

Promoting Adaptive Behaviour Through Specific Skill Building Interventions for Students with Exceptional Needs Procedure

RATIONALE:

“Children Do Well If They Can” ... If they’re not, something is getting in their way and it is our responsibility to determine what that is so we can help them. (*Collaborative and Proactive Solutions-Dr. Ross Greene; Collaborative Problem Solving-Dr. Ablon*).

Students who present with challenging behaviours have lagging skills in one or more key areas of cognitive functioning such as executive functioning, language processing, emotional regulation, cognitive flexibility and social skills. As such, they require supports and interventions to assist them in developing and strengthening these skills so they are able to successfully respond to situational demands and meet expectations placed upon them.

Most challenging behaviour can be prevented by understanding the perspective of the students; putting in place strategies that address and respect the needs of the student and others; and reducing situational demands until essential lagging skills are developed. The need for student and adult safety across all environments will inform the approach, timing and nature of the support and intervention.

There are instances, however, when we have not yet understood the students’ perspectives and/or have not yet been able to implement strategies that consistently and adequately reduce situational demands & expectations as well as address the needs of students and others.

When this happens, significant challenging behaviour may occur resulting in a safety risk for the student and others around him/her. An effective and comprehensive Behaviour Support Plan must include strategies designed to address these instances.

Additional information on Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs) and Safe Intervention Plans (SIPs) can be found in the *Policy Procedure: Promoting Positive Student Behaviour and Staff Safety through Behaviour Support Plans and Safe Intervention Plans*

<http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Promoting-Staff-Safety-Through-Behaviour-Support-Plans-and-Safe-Intervention-Plans-Directive.pdf>

and on-line at www.caringandsafeschools.commonshwdsb.on.ca

In some circumstances, providing students with opportunities to work outside the classroom in smaller groups or individual settings can be an effective way to more broadly reduce situational demands and expectations. These preventative and responsive strategies can assist students in reducing their anxiety, regulating their emotions, and/or providing a break from the stimuli that are exceeding their ability to respond adaptively.

Promoting Adaptive Behaviour Through Specific Skill Building Interventions for Students with Exceptional Needs Procedure

As with instructional strategies, all behaviour support and intervention strategies must be developed to meet the unique needs of the student while maintaining the (programming or integrity) of the classroom. This is determined through an understanding of the student's specific lagging skills in relation to the social and academic demands and expectations (s)he is being required to meet.

All strategies and interventions that involve students working outside the classroom for even a short period of time must be consistent with Board policies and procedures, including those regarding Safe Schools <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/board/policies/>. They must also be seen as a reasonable and effective way to address and reduce the challenging behaviour occurring inside the classroom.

The purpose of this procedure is to provide shared definitions for specific interventions, and to provide procedures that are educationally appropriate to ensure the provision of a safe, caring, and respectful educational learning environment at all times, for the benefit of all students and staff.

TERMINOLOGY:

Snoezelen/Sensory Room: The word Snoezelen is taken from two Dutch words: *snufflen* meaning to seek out or to explore, and *doezelen* meaning to relax. Snoezelen originated in the Netherlands as a leisure experience for adults with severe disabilities. Over time, this initial idea has merged with the use of a wide range of multi-sensory stimulation to provide special environments for people with a variety of disabilities, including autism, intellectual disability and emotional regulation needs.

Sensory rooms are spaces that use music, lighting, gentle vibrations, tactile sensations and/or aromatherapy and are designed in order for the users to relax and choose activities at their own pace. The room can be relaxing or stimulating depending on the student's sensory needs. It can encourage social skills and heighten sensory awareness. Sensory rooms may contain materials recommended by an occupational therapist (i.e., weighted blanket, therapy ball, sensory lighting, beanbag chair, soft music etc.). An adult must supervise the use of a sensory room at all times.

Calming Room/Space: A calming room is a room or space that is available for a student to use for the purpose of implementing a de-escalation, self-regulatory strategy that (s)he has learned or is learning, resulting in the avoidance or reduction of a challenging behaviour.

It is typically a space that is less stimulating than the classroom and may contain materials to assist the student in calming methods (e.g. squishy balls, visuals of deep breathing, preferred activities, etc.). The use of a Calming room/Space must be supervised by an adult at all times. A Calming room/Space may be a self-contained space, but may also be a designated space in the classroom or in the school (i.e., the resource room, the office).

Promoting Adaptive Behaviour Through Specific Skill Building Interventions for Students with Exceptional Needs Procedure

Time in a Calming Room/Space can be scheduled in advance as a preventative and proactive strategy or as a responsive strategy where it has been identified that certain situational demands or expectations are exceeding the student's ability to respond adaptively resulting in unsafe conditions for one or more students or staff.

Types of Calming Rooms/Spaces: There are three major types. All types must provide the opportunity for the student to re-engage in the class activity as soon as it is determined (s)he is able to successfully cope with the situational demands or expectations required of him/her.

Skill building strategies to assist the student in more successfully responding to classroom demands and expectations must be part of the plan for the student, and documented in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), Behaviour Support Plan (BSP), and Safe Intervention Plan (SIP), as appropriate for the individual student (see *Appendix A: Safe Intervention Plan*, and *Appendix B: Behaviour Support Plan*).

1. Classroom Calming Space with Observation

This type of Calming Area strategy allows the student to observe ongoing activities without the expectation of actively participating. This can be achieved in a variety of ways. One of the most common procedures is to create a space for the student on the periphery of ongoing activities so (s)he can clearly hear and see everything that is happening.

2. Classroom Calming Space With Independent Focus

This arrangement enables a student remaining in the classroom but redirects his/her focus to an activity that is independent of what the rest of the class is involved in. This could involve the creation of a "Calming Space" in another area of the classroom.

3. Out of Class Calming Room/Space

This strategy involves the use of a room or area in the school that is available, with supervision, when needed for the purpose of providing a safe environment for a student who has been unable to remain in the classroom due to immediate safety concerns (i.e., physical harm to self or others).

Calming, self-regulatory strategies need to be student-specific, and may include walking through the halls with a staff member, gross motor or sensory activities, spending time in the office area or resource room, or the use of a designated Calming room/Space, which will allow the student to de-escalate in a safe and private environment.

The use of this option should **only** be considered as part of a continuum of interventions and strategies, with the majority of supports and interventions focused on building and strengthening key lagging skills.

Promoting Adaptive Behaviour Through Specific Skill Building Interventions for Students with Exceptional Needs Procedure

Its use is to be outlined in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), Behaviour Support Plan (BSP), and be clearly articulated in the student's Safe Intervention Plan (SIP). The use of a Calming Room/Space must be supervised by a minimum of one adult at all times and carefully monitored as to its effectiveness.

Behaviour Support Plan (BSP): A Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) is a written plan that is designed to identify the situational demands and expectations a student is having difficulty meeting as a result of lagging cognitive skills in one or more key areas as relate to behaviour.

It should also outline what is required to reduce those situational demands and expectations while the necessary skills are built or strengthened.

If the student also has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), then the Behaviour Support Plan is developed based on the alternative expectations outlined in the IEP. The Behaviour Support Plan is developed to help the student acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful at school and in life overall.

Alternative programming is developed in an IEP when behaviour is impacting on academic success.

Safe Intervention Plan (SIP): A Safe Intervention Plan (SIP) is a plan developed for a student whose behaviour is known to pose an ongoing risk of injury to him/herself, 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 safely and effectively responding to and managing these behaviours. It is a tool that defines a consistent script for all staff that includes proactive supports, a planned reaction to behaviour, and is implemented and revised as needed and following any application of the SIP.

PROCEDURES:

1.0 General Safety Requirements

- 1.1 When it has been determined, in consultation with all appropriate parties, that the creation of a Sensory or a designated Out of Class Calming room (that is not a room currently being used for other purposes as well i.e. Resource room, room at the back of a Library etc.) is to be considered, it must be first approved by the appropriate school Superintendent followed by a referral to the Superintendent with responsibilities for special education.
- 1.2 Once approval from the Superintendent of with responsibilities in Special Education has been received, HWDSB Facility Services must be consulted before moving forward. This is to ensure that the room and any equipment to be used in the room meets building codes and fire safety regulations. Temporary or makeshift rooms are not permitted.
- 1.3 The Principal will establish fire drill protocols for the Sensory or Out of Class Calming room. Those who will be accessing the room should practice these protocols.

Promoting Adaptive Behaviour Through Specific Skill Building Interventions for Students with Exceptional Needs Procedure

- 1.4 Staff will conduct a visual check of the room prior to each use, to ensure that the room is safe and any equipment in the room is in working order and/or safely secured.
- 1.5 Staff will report to the Principal the absence of, or defect in, any equipment or other aspect of the room, which may present a safety concern to students or staff. If the space is deemed to be unsafe, the room will be closed until concerns are addressed, and all staff accessing the room will be notified of the closure and the subsequent reopening.
- 1.6 Any equipment located in the room will be maintained in good working order and serviced, as per the manufacturer's instructions/manual.
- 1.7 The construction of a Sensory and Out of Class Calming rooms must take into account the following safety factors:
 - 1.7.1 Size
 - 1.7.2 Ventilation
 - 1.7.3 Lighting (in the case of an Out of Class Calming room, with the switch outside the room);
 - 1.7.4 Restricted access to objects and fixtures with which students could harm themselves;
 - 1.7.5 Monitoring of student in all areas of the room, visually and audibly; and
 - 1.7.6 Inability to restrict access in or out.
- 1.8 In all situations, it is the intent to provide the best possible care and to respectfully ensure the welfare, safety, and security of all involved.

2.0 Sensory Rooms

- 2.1 Use of the room should be determined based on student need, as identified in her/his IEP and in consultation with the students' family and the appropriate Special Education staff and health professional (i.e. OT Sensory Processing Assessment Recommendations).
- 2.2 The Principal, in collaboration with staff who will be accessing the sensory room, will establish rules for use and maintenance of the sensory room, based on the needs of the students who will be using the space (i.e., timetable for use, number of students in the room, placement and maintenance of materials, cleaning of surfaces).

Promoting Adaptive Behaviour Through Specific Skill Building Interventions for Students with Exceptional Needs Procedure

- 2.3 Plans will be established for each student, as the experience of the room will be highly individual based on each student's sensory needs and preferences (i.e., appropriate stimuli, length of time in the room, physical restrictions). Plans should include strategies for monitoring any responses in order to adapt the environment appropriately. Plans must be available for all staff members who will be interacting with the student in this environment.
- 2.4 Sensory rooms are to be used as part of a student's continuing scheduled program needs and not as a de-escalating space for challenging behaviour.

3.0 Classroom Calming Spaces

- 3.1 Some students regularly experience high levels of frustration, anger and anxiety. Teaching calming, self-regulatory strategies to these students must be part of the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) and Behaviour Support Plan (BSP), and/or Safe Intervention Plan (SIP) as a proactive means of addressing safety issues and to provide the student with a greater level of self-control. Calming, self-regulatory strategies may include, but are not limited to, the student recognizing areas of frustration and/or beginning feelings of anger or anxiety and then self-employing strategies for managing these feelings.
- 3.2 The focus should be on the teaching and implementation of calming strategies in the classroom.
- 3.3 Students may access Calming Spaces voluntarily as part of a pre-determined plan outlined in the student's Behaviour Support Plan (BSP), Safe Intervention Plan (SIP) or they may be prompted by staff when access to this resource when needed.
- 3.5 Parent(s)/guardian(s) are to be informed and agree to the use of the Calming Space as part of the student's BSP.
- 3.6 Time in Calming Space may be scheduled or used as needed.
- 3.7 All staff working with the student must be aware that the student has access to a Calming Space as part of their plan, and be aware of the strategies involved in the student's plan.
- 3.8 Calming Spaces should not cause any further distress or create circumstances that increase situational demands or expectations.
- 3.9 Calming Spaces may contain items, which the students accessing the space can use to assist their self-regulatory strategies, such as stress balls or music, but should not include items that could potentially be harmful to the student.

Promoting Adaptive Behaviour Through Specific Skill Building Interventions for Students with Exceptional Needs Procedure

- 3.10 Students must be supervised in a Calming Space.
- 3.11 Calming rooms/Spaces are not to be used as a disciplinary measure or as punishment for challenging behaviour but rather as a strategy to reduce situational demands and expectations and allow the student to practice self-regulation skills
- 3.13 Students must not be restricted in their ability to leave Calming Spaces.
- 3.14 Parent(s)/guardian(s) must be aware that the use of a Calming Space is part of their child's SIP.

5.0 Out of Class Calming Rooms/Spaces

- 5.1 Out of Class Calming Rooms/Spaces should be considered:
 - 5.1.1 when less intensive intervention alternatives have been attempted and have not met the student's needs, and this has been documented; and
 - 5.1.2 in an emergency when the student shows clear evidence that he or she may injure themselves or others.
- 5.2 The use of an Out of Class Calming Room/Space is to be outlined in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), Behaviour Support Plan (BSP), and be clearly articulated in the student's Safe Intervention Plan (SIP).
 - 5.2.1 In some circumstances, Out of Class Calming rooms/Spaces may be used by a student as a temporary measure, when challenging behaviour that is creating safety concerns has not surfaced previously. In such cases, the student may not have an Individual Education Plan (IEP), nor a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP). If the student continues to require this area over an extended period of time, then plans should be developed. Parent(s)/guardian(s) must be notified of their child's use of the Calming room/Space.
- 5.3 The use of an Out of Class Calming room/Space must be supervised by a **minimum** of one adult at all times and carefully monitored as to its effectiveness.
- 5.4 The use of an Out of Class Calming room/Area must be tracked to refine and determine the effectiveness of the strategy (see *Appendix C: Calming Room Log*).
- 5.5 The use of Out of Class Calming rooms/Spaces requires careful planning and consideration of the following steps before its use:

Promoting Adaptive Behaviour Through Specific Skill Building Interventions for Students with Exceptional Needs Procedure

- 5.5.1 A description of the unsafe behaviours (including early warning signs and symptoms of escalating behaviours, triggers of behaviours) that will necessitate supports outside of the classroom setting. A description of the behaviours that are understood by the student (based on the student's cognitive abilities), teacher(s), educational assistants, parent(s)/guardian(s), and all who will implement the procedures.
- 5.5.2 An analysis of the situations in which the unsafe behaviours may occur and development of a plan to pro-actively reduce situational demands and expectations and intervene as soon as there is an indication the student is beginning to struggle with what is being asked or expected of him/her in the classroom
- 5.5.3 A description of the level and conditions of supervision.
- 5.5.4 The development of transition procedures that allow the student to return to the classroom whenever (s)he feels able safely do so, and with as much dignity as possible.
- 5.5.5 The development of a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) and a Safe Intervention Plan (SIP) for every student for whom the use of an Out of Class Calming room/Space is considered part of the student's management plan. The use of the Out of Class Calming room/Space will be recorded as part of the plan (see *Appendix C: Out of Class Calming room/Space Log*), and a copy of the SIP Intervention Report (see *Appendix A: Safe Intervention Plan*) placed in the documentation section of the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR).
- 5.5.6 Consultation with the Parent(s)/guardian(s) in the development of the SIP. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) do not support the SIP and/or the use of the Out of Class Calming room/Space, then the onus is on the parent(s)/guardian(s) to present a mutually acceptable alternative plan. Should an agreement not be reached, if a challenging behaviour poses a safety concern to the student or others the school may need to implement next steps (e.g., suspension, expulsion, police contact) in lieu of the use of the SIP and/or the Out of Class Calming room/Space.



SAFE INTERVENTION PLAN

Student's Name	School
Date of Birth <hr style="width: 80%; margin: 5px auto;"/> (year/month/day)	Grade
Gender Male Female	IEP BSP <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Name of Staff Member Assisting in the creation of the Safe Intervention Plan</i>	<i>Position</i>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Parent Response to the Safe Intervention Plan

Parent's Signature

Date

Principal's Signature

Date

This Plan must be reviewed yearly and/or as circumstances change. The Safe Intervention Plan should be reviewed in conjunction with other related documents (e.g., Individual Education Plan - IEP, Behaviour Support Plan - BSP). A copy of the SIP should be placed in the Documentation File of the Student's Ontario School Record. The information contained in the SIP should be made available to all appropriate staff.

(page 2)

CRISIS DEVELOPMENT	STAFF RESPONSE
STAGE 1: Anxiety	Supportive
STAGE 2: Defensive	Directive
STAGE 3: Acting-Out	Non-violent Physical Crisis Intervention
STAGE 4: Tension Reduction	Therapeutic Rapport



School Behaviour Support Plan Planning Guide for Alternative Expectations

Student:	School:	
D.O.B.:	O.E.N.:	SIP: Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher:	LRT:	Grade:
Date Written:	Review Date:	IEP: Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> ID:

Triggers:	Strengths:
	Reinforcers/Motivators/Interests:

Date	Assessment methods	Review of progress

Learning Expectation:
Teaching Strategies:

Learning Expectation:
Teaching Strategies:

Learning Expectation:
Teaching Strategies:

Communication Plan:

Principal Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

