

**Informed Consent Form  
Physical Prompting and Behavior Management  
For Participants in GJEP Programs**

**A. Introduction**

Gateways: Access to Jewish Education (“Gateways”) is committed to promoting the safety and well-being of all students, parents, volunteers, teachers and staff in our programs. Gateways is aware that the population we serve may have behavioral challenges that range from minor to significant, and that can interfere with students’ safety and/or harm their dignity in the presence of others. Gateways’ staff and volunteers (“the team”) are trained in highly-structured preventative techniques and teaching strategies in order to lessen the likelihood of challenging behaviors. The team is guided by the principle of “least-restrictive-most-effective” strategies, prioritizing the use of preventative and less restrictive strategies when it is reasonable to do so. In order to provide a safe environment for everyone, should an emergency arise or after failure of less restrictive alternatives, or after a determination by staff that such alternatives would be inappropriate or ineffective under the circumstances, a more intensive method of prompting and/or protection may be required, as described below.

**B. Physical Prompting**

Physical prompting may include helping a student complete a request or academic task, such as hand-over-hand assistance to complete a worksheet or art project. It may also include physical guidance to assist a student in responding to a question (e.g., by pointing to a picture or item) or to redirect a student’s attention back to a task. A hands-off approach, following a least-to-most prompting hierarchy, is used as much as possible to help build independence and limit prompt dependency. An example of physical redirection would be escorting a student back to a designated space by touching the student’s back, arm and/or shoulders. Physical prompting may also be used to assist students with activities of daily living, such as hand washing, eating, drinking, hygiene, appropriate supervision during bathroom use, when necessary.

**C. Minor Challenging Behavior**

After implementation of least-restrictive strategies, should minor incidences of challenging behavior continue, such as flopping to the floor, minor tantrum behavior (e.g., crying, screaming), leaving the designated area, and/or using materials inappropriately, physical prompting to redirect the student back to the task may be used. A child may be lifted to his/her feet or physically escorted to a safe space if the staff deems the student to be in an unsafe location (e.g., in a doorway where others would be required to step over). A team member may use his/her own body to block a child from bolting or to ensure that they stay within a safe space.

**D. Significant Challenging Behavior**

Should significant challenging behavior occur, such as excessive physical or verbal aggression, property destruction, self-injury, unsafe noncompliance and/or continuing tantrum behavior, the first concern of Gateways is protecting the students and others from physical harm and Gateways will make reasonable efforts to do so while also endeavoring to preserve students’ dignity in front of others. In accordance with applicable Massachusetts regulations (603 CMR 46.03), physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort, after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. Gateways’ trained staff shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:

(a) To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm; and

(b) To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

In the event that an episode of significant challenging behavior occurs, a trained Gateways staff member will implement the least-to-most prompting hierarchy and limited physical interventions set forth in Section C above, with the addition of the following steps as deemed necessary to protect the safety and well being of the student in question, and the staff and volunteers: a) a Gateways staff member present at the time will make reasonable efforts to immediately contact the parent/guardian/caregiver of the student. The parent/guardian/caregiver, if on-site, may independently implement physical management of their child at their own discretion. If precursor behavior is exhibited, contact with the parent/guardian caregiver will be made as soon as possible to allow maximum time for the parent/guardian/caregiver to arrive at the setting; b) should the episode escalate to a degree that is imminently harmful to the student or others, the Gateways staff present will, in their sole discretion, engage in steps to secure the safety of all involved. These steps may include, but are not limited to:

- Calling emergency personnel (police, ambulance, fire);
- Requesting that a mobile crisis team arrive; and/or
- Securing the area and/or removing others from the space in which the unsafe behavior is occurring.

It would be unusual to have a student engage in such significant behavior that the above measures would need to be taken. The above actions will be taken in the event the Gateways staff member present at the time determines that a student's behavior is unable to be addressed safely by other means. When an episode of significant challenging behavior occurs, a written report of the incident will be created by the team and kept within the child's confidential file, and will be available for review by the child's parent/guardian upon request. Gateways staff will meet with the parent/guardian to determine next steps and whether continued program participation is feasible.

## **INFORMED CONSENT**

I have had the opportunity to read the above consent form and ask any questions. I understand that this Informed Consent Form outlines Gateways' process, policy and procedures regarding physical prompting and the use of physical restraint in emergency situations. I understand that Gateways employees and volunteers will make reasonable efforts to implement a range of strategies including but not limited to the least-restrictive-to-most-effective approach, , to promote my child's safety while participating in programming, and to preserve the safety, security, and dignity of all Gateways participants, volunteers and staff.

THEREFORE, I HEREBY CONSENT TO THE USE OF PHYSICAL PROMPTING AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AS DESCRIBED ABOVE AND RELEASE AND HOLD GATEWAYS: ACCESS TO JEWISH EDUCATION, AND ITS OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, EMPLOYEES, REPRESENTATIVES, AGENTS, AND VOLUNTEERS HARMLESS FROM ANY AND ALL INJURY, DISABILITY, LOSS OR DAMAGE TO PERSON OR PROPERTY THAT MAY OCCUR WHILE PARTICIPATING AS A STUDENT IN ANY GATEWAYS JEWISH EDUCATION PROGRAM.

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Date

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Student's Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature