

Child and Youth Guidance

Division:	Parks and Recreation	Approved by:	Parks and Recreation Directors
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Policy Statement

Parks and Recreation Division recognizes the responsibility of Staff to deal with disruptive behaviour of participants. This policy applies to children and youth participating in Parks and Recreation programs.

Staff will use approaches that are positive, supportive, consistent, proactive and based on logical consequences so that participants learn to take responsibility for their own actions and cooperate in the program.

Disruptive behaviour will be handled in a fair and consistent manner using progressive behaviour management strategies. If the participant's behaviour escalates to the point where it is jeopardizing the physical safety and security of themselves, staff and other participants, then it is appropriate for staff to intervene to prevent harm.

Under no circumstances should Staff use physical coercion, verbal abuse, confinement, deprivation, humiliation, threats and sarcasm when working with children. When a child must be removed from the program given that there are no other options, the Recreation Coordinator must meet with the parents/caregivers to inform them. The Supervisor of Recreation & Facilities must be notified.

Definitions

PARTICIPANT

17 years and under

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR:

A range of actions that may include refusal to co-operate, inappropriate language (i.e. swearing, threatening) and all forms of physical acting out.

PROGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT:

A method of intervention that matches the severity of the behaviour.

LOGICAL CONSEQUENCE:

Interventions that incorporate the developmental stages of children so that a logical link is established for the child between the misbehaviour and the consequence. (i.e. a child who purposely spills paint; the logical consequence is that the child is involved in the clean up of the paint.)

INTERVENTION:

Using good judgement, taking action to prevent harm i.e. confiscating an object a participant is ready to use which could harm them or others, physically removing a participant from an unsafe environment i.e. stepping onto roadways, broken glass in a sandbox, fighting.

Procedures

These are the progressive steps to take when dealing with behaviour management situations for children and youth. It should be noted that behaviour management is situational and staff may need to follow the steps below in a different order, depending on the nature of the situation.

• Step #1:

At the first instance of disruptive behaviour, the Staff and participant will discuss the situation. Staff will clearly indicate what behaviour is acceptable and what is not as well as why the behaviour is inappropriate.

• Step #2:

If the behaviour continues, the Staff and participant will develop an action plan/strategy on how to change the behaviour. Staff will reinforce the consequences of acceptable behaviour. Staff are required to contact the parent/caregiver at this time.

• Step #3:

If the behaviour escalates to an ongoing concern or it becomes a safety issue, the parent/caregiver is contacted to notify them of the situation and discuss possible strategies towards a solution. It is strongly recommended that two Staff are present during this discussion when possible. Parents/caregivers will be made aware of potential consequences should the behaviour continue. (i.e. removal from the program) During this process, Staff are to notify their Immediate Supervisor to inform them of the status of the situation up to this point.

• Step #4:

If the behaviour has not improved, the Program Staff and Recreation Coordinator or the Recreation & Facility Supervisor meets with the parent/caregiver to discuss alternative options. (i.e. transfer to another program, support for child, removal from program)

For children and youth, suspension or banning may be required which is determined in consultation with staff and parent/guardian. Refer to **Suspension, Ban and Trespass Policy**.

Training

It is the responsibility of the Supervisor of Recreation and Facilities to ensure that:

- All Staff and volunteers working with children are familiar with the Division's policies and procedures for **Child & Youth Guidance**.

- All Staff receive appropriate training on this topic.

Documentation

- Log/note all concerns and actions regarding the participant's behaviour right from the beginning.
- Complete the **Participant Minor Injury/Incident form** when required.

Related Information

Suspension, Ban and Trespass Policy

Form

Participant Minor Injury/Incident Report