

# Student Timeout Policy

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At Nipisihkopahk Education Authority (NEA), we believe that there are many ways to promote safe and caring schools and encourage responsible and respectful behaviours in students. All behavioural interventions assume a regard for the well-being and dignity of students and staff.

The concept of Timeout is used when a student needs to be temporarily separated or removed from the environment where he/she is behaving inappropriately until he/she can demonstrate appropriate behaviour. Timeout should be a proactive strategy used to support self-monitoring, student self-reflection and self-calming. Timeout can range from quiet time in the regular classroom (exclusion) to removal of the student to a supervised area within the school (seclusion) as well as suspension and expulsion.

Timeout should only be used after less restrictive measures have not been successful or the behaviour poses an immediate threat to self and/or others. A Behaviour Plan must be developed if timeout is used as a method of behaviour management. Strategies must be systematically planned, delivered, supervised, and evaluated to determine their effectiveness.

Parental permission must be obtained in order to utilize seclusion timeout. If parents do not support this strategy they must be involved in determining alternative strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviours of their children. If this is unsuccessful, it may be necessary to provide an alternative educational program, suspend, or expel the student from school.

## A. Guiding Principles

- a. Timeout strategies should not be used as punishment or as a means of removing students indefinitely from the classroom. Timeout may be teacher directed, or student selected, as a means of calming during a stressful situation within a safe and predictable environment.
- b. A timeout strategy should be used only for the minimum period of time necessary for the student to regain enough composure to be able to return safely to regular classroom activities.
- c. Procedures for the use of timeout strategies should be communicated to all students, parent(s) or guardian(s), and school staff. It must also include information for parent(s) or guardian(s) about the process to be used when parents or guardians may have concerns or complaints about the use of timeout strategies.
- d. Any use of timeout strategies must take into account factors such as the age, learning needs, any individual needs, disabilities, and developmental level of the student. Questions to consider:

- i. Does the student understand the reason for the timeout?
- ii. Does the student have an opportunity to stop the misbehaviour and demonstrate appropriate behaviour?
- iii. Does the student have an opportunity to demonstrate responsibility for his/her own behaviour and have opportunities to practice self-control?
- iv. Does the student understand what the expectations are for a successful return to classroom activities?
- v. Is the length of time in timeout reasonable and appropriate for the student's age and/or ability?
- vi. Is the timeout space reasonable, safe, and respectful of the needs of all students?
- e. Data is routinely collected and reviewed to evaluate the effectiveness of timeouts.

#### B. Timeout Definitions

- a. Contingent Observations or Non-exclusion Timeout
  - i. The student is removed from the reinforcing activity, but is still allowed to remain in the classroom and observe the activity.
- b. Exclusion Timeout
  - i. The student is excluded from the classroom activity and is not allowed to participate or observe the activity. The student may be removed to another classroom or other supervised area in the school.
- c. Seclusion Timeout
  - i. The student is removed from the reinforcing activity area, placed in a separate room and is supervised during the entire seclusion timeframe by an NEA staff member.
- d. Suspension and Expulsion
  - i. These interventions are recognized as forms of timeout and fall within this policy.

#### C. Timeout Guidelines

Prior to considering a timeout strategy with a student, teachers must employ classroom management tactics as they are outlined in the Student Discipline & Behaviour Plans Policy.

- a. Process/Progression
  - i. School staff members are to provide a safe and caring learning environment where students can benefit from a wide variety of positive reinforcements and instructional strategies. These include, but are not limited to:
    - Clear, concise expectations of behaviour;
    - Use of proximity, eye contact, nonverbal cues and redirection;

- Positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviour that may include, but are not limited to, praise and encouragement, behaviour contracts, positive phone calls, emails, and notes home and reward systems;
  - Create clear distinctions between rewards for positive behaviour versus sanctions for inappropriate behaviour.
  - Use of positive reinforcement should be used far more frequently than sanctions for negative behavior.
- ii. There must be a documented attempt to establish the cause of the behaviour leading to a timeout. This documentation will also guide future education and behaviour programming decisions.
  - iii. The behaviours that result in timeout must be stated prior to the use of timeout. Staff should be able to identify the specific behaviour that has resulted in the timeout and the reinforcing situations that are allowing the student's inappropriate behaviour to continue.
  - iv. School staff are to progress through the different timeout strategies, starting with Contingent Observations or Non-Exclusion timeouts and progressing to Exclusion and then Seclusion timeouts based in individual student needs and circumstances unless the student's behaviour is such that it poses an immediate threat to self and/or others.
  - v. The specific behaviour(s) resulting in timeout must be clearly communicated to the student and school administration prior to their use. Parent(s) or guardian(s) must be informed if seclusion timeout has been used.
  - vi. Staff must document use of seclusion time out by using the NEA Seclusion Time Out form attached as Appendix 1.
  - vii. Use of exclusion or seclusion time out should be documented on the student's Individual Program Plan and/or behaviour plan.
  - viii. If a student is going to time-out frequently, then student services staff should be consulted.
- b. Nipisihkopahk Education Authority (NEA) supports the use of Quiet Rooms as locations that may be used for seclusion time out in order to provide a safe and quiet place for students to reflect on their learning, behaviour, roles and responsibilities and to facilitate self-regulation. Students may request access to the quiet room at any time. Seclusion time out rooms must:
- i. Not be locked from either the outside or inside;
  - ii. Meet fire marshal standards;
  - iii. Allow for visual supervision of students at all times;

- iv. Not contain items or fixtures that may be harmful to students;
  - v. Be well ventilated;
  - vi. Allow the students to exit should there be an emergency.
  - vii. Must have a door that swings out.
- c. Student refusal to participate in a timeout  
 School staff should have a plan in place on what to do if a child refuses to engage in or go to a timeout prior to using this strategy. Some choices are:
- i. Give the student a choice of which timeout is the least aversive ie. "You can go to timeout or you will have to stay in at recess/lunch..."
  - ii. If the student refuses to comply with a request to move to a timeout space, the teacher may want to contact the principal or vice principal to deal with the student in the short term.
  - iii. In rare situations, it may be necessary to physically move the student to the timeout room or designated area. In this case, staff must use non-violent techniques;
  - iv. Refusal to comply or go to timeout can result in a request to have a parent or guardian remove the student from the school.
  - v. If the parent or guardian is not available and the student refuses to comply with a request to move to a timeout space, the principal may choose to contact other staff members, NEA administration staff, or if necessary, the RCMP and request their assistance.

#### D. Suspension and Expulsion.

If all other time out strategies have been unsuccessful the teacher may refer the student's behaviour to the school administration.

The school admin may take appropriate action in order to correct the negative behaviour. This may include but is not limited to: referring the student to a counsellor or elder, calling parent(s) or guardian(s), holding circles, requesting outside services etc.

If the behaviour continues the principal may issue either an in-school or out-of-school suspension for up to five days.

If the student does not return after the suspension is over then the school will make every effort to contact the home and set up an reinstatement meeting. The parent may be required to attend this meeting with the student.

The student will be considered absent from school if he or she has not returned after the suspension is over. If the student is absent for 20 consecutive days they will be officially transferred out from the school enrolment as a voluntary withdrawal. The transfer out date will be recorded as the first possible day back after the suspension.

If the disruptive behaviour continues and all avenues of intervention have been exhausted, the principal may recommend the student to the superintendent for indefinite suspension that may lead to expulsion.

The superintendent will inform the school board of the indefinite suspension or expulsion. The parent(s) or guardian(s) may appeal the suspension or expulsion in writing to the school board.