



Physical Intervention Policy

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the position of The Outdoor Ed School on the use of physical intervention and establishes our commitment to maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all individuals.

We believe in using positive, proactive methods of support, and seek to avoid the use of any form of physical intervention.

Our focus is on creating an environment where every individual is treated with respect, dignity, and care.

2. Policy Statement

The Outdoor Ed School does **not** use physical intervention under any circumstances.

We are committed to supporting individuals through non-physical means and fostering an environment where everyone feels safe, respected, and empowered.

The use of physical force is not a method we will ever condone or employ as a form of behaviour management or crisis resolution.

We are dedicated to finding alternative methods and de-escalation techniques to address challenging situations effectively and safely.

3. Guiding Principles

Our approach to care and support is grounded in the following principles:

- **Prevention over Intervention:** We prioritize early intervention strategies, effective communication, and creating a calm environment to prevent situations from escalating to a point where physical intervention might be considered.
- **De-escalation:** De-escalation techniques including calm communication, active listening, distraction, and offering choices to manage conflict or challenging behaviours.
- **Support and Care:** We will seek to understand the underlying causes of challenging behaviours, whether they are related to emotional distress, physical health issues, or other factors, and provide appropriate support to address these needs.

4. Alternatives to Physical Intervention

In the event of a challenging or unsafe situation, the following methods will be utilized in place of physical intervention:

- **Verbal De-escalation:** Using calm, clear communication to address concerns and work with the individual to resolve the issue.
- **Break Out Space:** Providing a safe, quiet space where the individual can self-regulate and de-escalate.
- **Staff Support:** Engaging staff to provide emotional support, guidance, or practical help as needed.
- **New Face:** If a staff member is struggling to support the de-escalation of an individual, a different staff member can replace them. This gives the individual a new calming and supportive person to interact with.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Using mediation / mindfulness, negotiation, or conflict resolution strategies to address disagreements and issues in a constructive manner.
- **Referral to External Services:** If the situation requires additional intervention, we will refer the individual to external support agencies.

5. Staff Training

Regular group discussions will be held with all instructors to discuss the following:

- **De-escalation techniques**
- **Behaviour management strategies**
- **Effective communication skills**
- **Recognizing signs of distress and need for intervention**

These regular discussions will ensure that staff are equipped to manage challenging situations effectively without resorting to physical intervention.

6. Reporting and Accountability

In the unlikely event that physical intervention is deemed necessary by another organization (e.g., law enforcement), the following procedures will apply:

- The event will be documented thoroughly, including the reasons for considering the use of physical intervention and the steps taken beforehand.
- The individual involved, and where applicable, their family or guardians, will be informed immediately.
- A review of the incident will take place to evaluate the situation and ensure that appropriate support was provided.

However, as previously stated, the goal is to avoid such circumstances entirely by using proactive support, de-escalation, and conflict resolution strategies.

7. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and to assess the ongoing training and support provided to staff. Feedback from staff, individuals served, and other stakeholders will be considered as part of the review process.

8. Conclusion

At The Outdoor Ed School, we are committed to maintaining a safe and supportive environment that respects the rights and dignity of all individuals.

The use of physical intervention is never acceptable, and we are dedicated to using positive, non-physical methods to prevent and manage challenging situations.