

# All8 Sensory Support Safe Physical Touch Policy



## SECTION A: POLICY PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy explains All8 Sensory Support's position on the use of healthy touch and provides basic guidance to meet developmental needs and safeguard children at all times.

## SECTION B: VALUES STATEMENT

Healthy touch is a basic human need. There are numerous physical and emotional benefits of healthy touch within the context of safe and caring relationships. Withholding positive touch can also have negative consequences for children and our community.

All8 Sensory Support wants to ensure that the needs of children are met and that they develop caring, positive relationships with others. For example, if a child initiates contact or needs reassurance, we want adults to feel confident that they can respond naturally without fear of unfounded accusations. We also want others (including family members and other professionals) to feel confident that we will respond appropriately to their children's needs, and to understand that positive touch may be a part of that response.

## SECTION C: EXAMPLES OF ACCEPTABLE TOUCH

Healthy touch includes physical contact in everyday tasks, greetings, encouragement and reassurance, nurturing, and protecting children. The following examples are not exhaustive and highlight situations where healthy touch is appropriate and encouraged:

- Greetings such as handshakes and fist bumps
- Assisting with hygiene and dressing
- First aid such as cleaning an injury or applying a bandage
- Support with tasks such as perform a chore, or sports activity
- Responding to their initiated contact to return a hug or hold hands
- Providing a hand hold or hug to reassure a worried or upset child
- Offering praise through a pat on the shoulder or high five
- Ensuring safety by preventing the child from injury

## **SECTION D: TYPES OF TRAINING PROVIDED TO STAFF**

All Staff at All8 Sensory Support receive training on the developmental needs of children related to touch, the content of this policy, strategies to respond to feedback from children, and types of touch that are unacceptable (e.g. controlling, violent, or sexual contact).

## **SECTION E: PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING CONCERNS**

The protection and safety of children through ethical practice is our priority. Anyone who has concerns about inappropriate touch from an adult or child should report their concern immediately to the Designated Safeguard Lead (Ali Alderton) who will deal with the report according to organizational ethics and policy. Should your concern regard this person then you should contact Safeguarding Trustee Hannah Lindsay.

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