



# Prince George's County Public Schools Personal Care Management Guidance Document



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview..... 2

Definition of Personal Care ..... 2

Basic Principles ..... 2

Vulnerability to Abuse ..... 3

Working with Parents ..... 3

Guidelines for Implementing the Management of Personal Care Needs ..... 4

Best Practice and Guidance in Personal Care ..... 5

References ..... 6

Appendices ..... 7

## **GUIDELINES AND PRACTICES FOR PERSONAL CARE MANAGEMENT**

In an effort to ensure the safety and security of students in Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) with significant cognitive and physical disabilities who require adult support to address their personal care needs at school and during Community-Based Instruction (CBI), staff members shall adhere to the guidelines and practices outlined in this document. The purpose of the guidelines is to provide additional clarification and guidance regarding procedures and processes to further enhance the safety and security of students who are identified as individuals with significant cognitive and physical disabilities, along with toddler and preschool children, as it relates to their personal care attended by PGCPS employees.

These guidelines were developed to:

- Provide guidance on supporting personal care needs in school and during CBI activities.
- Safeguard the rights and well-being of children and young adults with significant cognitive and physical disabilities.
- Assure parents and caregivers that PGCPS staff members are knowledgeable, trained and monitored to ensure the appropriate use of personal care practices and protocols to address their student's individual needs and concerns.

### **DEFINITION OF PERSONAL CARE**

Personal care is defined as "the occupation of attending to the physical needs of people who are disabled or otherwise unable to take care of themselves, including tasks such as bathing, management of bodily functions, and cooking".

(<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/personal-care>)

Students may require help with these skills as well as other activities of daily living such as eating, drinking, washing, dressing and toileting.

### **BASIC PRINCIPLES**

It is essential that every student is treated as an individual and care is given as gently and respectfully as possible. Personal care can take substantial amounts of time. PGCPS staff members should bear in mind the following principles:

- Children and young adults have a right to feel safe and secure.
- Children and young adults should be respected and valued as individuals.
- Children and young adults have a right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from staff members when meeting their personal care needs.
- Children and young adults have the right to information and support to enable them to make appropriate choices when it comes to their personal care needs.
- Children and young adults have the right to be accepted for who they are, without regard to age, gender, ability, race, culture or beliefs.

- Children and young adults have the right to express their needs, wants, concerns and have what they expressed responded to appropriately.
- A personal care plan for children and young adults should be designed to lead to independence.

## **VULNERABILITY TO ABUSE**

Children with disabilities have been shown to be particularly vulnerable to abuse. Looking specifically at individuals with an intellectual disability, they are 4 to 10 more times likely to be victims of crime than others without disabilities (Sobsey, et al., 1995). One study found that children with an intellectual disability were at twice the risk of physical and sexual abuse compared to children without disabilities (Crosse et. al., 1993). It is essential that all staff members are familiar with the district's Child Abuse and Neglect Policy and procedures.

### **[Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect AP 5145](#)**

The following are factors that increase a student's vulnerability:

- Children and young adults with disabilities may have less control over their lives than is typical for peers without a disability.
- Children and young adults with disabilities do not always receive sex and relationship education and therefore, are unable to recognize abuse.
- Children and young adults, who are in a residential, foster or hospital placement may have multiple caregivers.
- Differences in appearance may be attributed to the child's disability rather than to abuse.
- Children and young adults with disabilities are not always able to communicate what is happening to them or how they are feeling.

Personal care may involve touching/viewing the private parts of a child's body and may leave staff members vulnerable. It is unrealistic to eliminate all risk but this vulnerability places an important responsibility on staff members to act in accordance with agreed procedures.

## **WORKING WITH PARENTS**

Establishing effective working relationships with parents and staff members is a key task for all schools, and is particularly necessary for students with disabilities. Parents should be encouraged and empowered to work with professionals to ensure their child's needs are properly identified, understood and met.

Parents are partners in the development of Individual Education Program (IEPs) and, therefore, should be included in the discussion of personal care needs such as toileting and feeding in order to identify a personal care plan specific to their child that may need to be included as part of an IEP.

Meeting the personal care needs of a student with a disability must be clearly documented to ensure clarity of expectations, roles and responsibilities within the classroom. The data recorded should also reflect arrangements for ongoing communication between home and school. It is also important that the procedure for dealing with concerns arising from personal care processes is clearly stated and understood by parents and all those involved.

## **GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE MANAGEMENT OF PERSONAL CARE NEEDS**

- Special Education classroom teachers of students receiving special education services and require adult support with personal care needs shall provide their principal with the name(s) of the adult(s) assigned to their classrooms who are responsible for supporting students with disabilities who require adult support with personal care needs, including toileting in school and during CBI (as appropriate). It is imperative this information stay current as the school year progresses if there are personnel changes.
- Principals of Early Childhood Special Education Schools, Community Referenced Instruction (CRI), Regional Schools and Programs in Comprehensive Schools shall require the use of a sign-in sheet by staff members responsible for supporting students with personal care needs in the bathroom and/or locker room area of aquatics therapy tank. The assigned staff member shall sign their name, the name of the student, and the time of entry and exit from the designated bathroom. This sheet shall be maintained and collected by principal weekly and made available upon request to the parent or district office. Please refer to Appendix A-C for sample templates.
- Principals/Assistant Principals at all elementary and secondary schools responsible for serving CRI or Regional Program students shall identify designated areas for personal care needs for students within their school building. In addition, staff bathrooms shall also be designated for adult use within the building. Staff may only use designated staff bathrooms.
- Staff members supporting students who participate in the Adapted Aquatics Program in PGCPs and use the aquatics therapy tank shall change their clothing in designated staff bathrooms/area or in the locker room when no students are present. Two adults shall monitor and assist students in each locker room (preferably male/male and female/female). Male and female students MUST be in their respective locker rooms at all times. Staff members must use the locker room sign-in document provided by the principal/designee.
- Principals/Assistant Principals at all elementary and secondary schools responsible for serving CRI or Regional Program students and Principals of Regional Schools shall require the submission of a list of the CBI sites that includes the address or location where students are expected to visit to apply the skills learned in class to be College, Career, and Community Ready. This information should be submitted to principal, as well as CRI Specialist or Special Education Instructional Specialist for Regional Programs, on the document titled, CBI Lesson Planner. Please refer to Appendix D.

- PGCPS shall continue to require that adult support for personal care needs in public settings consist of students being supported by two adults. The only exception is during work-study programs or CBI when there is only one/two staff members who are supporting the students. The names of staff members responsible for supporting students who require adult support with their personal care needs during CBI activities shall be submitted to the school principal or his/her designee prior to the CBI.
- The Occupational Health and Safety Administration requires that all employees who have the potential of being exposed to blood borne pathogens (bodily fluids) or other potentially infectious materials be trained in Universal Precautions. The purpose of the training is to educate all staff members about the prevention of communicable diseases and infections. Principals shall ensure that all staff members responsible for providing personal care support are trained annually by a registered nurse from the Office of School Health/ Department of Student Services. The training of Universal precautions shall include but not be limited to: hand-washing, the use of gloves, the use of other protective gear, how to report an exposure, post exposure procedures, etc.

## **BEST PRACTICE AND GUIDANCE IN PERSONAL CARE**

In many schools, staff members are involved in providing personal care to students daily. This requires great trust and responsibility. When providing personal care, support staff members must attend to the safety and comfort of the students and ensure they are treated with dignity and respect. There is a balance struck between maintaining privacy and dignity for children alongside protection of the student and staff member(s). It is important for each school to ensure the following best practices are in place to manage the personal care needs of students.

- All adults assisting with personal care should be employees of the Prince George's County Public Schools including substitute teachers. The school principal should review the job description with staff members assigned to support students with disabilities with personal care management, including toileting, as reflected in their job description.
- Identified staff members should also receive training for specific personal care procedures for those students with physical and cognitive disabilities. This may include instruction on lifting and transferring students as well as the use of adaptive equipment needed for toileting with the student's physical therapist.
- Where a routine procedure needs to be established, a meeting with school staff members, parents, related service provider as appropriate, relevant health personnel and the student, where appropriate, will need to be scheduled. All parties should know and understand the personal care needs of the student. Personal care needs should be reviewed on a regular basis by the classroom team members and reviewed during IEP meetings.

- Staff members assigned to support a student(s) with personal care needs shall notify the other classroom staff members when they are taking the student out of the classroom to another destination to take care of personal care needs.
- Wherever possible, staff members should work with students of his/her same sex in providing personal care. When determining the personal care needs of a student, it may be acceptable for a staff member of the opposite sex to provide personal care when no other reasonable alternative is available.

Personal care staff members should:

- know and have available a student's system of communication.
  - have knowledge of and respect for any cultural or religious sensitivity related to aspects of intimate care.
  - speak to the child by name and ensure they are aware of the focus of the activity.
  - address the child in age appropriate ways with agreed upon terminology for personal care routines.
  - give explanations of what is happening in a straightforward and reassuring way with the student using their personal mode of communication.
  - give verbal, visual and/or gestural clues that enable the child to anticipate and prepare for personal care steps the student will be engaged in.
  - encourage the child to undertake as much of the procedure for themselves as possible, including washing intimate areas and dressing/undressing.
- Provide facilities that afford privacy and modesty.
  - Supplies of clean clothes from the parent/guardian should be easily accessible to avoid leaving the child unattended while they are located in the restroom/changing area.
  - Hand washing must be done thoroughly. Soap and/or anti-bacterial hand wash shall be available.
  - When a staff member is concerned about a child's actions or comments while carrying out the personal care procedure, the staff member should report this immediately to the school principal and school nurse.
  - If a situation occurs while a staff member is engaged in a personal care routine with a child, which causes the classroom staff members to be suspicious, staff members should refer to the Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect AP 5145 and follow the procedures for reporting.

## References

- Crosse, S., Elyse, K. & Ratnofsky, A. (1993). A report on the maltreatment of children with disabilities. Washington, DC: National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Sobsey, D., Wells, D., Lucardie, R. & Mansell, S. (1995). Violence & disability: An annotated bibliography. Baltimore: Brookes Publishing.
- Personal Care Guidelines for Schools and Kent County Council Educational Establishments (2009)



# APPENDICES A- C

# Appendix A

## Prince George's County Public Schools Department of Special Education Personal Care Management Classroom Record

School Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Personal Care Needs Notes:</b>
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Date	Entry Time	Exit Time	Toileting Status	IEP goal/objective Y/N	Staff Member Name	Staff Member Initial	Comments
			( ) Independent ( ) Assisted ( ) Diapered				
			( ) Independent ( ) Assisted ( ) Diapered				
			( ) Independent ( ) Assisted ( ) Diapered				
			( ) Independent ( ) Assisted ( ) Diapered				
			( ) Independent ( ) Assisted ( ) Diapered				
			( ) Independent ( ) Assisted ( ) Diapered				
			( ) Independent ( ) Assisted ( ) Diapered				

**\*All soiled clothing must be changed.**

# Appendix B

Prince George's County Public Schools  
 Department of Special Education  
 Personal Care Management Classroom Daily Record

School Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Care Needs Notes:**

Entry Time	Exit Time	Toileting Status	IEP goal/objective Y/N	Staff Member Name	Staff Member Initial	Comments
		( ) Independent ( ) Assisted ( ) Diapered				
		( ) Independent ( ) Assisted ( ) Diapered				
		( ) Independent ( ) Assisted ( ) Diapered				
		( ) Independent ( ) Assisted ( ) Diapered				
		( ) Independent ( ) Assisted ( ) Diapered				
		( ) Independent ( ) Assisted ( ) Diapered				
		( ) Independent ( ) Assisted ( ) Diapered				

**\*All soiled clothing must be changed**



**APPENDIX C**  
**Prince George's County Public Schools**  
**Department of Special Education**  
**Personal Care Management Classroom Daily Record**

+	School:
	Teacher/Para/ISEA:
	Date:

Student Name	Date	Entry Time	Exit Time	Staff Member	Class or Individual	Student Changed Y/N	Toileting Y/N	Staff Initials
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
13								
14								
15								

# APPENDIX D

**Appendix D**  
**\*COMMUNITY BASED INSTRUCTION (CBI) LESSON PLANNER FOR \_\_\_\_\_**  
*(month)*

School \_\_\_\_\_  
 Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Time Period \_\_\_\_\_  
 Instructional Unit \_\_\_\_\_

**\*ATTACH PERSONAL CARE MANAGEMENT ASSIGNMENTS/DATA COLLECTION SHEETS. Remember to take the Personal Care Record Data Sheet with you when on your CBI.**

Trip Date and Times-Departure/Return	Destination(s) Address and Phone Number	OBJECTIVE(S): Aligned to MDCCRS, CCC or IEP Goals & Objectives	Materials and Money Needed	Lunch Plans	Pre-CBI Activity in the Classroom	Follow-Up Activity In the Classroom

Additional Notes:

cc: Principal  
 Parent  
 CRI Specialist