Positive Relationships and Behaviour Support

(Including the use of Physical Intervention)

Policy, Procedure and Guidance

(Fostering and Adoption Services)

This policy and guidance forms part of the Polaris Quality Management system ISO 900

The term 'child' or 'children' is used to refer to all children under the age of 18 years (16 in Scotland). Where the context specifically relates only to older children, the term 'young person' is used.

The term 'foster parent' is preferred but it is recognised that 'foster carer' is also used in legislation and within the community.

This policy and guidance forms part of the Polaris Quality Management system ISO 9001.

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Contents

POLICY

Aims and Introduction 3

Key Principles 4

A Team Based Approach /Network Based Approach 5

Therapeutic Childcare 6

PROCEDURE 7

PRICE Training 7

Talking to your child/young person about an incident 11

Recording and Reporting 14

Individual Risk Assessment and Safer Care Plan 14

Matching considerations 15

Complaints and Allegations 15

The use of Physical Intervention 16

Recording of Incidents involving Physical Intervention 20

GUIDANCE

The Importance of a Secure Base 21

Understanding children and young people's behaviours 21

Information and support to foster/adoptive parents around behaviour 22

Effective Behaviour Support 23

Behaviour support strategies 23

Policy

Aims

The aim of this policy and guidance is intended to assist foster/adoptive parents and staff to respond to children and young people in a positive and effective way. Children and young people who may have difficulty in expressing themselves appropriately can present with a range of behaviours we find challenging. We therefore have a responsibility to:

- Protect children and young people and those working with them;
- Support children and young people to be able to express their feelings and being able to respond to behaviours perceived as challenging;
- Enable foster/adoptive parents to effectively support them in the process;
- Facilitate responses that promote a sense of care, self-autonomy, safety and effect positive change.

Introduction

Coming to terms with living within a new family can be immensely daunting for children/young people who have often had experiences that have led to trauma. Such experiences can impact their ability to communicate and express their needs and feelings like sadness, anger, hurt and confusion. It is likely that, at times, children will present with behaviours that adults find challenging, but will express their sense of confusion, frustration, anger, anxiety, loss and hurt.

Children/young people need trusted, compassionate and understanding adults who can look beyond the behaviour and seek to understand the reasons behind it and offer safety, guidance and an environment that positively supports recovery and change. Our children/young people really need those around them to understand that behaviours they may find challenging, are communications of distress, and to have empathy and understanding for the feelings being expressed, rather than responding primarily with discipline.

As a consequence, the children/young people who live within our service need a greater level of care with individual focus. Behaviour that is often labelled 'naughty/challenging/ dysfunctional' is so often an expression of past hurt and abuse. It is very likely that it will have developed unconsciously and adaptively and will have functioned, in the absence of care giving, as a means of survival.

Most importantly we need to understand that 'behaviour' will continue to be a central form of communication of what is going on for children/young people in their thoughts, feelings, memories and needs. The strategies developed by young people who come into care have helped them survive difficult experiences in their early lives.

It is crucial to understand that these strategies are formed in response to early environments and relationships when children are the most vulnerable and dependent. Their nervous system, brain development and adaptation begins in utero, and continues at a rapid pace during their early days, months, and years. Later in childhood and into young adulthood brain development slows, and so it becomes harder to adapt to new environments. It is also absolutely vital to keep in mind that 'behaviours' we find challenging are not consciously chosen by children.

Understandably then, it is highly likely that children will find themselves using their survival strategies to help them feel safe, even when in an environment that we deem 'safe' like a foster /adoptive home.

Whilst children/young people bring their own history, values and survival strategies foster/adoptive parents have a key role in providing the safe, secure and trusting relationships that will provide them with the best opportunities to experiment with new ways of being and relating. Children/young people need to feel safe enough to do so, and that will take mutual understanding, patience, and the security of a stable relationship to experiment with new ways of coping.

The culture of the household, generated by the foster/adoptive parents, is crucial. Foster/adoptive parents with training and support are expected to understand children's/young people's feelings and behaviour, including encouraging them to feel able to understand and take responsibility for their actions and helping them to learn how to resolve conflict. A restrictive, unsupportive, discouraging and punishing culture will result in instability, hostility, and severe disruption.

Key Principles

All foster/adoptive families will have clear predictable routines, to enable children/young people to feel safe, encouraged and appropriately rewarded; and to help them to thrive and achieve stability. When caring for children/young people, foster/adoptive parents should always endeavour to:

- Listen to and empathise with the children/young people, respect their thoughts and feelings, and take their wishes into consideration;
- Proactively take care of themselves and each other as a peer community, and a multidisciplinary team. For example, by building trusting relationships with peers and staff to enable them to reflect, learn and grow and do what works for them to maintain their empathy for their children and young people. This will enable foster/adoptive parents to feel supported.

- Understand that behaviour is a means of communicating difficult feelings, experiences and needs;
- Use the support available to help them take decisions and act in a way that is in the best interests of children/young people;
- Maintain a clear duty of care in dealing with all aspects of behaviour;
- Look for things that are going well, or any step in the right direction, and praise or reward it appropriately.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Providing a safe, welcoming and child centred environment;
- Valuing the importance of positive relationships for example, warmth, sincerity, empathic, understanding, non-judgemental, trusting, supportive relationships;
- Ensuring that everyone feels valued and respected;
- Recognising that everyone has a voice and the right to be heard;
- Promoting an environment that values individuality and positive outcomes for children/young people;
- Ensuring that ALL children/young people have opportunities to become confident and achieve their full potential;
- Recognising and celebrating achievements;
- Supporting and preparing children/young people in coping with their past and for their future.

A Team Based Approach /Network Based Approach

As a service, we are committed to a holistic teamwork approach.

All our foster parents/ adopters are trauma and therapeutically informed. Both the Secure Base Model and PRICE provide a positive integrated framework that draws on established trauma and development theoretical bases, research, current thinking, best practice and guidance. We believe in the concept of teamwork (often multi-disciplinary) in understanding and supporting children/young people. There is an acknowledgment and commitment that

our foster/adoptive parents cannot and should not be expected to fulfil their roles that they may find difficult in the absence of guidance.

Foster parents and staff attend Secure Base and other training and Promoting Positive Approaches to Behaviour (PRICE) training is mandatory for all foster parents. Adoptive parents learn about the Secure Base model alongside the PACE therapeutic parenting approach within their preparing to adopt training. They all have access to the PRICE e- learning module on Learnative. Assessment, risk assessment, planning, intervention and evaluation will always be important in supporting children/young people and are elements that all members of the team should adopt in their practice. For adoption this includes the initial adoption support plan, AFA Linking and Child's Progress Document. From the outset the service is committed to gaining and sharing a robust assessment of need that determines the approach to be taken. The mechanisms of referral information, matching process, initial placement meeting, placement plan, individual behaviour support plan and reviews are central to the on-going planning and evaluation of the support in relation to behaviour.

A central aim will always be to provide a framework that can prevent and, where possible, de- escalate crisis, provide effective coping strategies and reduce the need for higher level interventions.

Therapeutic Childcare

Many children who are fostered/adopted have had experiences that give them little reason to trust adults. They have survival strategies based on a need to try to protect themselves from danger and to make their relationships and environments as safe and secure as they can. Attachment theory suggests that through warm, consistent and reliable caregiving children and young people can begin to form more trusting relationships with others and themselves.

We recognise that relationships within the foster/adoptive family are key enablers of this healing process and should be the focus of our support. We recognise how everyday caring experiences can be used therapeutically, which is especially relevant for children/young people who have not received good enough parenting during infancy and early childhood. We want foster/adoptive parents to realise that by looking after a child 24 hours a day they are in a strong position to meet the child's/young person's emotional needs as well as help them learn to develop strategies to keep safe and overcome the adverse impact of their early life trauma.

Although much therapeutic care occurs naturally within the fostering environment/adoptive home, we do not assume that this will simply happen but presume this relationship will need continuing focus and targeted support in response to the child/young person's presenting needs and behaviour. Our intention is always to try to be proactive rather than reactive to any situation that occurs.

PROCEDURE

PRICE Training

Polaris runs a mandatory training course called Promoting Positive Approaches to Behaviour incorporating PRICE (Protected Rights in a Caring Environment) which all foster/adoptive parents have access to. They also have access to the PRICE e-learning module on Learnative.

Foster parents should complete their training within their first year of fostering. This course covers positive care of children, including training in de-escalation techniques and strategies for responding to behaviour positively. The supervising social workers provide support to foster parents through regular supervision and support meetings that aim to develop the foster parents' abilities and strengths, and can offer guidance, as appropriate.

Primary Prevention

PRICE considers Primary Prevention as key to reducing the likelihood of what may be perceived as behaviours of concern by professionals occurring in the first instance. This approach takes into account:

- The child's trauma history;
- Consistent care and predictable routines;
- Safe predictable home environment;
- Promoting choice and independence;
- Promoting the child/young person's ability to regulate their behaviour.

Secondary Prevention

The aim of secondary prevention is to identify signs of escalating distress and prevent dysregulation building up into a full blown 'crisis'.

It can be useful to simply think about presenting behaviour and divide into three main categories or stages of development. The ABC approach to supporting behaviour is based on the premise that by focussing purely on the behaviour, you are unlikely to alter or reduce its frequency. It is just as important to recognise the causes and effects of a behaviour as it is to address the actual behaviour being presented. The ABCs are:

Antecedent

This refers to the causes and historical and immediate contextual factors of behaviour such as:

- The culture and ethos of your home;
- Behaviour and attitude of foster/adoptive parents and their families;
- Relationship between foster/adoptive families and children/young people;
- Home environment;
- Available activities/areas of interest;

- Background and previous experience of children/young people;
- Specific medical, psychological and emotional needs of children/young people;
- Specific learning needs of the child/young person;
- Rights, rules, routines and responsibilities.

Strategies that are effective in addressing and managing contextual issues are reflected in the Secure Base approach by-:

- Making children/young people feel welcome by smiling and being pleased to see them;
- Taking time to build positive relationships with children/young people, based on mutual respect;
- Setting a positive example through your own attitude, behaviour and manner;
- Taking care and providing security and predictability for children/young people;
- Being clear, consistent and taking the role of being a trustworthy adult;
- Noticing when the child is doing well and interacting with enthusiasm and confidence;
- Planning and preparing routines/structure that meets the needs of the child/young person;
- Ensuring that family life can be fun, is stimulating and varied;
- Ensuring that you work at the pace of the child/young person, small steps are often the most positive;
- Using a variety of resources and support;
- Setting clear expectations and guidance for behaviour in and out of the home;
- Taking responsibility for supporting and managing behaviour in your home;
- Being confident, consistent and fair in your approach;
- Giving clear and simple instructions;
- Giving your time;
- Giving praise, recognition and nurture;
- Belief, hope and not giving up goes a long way;

- Evaluating your approach and being prepared to change things that did not work.

Behaviour

This refers to the response of children/young people when the contextual factors have not been successfully addressed. Issues to be considered are:

- The type and level of behaviour presented by children/young people;
- The drivers behind any behaviour presented;
- How the behaviour is addressed by the foster/adoptive parents and involved professionals.

Effective strategies in addressing and managing behaviour that may be perceived as behaviours of concern by professionals, foster/adoptive parents:

- Being confident, consistent and fair in dealing with behaviour that may be perceived as challenging ;
- Using eye contact and non-verbal communication signals to re-enforce expectations of desired behaviour;
- Using verbal reminders to re-enforce expectations of desired behaviour;
- Exploring sensitively when calm and connected, the child's/young person's understanding if any of the cause of the behaviour;
- Getting alongside and actively re-engaging the child/young person in the task;
- A tactical change of activity or humour (when appropriate) to re-engage the child/young person;
- Use of play, story boards, role modelling;
- Using direct requests to cease behaviours which are unsafe or likely to lead to negative outcomes;
- Giving a verbal warning that behaviour resulting in the damage or loss of property and equipment will need reparation;
- Ensuring that appropriate interventions are undertaken if dysregulated behaviour continues.

Consequences

Families should offer consistency in their approaches to managing behaviours they may find challenging. Any consequence should be reasonable, proportionate and made in the belief that it will have a learning outcome for a child/young person in modifying perceived

challenging behaviours or actions in the future. Supervising Social Workers/or equivalent should be consulted as to strategies that are being used in the home.

Children/young people should be encouraged and supported to respect the rights of others, understand the value and safety of predictable routines, assisted to make positive choices that increase access to ordinary life experiences. This is about helping children/young people to take responsibility for reflecting on their actions.

In considering the consequences of behaviour, the following should be established:

- Are the consequences consistent with the behaviour displayed?
- Will there be a desired and successful outcome to employing the consequence?
- How will the foster/adoptive parent influence the consequences employed?
- Do the consequences address the contextual issues as well as the behaviour perceived as negative being presented?
- Identify personal impacts (emotional or practical);
- What happened to the child/young person? Did s/he have the behaviour rewarded or sanctioned?
- Any impact on the family? Home? Placement stability?
- Effects on other children/young people?

De-Escalation

PRICE training incorporates de-escalation strategies and recognises the importance of using verbal and non-verbal communication approaches to calm a heightened situation.

Talking to your child/young person about an incident

First and foremost, it needs to be remembered that all behaviour is a form of communication and first seeking to allow a child/young person to talk through what may have happened should be prioritised.

Foster/adoptive parents will also have gained through their training, understanding that where a child/young person may be within their 'cycle of arousal' is significant as to when it is appropriate to talk with the child/young person about an incident or behaviour that is of concern. At the right time, having a sensitive conversation with a child/young person offers opportunity for reflection and encouragement as to managing situations, emotions and responses differently in the future.

Avoiding criminalisation

The service is committed to trying to minimise the need for police involvement in dealing with behaviour we may find challenging, and we wish to avoid criminalising children/young people unnecessarily and would therefore encourage caregivers to follow the appropriate procedures in contacting the Supervising social worker/or equivalent and/or our out of office hours On Call service to discuss any concerns or issues. Where there is an immediate risk to life or significant harm then emergency services may be required

The following principles should be applied when considering the consequences to children/young people:

a. Never made 'in the heat of the moment'

b. Must be the exception, not the rule; a last resort;

c. Must not be imposed as acts of revenge or retaliation;

d. Only instigated for persistent or serious concerns about behaviour where reminders and prompting has not been effective.

e. Only used if there is a reasonable chance that they will have the desired impact of supporting a child to understand and modify behaviour.

f. Ensure the child/young person is aware that his/her behaviour is concerning and the reasoning why.

g. Implementation should be for the minimal time duration, allowing the child the opportunity to make a fresh start as quickly as possible.

h. Must be clearly recorded on the child's case record on CHARMs.

Foster/adoptive parents should also have an understanding of their own emotional response to a confrontation or threat, and know when to withdraw, concede or seek help. When considering what may be the most effective intervention to use it should be informed by these principles:

- Relevant for the child/young person and related to his or her care plan, age and circumstances;
- Realistic and sensitive;
- Not to induce feelings of shame;
- Understandable for everyone in the household;
- Be implemented at a point in time that is still current to the incident or behaviour.
- Follow good practice in the care of children/young people;

- Have been discussed during the placement planning meeting;

These are some strategies that may be considered after consultation with the supervising social worker or equivalent and the LA social worker:

- Confiscation or withdrawal of a mobile or other telephone in order to protect a child/ young person or another person from harm or injury, or to protect property from being damaged;
- Reparation, involving the child/young person doing something to put right the wrong they have done (e.g. repairing damage or returning stolen property);
- Payment for all or part of damage caused, or replacing misappropriated monies or goods may be considered, but only implemented following consultation with Supervising Social Worker and/or with the LA Social Worker;
- Early bedtimes, by up to half-an-hour, or as agreed with the child's/young person social worker;
- Temporary and time limited removal of equipment, such as a television or DVD player;
- Loss of privileges, for example the withdrawal of the privilege of staying up late for a particular reason;
- Suspension (i.e. deferred payment) of pocket money for short periods.

The service remains committed to ensuring that children/young people experience care that is safe, nurturing and upholding of a 'Secure Base' model of parenting. Interventions used that are contrary to the expectations of the service may be considered as abusive, and consideration for escalating the concerns for further discussion and consideration to the Designated Officer (formerly LADO) or equivalent in the LA will need to take place and exploration as to whether this is a Notifiable Event in which case appropriate procedures will need to be followed.

The following approaches and interventions are not approved for use when caring for children/young people:

- Any form or threat of corporal punishment; i.e. any intentional application of force as punishment, including slapping, punching, rough handling and throwing missiles;
- Any restriction to the consumption of, or deprivation of, food or drink;
- Any restriction on a child's/young person's family time with parents, relatives or friends, whether this is in person or via other communications. This does not prevent contact or communication being restricted in exceptional circumstances, where it is necessary to do so to protect the child/young person or others;

- Restricting access to any telephone helpline providing counselling or advice for children/young people;
- Any requirement that a child/young person wears distinctive or inappropriate clothes;
- The use or withholding of medication, or medical or dental treatment;
- The withholding of aids or equipment needed by a child/young person with disabilities;
- Intentionally depriving a child/young person of sleep;
- Bribery or the use of threats;
- Anything which may humiliate or shame a child/young person, or cause them to be ridiculed;
- The imposition of any fine or financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum by way of reparation. (If a fine is imposed on a child/ young person by a Court, staff should encourage and support them to pay it);
- Any intimate physical examination of a child/young person;
- Any measure which involves a child/young person imposing a consequence against another child/young person;
- Imposing consequences upon a group of children/young people for their behaviour towards an individual child/young person;
- Swearing at the child/young person, or the use of foul, demeaning or humiliating language or measures;
- Excessive physical activity being imposed on a child/young person;
- Isolation of a child/young person either within or outside of the home.

Recording and Reporting

Whenever there has been a cause for providing a behavioural consequence, this needs to be appropriately recorded in a child's/young person's CHARMS record within the daily log function. It is also important that this information is provided to the supervising social worker or equivalent and the LA social worker.

Individual Risk Assessment and Safer Care Plan

Within Fostering- All children/young people will have an Individual Risk Assessment and Safer Care Plan completed as soon as is practicable and this is reviewed by the agency and updated whenever there is a significant incident. The risk assessment considers the function, frequency, intensity and duration of the behaviours that are perceived as concerning, and the level of risk identified determines the risk reduction strategies, additional resources and frequency of review that will take place.

The Fostering service, in conjunction with the foster parents, placing local authorities and involved professionals will complete the initial risk assessment. This plan will always include the views, choices and suggestions of the child/young person (dependent upon age, level of understanding and willingness) . A key determinant will always be whether the level of risk/concern can be expected to be safely supported within the context of a home environment.

Within Adoption, there is no requirement for an Individual Risk Assessment, but specific risk assessments can be undertaken where necessary and the same principles apply.

On occasion there may be trauma responses displayed by a child/young person that requires additional consideration and assessment. In such circumstances services can access Polaris PRICE instructors who act as Behaviour Support Specialists to provide intervention with the foster/adoptive parents. This will result in an additional child/young person specific Individual Behaviour Support Plan being developed.

Each individual behaviour plan will include:

- Named involved parties;
- Date Plan completed;
- Assessment of behaviours seen as challenging;
- Risk assessment of the behaviour;
- Preferred responses and comforters of child/young person;
- Review schedule;
- Signatures of agreement.

Matching considerations

The matching and care of children/young people must take into account historical information available and consider any risk behaviour that may be challenging and whether the needs of the child/young person can be safely met in a foster/adoption home environment. The matching and care of children/young people with disabilities/learning

difficulties who have identified needs which , require careful consideration and the question of whether their needs can be safely met in the home must be evidenced.

This must be agreed by the Registered Manager/Senior Manager. Foster/adoptive parents require professional training by an accredited trainer before a child/young person moves into their family with such specified needs, and written evidence of the parent competency to deliver the care needs must be evident. It is important to ensure that the Local Authority/Trust are satisfied with the training provided, and they may prefer to provide their own specific training in such circumstances. It is acknowledged that we have a duty of care to prevent harm – there will be times when 'physical intervention' or physical restraint is required.

Complaints and Allegations

A situation may arise where a child/young person raises a concern about an adult's behaviour. It might not be clear whether an incident constitutes an 'allegation'. It is important to remember that in order to be an allegation the alleged incident has to be sufficiently serious as to suggest that harm has or may have been caused harm to a child/ren or that the alleged behaviour indicates the individual may pose a risk of harm to children/young people. In deciding whether an issue is an allegation or complaint, advice can be sought from central or agency Quality Assurance colleagues. This will determine whether the
complaints/allegations procedure should be invoked, and an appropriate response provided.

If there is a clear allegation or if the information is unclear, then there must be a discussion with the LADO or equivalent. The LADO or equivalent will be able to provide advice and support to the Manager who is overseeing the issue.

The use of Physical Intervention

Polaris do not encourage the use of physical interventions to support children/young people, though do recognise that if there is an immediate risk to the safety of a child/young person or those around them it may be necessary. Physical intervention must never be considered as the first response to a behaviour that is considered challenging.

There are clear legal frameworks, guidance and best practice standards that shape the response of foster/adoptive parents in situations that may be perceived as challenging. In the first instance the decision to physically intervene is driven by one consideration only to protect. It is never about achieving compliance and will always reflect a clear 'duty of care' and the best interests of the child/ young person.

To use physical intervention in the safe management of a situation, a foster parent/adoptive parent must be clear that there exists a 'lawful excuse' (a reason in law that

justifies the action taken). This would be at least one of the following:

- To prevent serious harm to self (the child/young person);
- To prevent serious harm to others (member of family, you);
- To prevent serious damage to property with a consequence of harm;

The next consideration is one of preventing a greater harm from occurring. The question for a foster/adoptive parent would be 'if I do not physically intervene will a greater harm occur?' If the answer to this question is 'Yes' then the intervention is likely to be in the best interests of the child/young person. If 'No' then the question should be asked 'what is the purpose of the physical intervention '

There will always be a consideration of necessity, 'did I need to intervene physically?' If as above there is a clear lawful excuse and this will prevent a greater harm from occurring, then the action is necessary. Physical intervention is always considered to be a last resort and follows the exhaustion of other non- physical strategies. There are situations in which there are no safer alternatives, but all reasonable steps should have been taken in advance to avoid the need for such intervention, including giving the child/young person the opportunity to stop the behaviour of concern during the incident immediately preceding the physical intervention.

That said, under a duty of care, the policy is clear that at times foster/adoptive parents may deem the use of physical intervention as a necessary first resort. An example would be a foster/adoptive parent is out with a six-year-old, on the way out of the park they run off and head towards a busy main road. The foster/adoptive parent shouts to the child to stop but it is clear they are not going to. Such is the risk of actual harm that the foster/adoptive parent determines the need to physically prevent the child entering the road. Another example is preventing a child/young person from hitting another person with a dangerous object such as a glass bottle or hammer.

There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force. It will depend on the precise circumstances of individual cases. To be judged lawful, the force would need to be in proportion to the consequences it is intended to prevent. The degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. Where there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, any individual would be justified in taking any necessary action (consistent with the principles of seeking to use the minimum forces required to achieve the desired result).

The legal and regulatory childcare framework that surrounds fostering and adoption is in addition to the common law power of any citizen in an emergency to use reasonable force in

self-defense, to prevent another person from being injured or committing a criminal offence.

Protocols for the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions (RPI)

In this document the term RPI will be used where a foster/adoptive parent is required to intervene physically, but it is recognised that different terminology may be used to describe incidents where foster/adoptive parent physically intervene in different ways. Guidance can be sought from QA where there are any queries with regards recording or reporting of incidents on CHARM and to regulatory bodies.

- Consent from the placing authority /person with Parental Responsibility should be requested in planned interventions;

- The service works towards the use of planned interventions through individualised Behaviour Support Plans and specific techniques most appropriate to the welfare of the child/young person will be documented and used;
- Only foster/adoptive parents and support staff that have been PRICE trained are authorised to do so;

- Restrictive Physical Interventions will only be deployed where there is a clear legal reason for doing so (lawful excuse);

- The child/young person is always asked to stop, given the chance to take responsibility of their own behaviour and informed of your actions should they not do so;

- Primary and secondary strategies that have been agreed have been assessed as no longer likely to work;

- RPI is used as a last resort, bearing in mind that last resort is determined by level of risk;

- In circumstances where it is evident that serious harm will follow, it will be counterproductive to continue with other strategies;

- The decision to use a one-person intervention is a skilled judgement and one that assesses it is safe to do so. All interventions carry risk. If a foster/adoptive parent uses a one-person technique where with hindsight this is judged as dangerous and inappropriate, then they will be held accountable for any injuries to themselves or the child;

- A one-person technique is used where it is safe to do so and the situation will allow for such management, as this is the least form of intervention. One-person strategies can be the least intrusive method of escorting a young person, less frightening for smaller children and a way of gaining a quick foundation in extreme circumstances, allowing a partner to join and assist;

- Monitor the psychological and physiological welfare of the child/young person; be aware of the child's/young person's previous experiences. Being aware of areas of the body known as "gender sensitive areas" that may have a particular significance for a child/young person, irrespective of gender/sexuality. Culture is important here for example, a child/young person wearing a hijab;

- If the child/young person shows any signs of distress, the intervention must stop if they are :
  a) experiencing any breathing difficulties including vocalising they cannot breathe, and also very rapid breathing;
  b) Has a fit or seizure;
  c) Vomits;
  d) Shows signs of blue coloration of the hands or feet or any other part of the body (indicates reduced blood flow);
  e) Shows any Mottling (paleness/yellowing of the skin due to restricted blood circulation);
  f) Shows physical distress;
  g) Expresses they are in pain;

- In circumstances above, First Aid must be given immediately and an ambulance called if necessary. The child/young person should be seen by a doctor to assess any physical or psychological harm;
- The child/young person should be held in a standing (utilising a wall where possible) or seated position, given the elevated risks associated with holding a child/young person on the floor;
- As soon as it is safe to do so, phase down the intervention and return the control to the child/young person, dialogue should be maintained throughout (unless it aggravates the situation) reassuring the child/young person and promoting a message of care;
- Never act under the influence of your own anger or frustration. Calm, controlled, compassionate and caring intervention is an absolute requirement;
- Physical Intervention is never about punishment or compliance and to

do so is to operate outside of these procedures;

- Partners or where supporting staff are present need to offer assistance, support other children/young people, possibly move them from the area and ensure any objects that could be used as weapons are removed;
- Work as a team, one person should lead; effective communication will be central to success.

After the Incident

- Stay close to and reassure the child/young person;
- Make sure nobody is injured and requires medical attention;
- Provide support and reassurance for each other;
- When all parties are composed, and the child/young person is calm and in control of their own emotions begin the debrief process. This is central to the repair and reflection of an incident and helps the child/ young person to make sense of what has happened, connect behaviour to feelings to actions and result in closure;
- Inform Supervising Social Worker/Adoption Social Worker or Out of Hours of the incident; Decide as part of debrief whether to invoke any consequences;
- Complete accident form if necessary;
- Access foster parent debrief processes. Adoptive parents debrief through discussion with their Adoption Social Worker;
- Return the child/young person to their routine - monitor, support and allow settling time.

Recording of Incidents involving Physical intervention

A report will be written for every incident in which physical intervention has been used. ***For Fostering in England, Wales and Northern Ireland***- (**ME15 Monitoring Event – Physical Restraint of a Child**). The member of staff completing the report will ensure that the report is fully detailed in accordance with the prompts provided.

For Scotland-:Physical restraint and Restrictive Physical Intervention are referred to separately within reporting guidance from the Care Inspectorate. For specific information please see *Records that all registered children and young people's care services must keep and guidance on notification reporting March 2025*. Physical Restraint is notifiable to the CI as a "restrictive practice" whereas RPI is not reportable but should be recorded. Separate Care Inspectorate guidance is available for adult services, *Adult care services: Guidance on records you must keep and notifications you must make, March 2025.*

A report will be written for every incident in which physical or restrictive intervention has been used, this should be recorded as either **NE15 – Physical Restraint (Restrictive Practice)** or **ME15**

Monitoring Event – Restrictive Physical Intervention.

Physical intervention refers to use of physical restraint. Restrictive intervention refers to either physical presence or non-restrictive contact. Definitions are as follows;

Physical restraint - refers to any measure to completely restrict a person's mobility or prevent them from leaving.

Physical presence- a person through their physical presence intervenes in order to influence a child or young person but does not touch them or prevent them from leaving an area. E.g. standing in their way to engage in conversation but letting the child/young person to pass if they wish.

Non restrictive contact - refers to situations where a person has physical contact with a child against their will, but where the child retains a degree of freedom and mobility and can break away if they wish. They are not overpowered.

Where there is any uncertainty about where an incident constitutes "restraint" or restrictive physical intervention without restraint, further discussion should be undertaken with Senior Management/QA Lead for the service. All incidents of restraint should be reported to the CI in line with usual processes.

For Adoption -Incident Form and Behaviour Support Plans which are updated on CHARMS.

For fostering and adoption, the incident will be discussed with the child/young person at the earliest appropriate opportunity, and their comments must be included in the report. The incident report must be shared with the child's/young person's social worker and will form part of the child's records.

Records of physical interventions will be monitored and tracked in order to identify patterns or any other relevant contextual factors as part of management oversight and management overview.

Guidance

The Importance of a Secure Base

A secure base is at the heart of any successful caregiving environment - whether within the birth family, in foster care, residential care or adoption. A secure base is provided through a relationship with one or more caregivers who offer a reliable base from which to explore and a safe haven for reassurance when there are difficulties. Thus, a secure base promotes security, confidence, competence and resilience.

Understanding children and young people's behaviours

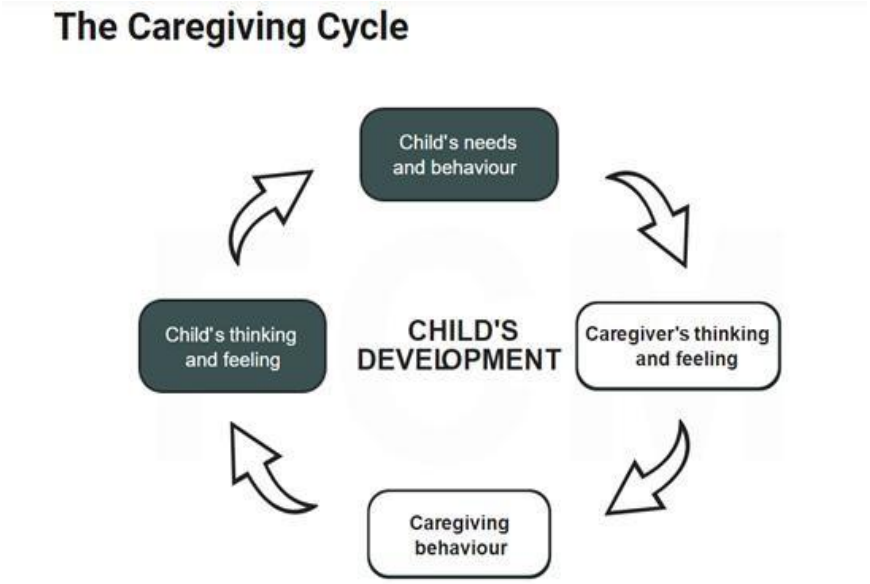
Many children/young people who are fostered/adopted have had experiences that give them little reason to trust adults. They have developed coping strategies based on a need to try to protect themselves and to make their relationships and environments as safe and secure as possible. Attachment theory suggests that exposure to warm, consistent and reliable caregiving can change children's/young person's future expectations, both of close adults and of themselves. The role of adults who can provide secure base caregiving, therefore, is of central importance.

The Secure Base Model provides a positive framework for therapeutic caregiving, which helps infants, children and young people to move towards greater security and builds resilience. It focuses on the interactions that occur between caregivers and children on a day to day, minute by minute basis in the home environment. It also considers how those relationships can enable the child to develop competence in the outside world of school, peer group and community.

It can be helpful, first, to think about caregiver/child interactions as having the potential to shape the thinking and feeling and ultimately the behaviour of the child/young person.

This cycle begins with the child's/young person's needs and behaviour and then focuses on what is going on in the mind of the caregiver. How a caregiver thinks and feels about a child's needs and behaviour will determine his or her caregiving behaviours. The caregiver may draw on their own ideas about what children/young people need or what makes a good parent from their own experiences and/or from what they have learned from training. The caregiving behaviours that result convey certain messages to the child/young person. The child's/young person's thinking and feeling about themselves and other people will be affected by these messages and there will be a consequent impact on his or her development. This process is represented in a circular model, the caregiving cycle (see below) which shows the inter-connectedness of caregiver/child relationships, minds and behaviour, as well as their ongoing movement and change. It is essential for caregivers to be able to reflect in order to give a considered response, in adoption training "the power of the pause" is used as an example in which a momentary pause or break is used before responding to a situation. Whilst it will not always be possible in the moment, e.g. if a caregiver is feeling exhausted or unsafe, it essential

that reflective practice is used to address ruptures in the caregiving cycle and repair them.



Information and support to foster/adoptive parents around behaviour

Foster/adoptive parents should be given all the available relevant information about the child/young person living with them to help them to provide a secure base, and opportunities to build positive relationships. This should include information about previous distress signalling behaviour and advice about how this might be handled in the future. If this is not provided by the child's/young person's social worker, the supervising social worker or equivalent will follow this up. However, even in those instances where information is missing or hard to access, all is not lost. Because behaviour is communication, even without a full history, it is possible to make use of reflective practice to explore the needs being expressed and experiment with ways of supporting the child/young person. In adoption, the matching panel process and a file read ensure that all the available information has been shared with adoptive parents.

The child'/young person's placement plan/care plan/Adoption Support Plan/ AFA Linking and Child's Progress Document should set out any specific issues that need to be addressed and suggest strategies to be explored including development of an Individual Behaviour Support Plan (ISBP) from the onset of a placement, if a child/young person is already presenting behaviours of concern.

Effective Behaviour Support

The Secure Base Model emphasises the critical role the foster/adoptive parent (caregiver) can have in creating the best possible environment for a child/young person to build on and

develop their resilience by thoughtfully offering:

- Availability - Helping the child/young person to trust;
- Sensitivity - Helping the child/young person to express feelings and reflect on behaviour;
- Acceptance - Building the child's/young person's self-esteem;
- Co-operation - Helping the child/young person to feel effective and to be co-operative;
- Family membership - Helping the child/young person to belong.

The Secure Base Model provides caregivers with approaches and activities to use with children/young people to support them in developing the strength, abilities and resilience referred to above.

Behaviour support strategies

Whereby it is deemed appropriate to implement a strategy for supporting a child/young person with understanding their responses or behaviours, foster/adoptive parents should use positive and constructive dialogue with the child/young person or guide them away from a confrontational situation. The aim at all times is to try to think flexibly about what the child/young person may be thinking and feeling and to reflect this back appropriately to the child/young person.

It remains a pivotal point of parenting that our children/young people are supported in recognising and celebrating their strengths and achievements. However, in doing so we need to be mindful that praise and extrinsic rewards like a treat day or new toy may have really disturbing connotations for some of our children/young people due to previous experiences of being groomed for abuse or experiences of adults who cycle between opposing extremes of praise/reward and neglect/criticism/punitiveness because of mental health or substance use difficulties. It may be an entirely new experience and therefore cause confusion or anxiety, or a feeling of pressure to feel happy, grateful or pressure to continue to live up to expectations that feel unsustainable. For some children/young people, therefore families may need to allow children/young people a long time to transition to praise and not feeling loaded with confusion and foreboding.

Intrinsic vs extrinsic motivation

Whatever their history, approaches which support children/young people to experience their own intrinsic motivation will be more empowering and sustainable.

Encouraging intrinsic motivation for children/young people involves creating an environment

that fosters autonomy, competence, and a sense of relatedness.

Listed below are some strategies a foster/adoptive parent can use:

Provide Choice: Offer the child/young person choices whenever appropriate. This could range from small decisions like what to wear or what to eat for breakfast, to larger decisions like what extracurricular activities they want to participate in. Having a say in their own life can empower them to make decisions based on their interests and preferences.

Set Realistic Goals: Work with the child/young person to set goals that are attainable and meaningful to them. Encourage them to choose goals that align with their interests and values. Celebrate their progress and achievements along the way to reinforce their intrinsic motivation.

Encourage Exploration and Curiosity: Foster an environment where curiosity is encouraged, and exploration is supported. Provide access to books, educational materials, and opportunities to try new activities. Celebrate their efforts in trying new things rather than just focusing on outcomes.

Offer Positive Feedback and Encouragement: Acknowledge the child's/young person's efforts and progress, focusing on their actions and strategies rather than just outcomes. Use praise that is specific and genuine, highlighting the qualities they displayed in pursuing their goals.

Model Intrinsic Motivation: Lead by example by demonstrating your own passion and commitment to personal goals and interests. Share stories about your own experiences with intrinsic motivation and how it has influenced your life positively.

Create a Supportive Environment: Foster a supportive and nurturing environment where the child/young person feels safe to take risks and make mistakes. Offer guidance and support when needed but also allow them the space to learn from their experiences and develop their own problem-solving skills.

Encourage Self-Reflection: Help the child/young person develop self-awareness by encouraging them to reflect on their interests, strengths, and areas for growth. Prompt them to think about what *motivates them intrinsically and how they can pursue those interests further.*

Avoid Excessive Rewards or Punishments: Be cautious with external rewards or punishments, as they can undermine intrinsic motivation. Instead, focus on fostering a sense of autonomy and competence by allowing the child/young person to take ownership of their actions and decisions.

Provide Opportunities for Mastery: Offer activities and challenges that are appropriately challenging for the child's/young person's skill level. This allows them to experience a sense of competence and mastery, which can enhance intrinsic motivation.

Build Positive Relationships: Foster positive relationships built on trust, respect, and empathy. A strong bond between the foster/adoptive parent and child/young person can

enhance the child's sense of relatedness and intrinsic motivation.

By implementing these strategies, foster/adoptive parents can help cultivate a sense of intrinsic motivation in the children/young people under their care, empowering them to pursue their interests and goals with enthusiasm and passion.

'The best things in life are not things'

It can be tempting to rely on offering 'tangible' recognition such as the giving of toys, games, activities or money when trying to encourage children/young people to behave in certain ways, however, this can quickly become transactional and estrange children/young people from experiencing the inherent good feelings that come from achieving something. It is recommended that where extrinsic /tangible rewards are given, they should always be accompanied by the use of 'intangible' and relational recognition such as verbal praise specific to the behaviour being recognised, smiles and high fives. Sometimes what we know about how a child/young person perceives themselves, or early life experiences can offer insight as to the most effective means of celebrating their success and achievements with them.

There may be occasions when children/young people need to be supported while they experience a 'natural' consequence of something they have done or not done.

Understanding the difference between natural consequences and arbitrary consequences is crucial for foster/adoptive parents in guiding children/young people effectively and supporting their development.

Natural Consequences:

Definition: Natural consequences are the direct, logical outcomes of a child's/young person's actions or choices. They occur naturally without intervention from adults.

Example: If a child/young person refuses to wear a jacket on a cold day, the natural consequence may be that they feel cold when they go outside.

Supportive of Development: Natural consequences provide valuable learning opportunities for children/young people. They allow them to directly experience the results of their actions, helping them understand cause-and-effect relationships and develop problem-solving skills. Since the consequences are inherently tied to their actions, children/young people are more likely to recognize the connection and learn from the experience.

Arbitrary Consequences:

Definition: Arbitrary consequences are imposed by adults and are not directly related to the child's/young person's actions. They are often seen as punishments or rewards that are disconnected from the behaviour they are meant to address.

Example: If a child refuses to wear a jacket on a cold day, an arbitrary consequence imposed by the foster/adoptive parent might be to take away their favourite toy.

Less Supportive of Development: Arbitrary consequences can be confusing for children and young people because they may not understand why they are being punished or rewarded. Instead of learning from their actions, they may focus on avoiding punishment or seeking rewards, which can undermine their intrinsic motivation and hinder their ability to develop internalised values and self-regulation skills.

Why Natural Consequences are More Supportive of Children's Development:

Natural consequences are more supportive of children's/young people's development because they offer meaningful learning experiences that are directly connected to their actions. By understanding and leveraging natural consequences, foster/adoptive parents can help children/young people learn, grow, and develop important life skills in a supportive and nurturing environment.

In addition, positive reinforcement will always be more beneficial to a child/young person than sanctioning when we perceive a behaviour as undesirable. For example, it may be more effective to allow a child/young person to have use of a TV at bedtime for getting up on time; rather than taking the TV away for getting up late. Same deal, different meaning! The former is discouraging and causes resentment; the latter is encouraging and can improve self-esteem as well as relationships between children/young people and foster/adoptive parents.

Review Dates

14/04/25- Additional information added to Responding to Incidents involving Physical Intervention for Scotland.