



Practice Directive

Practice Directive No. 004

Use of Safe Rooms in Residential Resources

Purpose

The use of safe rooms under any circumstances is to be discontinued in all residential resources including foster homes and staffed residential resources. Effective immediately, any current exceptions to this policy are no longer supported and further exceptions will not be approved.

The use of safe rooms, confinement and seclusion of children for any reason, including behavioural management strategies, is not permitted.

Application

This Practice Directive applies to all residential resources, including resources licensed under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*.

Background

In the past, exceptions to this policy were permitted in cases where a child's behaviour presented significant risk to the safety of the child or others.

Details (Guidelines/ Policy/etc)

- A safe room is defined as containment of a child within any space from which the child is not able to exit without the permission of another or within which his or her movements may be restricted. This includes seclusion or confinement.
- Safe rooms involve the use of a locked door or attendants confining the child for periods of time. Safe rooms do not include behavioural management approaches such as periods of "time out" where a child exercises a degree of cooperation and self.
- Policy prohibiting the use of safe rooms, seclusion and confinement in residential resources is addressed in the Standards for Foster Homes and Standards for Staffed Children's Residential Services.
- In situations where the use of Safe Rooms have historically been used, or it is included in a child's current care plan staff should:
 - consult immediately with the child's care team and work collaboratively with the team to identify alternatives to the use of a safe room;
 - contact the Executive Director to inform them of the situation, obtain clinical consultation, support, and direction; and,
 - review the Practice Directive on *Clinical Consultation and Support in Complex, High Risk Child Protection Cases*



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**Relevant
Legislation,
Regulations,
Rules**

- Standards for Foster Homes
- Standards for Staffed Children's Residential Services
- Clinical Consultation and Support in Complex High Risk Child Protection Cases
- This Practice Directive does not apply to provincial facilities such as youth custody centres and facilities designated under the *Mental Health Act*.
- Use of Safe Rooms in Residential Resources form (D-075)

Effective Date This practice directive is effective as of February 7, 2013.

Original Signature on File

Samantha Langton, Executive Director
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Family Services Society