



## Administrative Procedures Memorandum

### APH 012

## Physical Containment of Students: Guidelines for Responding to Injurious and Self-Injurious Student Behaviour

**DATE OF ISSUE:** September 2002  
**Revised:** September 2006, June 2012, October 2016

**MEMO TO:** All Staff

**FROM:** Director of Education

### PURPOSE

The Waterloo District School Board (WCDSB) recognizes its responsibility to provide a safe and supportive learning and teaching environment for all students and staff. The WCDSB also fosters the principles of respect and responsible citizenship in Ontario schools. Staff may also refer to Administrative Procedures Memorandum APC018 Code of Conduct regarding additional issues related to safety.

The WCDSB encourages the use of non-violent means to resolve conflict and promote safety of all in schools in accordance with Section 301(2) of the Education Act. This Guideline for Physical Containment of Students provides a consistent response to injurious, including self-injurious, student behaviour. This Guideline recognizes that when safety is an issue there may be situations where physical containment may be necessary as a last resort in order to ensure safety for all.

### REFERENCES:

- Education Act and Regulations – Section 265, 301(2), Reg. 298
- Individual Education Plans: Standards for Development, Program Planning and Implementation, 2002
- APH002 School Accidents
- APH023 Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and Program
- APH010 Violent Incident Record Keeping
- APC018 Code of Conduct
- APH029 Use of Calming Rooms as a Proactive Self-Regulation Strategy
- APS020 Suspected Child in Need of Protection
- Progressive Discipline and School Safety Act 2008
- Criminal Code, Sections 25, 34, 35, 43
- Child and Family Services Act (CFSA)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Behaviour Management Systems

### FORMS

- APH012-01 Physical Containment of Student Report
- APH012-02 Physical Containment Incident Form
- APG012-03 Physical Containment Incident Form Employee Copy

## APPENDICES

n/a

### COMMENTS AND GUIDELINES

1. **Physical Containment** is a predetermined and well-defined series of safety procedures whereby staff physically intervene to support a student who is posing an imminent physical risk-of-injury to self and/or others in order to minimize and /or eliminate the risk. As a last resort, the WCDSB supports staff in the management of a student's behaviour through the use of pre-determined and pre-approved physical containment techniques as defined in Behaviour Management Systems (BMS) Training.

Physical containment techniques are meant to keep the student and others safe, and include techniques specific to both "small" and "large" students as defined in BMS training.

2. **Behaviour Management Systems (BMS)** Since 2006, the WCDSB trains support staff and administrators on the use of BMS which emphasizes a team approach to early intervention non-physical techniques. The focus is on prevention, rather than control of disruptive and/or unsafe behavior. BMS teaches staff the importance of identifying early warning signs, and the effective use of calming and de-escalating techniques (*i.e. proximity, verbal and nonverbal interaction etc.*). BMS also includes a secondary emphasis on defensive techniques (*i.e. avoidance, releases, blocks etc.*) combined with containment methods to be used only as an absolute last resort.

### **3. Guiding Principles of Physical Containment**

- a) In all daily situations, the intent of the WCDSB is to provide the best possible care for all students and staff, and, to ensure the welfare, safety, and security of all involved. Physical containment will not be used as a tool to manage uncooperative behaviour, as a form of punishment, or as a means to inflict pain.
- b) Physical containment will not be used as a means to prevent the destruction of property unless the destruction poses a serious, imminent and acute risk of physical injury to the student and /or others. Attempts will always be made using proactive strategies to prevent or defuse potentially injurious behaviour. All proactive de-escalation strategies should be outlined in the student's Safety Plan and must be followed.
- c) The goal is to defuse, not to trigger or escalate behaviour. Discipline and consequences should be addressed when the student is de-escalated and re-engaged in learning.
- d) Physical containment shall only be used as a last resort when all other less-restrictive proactive strategies, including removing the target have been exhausted and there is an imminent and acute risk-of-injury to self or others.
- e) Physical containment will be used to manage a student's imminent risk behaviour for only 3 to 5 minutes as recommended by BMS. Staff then are required to disengage in the containment and only re-engage if the imminent risk presents itself again.
- f) The physical containment used will be the least intrusive level of the partial, small or large person containment technique as defined by BMS training.
- g) If any physical containment is required, then a debriefing with staff involved must take place. An individual student Safety Plan must be developed or revised in consultation with the student (over the age of 16), parent, and relevant staff.
- h) All incidents resulting in a physical containment must be documented by the staff members who were involved in the containment (team members who contained, assisted or observed) using the appropriate reporting form (APH012-01).
- i) There may be instances where a physical containment should not be utilized as it may result in the escalation of injurious behaviour and/or pose an increased risk to the student (*i.e. medical conditions, emotional disturbances, trauma, anxiety disorders*) and/or others. In these instances, the reasons for not engaging in a containment should be listed on a safety plan. Staff should also be aware of imminent risk situations when containment is necessary for student and staff safety.
- j) Calling 9-1-1 for professional assistance by police and/or emergency medical services is always a viable option in an emergency situation, and must be given consideration where the behaviour(s) of the student poses serious risk-of-injury to self and/or others, such that BMS techniques cannot be safely used or alleviate the risk.

### **4. Behaviour Management Systems (BMS) – Staff Training and Responsibilities**

- a) Staff that intervene with a student who poses a physical risk-of injury are potentially vulnerable to personal injury themselves. To reduce the chance of injury to staff, the Board trains staff on the use of BMS in both prevention and intervention strategies that are mostly likely to support a student who poses a risk-of-injury.

- b) BMS Training is required yearly for all support staff and administrators working directly and regularly with students who pose a significant risk-of-injury. In addition, the principal will make requests to the WCDSB Health and Safety Officer for personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff as necessary and appropriate. Principals considering the use of PPE to reduce risk-of-injury must contact WCSB Health and Safety Officer.
- c) Consistent with the legislative requirement of the Education Act as well as the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), the school board, as the employer, have an obligation to provide staff with appropriate training. The school board must also provide support staff with personal protective equipment to support student and reduce the risk-of-injury to both student(s) and staff. Support staff and/or administrators, when provided with appropriate training in the use of BMS and personal protective equipment has an obligation to support a student through the use of containment protocol, when necessary, in order to reduce the risk-of-injury to the student.
- d) A teacher and/or support staff that believes a hazard exists in the workplace should report that hazard to their principal immediately. If action is not taken in a reasonable time-frame, the teacher or support staff should contact their Health and Safety Officer.
- e) The OHSA (R.R.O. 1990, Regulation 857) states that teachers have a limited right to refuse to work (OHSA, Sections 43-45), and requires that they must ensure the health and safety of a student is not in imminent jeopardy prior to enacting a work refusal.

## 5. Unanticipated Containment for Emergency Intervention

- a) The decision to use physical containment in an unanticipated situation for emergency intervention is a matter of professional judgment. The school Crisis Response Team (CRT) will be called upon in these situations. In making the decision whether or not to use physical containment, the following factors must be considered:
  - Imminent risk-of-injury to self or others;
  - Options available other than containment to maintain safety;
  - Student's Safety Plan;
  - Availability of external support (i.e. police, Children's Aid Society (CAS));
  - Characteristics of the staff member and the student (size, age, strength, gender);
  - Previous history of the student (special education needs, patterns of behaviour, health, etc.)
  - Staff training, confidence and willingness to intervene; and,
  - Physical setting.

## 6. Additional Safety Considerations

**Note: All three conditions below must be present if containment is necessary:**

When the student's behaviour presents an imminent risk-of-injury to the student and/or others, and;  
 When all other non-physical interventions have been unsuccessful (*including removing the target*), and;  
 When the physical intervention itself presents less of a risk-of-injury than the inappropriate behaviour.

## 7. Team Approach

Each school should ensure that support staff and administrators are trained in the use of BMS and there is a Crisis Response Team (CRT). The Observer on the Crisis Response Team does not require BMS training but it is preferred. In implementing a containment procedure, a team approach is preferred. A team consists of two or more people. This approach addresses the safety of all concerned and allows flexibility in supporting others in the vicinity of the incident.

## 8. Containment as a Component of a Safety Plan

The potential to use physical containment may be a necessary component of a Safety Plan for a student with special education needs. In this case, physical containment would be the last resort in a series of least to most intrusive behaviour management strategies used with that student. The Safety Plan should clearly outline the purpose of the containment and the conditions of its use and be developed in a consultation with the parent/guardian, and student if over the age of 16.

## 9. Procedure Following Containment

- a) Following a physical containment, parent(s) or guardian(s) of students under the age of 18 are to be made aware of the incident as soon as possible and on the same day before the student is sent home from school.
- b) Following a containment, the school principal (or designate) should use their professional judgment as appropriate and:
  - Evaluate injuries of student and staff and follow WCDSB procedures
  - Contact School superintendent
  - Determine school's actions in response to the incident leading to a containment
  - Reassure and support student
  - Complete all board documentation as required
  - Debrief with support staff that were involved with the containment

## 10. Documentation

- a) Documenting the use of physical containment is necessary for both planning and accountability. The Physical Containment Incident Report (FORM APH012-01) must be completed for all incidents where physical containment is used.
- b) If any staff injury results, staff shall complete and submit the OSBIE Online Incident Report Form APH002 School Accidents.
- c) If any student or member of the public is injured, staff shall complete and submit OSBIE Online Incident Report Form (APH002) School Accidents.
- d) If the physical containment is in response to a serious violent incident, staff shall complete and submit the Workplace Violent Incident Report Form - Employees (APH023).
- e) If the physical containment has resulted in any bruising or marks left on the student, staff will contact Family & Children's Services and complete Family & Children's Services (F&CS 1A and/or F&CS1B) form.

## 11. Debriefing and Follow-up

1. All physical containments place stress on staff and students. Each individual responds to these types of incidents in a way that is unique to them. Review and debriefing strategies will vary with the nature of the school, program and staff allocations. However, it is important to note that the Ministry of Labour requires post incident response procedures for school staff who work with students whose behaviour presents safety risks. The incident response procedures are meant to inform the immediate response and also be a component in reviewing and revising prevention/intervention strategies. Based on this follow-up, the Safety Plan should be reviewed and revised as necessary with the date of review noted. These expectations for debriefing are consistent with the legislative requirements of the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA).
2. In addition to informing parent(s)/Guardian(s) there are three types of debriefing that should occur following containment.

**Student debriefing** – there must be readiness on the part of the student to participate in the debriefing. For students with significant cognitive and/ or communicative impairment, special education staff should be consulted along with parent(s) or guardian(s) during the process. This debriefing must be facilitated in order to accommodate the needs of the student. The parent or guardian of the student must be invited to attend during the process.

The purpose of the debriefing is to:

- Gain an understanding of the incident from the student's perspective;
- Validate and empathize with the student's feeling;
- Discuss any unresolved emotional distress about the incident; and,
- Negotiate alternative responses for similar situations that might occur in the future.

**Staff Debriefing** – The staff debriefing must be led by the principal or designate and preferably occur the same day as the incident. The purpose of the staff debriefing is to:

- Assess the staff's ability to support the student in a positive manner in the future;
- Gain an understanding of the incident from the staff's perspective;
- Validate and empathize with the staff's feelings;
- Discuss any unresolved emotional distress about the incident;

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the response; and
- Discuss alternative responses for similar situations that might occur in the future.

**Observers Debriefing** – Debriefing of observers may include other students, staff, volunteers and/or members of the public that witness the containment. The principal or designate should consider providing observers the opportunity for debriefing. Students who witness a physical containment may not understand the situation and/or may require a special debriefing with focused message regarding maintaining safety at school. The principal should consider the age of the student(s) involved in the debriefing and ensure the message is age-appropriate. The principal should be careful to not disclose private information in order to respect the privacy of the student involved in the containment.

Following the debriefing, the principal shall forward a copy of the completed Physical Containment of Student Report (APH012-01) to the Superintendent of the student's school.



PHYSICAL CONTAINMENT OF STUDENT REPORT

This form is to be completed by the person(s) who apply the physical containment.

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Behaviour Plan with Physical Containment listed as potential Strategy  Yes  No

Incident Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Incident:
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Incident Location

- Incident Location options: School, Yard, Bus, Classroom, Hallway, Other

Student's Actions/Potential Actions

- Student's Actions/Potential Actions options: Hurt Self, Hurt Others, Damage Property, Other

Behaviour(s) Exhibited by Student During Incident

- Behaviour(s) Exhibited by Student During Incident options: Agitated, Mood Swings, Withdrawn, Self-Abusive, Verbal or Physical Threats, Other, Physically Aggressive to Peer/Staff, Verbally Aggressive to Peer/Staff, Crying, Non-Compliant, Hostile, Very Quiet

Antecedents of Incident: (Describe events prior to dangerous behaviour, strategies attempted)
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Add Important Details of Behaviour
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Details of Containment:**

Small Student Containment Partial

Full

Larger Student Containment Partial

Full

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe Student's Reaction to the Containment**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Length of Time Containment Was Used (Containments should last no more than 3 – 5 minutes)**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Follow-up to Containment**

1. Date of Report to Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Date and time of Parental Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Were police involved?  Yes  No (Police Incident # \_\_\_\_\_)

4. Were there bruises, scratches, contusions or other marks on the child?  Yes  No

Date and Time F&CS Contacted: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please fill our F&CS1A Form)

5. Were there bruises, scratches, contusions or other marks on the staff?  Yes  No

Was medical attention required by child, staff or others?  Yes  No

If yes, describe. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Must complete Physical Containment Incident Form if injury occurred to student**

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Position/Title</u> | <u>Type of Involvement (contained, witnessed, assisted)</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------|---|
| _____       | _____                 | _____   |
| _____       | _____                 | _____   |
| _____       | _____                 | _____   |

**Form Completed By:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**FORM TO BE COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED BY STAFF WHO APPLIED PHYSICAL CONTAINMENT TO THE PRINCIPAL WITHIN 24 HOURS OF THE INCIDENT**

**Distribution:** 1. O.S.R. 2. Student Services  
Date Revised: October 2016





WATERLOO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD  
**(THIS FORM IS TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PRINCIPAL)**  
EMPLOYEE COPY

FORM APH012-03

**PHYSICAL CONTAINMENT INCIDENT FORM  
EMPLOYEE COPY**

**Please Note:** Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, the student/family information has been deleted from the "Employee Copy" of this form.

EMPLOYEE'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Briefly describe the injuries the student received

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Briefly describe any medical intervention administered to the student.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date of Containment* *Time of Containment*

**TO BE COMPLETED BY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL/SUPERVISOR**

4. Consultation with Superintendent: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Parent Contacted by Principal: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ *Date* *Time*

6. Report completed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature* *Date*

**Distribution:** Employee  
Date Revised: October 2016