

Handling Incidents of Expressed Bias and Discrimination

George Brown College Lab Schools will not tolerate incidents of expressed bias, discrimination, prejudice or harassment. The centre will act to eliminate all forms of discrimination and bias on the part of Staff, students, administrators, co-operative placement Staff, community affiliates, Advisory Committee members, the Board of Governors and visitors.

George Brown College personnel who handle incidents of expressed bias and discrimination will be consistent and will respect the confidentiality and the rights of all parties involved, including the complainant, the witnesses and the accused perpetrator.

Rationale:

The centre has the responsibility to promote racial, ethno-cultural, special abilities and religious harmony among its members, and to maintain harassment –free environment.

An incident of expressed bias and discrimination can involve anyone in the Lab Child Care Centre community- students, child care Staff, administrative Staff, families and children, or visitors from any racial or cultural group.

Incidents may be intentional or unintentional and can take verbal, written, non-verbal, or physical form. They may be subtle or passive, or they may be overt. Avoidance or exclusion, rude behaviour, stereotyping, name-calling, jokes and slurs, graffiti, insults, threats or intimidation are typical expressions of bias or discrimination.

Procedures:

Therefore the Lab Child Care Centre adopts the following procedures:

1. The Lab Child Care Centre's response to racial and ethnic, special abilities incidents will allow for disciplinary action. Such disciplinary action may include a warning, reprimand, suspension, and expulsion, termination of services or non-renewal of contracts.
2. The Childcare Centres will develop and provide guidelines as well as educate all Staff and students in the procedures to be followed for the resolution of racial and ethnic incidents. The Lab Child Care Centre will also provide Staff development to assist child care personnel to :
 - Identify racial and ethnic incidents;
 - Understand the legal implications of racist behaviour, as outlines in the Canadian Charter of rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code;
 - Deal confidently with incidents of racial or ethnic harassment;
 - Provide immediate and consistent response to racial, ethnic or special abilities incidents.
3. Complaints may be lodged by any member of the Lab Child Care Centre community. The complaint procedure contains the following six steps. A complainant or a witness may begin action at any step.

- I. The complainant and/or witness shall ask the alleged offender to stop (verbally or non-verbally). The alleged offender must be given an opportunity to stop the offensive behaviour.
- II. If the problem is not resolved through this request, the complainant and/or witnesses shall make a written record of the incident, including dates, names and as full an account as possible.
- III. The complainant and/or witnesses shall lodge a complaint with the Manager, or Director of the School of Early Childhood.
- IV. Upon receiving the complaint, the administrator shall start an investigation. The investigation will include the complainant, the alleged offender, and any other person who may have information. Information shall be received in the strictest confidence and shall be documented.
- V. If the complaint is not resolved at the level of the administrator within 10 working days of being lodged, the complainant may, through a Director or Dean, appeal to the College's Race and Ethnic Relations Appeal Committee. That committee shall consist of one member of the local executive of the faculty union, one student representative, one chairperson, and a Director or Dean. The members will have received training as outlined in Section 2 of the George Brown College's Race and Ethnic Relations Policy.
- VI. If a mutually acceptable resolution is not reached at the level of the Race and Ethnic Relations appeal Committee within 15 working days of the appeal, either the complainant or the alleged offender may make the final College appeal to the office of the President. An appointed Vice-President or the President will communicate his/her decision to both parties, in writing, within 10 working days of this final appeal.

The complaint process must begin no later than six months from the date of the incident and not later than six months after a student completes or leaves a program.

However, for students, if the complaint concerns a grade, it must be lodged within 10 days, in accordance with the College's student appeals procedure.

This procedure does not affect an individual's right to file a complaint with the Ontario Human rights

Commission, or to use the grievance procedure of the relevant Collective agreement.

Resolving incidents when children are involved:

Where possible, children who were involved are encouraged to report it to an adult (e.g., teacher, supervisor, and parent). In all situations, families should be informed by the program if their child has been involved in a racial incident.

In the case where the families are aware that their child was involved in an incident and/or any parent who witnessed the incident, the parent should make a written or verbal report to the Manager for them to take immediate action in resolving the incident.

All follow-up and responses involving children must recognize the individual child's age and stage of their understanding, and be handled in a manner intended to foster self-worth of all children involved.

Actions to be taken to resolve incidents of expressed bias/discrimination between or involving children.

Staff should try to resolve the matter by talking to the children and explaining why the behaviour is inappropriate.

Some key elements of this process are:

1. The targeted child must immediately be publicly supported to acknowledge the hurt he/she has experienced. This will help the hurt child to re-establish self-esteem.
2. Both the offender and targeted child are spoken to individually. The objective of speaking with the offender is to correct the behaviour, not to punish. The offender should be assisted in seeking appropriate ways to express themselves.
3. Incidents can be used as learning opportunities for all the children (e.g. built into the overall curriculum).
4. Document incidents, indicating who was involved using first names only, and include as much detailed information as possible on how the incident was resolved.
5. Discuss the incident and its resolution with each child's parent.
6. Staff review the frequency of incidents, both within groups and with specific children, and set longer range plans accordingly.

If other children were present at the time and witnessed the incident, Staff will talk to the children and explain why the behaviour is inappropriate.

Teaching children about the inappropriateness of this behaviour will involve group activities, group problem-solving, program and curriculum development, or other preventative methods (e.g. modeling positive interactions and conflict resolution skills.)

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