

School Policies & Procedures: 20/12/19 Robert Service School Policy 19-02 Substance Use Policy

Preamble:

At Robert Service School we honour and seek to live by the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in construct of Trë'hude. Trë'hude is a Hän language term which translates as "living in a good way" and increasingly is evidenced in our school culture and proceedings such as daily announcements and messages at Good News Assemblies. Trë'hude is likely best described by a quote from local Elder Percy Henry.

It is like for many years we have watched this thing you call 'education' occur in our town. I know there is much that can occur in the school that is good, but it does not make a person wise. In our culture, there is nothing more important than the learning that makes a person wise and a good human being (Percy Henry, 2012).

Over the past few years there has been considerable conversation at Robert Service School on how Trë'hude can be authentically be enacted at RSS; that is ensuring we simply limit our focus on academic development and commit also to socio-emotional development. It is important to recognize that Trë'hude parallels the British Columbia Curriculum's focus on the recently declared Core Competencies, which encourages students' learning to have a balanced approach to the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for leading a good life.

From the BC Curriculum:

Education should lead to the development of the whole child—intellectually, personally, and socially. In a world of growing diversity and challenge, schools must do more than help students master the sets of knowledge and skills acquired through the standard subject areas. They must prepare students fully for their lives as individuals and as members of society, with the capacity to achieve their goals, contribute to their communities and continue learning throughout their lives (2016).

Along with the construct of Trë'hude, we value a school-wide approach in which we all "take care of ourselves and each other", known by Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in as tak'atr'enocha. Robert Service School has a long history of being a school in which care for all students is demonstrated by acts of tolerance, acceptance, support for change and expectation. Since students are expected to model actions viewed as characteristic of leading a good life, the demonstration of substance use behaviors are discouraged in general, especially on school property, and also in proximity to the school, especially in view of younger students.

The Substance Use policy is also informed by the Yukon's (2009), Smoke-free Places Act.

Definitions:

1. ALCOHOL

Alcohol is a depressant drug that slow down the parts of the brain that affect thinking, behaviour, breathing and heart rate. It is commonly available to youth in Dawson, often through parental consent.

2. SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Robert Service School students engage in a variety of off-school site learning activities, some of these a considerable distance from the school property in Dawson City, including sporting, cultural and land-based activities. The behaviors expected of students on these experiences are similar to what would be expected while on school property.

3. ACCESSORY

An item that can be used for, or represents, the consumption of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, and/or drugs, such as: rolling papers, holders, pipes, bongs, and vaporizers,

4. PROPERTY

Property refers to any property owned or occupied by Yukon Education or provided for the purpose of education, including administrative and non-administrative buildings, schools (and their surrounding property), and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in locations and facilities. The immediate school property in central Dawson on 5th Avenue is clearly delineated by the roads and access roads that define the perimeter of the school.

5. CANNABIS

Cannabis comes in the form of dried plant buds, hashish (dried resin from plant leaves) or oil (boiled resin). The legalization of cannabis makes cannabis commonly available to youth in Dawson, often through parental consent.

There are many ways that cannabis can be consumed. These include:

- i. Smoking, such as a "joint", in a pipe or bong;
- ii. Ingested as an edible or drink;
- iii. Consumed through vaping.

5. ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE

An electronic (e-cigarette) cigarette is defined as a vaporizer or inhalant-type device, whether called an electronic cigarette or any other name, that contains a power source and heating element designed to heat a substance and produce a vapour intended to be inhaled by the user of the device directly through the mouth, whether or not the vapour contains nicotine. The legalization of e-devices makes vaporizers and vaping commonly available to youth in Dawson, often through parental consent.

6. DRUGS / OTHER DRUGS

Other drugs include, but are not limited to, those listed in the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, prescription/non-prescription pharmaceuticals, as well as any other substance that is used and/or possessed with the intent of intoxication, and/or stimulation depression of the central nervous system.

7. PERSON

A person includes, but not limited to, employees, students, School Council members, parents/guardians, visitors, volunteers, contractors, community members, facility renters, and service providers.

8. VEHICLES

Vehicles refers to all vehicles either owned or leased by the school or Yukon Education, or used for school purposes, which includes vehicles owned or driven by Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in or parents and caregivers for school-related purposes

9. SMOKING

Smoking (inhaling or exhaling) or holding lighted tobacco or cannabis

10. TOBACCO

Tobacco is defined as any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco that is intended for human consumption, whether chewed, smoked, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, sniffed or ingested by any other means or any component, part, or accessory of the tobacco product. Common types of tobacco products include but are not limited to cigarettes, cigarillos, cigars, chew, plug, and snuff (whether tobacco or herbal). It excludes ceremonial tobacco used for smudging or provided as an offering.

11. VAPING

Inhaling or exhaling vapour from an electronic cigarette (e-cigarette) or holding an activated e-cigarette, whether or not the vapour contains nicotine.

12. RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Restorative Justice is approach to discipline that focuses on repairing harm through inclusive processes that engage all stakeholders. At the school level, this typically involves a dialogue, maybe even a circle dialogue, where the offender hears from the offended. The dialogue is usually facilitated.

Procedure:

With these ideas in mind and recognizing the school has a central role in public education and developing community citizens at Robert Service School, our response to substance use is defined below.

1. A priority in all actions is assuring that preventative and proactive actions are evidenced in Robert Service School's health curriculum experience for students, which includes substance use education.
2. Robert Service School's Student Handbook and initial Good News Assemblies and Sourdough newsletters will make explicit through early school-year and ongoing communication the policy details associated with substance use.
3. This procedure will apply to all persons, while on school property, in school vehicles, in vehicles parked on school property, at school-related events/activities/trips, or in any other circumstance that could have an impact on Robert Service School and/or workplace climate. In regards to the school property, it is preferred that the procedure is encouraged to apply to persons on the boardwalks and immediate road and alleyways on the perimeter of the school property.
4. No person shall be under the influence of alcohol, cannabis or drugs while on school property.
5. No person shall do any of the following:
 - i. Consume alcohol
 - ii. Smoke or hold tobacco
 - iii. Smoke or hold cannabis
 - iv. Use an electronic cigarette
 - v. Consume a tobacco, vape, or cannabis product or substance
6. In addition to those actions the policy prohibits any person from:
 - i. Possessing and/or using tobacco, vaping, cannabis and/or drug related accessories, including clothing or insignia that endorse such products;
 - ii. Possessing, and illegally and/or irresponsibly using alcohol and other drugs, or any related accessories/paraphernalia;
 - iii. Selling, suppling, or serving alcoholic beverages and/or any of the other prohibited substances indicated in this procedure.

Actions:

In association with Robert Service School's Positive Behaviour Policy (19-01), all actions that are associated with substance use and abuse, are identified as Red (Critical) Incidents and, when appropriate, a Red Incident Form will be completed and delivered to administration. There is zero tolerance for such behaviours. In line with other Critical Incidents, these incidents are primarily associated with and are validly regarded as illegal and destructive activity. Addressing the behaviour exhibited and, potentially, changing the behaviour from recurring requires a course of action, which involves discipline, possibly suspension, and, most importantly support. Parent/ Carer contact and re-entry restorative action is required and behavior closely monitored. Repeated offences will require progressive discipline and support.

Outlined below articulate an example of a course of action for such behaviours.

1. The incident is immediately communicated to administration, possibly at this time through a Red Critical Incident form;
2. Administrator, possibly with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in CELC and/ or Counsellor support, meets with the offender;
3. An initial assessment determines whether any immediate support is necessary for the offender, such as medical support in the case of a student being under the influence. The first course of action is to ensure the offender is safe;

4. The parent(s)/ caregiver is then contacted to inform them of the offending, which will be associated with the student being removed from the school for the day; with the student only being discharged in the hands of a parent or caregiver. If a parent or caregiver is not available, the student will be kept at school in a supervised environment;
5. If the event is associated with a school-related activity, such as alcohol or drug use on a culture camp or sporting event, the incident may require the student to be removed from the event, which may mean a parent or caregiver may have to collect the student;
6. If evaluated as a significant critical incident (such as in the case of distribution of cannabis), the superintendent of schools (Yukon Education) and, as appropriate, Education Manager for Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in will be contacted. Further, if seen as a legal offending matter, RCMP may be contacted;
7. In the case of the distribution of drugs, a property search of a school locker may be initiated, which does not require the consent of the student;
8. Within one to two days of the incident occurring, a meeting of the student and parent(s)/ caregiver(s) will be held with a member of the administrative team, and as deemed appropriate, a Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in CELC and/ or RSS School Counsellor. In the case the incident has broader ramifications for the community, this meeting will not occur until the meeting can be set to protect all associated parties;
9. An individualized consequence plan will be developed during this conversation. The plan may include a range of consequences such as verbal reprimand, written reprimand, loss of privilege (possibly learning experience exclusion), extra duties, suspension, and/ or exclusion. Most importantly, Counsellor support, maybe be required for actions where it is deemed the student is at risk for repeated offending. Based upon this meeting, a re-entry restorative action may be required, which may require formal apologies. Student behavior will be closely monitored. If behaviour is repeated, escalated actions would be expected, including requirement for Drug and Alcohol or other external support, which may be deemed essential for re-entry. Loss of sporting team or event participation privilege may also be considered as an option, but as a final last resort.