

## SPECIAL TREATMENT TECHNIQUES

The Staff at Virtual Connections Academy believe that a student's development will progress as long as the child experiences a supportive, structured, consistent, stimulating environment. When behavioral and/or emotional disabilities are impeding academic success, our staff utilize a variety of strategies to help the students learn the academic, social and emotional management skills necessary for success within the school environment.

Throughout the school day, the staff utilize a point sheet to acknowledge the positive, pro-social and notable efforts that each student makes. They also help the students to identify problems and areas of struggle, utilize the point sheet to explain why their behavior is impeding their ability to be successful in the classroom. They will point out the negative effects the problem is creating, suggest alternative behaviors and help the student practice these within a nurturing setting.

At times, the student may persist with disruptive or inappropriate behaviors. When this occurs, the student will be asked to leave the activity, but remain within the proximity of the group while taking a "time out" in the hallway.

If the behavior continues to disrupt the group, the student may be referred to the Behavioral Intervention Services (BIS) office for a more intensive level of support. Our Behavioral Intervention Specialists are trained in crisis intervention, conflict resolution, and teaching students the skills to better manage their impulses; more effectively get their needs met; and practice pro-social, appropriate ways to cope with and express their thoughts and feelings.

If a student is acting in a manner that indicates the possibility of physical harm to him/herself or others, it may be appropriate for the staff to engage in a "therapeutic hold" of the student in order to prevent this outcome. The safety and dignity of the child, as well as the safety of peers and staff, is of paramount importance in this process; and it is always as unobtrusive and brief as possible. Consistent staff training in crisis prevention and non-violent physical intervention techniques is provided by Virtual Connections Academy and is required of all Staff Members. If a therapeutic hold is necessary to maintain care, welfare, safety, and security of students and staff, the following will occur:

1. A senior staff member will be present during the intervention
2. The school nurse and the student's therapist will be notified
3. The school nurse or designee will conduct a wellness check
4. Parents will be notified the same school day
5. NCI paperwork will be completed including:
  - a. Behavior Intervention Referral Form (precipitating classroom events, antecedents, interventions used)
  - b. School Incident Report (narrative by all staff involved in the hold, including therapist, nurse, and senior staff member evaluating the child immediately after the hold)
  - c. Student Intervention Form (behavior intervention form completed by student)

6. The student's team engages in a discussion of current behavioral concerns and an analysis of the effectiveness of the current Behavior Intervention Plan at the next Functional Behavioral Assessment meeting

Virtual Connections Academy follows all procedures specified in the 23 Illinois Administrative Code C.H.I.S. Subpart B Section 1.285. At times, the nature of the threats to self or others may necessitate:

- Contacting an emergency assessment team who will evaluate for hospitalization; or referring the student and parent to a local Emergency Room so the student can be evaluated for hospitalization.
- Contacting the local Police Department
- Contacting the student's psychiatrist, outside therapist, probation officer, caseworker, etc. for additional support.
- An informal parent meeting and/or formal staffing may be required prior to the student returning to school.
- Chronic threatening or aggressive behavior may also result in a careful assessment by the team as to whether or not the student continues to be appropriate for Connections Day School.

We do not endorse the use of time-out/padded rooms, mechanical restraint or harsh/punitive interventions. Virtual Connections Academy does not engage in therapeutic holding of a student as a consequence, or for any other reason aside from a clear indication that a student is a threat to him/herself or others. Overall, we believe that students can learn to act in safe and appropriate manner with the positive guidance of nurturing adults, who adhere to the clear rules, boundaries and expectations established within the school.

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*Signature page*

We thank you for taking the time to read and review the Special Treatment Techniques of our schools. If you have any further questions, please contact your principal.

Your signature below acknowledges that you have read, understand, and have received a copy of the Special Treatment Techniques outlined above.

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Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

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Student Name (Printed)