

<b>Date of Issue</b>	March 2023
<b>Original Date of Issue</b>	February 23, 1990
<b>Subject</b>	<b>PHYSICAL CONTAINMENT: GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO INJURIOUS AND SELF-INJURIOUS STUDENT BEHAVIOUR</b>
<b>References</b>	<a href="#">APM A4002 – Reporting and Investigating Workplace Injury/Illness (Critical/Non-critical)</a> <a href="#">APM A4071 –Reporting Violent Incidents in the Workplace Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act</a> <a href="#">APM A5410 – Injuries to Students and Non-employees</a> <a href="#">APM A7100 – Reporting Violent Incidents</a> <a href="#">APM A7630 – Code of Conduct Occupational Health and Safety Act</a>
<b>Contact</b>	Student Services

---

## 1. Rationale

- 1.1 The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) recognizes its responsibility to provide a safe and supportive environment for all students and staff. Staff may also refer to Administrative Procedures Memorandum (APM) A7630 – Code of Conduct, regarding additional issues related to safety.
- 1.2 Students and staff are best served in classrooms with supportive and planned responses to address students' socio-emotional, behavioural, and safety needs. This guideline outlines board-approved physical containment techniques and protocols, to ensure a consistent response to injurious and self-injurious student behaviour.
- 1.3 The *Education Act* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) create obligations for the SCDSB to provide staff with personal protective equipment (PPE) and appropriate training, to support students, and to reduce the risk of injury to both students and staff. Staff members, when provided with PPE and the appropriate training in physical containment protocols, have an obligation to support a student using PPE and the appropriate protocols, when necessary, to reduce the risk of injury to the student and/or others.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Physical Containment** – is a predetermined intervention, as outlined in a student's Safety Plan-Notification of Worker Risk, whereby staff intervene to support a student who is posing an imminent and acute physical risk of injury to self and/or others, to minimize and/or eliminate the risk. As a last resort, the SCDSB supports staff in the management of a student's behaviour through the use of board-approved protocols, training, de-escalation strategies, and physical containment techniques.

Physical containment techniques are meant to keep the student, other students, and staff safe. Techniques are specific to the student and are informed and supported by board-approved training provided to staff. The use of board-approved physical containment protocols, strategies, and techniques shall only be implemented by trained and certified staff, when the risk to staff and students of not physically intervening outweighs the risk of physically intervening.

- 2.2 **Behaviour Management Systems (BMS)** – is one of two board-approved approaches used for prevention and de-escalation protocols in the school setting. To support staff and student safety, the SCDSB train staff on the use of BMS de-escalation and intervention strategies, with an emphasis on prevention and understanding behaviour, rather than control of disruptive and/or unsafe behaviour. BMS teaches staff the importance of identifying and responding accordingly to student behaviour, and the effective use of calming and de-escalating techniques. BMS also includes a secondary emphasis on defensive techniques (e.g., avoidance, releases, blocks, etc.) combined with containment methods to be used only as an absolute last resort.
- 2.3 **Non-violent Crisis Intervention (NVC)** – is the second of two board-approved approaches to be used, and only in specific situations when pre-approved by the Special Education Department. NVC provides additional and specialized support, strategies, and protocols to respond to situations involving student escalations.
- 2.4 **NVC Crisis Development Model (Integrated Experience)** – details specific crisis development/behaviour levels with corresponding staff attitudes/approaches and shall be created and reviewed with appropriately trained staff prior to implementation.

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

- 3.1 In all situations, it is the intent of the SCDSB to provide the best possible care and to ensure the welfare, safety, and security of students, staff, and volunteers.
- 3.2 A physical containment will not be used as a tool to manage uncooperative behaviour, a form of punishment, or as a means to inflict pain.
- 3.3 A physical containment will not be used as a means to prevent the destruction of property, unless that destruction poses a serious, imminent, and acute risk of physical injury to the student and/or others.
- 3.4 Whenever possible, attempts will be made to determine the function of student behaviour, and to avoid and defuse potentially injurious behaviour through preventative techniques. Specific prevention and de-escalation strategies should be outlined in the student's Safety Plan-Notification of Worker Risk, and must be followed.
- 3.5 Staff should not consider behaviour that poses a risk of injury as an educational opportunity for teaching, or address the behaviour with threats of discipline. The goal is to defuse, not trigger or escalate behaviour. Teaching and debriefing should occur when the student is de-escalated and re-engaged in learning.

- 3.6 A physical containment should only be employed as a last resort when all other measures have been exhausted, including removing the target, and there is an imminent and acute risk of injury to self and/or others.
- 3.7 A physical containment shall not be used as a behaviour modification strategy or technique.
- 3.8 A physical containment will only be used to manage a student's behaviour until the student no longer creates/poses an imminent risk of serious physical injury to self and/or others.
- 3.9 If a physical containment is required in a particular instance, then a debriefing and an individual student's Safety Plan-Notification of Worker Risk must be reviewed/developed in consultation with the student, parent/guardian, and staff.
- 3.10 All physical containments must be documented by a staff member directly involved in the containment.
  - 3.10.1 containments must be reported verbally to the school principal, or designate, on the day they occur;
  - 3.10.2 containments must be documented, using the Physical Containment Incident Report form (FORM A1440 - 1) and submitted to the school principal, or designate, within three working days; and,
  - 3.10.3 the Physical Containment Incident Report form (FORM A1440 - 1) must be scanned and emailed to the principal(s) of special education and the superintendent of education on the same day they are submitted.
- 3.11 There may be instances where a physical containment should not be utilized, as it may result in the escalation of injurious behaviours and/or pose an increased risk to the student (e.g., medical conditions, emotional disturbance, trauma, anxiety disorders) and/or others.
- 3.12 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/NVCI approaches cannot be safely used or alleviate the risk.

#### **4. Staff Training and Responsibilities**

- 4.1 Training
  - 4.1.1 BMS – staff that intervene with a student who poses a physical risk of injury are potentially vulnerable to personal injury. Unless otherwise specifically stipulated and approved, to reduce the potential of injury to staff, the board trains staff to use BMS prevention and intervention strategies that are most likely to support a student who poses a risk of injury.
  - 4.1.2 NVCI – when pre-approved as an alternative to BMS, NVCI training and certification may be provided to designated staff to use when working directly with students with complex needs who may pose a significant risk of injury to self and/or others while at school, and whose behaviour is deemed by the Special Education Department as not suitable for BMS.

- 4.1.2.1 In addition to a Safety Plan-Notification of Worker Risk, students being supported through NVCI will also have a SCDSB Behaviour Support Plan, including a NVCI Crisis Development Model Plan (Integrated Experience).
- 4.2 Training to use physical containments and de-escalation strategies is required for support staff and administrators working directly, and regularly, with students who pose a significant risk of injury. It is the principal's responsibility to ensure that any staff member who works with students who pose a risk of injury participates in the appropriate training. If a principal determines that PPE is required to reduce risk of injury, they should contact their family of schools' consultant for special education and/or principal(s) of special education.
- 4.3 A staff member who believes a hazard exists in the workplace should report that hazard to their principal, or designate, immediately. If action is not taken in a reasonable timeframe, the staff member should contact their health and safety committee member for assistance.
- 4.4 The OHSA (R.R.O. 1990, Regulation 857) states that teachers have a limited right to refuse to work and requires that they must ensure that the health and safety of a student is not in imminent jeopardy prior to enacting a work refusal.

## **5. Unanticipated Containment for Emergency Intervention**

- 5.1 The decision to use a physical containment in an unanticipated situation for emergency intervention is a matter of professional judgment. In making the decision whether or not to use a physical containment, the following factors must be considered:
  - 5.1.1 imminent risk of injury to self and/or others;
  - 5.1.2 options available other than containment to maintain safety;
  - 5.1.3 student's Safety Plan-Notification of Worker Risk;
  - 5.1.4 availability of external support (e.g., police, Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions);
  - 5.1.5 characteristics of the staff member and the student (e.g., size, age, strength, gender);
  - 5.1.6 previous history of the student (e.g., special education needs, patterns of behaviour, health, etc.);
  - 5.1.7 staff training, confidence, and ability to safely intervene; and,
  - 5.1.8 physical setting.

## **6. Additional Safety Considerations**

- 6.1 A physical containment will only be used as a last resort when the physical safety of the student or others is endangered.
- 6.2 It is imperative that a physical containment be used in such a way that the risk of injury to all parties is minimized.
- 6.3 When a physical containment is applied in a safe manner, the intent is to protect, not to teach, consequence, or cause pain.

**7. Team Approach**

Each school should ensure that it has staff trained in the use of BMS. The Special Education Department will designate staff to be trained in NVCI, when necessary. When implementing a containment procedure, a team approach is required. A team consists of at least two staff members for a small person containment and three staff members for a large person containment. 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-Notification of Worker Risk**

A physical containment may be a necessary component of a Safety Plan-Notification of Worker Risk for a student with special education needs. In this case, a physical containment would be the last resort in a series of least to most intrusive behaviour management strategies. The Safety Plan-Notification of Worker Risk should clearly outline antecedents, preventative/calming strategies, and the conditions that must be present for a small or large person containment. Parent(s)/guardian(s) should be consulted when developing and reviewing the Safety Plan-Notification of Worker Risk. If a student has a Safety Plan-Notification of Worker Risk, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) with an Alternative Program page is required. Students supported through NVCI will also require a SCDSB Behaviour Support Plan, including a NVCI Crisis Development Model Plan (Integrated Experience).

**9. Procedure Following a Containment**

- 9.1 Following a physical containment, parent(s)/guardian(s) of students under the age of 18 are to be made aware of the incident immediately following the containment.
- 9.2 Following a containment, the school principal, or designate, should use their professional judgment to determine whether or not they should:
  - 9.2.1 contact the principal(s) of special education for proactive programming support;
  - 9.2.2 submit a referral to the family of schools' consultant for special education for assistance in debriefing and providing programming support;
  - 9.2.3 contact the Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions for students under the age of 16 for information or support; and,
  - 9.2.4 contact the local police for support.

**10. Documentation**

- 10.1 Documenting the use of a physical containment is necessary for both planning and accountability. The Physical Containment Incident Report form (FORM A1440 - 1) must be completed for all incidents where a physical containment is used.
  - 10.1.1 If any staff injury results, the employer and employee shall follow the protocols and complete and submit the required documentation as per APM A4002 – Reporting and Investigating Workplace Injury/Illness (Critical/Non-critical).
  - 10.1.2 If any student or member of the public is injured, staff shall follow the protocols and complete and submit the required documentation as per APM A5410 – Injuries to Students and Non-employees.

- 10.1.3 If the physical containment is in response to a violent incident, staff shall follow the protocols as per APM A7100 – Reporting Violent Incidents.
- 10.1.4 If the physical containment is in response to an aggressive incident, staff shall follow the protocols and complete and submit the required documentation as per APM A4071 – Reporting Violent Incidents in the Workplace Under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

## **11. Debriefing and Follow-up**

- 11.1 Physical containments place stress on staff and students. Each staff member or student may respond to these incidents in a way that is unique to that individual. Reviewing and debriefing strategies will vary with the nature of the school, program, student, staff, and protocol implemented (BMS or NVCI). The incident response procedures are to inform both the immediate response and support the school team in reviewing and revising prevention/intervention strategies, in accordance with the protocol followed.
- 11.2 In addition to informing parent(s)/guardian(s), there are three types of debriefing that should occur following containment.
  - 11.2.1 Student debriefing – there must be readiness on the part of the student to participate in the debriefing. This debriefing must be facilitated in order to accommodate the needs of the student. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student must be invited to attend during this process. The purpose of this debriefing is to:
    - 11.2.1.1 gain an understanding of the incident from the student's perspective;
    - 11.2.1.2 validate and empathize with the student's feelings;
    - 11.2.1.3 discuss any unresolved emotional distress about the incident;
    - and,
    - 11.2.1.4 identify alternative responses for similar situations that might occur in the future.
  - 11.2.2 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:
    - 11.2.2.1 assess the ability of staff to support the student in a positive manner;
    - 11.2.2.2 gain an understanding of the incident from the staff member's perspective;
    - 11.2.2.3 validate and empathize with the staff member's feelings;
    - 11.2.2.4 discuss any unresolved emotional distress about the incident;
    - 11.2.2.5 evaluate the effectiveness of the response; and,
    - 11.2.2.6 discuss alternative responses for similar situations that might occur in the future.
  - 11.2.3 Observers debriefing – may include other students, staff, volunteers, and/or members of the public that witnessed 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 a focused message regarding maintaining safety at school. The principal, or designate, should consider the age and capacity of the

student(s) involved in the debriefing, and ensure the message is age appropriate. The principal, or designate, should be careful not to disclose private information in order to respect the privacy of the student involved in the containment.

- 11.3 Following the debriefings, the principal, or designate, shall forward a copy of the completed Physical Containment Incident Report form (FORM A1440 - 1) to the principal(s) of special education and their superintendent of education.

**First Issued**  
**Revised**

February 23, 1990  
June 30, 2008, January 2014, June 2015, April 2018, March 2023

***Issued under the authority of the Director of Education***



---

---

**Physical Containment Incident Report**

---

---

**Reporting Process and Timelines:**

All physical containments must be documented by a staff member directly involved in the containment.

- Containments must be reported verbally to the school principal, or designate, on the day they occur.
  - Containments must be documented using the Physical Containment Incident Report form and submitted to the school principal, or designate, within ***three working days***.
  - Physical Containment Incident Report forms shall be scanned and emailed to the principal(s) of special education and superintendent of education on the same day they are submitted.
- 
- 

**School Information**

_____	_____
School	Principal (print name)
_____	_____
Completed by (print name)	Date of Report
_____	_____
Principal Signature	Date

---

---

**Student Information**

_____	_____	_____
Student (name)	Age	Class/Grade
_____	_____	_____
O.E.N.	Exceptionality (if applicable)	
Is the student currently on medication?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Type: _____		

---

---

Comment:

Is there an existing Safety Plan-Notification of Worker Risk? YES  NO

---

---

**Description of Incident**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Specific Location: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Staff Directly Involved**  
(Include job title and time arrived at scene)

---

**Staff Witnesses**  
(Include job title and time arrived at scene)

---

---



**Observers** (Students, Parents/Guardians, Staff, Volunteers, etc.)

**Pertinent circumstances precipitating a physical containment.**

**Description of preventive measures used prior to a physical containment.**

**Reason situation was judged unsafe, and a physical containment required.**

Description of the Physical Containment	Length of the Physical Containment
---	------------------------------------

**Were there any injuries/damage to the student or to school property prior to the Physical Containment?** YES  NO

**Description of injuries/damage:**

**Were there any injuries/damage to the student or to school property directly related to the Physical Containment?** YES  NO

**Describe:**

**Injuries (if any) have been reported to:**

No injuries

Ontario School Board Insurance Exchange (OSBIE)

(Refer to APM A5410)

Workplace Safety & Insurance Act (WSIB)

(Refer to APM A4002)

**Notification Made: (Include date, time, and person)**

**Name of Parent/Guardian Contacted:**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Superintendent of Education Contacted:**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Principal of Special Education Contacted:**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Student Debriefing Occurred:**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Staff Debriefing Occurred:**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Persons Involved:**

**Observer Debriefing Occurred:**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Persons Involved:**

**Summary of Debriefing Meeting**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- Copies:
1. Principal of Special Education
  2. Superintendent of Education
  3. OSR

Personal information collected on this form is collected under the authority of the *Education Act* in accordance with the *Education Act* and *Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act*.