



Behaviour Support Policy



"I am treated with dignity and respect"

Intent

We respect the human right to be treated with dignity and respect.

Positive, non-intrusive and ethical strategies are used to assist rangatahi/whānau to manage their own or others' challenging behaviours, when necessary.

We do not tolerate bullying, abuse and rough treatment of anyone in any circumstance.

Responsibilities

Management will:

- ensure relevant team members have the skills and competence to respond to challenging behaviours
- ensure and support compliance with this policy
- model positive behaviour in the workplace
- support team members to access supervision, advice and training in conflict management, de-escalation and positive behaviour support.

Kaimahi will:



- act professionally at all times and desist from any abusive or harmful action against rangatahi/whānau
- communicate this policy and behavioural expectations to rangatahi/whānau and their supports
- report to management in accord with this policy
- model positive behaviour in the workplace.

Definitions

"Disciplinary action" is action taken to exclude a person from an activity or place on a temporary or permanent basis.

"Disruptive behaviour" is behaviour that chronically threatens and intimidates others (eg other clients, staff).

"Serious incident" is an event that causes or could have caused significant harm to person or property.

Principles

We apply the following principles to managing challenging behaviours:

- behaviour which demeans, belittles, diminishes mana, threatens or is harmful should be addressed immediately
- the best interests of child, young person policy will be applied where a young person is involved
- we will not attribute blame for challenging behaviour
- we aim to maintain relationships with rangatahi/whānau and only use disciplinary action as a last resort
- we recognise the adaptive and functional nature of behaviour and address the interplay of:

Behaviour + Response + Culture + Environment



- we are open and transparent about our obligations to report concerns about the safety of tamariki to Oranga Tamariki and/or New Zealand Police.

Requirements

Prevention

Clients/whānau will be informed when we welcome them and subsequently reminded about:

- their rights and expected standards of behaviours
- how to give feedback and make a complaint
- how to access support and advocacy through internal and external channels.

Staff/kaimahi will, if relevant to their role, be given training to prevent and manage aggression and challenging behaviours.

Responses

Kaimahi will be guided by the above principles and apply their professional expertise when managing disruptive and aggressive behaviour. They will use a range of strategies to respond to and manage the behaviour, for example:

- risk assessment and safety planning with rangatahi/whānau
- hui with whānau and/or affected rangatahi
- consult with colleagues and management
- seek and action advice from behavioural specialists (eg behaviour plan)
- de-escalation techniques
- change the mode of service delivery (eg group to 1:1; in-person to remote)



- debriefing and supervision
- team monitoring and planning to address “high risk” situations
- call for emergency assistance
- Police contact for harmful criminal behaviour.

The Social media and Cyberbullying policies will be applied to manage disruptive or aggressive online behaviour.

What must not happen

The following strategies must **never** be used to manage or respond to behaviour:

- physical abuse which includes punching, kicking, slapping, choking, punching, shaking, hair pulling, scratching, and biting verbal abuse or threats which are demeaning or intended to instil fear
- deprivation of liberty, freedom or basic rights (e.g to food, safety) and use of physical, mechanical, seclusion or other type of restraint
- withholding medication or using it for a purpose for which it is not prescribed or intended.

Disciplinary action

Disciplinary action (eg Trespass notice, termination of service) will be taken if a serious incident occurs. It will be taken for disruptive behaviour, only after the following has been considered:

- previous efforts to manage the behaviour
- the impact of behaviour on others including impacts on their safety and wellbeing
- the extent to which the behaviour can be managed with support from others
- the young person's/whānau views and wishes and
- where the person has a legal guardian, that guardian's views



- the benefits to the rangatahi/whānau of remaining with our service/ programme.

The decision to exclude a child/rangatahi may only be made after discussion with their parents/ whānau about alternative options and services.

Report

A record must be kept of all behavioural incidents and interventions with a rangatahi/whānau. Incidents involving a threat of property damage, physical injury, or harm to any individuals will be recorded and reported in accord with our [Incident management](#) policy.

Referrers will be notified (if this was a referral condition) that we have terminated the service as a disciplinary measure .

Abuse must be reported

Concern that a child/young person is being abused or neglected or, through their conduct, is jeopardising their own or another's health, safety or welfare, will be reported in accordance with our Abuse and protection policy.

Responding to an aggressive incident

If a person is hurting or is indicating they will hurt themselves or others, the Police should be called. While waiting for a Police response, kaimahi/staff will apply their relevant training and skills and try to:

- de-escalate the situation
- remove anything triggering the situation
- clear the area of people
- seek backup support
- act within their own limits.



They may handle the person only to the extent necessary for them or others to be safe until Police arrive. Restraint should only be exercised by those trained in the use of restraint.

Kaimahi/staff are not expected to risk their own safety and understand that it is acceptable to retreat from an aggressive incident and to refuse work they consider dangerous.

All incidents and near misses of aggression or violence must be reported and followed up in accordance with the [Incident management policy](#) to minimise the risk of recurrence.

Kaimahi exposed to an aggressive or violent incident will be given debriefing opportunities and support.

Compliance

Social Sector Accreditation Standards - Level 2, Community wellbeing 1.0, Client-centred services 4.0; Health and safety 2.0

Social Sector Accreditation Standards - Level 3, Community wellbeing 1.0; Health and safety 2.0

NZS 8134:2021 Pathways to Wellbeing, Criteria 3.2; 6.1.5-6

Helpful links

[The best interests of child or young person](#)

[Responding to allegations of abuse, exploitation or neglect against a team member policy.](#)

[Positive Behaviour Support \(for more information\)](#)



Healthcare New Zealand Awhi Te Tangata Positive Behaviour Support (for specialised support)

Review

Date: January 2022

Next review: December 2023