

School District 50: Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte

Policy Subject: HOME VISIT SAFETY GUIDELINES

Date Passed: November 2006

Date Amended: January 2007

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Policy No. 6301P

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POLICY:

1. To ensure staff are alert and mindful of safety issues while working alone.
2. To provide a safety checklist.
3. To guide staff on risk assessment for home visits.
4. To encourage staff to remain alert to signals (student and internal) when assessing danger.
5. To encourage staff to consider alternative responses in potentially dangerous situations.

PROCEDURE:

Step 1:

A. Review student's history (file, verbal)

B. Plan ahead:

i. Determine: Where? When? How? With whom?

ii. Considerations:

Does the meeting need to occur in the home?

Should I take another person with me?

C. Leave a copy of your itinerary with the designate at the school

Step 2:

A. Do a risk assessment from outside the home

- i. Park where you can' be blocked in
- ii. Determine if there are any vicious pet(s) in the yard of home
- iii. Consider entrances and exits to the home
- iv. When approaching the house, listen for outward sounds of potential danger
- v. If it feels at all threatening do not enter the home

Step 3:

A. Do a risk assessment inside the home

- i. Do a quick visual scan of the room for possible signs of danger (drug paraphernalia, weapons)
- ii. Be observant in regards to people's behaviour in the home (intoxication, emotional aggression, agitation, etc.)
- iii. If there is any indication of a threat to your safety promptly and politely end the visit.

Step 4:

A. Report and record unsafe conditions

Conclusion:

Safety cannot be guaranteed, but through appropriate planning and by taking reasonable precautions, we can reduce the risk factors and heighten our own safety.

Be aware of signals that may alert you to a potential for violence

1. Consider home occupant' signals when assessing danger:

Body Movements

Lots of activity, exaggerated movements, pacing, tense muscles in hands and limbs, shifting positions, rocking, flailing arms, jerky non-fluid movements, threatening gestures, clenched fists, wringing hands, pounding of fist on table

Speech

Loud, sharp, pressured.

Note tone and level or unresponsiveness

Facial Cues

Muscle tension, gritting teeth, dilated pupils, scowling, staring, glaring, flushed, pale, inappropriate affect, flat effect

Bodily Changes

Sweating, shakes, tremors, trembling, heavy breathing

Agitation

Easily excited, quick responses to stimuli, hyperactive, appears tense or ill at ease, overly anxious, easily upset when things go wrong, hyper vigilant, swearing

Angry Verbalizations

Sarcastic, complaining, challenging, insults, swearing, impulsive, threatening statements

Emotional Distress

Unhappy, distressed, irritable, emotionally labile, negative, lying, suspicious, uncooperative, hostile

Thought Distortion

Disorganization, confused, disoriented persecutory ideas, hallucinations

Signs of Intoxication

Lack of co-ordination, slurred speech, unsteady gait, fluctuating levels of consciousness, dilated pupils, flushed face, tremors, smell of liquor or substances

2. Consider your own internal signals:

a. What are your own inner reactions and do they give you indication of potential danger?

b. Tune into these feelings, give them credence, and leave.