

1.14.6 Appropriate Touch Procedure

Regulations and Standards

England

- [Regulation 11: The positive relationships standard](#)
- [Guide to the positive relationships standard](#)
- [Regulation 19: Behaviour management and discipline](#)

Wales

- Regulation 35: Fitness of staff
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/35/made>
- Regulation 36: Supporting and developing staff
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/36/made>

Introduction

Lack of appropriate touch can lead to the young person being emotionally isolated, feeling less compassionate and more vulnerable to inappropriate relationships.

Part of a carer's role is to develop sound, healthy caring relationship with the young person therefore it is essential for all carers to understand this policy and to be clear about what is not considered as appropriate touch.

- A carer should never play fight, tickle, or over stimulate the young person, which could lead to more inappropriate touching;
- A carer should never allow the young person to sit on their knee or vice versa;
- A young person should never sit in between carer's legs, or vice versa;
- A carer should never lie, next to a young person, or allow the young person to lie on them;
- It is essential that a carer never rough handle, shove, pinch, slap, a young person or pulls their hair;
- A carer should never kiss a young person;
- It is not appropriate to touch the young person on the upper thigh or anywhere that could be interpreted as sexual;
- A carer should never hug a young person unless invited and in a safe environment to do so, the carer must be aware of the young person's motives. A hug should be hip to hip, all other hugs should be avoided.

It is essential that the care and clinical team assess the young person's needs, through reflective practice and care planning, to be able to give an all-round holistic, thoughtful, nurturing and individual approach to a young person's needs.

- The carer should be aware of the young person's history, Individual Behavioural Support Plan (IBSP) and whether the young person has any Attachment issues etc;

- It is appropriate to state explicitly to the young person when they are being over familiar and seeking lots of physical contact. The carer should have the confidence to speak out, and make sure that all details are documented and relevant;
- It is essential to be aware of your own boundaries, when discussing or initiating physical contact, it is important to recognise what is comfortable to you, may not be so to the young person or other staff members;
- Where appropriate use caring gestures i.e. use open hand on the top part of the back and shoulder, show understanding and use PRICE techniques, to keep yourself and the young person safe;
- The carer should be aware that they are a professional and would want to be seen in such a capacity when out in public with the young person. Be aware of how your body language, amount or extent of touch and you physical proximity to the young person may be interpreted by them or others. Show Identification provided by Bryn Melyn Care when applicable;
- Remember: It is not your intention but the young person's interpretation that takes primary importance in offering physical contact.

End

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