



# **The Winston Knolls School**

## **Behavior Policies and Procedures**

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## **I. Statement of Philosophy**

The goal of all programs within The Winston Knolls School is to teach skills and adaptive behaviors that will allow the students we serve to function in the least restrictive environment, as independently as possible.

The Winston Knolls School emphasizes encouragement and positive reinforcement of the appropriate behaviors of individual students, and is committed to the standard of "least restrictive alternative." Behavioral interventions are employed in a thoughtful, objective, data-based manner to substitute adaptive behaviors for those behaviors that prevent the student from functioning successfully in a less restrictive environment. Discipline in the punitive sense, as most persons understand it, is not employed as a policy of The Winston Knolls School. Training of faculty members is continued on an ongoing basis in the classroom and school through supervision, direction, and oversight that is provided by the school administration and related services team of school therapists, speech-language pathologists, and occupational therapists.

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## **II. Programming**

The Winston Knolls School uses *The Zones of Regulation*®; a framework and curriculum for teaching students strategies for emotional and sensory self-management. Rooted in cognitive behavioral therapy, the Zones approach uses four colors to help students identify how they are feeling in the moment given their emotions and level of alertness as well as guide them to strategies to support regulation. By understanding how to notice their body's signals, detect triggers, read social context and consider how their behavior impacts those around them, students learn improved emotional control, sensory regulation, self-awareness, and problem-solving abilities.

Learning activities are designed to help students recognize when they are in different states or "zones," with each of four zones represented by a different color:

The **Red Zone** is used to describe extremely heightened states of alertness and intense emotions. A person may be elated, euphoric, or experiencing anger, rage, explosive behavior, devastation, or terror when in the Red Zone.

The **Yellow Zone** is also used to describe a heightened state of alertness and elevated emotions, however individuals have more control when they are in the Yellow Zone. A person may be experiencing stress, frustration, anxiety, excitement, silliness, the wiggles, or nervousness when in the Yellow Zone.

The **Green Zone** is used to describe a calm state of alertness. A person may be described as happy, focused, content, or ready to learn when in the Green Zone. This is the zone where optimal learning occurs.

The **Blue Zone** is used to describe low states of alertness and down feelings such as when one feels sad, tired, sick, or bored.

All of the zones are natural to experience, but the framework focuses on teaching students how to recognize and manage their zone based on the demands of their environment and the people around them.

### **III. Assessment and Planning**

Before implementing a program of behavior support with a student, he or she receives a comprehensive assessment to determine the cause of the presenting problem and to ensure that all contributing factors have been considered. Students who are able to participate in the creation of their individual behavior plans are encouraged to do so. However, many students served by The Winston Knolls School are not able to participate in the establishment of their behavior support plans because of their age and their cognitive challenges. For these students, parents/guardians, and members of the outside service team are involved in the development of all behavioral plans. The Winston Knolls School maintains a multi-level system of clinical oversight to ensure that all interventions used with a student are properly formulated, that they meet contemporary standards of professional practice, and faculty members are trained properly in their application.

There are three categories of behavior support interventions that are approved for implementation by The Winston Knolls School that constitute a continuum of restrictiveness: Classroom-based interventions, out-of-classroom interventions, and crisis interventions. Programmatically, classroom-based interventions include students accessing motivational systems in the form of token economies used in the classrooms. Students earn points or tokens for demonstrating positive behaviors, paired with positive verbal reinforcement and these points and tokens can be accumulated for students to cash in at various times throughout the day for a variety of different incentives. Related Services professionals work closely with classroom teams to identify appropriate replacement skills for maladaptive behaviors and integrate functional communication strategies and sensory interventions into daily instruction.

#### **The Zones Room**

Out-of-classroom interventions are used when a student is in need of further behavioral support that exceeds those in the classroom that primarily address mildly intensive target behaviors. Students are referred by their classroom staff to one of our Zones Rooms, alternative learning spaces staffed by a dedicated team of behavior interventionists who support students experiencing moderate to severe intensity levels of dysregulation. The two Zones Rooms are separate, quiet environments, each approximately 14'x19' that are designed to provide for

individualized instruction to the student in the areas of self-regulation and/or functional communication. Referrals to the Zones Room may be student-initiated if the student is independently capable of communicating to staff of a need for a break. Many times there may be more than one student occupying the Zones Rooms as it is a multifunctional alternative space where students come to have a quiet lunch away from visual and auditory overstimulation in the cafeteria, or a study space to work on classroom assignments. A referral may also be staff-initiated if the student's level of dysregulation impedes their ability to communicate with their instructors. Each Zones Room is equipped with student desks, chairs, sensory mats, mobile dividers for privacy, and an array of sensory tools including but not limited to chewies, noise-canceling headphones, games, fidgets, compression vests, and weighted blankets.

The behavior interventionists, paraprofessionals with state-certified substitute licenses, provide students with coaching in mutual-regulation and emotional management, debrief and problem-solve challenging situations from the classroom, and practice replacement skills. The steps in the Zones Room are not linear but encompass five (5) areas that are designed to fluidly engage students where a behavior interventionist deems to be the the priority focus at the time of dysregulation or crisis: assessment, refocus, reflect, review, and restore. Importantly, these steps are not used as a form of compliance for students but rather a guide to developing self-control, which leads to understanding and confidence. When a student has demonstrated the ability to cooperate through all steps, they participate in a restorative discussion with the referring classroom staff before returning to their schedule.

When needed, the behavior interventionist may call for related services or support staff to further assist in the Zones process. For instance, the speech-language pathologist or occupational therapist may be called upon to assist in promoting the student's use of a communication device or student-specific regulation strategies. The school therapist will also support at times when students are in need of additional counseling beyond the scope of a behavior interventionist's abilities.

When a student experiences severe levels of dysregulation in the form of repeated physical aggression or repeated self-injury, personnel trained in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (CPI) techniques engage students in verbal de-escalation strategies to support and if necessary, physical restraint.

Whenever possible, the least restrictive interventions always are employed first. Subject to the limitations stated in 23 Illinois Administrative Code 401.140(a), a more restrictive intervention is only considered or applied when prior and less invasive interventions prove ineffective or they are contraindicated because of safety concerns and health risks. Another critical feature in the selection of treatment interventions is that the behavior intervention plan is designed based on the outcome from functional assessment and analysis (FBA). This means that behavior plans are

"matched" to the variables and influences that set the occasion for, and maintain, clinically undesirable behaviors.

The Winston Knolls School prohibits several restrictive and aversive treatment interventions that include: seclusion, in the form of isolated timeouts; corporal punishment, including any type of physical hitting inflicted in any manner upon the body; requiring or forcing an individual to take an uncomfortable position such as squatting or bending, or maintaining the position of his/her arms in an unusual posture; any prone or supine positions where the individual's face is pushed into a mat or cushion, where pressure is applied to the upper body or the neck of the individual, or restraining an individual on their back; subjecting an individual to verbal abuse, ridicule, humiliation, or frightening or embarrassing situations; denying an individual sufficient sleep; and denying an individual shelter, bedding, food, or access to bathroom facilities.

Behavior Policies and Procedures will be reviewed by The Winston Knolls School administration on an ongoing basis. The Winston Knolls School is committed to maintaining an atmosphere of respect and dignity towards all students. Interventions used to improve student behavior are constantly under review.

In summary, the Behavior Policies and Procedures used within The Winston Knolls School have two main purposes: (1) To maximize the growth and development of each student in order to help that the student participate in their education in the least restrictive environment possible, and (2) To protect the student, all persons who come in contact with the student, and the student's environment from undue risk. The purpose of this document is to set forth the guidelines for developing behavior support plans, describe the interventions that are approved for implementation, and define the process of treatment review, approval, and clinical oversight. The standards and policies that are contained in this document have received detailed review and scrutiny by committees within The Winston Knolls School that are devoted to formulating clinical, quality improvement, and accreditation standards. Therefore, appropriate disciplinary action, in consultation with the Human Resources Department, will be taken with any employee who does not adhere to these guidelines.

#### **IV. Behavior Intervention Plans**

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Students enrolled at The Winston Knolls School will have a Behavior Intervention Plan [BIP]. A Behavior Intervention Plan is a plan created by the behavior department, the educational [IEP] team and parents for the purpose of reducing a student's problem behavior. A Behavior

Intervention Plan will always be accompanied by a Functional Behavior Assessment [FBA.] A Functional Behavior Assessment is an assessment and analysis of collected data to determine function, or why a student behaves the way he does.

This plan outlines specific proactive and reactive behavior management strategies that are not already embedded into the classroom management strategies being used by individual classroom teachers. Strategies are utilized if 1) The behaviors impede the learning of the student and/or other students and 2) behavior(s) targeted for reduction include any behavior that is dangerous to the student, others or property.

Behavior plans have two main parts: what to do before a problem behavior occurs (proactive) and what to do after a problem behavior occurs (reactive). Proactive strategies include a variety of replacement behaviors (what the student should do instead) and other ways to change the environment or teaching interventions that can help increase the student's skills and motivation making it possible for the student to make better choices. Behavior plans also list reactive, or consequence management strategies, by function to make the problem behavior(s) irrelevant, inefficient, or ineffective.

The Winston Knolls School favors least restrictive alternatives when it comes to interventions. In cases where a student's problem behavior is considered dangerous or health-threatening to self, others, and/or the physical environment, Protective Holding will be implemented.

## **V. Policies & Procedures for Physical Restraint**

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The Winston Knolls School views discipline for mildly challenging student behaviors as opportunities for the staff to teach students about negative outcomes of inappropriate behaviors, recommend alternative solutions, and assist in the practice and positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviors. Throughout the school day, staff address problematic behaviors from

students with a non-confrontational approach and utilize non-punitive consequences built into classroom management motivational systems.

In accordance with 23 Administrative Code 1.285(j), a physical restraint is not administered as a form of punishment but rather a means of maintaining a safe and orderly environment for learning. These restrictive interventions are only used as a last resort in which every attempt to de-escalate a student has been made and staff determine through a Functional Behavior Analysis and formalize in a Behavior Intervention Plan that the severe behavior of the student meets the criteria of continuous physical aggression or self-injurious behavior. Repeated incidents resulting in injury to peers or staff will require a school administrator to assess the situation and determine if suspension from school is warranted.

### **Physical Restraint**

For instances where a student demonstrates unsafe behavior that threatens the safety of themselves or others, faculty/staff may be required to physically transport the student from the learning environment to an alternative space such as the Zones Room. Pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/14-8.05, faculty members are trained in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention strategies and techniques, with a required minimum of eight (8) hours training and recertification each year. If de-escalation strategies are unsuccessful, faculty/staff that have been trained and certified in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention will use physical restraint to ensure the safety of the student and/or any other persons involved. If an episode of physical restraint exceeds 15 minutes, trained personnel in the use of crisis intervention will assess the need for continuation or discontinuation of the intervention. When a physical restraint episode is over, the student shall be evaluated for any injury by school health professionals..

### **Additional Guidelines for Physical Restraint**

**Notification & Documentation:** It is the policy of The Winston Knolls School that parents will receive a phone call the day physical restraint occurred. Should the parents prefer an email, a written waiver must be signed.

Parents will receive written notification within one (1) business day of any incident of physical restraint and be informed of their right to a meeting with applicable school personnel to be held within two (2) business days of the date of the incident. The Winston Knolls School will notify ISBE within two (2) school days of any incidents of timeout or physical restraint through the Student Information Systems (SIS).

The Winston Knolls School will hold a review and invite parents when there are three (3) days of physical restraint within a 30-day period. The Winston Knolls School will notify parents that a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) will be conducted after ten (10) days of suspension in a school year.



The Winston Knolls School will hold an annual review of all incidents of timeout and restraint, and will name the job title of staff involved in this review. The purpose of this review is for the goal of reducing the number of incidents in future years.

**Toileting Accidents:** Students may exhibit a wide variety of behavior when engaged in a physical restraint intervention, and occasionally students will urinate or defecate during this intervention. Should a student have a toileting accident during a physical restraint intervention, when the student is demonstrating safe behaviors, the intervention will be interrupted so the student can change clothes and/or clean up. Upon appropriate clean up, the student will need to complete the exit criteria prior to returning to the learning environment.

**Interference with Transportation:** It is possible that a behavior for reduction may occur near the end of the day and with the possibility of the proper reactive plan interfering with the transportation plan. In these instances, Administration must be called, at minimum, 20 minutes before the end of the school day. Administration will facilitate end of the day activities and make the decisions to disrupt transportation if warranted.

## **LEGAL DISCLAIMER**

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The Winston Knolls School Behavior Policies and Procedures contains only general guidelines and information, and it is not intended to be comprehensive or to address all the possible applications of, or exceptions to, the general policies and procedures described. Neither this document of Behavior Policies and Procedures nor any other document published by The Winston Knolls School confers any rights, either expressed or implied, including contractual rights between you and your student and The Winston Knolls School. No employee or agent of

The Winston Knolls School (except the President) has the authority to make any agreement contrary to the above.

The procedures, practices, policies, and benefits described herein may be modified or discontinued from time to time. Every attempt will be made to inform you of any changes as they occur. However, it is your responsibility to keep current of all The Winston Knolls School policies and procedures. These changes will have effect regardless of whether any particular notice is given or received.

The Winston Knolls School Behavior Policies and Procedures is not intended to substitute, replace, overrule, or modify any existing federal and state laws, agency rules, regulations or policies, nor be inclusive of every policy.