BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY

[Organization Name] establishes guidelines for prohibited and permitted practices when working with clients and other vulnerable sector groups. The vulnerable sector refers to individuals who are dependent on others due to their age, disability, or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent or who are otherwise at a greater risk of being harmed than the general population by those in positions of authority or trust relative to them.

POLICY

This policy seeks to assure the safety and protection of clients, as well as any other vulnerable group associated with [Organization Name], as well as their treatment with decency and dignity.

All staff and volunteers will review, sign, and witness the policy prior to beginning their work with [Organization Name], and it will be reviewed, signed, and witnessed annually by all workers and volunteers.

Failure to adhere to these principles may result in disciplinary action, including and up to dismissal.

**Appropriate Methods of Behaviour Correction**

Unique and individual interventions are more important than any prescribed behaviour program. Some examples of useful interventions include building relationships, adapting the environment, managing sensory stimulation, changing communication strategies, providing prompts and cues, using a teach, review, and reteach process, and developing social skills.

It is important to ensure that any misbehaviour that occurs is reported, upon occurrence. All employees, students, and volunteers are responsible for reporting any occurrence to their [INDICATE PERSON/DEPARTMENT]. Once misbehaviour has been noted and/or reported, disciplinary action/behaviour management must be provided to the individual in a constructive manner appropriate to the actions and age of the individual, in order to foster self-discipline, protect health and safety, respect the rights of others, and maintain equipment.

The following are some examples of permitted methods of behaviour correction:

* Approach the individual in a calm, supportive manner and attempt to have a conversation about natural consequences to misbehaviour, respond to the individual rather than reacting to their actions and ensure they understand that the issue is with the behaviour, not with the individual;
* Set a good example of behaviour, model the communication style you would like to see from the individual;
* Utilise positive reinforcement, wherever possible, to promote and reinforce positive behaviour (Eg. Praise);
* Provide time and space for the individual to calm down and collect themselves behaviour attempting to deliver behaviour correction;
* Actively and explicitly promote the rules and regulations that must be followed within the organization. These rules apply to all individuals including clients and employees and must be enforced consistently and fairly. Employees can be made aware of the repercussions of non-compliance by posting clearly defined regulations governing behaviour;
* Ascertain courteous, non-defensive communication by carefully listening, maintaining acceptable eye contact, and utilising "I messages" that are succinct, express your perspective and what you require;
* Demonstrate active listening and non-defensive communication, maintain eye contact with the individual, bend down to their level, if needed and allow them to express themselves safely and calmly;
* Be clear and precise with what you require from the individual to correct the behaviour and get the situation back to a neutral place, avoid listing too many instructions, rather just keep it as simple as possible;
* If the environment is overstimulating, loud, or rambunctious, take the individual to a quiet place to help them regulate their feelings;
* Help the individual identify the emotion that they are feeling that is causing them to misbehave, once you are able to help them name the emotion, help them connect it to the event that has occurred and help them identify alternate paths of action;
* All misbehaviour can be traced back to an unmet need, support the individual in verbally identifying what their needs are in the moment and help them achieve it (Eg. hunger, exhaustion, overstimulation);
* Redirect their behaviour, this group of vulnerable individuals may have a difficult time regulating their emotions and directing their behaviour appropriately, once they have stopped the misbehaviour, find an alternative action/activity/behaviour for them to engage in instead (Eg. If they are throwing toys inside, take them outside to safely throw a ball)
* Apologise to the individual if they have been disadvantaged or their feelings have been hurt, model the apologising behaviour to them and demonstrate understanding and compassion.

If a situation arises that may cause harm to a distressed person or people around them, employees and volunteers should reach out for assistance to avoid any further escalation. Safety comes first in any circumstance, this includes the safety of the misbehaving individual, all other clients, and volunteers and employees of [Organization Name]. [INDICATE PERSON/DEPARTMENT] is available for support if employees/volunteers are confronted with a stressful or dangerous situation that is escalating.

Any unexpected or persistent disciplinary issues will be dealt with by the [INDICATE PERSON/DEPARTMENT].

**Prohibited Methods of Behaviour Correction**

* The *Criminal Code of Canada* prohibits any form of corporal/physical punishment against a child. [Organization Name] will not tolerate any form of abuse, assault, physical punishment or bodily harm that is caused against any vulnerable individuals associated with the organization;
* Prohibited actions may include but are not limited to, forceful handling, shaking, securing a person in a chair, rapidly and suddenly sitting a person down, restraining a person by their arms/legs forcefully, and dragging a person by the arm to a certain spot;
* Reasonable, safe and corrective force may be used in specific circumstances to secure the safety of the individual and those around them, however, any use of force on a child cannot be degrading, inhumane, or result in harm or the prospect of harm;
* Under no circumstances is it permissible to utilise an object (Eg. Ruler) to physically harm or punish an individual;
* Intentionally employ harsh or degrading measures that are designed to humiliate or weaken a person's self-esteem. Yelling, sarcasm, and humiliating a person in front of his or her peers are all thought to be detrimental to a person's self-esteem;
* Isolating an individual as a form of punishment, “time-outs” may be effective if employed with compassion and understanding but distressed individuals should not be left alone for extended periods of time, locked or closed in a room or a space alone for extended periods of time, or neglected as punishment;
* Depriving an individual of their fundamental needs and/or rights (Eg. food, water, light, space);
* Demonstrating any aggressive or violent behaviour toward an individual or toward other people/property as a reaction to misbehaviour (Eg. Slamming doors after an individual misbehaves);
* Any discriminatory or hateful behaviour or words must not be used against any person associated with [Organization Name];
* This list is not exhaustive, any behaviour that may be characterised as abusive, physically, mentally or verbally is prohibited at [Organization Name].
* When the misbehaving individual is a child that is demonstrating signs of witnessing domestic violence, being abused or neglected, all [Organization Name] personnel are bound by [the](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/17c14) [Insert applicable child protection legislation] Every person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection must promptly report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to a [Insert applicable child protection agency]. This is a legal obligation and [Organization Name] will abide by all legal requirements to protect and conserve the safety of our clients.

**Who to Call:**

[Insert applicable children's protection agency information]

If a child or youth is in immediate danger, call the police or other emergency services, as needed.

**Non-Compliance**

Any employees or volunteers who are non-compliant with this policy will be subject to corrective action including and up to dismissal. Any incidents witnessed, whether by an employee, child, parent, volunteer, teacher, etc., must be immediately reported to the Director/ [INDICATE PERSON/DEPARTMENT].

**Dangerous Behaviour**

If [Organization Name] has not been able to support a client in a way where the safety of others can be ensured, after appropriate effort has been made, [Organization Name] will recommend that the individual be withdrawn from the program. Although this is rare, it may still occur in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of others. [Organization Name] will assist the family in sourcing alternative supports.

**Employee Acknowledgement**

I acknowledge that I have received, read and understood the Behaviour Management policy as provided by [Organization Name]. I understand this policy and its content may be legally enforced and any non-compliance may result in disciplinary action, including and up to dismissal.

Print Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_