



Niagara Catholic District School Board  
**SUPPORTING PHYSICAL INTERVENTION  
WITH STUDENTS**  
ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

300 – Schools/Students

No 301.8

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In keeping with the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, the following are Administrative Operational Procedures for Supporting Physical Intervention with Students.

## BACKGROUND

The Niagara Catholic District School Board, along with its elementary and secondary schools, is committed to:

- supporting a safe and inclusive Catholic learning environment for all students and staff,
- respecting and celebrating the uniqueness of each student and staff,
- the student's right to an appropriate education
- utilizing the least intrusive measures to promote/uphold the safest possible school environment
- providing training and certification for identified employee groups to assist with managing behaviours in the school environment

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### **Behaviour Support Plan (BSP):**

A behaviour support plan is a written plan designed to target the underlying reason for behaviour, replace the inappropriate behaviour with an appropriate behaviour that serves the same function, and reduce or eliminate the challenging behaviour.

### **Safety Plan:**

A safety plan is a plan developed for a student whose behaviour is known to pose an ongoing risk to themselves, other students, staff, or other people in general. It can serve as a crisis-response plan that outlines the roles and responsibilities of the staff in dealing with specific problem behaviours. The development of a safety plan involves all staff who work on an ongoing basis with a student, as well as parents and the representatives from any community agencies working with the student/family.

### **Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA):**

An applied science, based on the principles of learning and behaviour, which uses specific methods to change behaviour.

### **Behaviour Management Systems (BMS):**

A training program that stresses early prevention and safe physical intervention techniques for staff.

**Behaviour Resource Teacher (BRT):**

A certified teacher with additional Specialist qualifications in Special Education. A member of the Student Support department with system responsibilities to multiple families of schools

**Board-Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA):**

A member of an interdisciplinary team. Often referred to as a "Behaviour Analyst". Responsibilities include: developing a service delivery model for prioritizing and responding to behaviours that interfere with learning; providing clinical supervision to the ABA Team; and supporting system and school staff in conducting Functional Behaviour Assessments (FBAs), developing Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs) and Safety Plans.

**Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA):**

An assessment that identifies where, when and the likely reasons why a behaviour of concern happens. The data/information is then used to inform a behaviour support plan (BSP).

**Safe Management Group (SMG) Crisis Intervention Training:**

A training program that uses evidence based practices and techniques to promote student and staff safety divided into two areas: Prevention and Management.

**PREVENTION AND DE-ESCALATION**

Supporting positive behaviour requires preventative measures intended to reduce the need for physical intervention. These include anticipating, preventing, and reviewing the potentially harmful behaviour(s) and evaluating and reviewing the team's response and strategies.

Staff members are expected to resolve situations involving disruptive/interfering behaviour by using the least intrusive means possible, which may include, but are not limited to:

- Establishing a positive relationship with the student to develop rapport;
- Establishing consistent, structured and positive school and classroom expectations and routines;
- Ongoing assessment of student motivation and preferences;
- Reinforcing behaviour that is consistent with school, classroom and behavioural expectations;
- Identifying antecedents of disruptive/interfering behaviour in an attempt to prevent the behaviour from occurring;
- Teaching socially acceptable replacement behaviours that are alternatives to aggression;
- Utilization of visual/verbal de-escalation measures to reduce potential triggers or contributing factors for the individual student;
- An understanding of a learner's profile including a child's exceptionality and/or diagnosis;
- An understanding of the need to support individuals in the replacement of disruptive/interfering behaviour as opposed to controlling or compelling them;
- Applying an empirical approach with respect to data collection

### THE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT PLAN (BSP):

- Is a proactive plan created through a collaborative team process. The team consists of parent/guardian/caregiver, school staff and Student Support department members (BRT, ABA staff and sometimes a BCBA).
- Requires direct and indirect data collection and analysis completed by or in consultation with school staff, BRTs and/or ABA staff.
- Considers proactive measures that identify environmental, educational and/or instructional strategies that may eliminate or reduce the impact of antecedents/triggers.
- Requires ongoing review, consultation and consistent daily implementation.
- Includes a behaviour escalation continuum with corresponding strategies to assist staff in safely responding to various levels of behaviour.

A Principal **may** consider developing a BSP:

- If a student demonstrates interfering behaviours over such a period of time, and to such a marked degree, and of such a nature, as to adversely affect educational performance and/or interfere with development of interpersonal relationships. These may also be accompanied by one or more of the following:
  - excessive fears or anxieties;
  - a tendency to compulsive reaction;
  - direct or indirect data collection that supports it
  - a recommendation from appropriate staff or other professionals

A Principal **must** develop a BSP:

- If the above criteria are met **AND** a safety plan that outlines planned physical intervention to assist with student safety is developed

### THE SAFETY PLAN:

- Is a written emergency response plan that outlines the roles and responsibilities of the staff dealing with specific aggressive/interfering behaviours.
- Is a planned response to escalating behaviour and is not intended to correct behaviour
- Emphasizes prevention, de-escalation, and the use of non-verbal and verbal responses
- Can be created for any student regardless of whether they are receiving special education programs and services

A Principal **may** develop a Safety Plan:

- when the student's behaviour poses a safety concern and/or imminent risk to self and others

A Principal **must** develop a Safety Plan:

- when physical intervention to assist with student safety is being considered

The components of a safety plan shall include (but are not limited to):

- Description of the observable behaviour concerns (operationally defined for ease of interpretation)

- Triggers or antecedents
- Prevention and intervention strategies to support student and staff safety
- Emergency communication procedures for all staff, including but not limited to: teaching and non-teaching staff and permanent and/or occasional/casual staff
- Ongoing review regarding the efficacy of the safety plan as determined by Principal (or designate)

## RESPONSE TO ESCALATING/AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Physical interventions may be warranted due to behaviours characterized by, but not limited to:

- The misuse of any object which may be used as a weapon, endangering self, students or staff member;
- The assault of another person;
- Self-injury;
- Students attempting to leave a supervised area where their personal safety is at imminent risk;
- Damaging property which may result in injury to self or others

Prior to responding to behaviour through the use of physical containment, the following questions must be considered:

- **Level of risk:** Is there an imminent risk of injury to student or others present?
- **Physical environment:** Does the current environment pose the potential of more harm? (Examples may include: proximity of other students/staff, proximity of objects that could be harmful to student/others, etc.)
- **Staff Training:** Are staff with BMS or SMG certification available if physical intervention is imminent?
- **Student history:** Have physical intervention procedures been successful in the past?

Additional Notes:

When student and staff safety cannot be ensured, principal and staff must consider calling 9-1-1 for police and/or medical assistance or as part of the Safety Plan response.

Physical containment may never be used to respond to non-compliance or behaviour perceived to be defiant that does not meet the above criteria or as a punishment procedure.

## EMERGENCY PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Emergency Physical Intervention refers to the actions taken by staff in a crisis situation in which a student poses an immediate risk to themselves or others. Any employee of the NCDSB may use emergency physical intervention in an attempt to prevent harm to any student, staff member or others who are at imminent risk of injury. Emergency Physical Intervention does not require prior approval of the parent/guardian.

A staff response to behaviour that includes the use of an Emergency Physical Intervention must be reported to the Niagara Catholic Student Support Services Department using the Physical Intervention Incident Report ([Appendix A](#)).

## REPORTING A PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Staff responding to aggressive, disruptive or interfering behaviour should first always be using the safest and least intrusive possible methods to de-escalate situations.

All incidents involving physical intervention, whether in accordance with a student safety plan or deemed emergency, are to be immediately reported to a Principal/Vice-Principal or the designated teacher-in-charge.

Any incidents where a potential injury has occurred to either student or staff must be immediately reported to a Principal/Vice-Principal or designated teacher-in-charge.

A copy of the Physical Intervention Incident Reports must:

- be stored in the students Ontario Student Record (OSR)
- be provided to the parent/guardian/caregiver within a reasonable timeframe.
- Be shared with the Student Support department so it can be reviewed by either a BMS Instructor and/or an SMG Advanced Trainer

Parent/guardian/caregiver must be informed of the physical intervention on the same day that incident occurred. This can be achieved through typical means of communication with the parent/guardian/caregiver prior to providing a copy of the Physical Intervention Incident Report at a later date.

## FOLLOW-UP AFTER REPORTING A PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

A BMS Instructor, or an SMG Advanced Trainer - when applicable, will review every Physical Intervention Incident Report.

A summary of the incident, interventions and response to interventions is kept by the appropriate Instructor and/or Advanced Trainer.

A BMS Instructor, or an SMG Advanced Trainer – when applicable, will arrange a consultation with staff involved in the incident to review the antecedents and behaviours along with the techniques that were used during the intervention. Staff are asked to review their training regularly and an Instructor or Advanced Trainer will attend practice sessions to ensure that staff are performing the techniques properly.

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