situation, there are things that are non-negotiable. There are, however, very few situations where choice is not an option.

Mild and Private Reprimands

Be aware of the effect of modelling on the student's dignity.

All reprimands must:

- be delivered in a calm and objective tone of voice
- separate the behaviour from the individual

Planned Ignoring

Student misbehaviour often ends when it is purposefully ignored.

Teachers should consider:

- providing no response to negative behaviours
- focusing on positive/ appropriate behaviour/ response
- exaggerating ignoring by going to talk to someone else (this should not be overused)
- bearing in mind that some behaviour can not be ignored
- following-up with the student, so that the issue becomes a learning experience
- reinforcing positive behaviour immediately

Distraction

Creating an alternative stimulus to re-focus the student often provides a means to allow a student to save face.

The following strategies are appropriate:

- asking the student a non-related question
- using humour
- sharing non-related information
- changing environment
- changing activities
- asking a favour

Proximity

Maintaining physical proximity and/or addressing the student by name can often defuse a difficult situation. Continuous scanning and movement through the classroom by the teacher is essential. The classroom set-up should facilitate movement by the teacher. It is important for the

teachers to be sensitive to the fact that sometimes proximity can escalate the situation, e.g. stand by rather than stand over.

Disarm Power Struggles

Staying calm and in control, stating your expectations calmly, clearly and firmly helps via a student focus. This provides the student with an opportunity to 'save-face'.

Consider:

- disengaging rather than having the last word
- removing the audience if necessary
- avoiding power struggles by using phrases such as "I am really concerned", or "There may be some truth to what you are saying, but it is hard for me to really hear you when you use words which are disrespectful."

Time Out Continuum

Students often have to be removed to a less reinforcing environment, when misbehaviour occurs. It is always for a predetermined length of time. The student should be directly monitored at all times by staff during time out. The use of humour, distracting, or cueing to get students to move to time out area may be effective. Time out allows the student time to reflect, calm down, refocus and evaluate the situation and then plan for a re-entry. Time out may or may not require an Interim Control Position (See Transport Technique p.5). Talking or eye contact should not take place once a student is placed in time out. If the student refuses to co-operate, see Transport Technique section.

Time out may involve the following less reinforcing environments:

- **Sit and Watch Time Out**
The student is in the classroom but in a remote spot. This non-exclusionary time out allows the student to observe classroom activities but not participate in them. In such cases, staff members direct the student to another area within the classroom or simply have the student move away from the activity.
- **Non-observation Time Out**
This exclusionary time out refers to barring the student from participating in or observing the activity. An area within the classroom may be created by the use of a divider or the use of a study carrel.
- **Interclass Time Out**
The student is removed to another classroom of a different grade level (2 or 3 levels above or below). The student may return to his/her own classroom when the assigned work has been completed.
- **Movement to a Special Class**
The student is temporarily placed in the Special Education Learning Center (SELC) and/or the Alternative Learning Center (ALC). This is a program in which students are withdrawn in small groups to focus on academics and social/emotional/behavioural issues.
- **Seclusionary Time Out**
The student is placed in a Reflection Room. This behavioural technique is a part of a continuum of intervention with the intent of de-escalating the behaviour as quickly as possible. If used as a means to 'isolate' and, if this intervention occurs on a regular basis, it must be included in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

- **In-School Sanctions**
This is an extended time out in a predetermined, supervised location. Time length is from a few hours up to a couple of days.
- **Suspensions**
This is an extended time out off school property. The duration of a suspension can be half day up to 20 days.
- **Expulsions**
Limited and full.

Time outs and their location must not be a surprise. They ought to have been previously discussed during discussions with the student relating to consequences. The voluntary time-out concept is an effective intervention.

Behaviour Contracts

In collaboration with teachers, support personnel, administration and parents, target behaviours are identified. Time blocks are established, with specific mutually agreed upon rewards for appropriate behaviours within these time blocks. Behaviour contracts, when linked to the home, are more effective.

Conferencing with In-School Team

Collaboration between school personnel and the student's home is essential. The In-school Team is comprised of the Administration, Special Education Resource Teacher, home room teachers, Special Education Learning Center teachers, Educational Assistants or other specialized personnel as may be required, such as Speech and Language Pathologists. Communication about positives and consequences is required. It is important not to minimize inappropriate behaviour. It is generally preferred that communication be done directly (i.e. by telephone) rather than through a communication book.

Referral to Student Services

Once the In-school Team has exhausted all resources, additional support may be accessed through Student Services such as the social worker, psychologist, Special Education Support Teacher.

Preventative Communication Interventions

Inspire

Teachers need to set a positive tone in their classes. It is important to focus on the desired attitudes and behaviours. A deliberate approach combined with high but reasonable expectations works best.

Self-Esteem Building

When teachers focus on past successes and on improvement they get better results. Praising, building on strengths, encouraging, and acknowledging the difficulty of a task, enables teachers to establish a positive relationship with students. Teaching positive self-talk is also an effective approach to building self-esteem.

Pro-Active Social Skills

The need to teach proactive social skills is essential for all students. These skills must be included and reinforced through classroom activities. Students need opportunities to role-play as well as to discuss their ideas, feelings and attitudes in a supportive, caring and safe environment. The social skills that must to be addressed are:

- solving conflicts peacefully
- anger management techniques
- assertive communication techniques
- tolerance of differences
- impulse control strategies
- empathy - critical in the understanding of 'why'
- self-acceptance
- self-discipline
- relaxation techniques

Active Listening

- listening techniques encompass the following:
- eye contact
- paraphrasing (e.g. restating the student's message, mirroring)
- using listening responses
- using confrontations (* Care is emphasized when confronting a hyper-vigilant student)
- summarizing (e.g. a brief statement outlining main ideas, feelings, themes)
- using receptive body language (e.g. legs and arms uncrossed, shoulders square, facing the student)
- validation - verbal and non-verbal

Pauses

A period of silence following a verbal interaction may be used. This allows and encourages a self-directed response. It also enables the student to 'own the response' and allows the student the time needed to plan their next verbal input, as well as an opportunity to reflect upon what was just communicated.

Verbal Communication

The use of Alpha commands, which are requests that are clearly stated, concise and specific followed by 30 seconds of silence, is an effective tool. Listen for voice-speed, cadence, volume, tone, and word choice. Sensitivity to the student's learning needs and ability to comprehend instructions must always precede intervention. These requests should reassure the student that the expectations are going to be met. Teachers should not use a question format when giving a direction. They should get close to the student when giving a command, using a quiet voice and not yell. It is important to give the student reasonable time to comply without nagging. Teachers should describe the behaviour which is required. It is important to make more start requests than stop requests and immediately reinforce compliance verbally.

Open Questions

Specifically phrased open-ended questions will elicit more detailed responses. Questions usually begin with "what, tell me what happened, how could you have done this differently...etc." These types of questions allow appropriate venting of anger and hostility. Open-ended questions also help non-communicative students to share or to elaborate thoughts and feelings. Avoid using 'why' to begin questions.

Direct Appeal

Teachers are most effective when they appeal to the student's feelings, values, judgment, or self-control, for the purpose of re-directing or terminating the unacceptable behaviour. The intent of the direct appeal is to allow the student to stop and reflect about their behaviour and decide if it is appropriate.

Self Disclosure

This is the sharing of a personal, relevant and meaningful experience to demonstrate a relationship to the present situation. Self-disclosure must be supportive and genuine. Its intent is to give options, resources/examples and reveals that the student is not alone. It demonstrates to the student that the student is not the only one to experience or feel this experience. It aids in the development of trust in the relationship between the student and the teacher. Caution is highlighted to maintain professional boundaries by not sharing overly personal information.

Non-Verbal Communication

The use of eye contact (with sensitivity to cultural issues), facial expressions, hands actions, arms actions, personal space, shoulder position, head position and movement, leg stance and movement in general all contribute towards sending positive non-verbal messages to students.

Cueing

Establishing signals to be used with the student on an on-going basis provides for cueing opportunities. Cueing may be used to signal the student to re-focus, and to get back on track. Supporting the student helps the student identify a specific behaviour or pattern. Cueing teaches the student how to read others, face-saving, self-learning, and it empowers. Timing is essential. The use of smiles is also a form of cueing.

Modeling

Teachers need to ask themselves the following relative to the model they set for students.

- how do you present yourself?
- are you modeling positive behaviours when attempting to solve conflicts?
- are you communicating respect?
- are you separating the behaviour from the student?

Humour

Humour can be a verbal or non-verbal intervention to help the student see a lighter side of the situation.

Humour works to lighten up a tense situation by:

- telling a joke
- using facial expression
- exaggeration
- care must be taken not to over use humour or use it to mock, belittle or speak in a disrespectful manner.

Physical Restraint

Rationale

**The technique of physical restraint shall be used only as a last resort.
911 is always an option in a crisis situation.**

For students at the Secondary level, physical restraint is NOT recommended. There may be exceptions for students with autism or developmental disability where physical restraint is specifically identified as part of a continuum of intervention within the Individual Education Plan.

Physical restraint may be used only when it is necessary to prevent the student from imminent danger of harming himself /herself, or others. Where physical restraint must be utilized, it shall be carried out according to the principles and practices taught in the Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCi), Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) and/or Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) techniques. Care, welfare, safety and security are the underlying goals of any physical intervention.

NVCi is a program focusing on management of disruptive, assaultive, or 'out-of-control' behaviour. Teachers and support staff and students are potentially vulnerable to personal injury if they are not trained properly when physical restraint is deemed necessary. It is recommended that OCDSB staff be trained in NVCi and/or TCI techniques. It is required that OCDSB staff who provide direct service to Special Support Units (SSU) and Dual Diagnosis classes be trained in NVCi and/or TCI techniques.

The duties of principals and teachers are set out in various statutes and regulations, as well as in Ministry and Board policies and procedures. The Education Act (R.S.O.) gives Principals under clause 265(a) the mandate to maintain proper order and discipline in the school. Clause 264(1)(d) mandates teachers to maintain, under the direction of the principal, proper order and discipline in the teacher's classroom, and while on duty in the school and on the school ground. If the security of the

school and/or safety of its students require the physical restraint of a student, Board employees have the authority and responsibility to take reasonable steps.

Section 43 of the Criminal Code also authorizes private citizens to use force to restrain another in self-defense or in order to prevent the commission of a criminal offence, injury to others, or damage to property, provided that the force used is not excessive.

Physical restraint is an intervention strategy used by staff to temporarily immobilize a student through the use of safe techniques. It is important to remember that physical interventions are short-term crisis strategies for safety purposes only. They are not to be considered as a solution because nothing else has been effective.

In cases where a student exhibits behaviours which require frequent use of physical restraint, the Principal, and the teacher(s) in consultation with parent(s)/guardian, will develop a behavioural plan which is part of the student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP). This planned behavioural intervention with informed consent is an interim measure to prevent injurious behaviour during crisis and must not be seen as a behavioural tool to change or modify behaviour. Physical interventions are short-term strategies for safety purposes only. Intrusive interactions are used only in crisis situations.

Use of Physical Restraint

Physical restraint may be used when it is necessary to prevent the student from imminent danger of harming himself or herself, or others.

- a) physically assaulting another person
- b) deliberately attempting to incur self-injury

It is important to note that physical restraint has the potential to cause bodily harm to students and/or staff and as a result, the following guidelines are suggested.

- a) At no time shall physical restraint or contact be used to threaten, punish or discipline a student.
- Physical restraint may be used:
 - when less intrusive measures have failed
 - in a crisis situation
 - to prevent self-abusive or aggressive students from harming themselves, others
 - to protect developmentally delayed and physically challenged students from hurting themselves or others [for this population, a comprehensive behavioural management program is included in the student's Individual Education Program (IEP)]
- c) The student's peers will not be directly involved in the employment of the physical restraint. However, an urgent message for assistance may be delivered by a student during a crisis situation.
 - d) Throughout a physical restraint, staff remain calm, caring and compassionate.
 - e) Every opportunity should be provided for the student to control his/ her own behaviour prior to physical management. To ensure this, a graduated implementation of the behavioural intervention continuum should be used.

Transport Technique (Escorting)

The transport technique may be used only when it is necessary to prevent the student from imminent danger of harming himself or herself, or others. Where the transport technique must be utilized, it shall be carried out according to the principles and practices taught in the Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCi), Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) and/or Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) techniques. Care, welfare, safety and security are the underlying goals. Whenever possible, transporting should be done with two staff members present, and escorting must be performed with an opened-hand position. It should be understood that escorting does not mean pulling the student in any way nor does it imply the use of force. Transporting does not restrict the student's movement, nor is it a restraint technique.

Parents need to be informed on the same day, whenever physical restraint is utilized with their child. Staff must complete an Incident Report of the Use of Restraint. Readers are directed to APPENDIX A: Incident Report: Use of Physical Restraint

After a crisis in which physical restraint is used, a written report Incident Report: Use of Physical Restraint describing the antecedents, aggressive responses and outcomes must be completed by staff involved. This report will be placed in the student's O.S.R. and be verbally communicated to the student's parents or guardians by the principal or designate on the same day. This written report must be completed as soon as possible after the incident to ensure that all pertinent information is recorded accurately.

Debriefing is essential for staff after all crises. Readers are directed to APPENDIX B: Debriefing that provides a learning mechanism as well as a means to relate accurate events. It will involve reflections about what did and did not work effectively during the intervention, with subsequent changes to the intervention plan if required.

A counselling/debriefing session must be provided for the student once they have become emotionally and physically calm. This period of tension-reducing therapeutic rapport should involve a problem-solving approach, identifying alternative actions the student could use in the future. Counselling should also be provided for students who witness physical restraint. Counselling/debriefing should be provided for staff members involved in the restraint.



Incident Report Use of Physical Restraint

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Date: | Time: |
| Student's Name: | School: |
| Staff Involved: | Other Witnesses: |

Describe student behaviour and staff responses leading up to the restraint:

What interventions were used prior to physical restraint?

Briefly describe student's history in relation to behavioural interventions?

Describe length of time and what happened during the restraint:

Describe the outcome in terms of follow-up to the restraint incident:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Name of Person Completing Form | |
| Signature of Witness | |
| Name of Parent/Guardian Notified | |
| Name of SRO if contacted | |
| Signature of Person Completing Form | |
| Principal Signature | |

Debriefing

Debriefing is essential after a crisis situation. This should be used as a learning mechanism as well as a mechanism for accurate documentation.

The following breaks down the debriefing session into units.

The Introductory Phase

- Rules of the process are articulated
- Confidentiality is emphasized
- Staff are encouraged to participate
- Process is supportive

The Fact Phase

- Participants are asked to share information about what they saw, heard, touched, smelled and did during the incident

The Thought Phase

- Participants conceptualize what they have heard and seen
- Participants begin to take the information supplied during the fact phase and transform from a general state to a more personal state of thinking
- Participants may use reframing as an effective technique

The Reaction Phase

- Participants will share their reactions to the incident
- Participants describe what was the worst part for them and what was the most effective part

The Symptom Phase

- Participants share information regarding physical, emotional, cognitive, or behavioural signs or symptoms

Teaching Phase

- Offer reassurance that symptoms are normal
- Offer information on positive coping methods, stress management

Re-Entry Phase

- Wrap up loose ends
- Consider developing a plan for action
- Investigate information/ educational resources
- Identify individuals deemed in need of additional support

Follow-up Phase

- Reconvene at an agreed upon time (six weeks later, or anniversary of event)
- Meet individually or group focused