



Isolation

Whetstone Academy's clinical and philosophical foundations of Attachment Theory and Relationship-based Programming are in direct conflict with any form of isolation or seclusion as a form of discipline. As a trauma-informed care facility, we strongly believe that isolating a child can cause emotional harm and trauma.

We believe that having capable staff working with a student 1:1 without completely isolating a child from the community helps to build trust. We assert that safety, collaboration, relationship, choice, and empowerment are the foundation of healing and change.

If a child becomes violent and is in danger of hurting themselves or others, we are trained in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) developed by Cornell University. Our goal is to de-escalate a situation. In the event we have to go hands-on to keep a child safe, strict protocols are followed including the removal of any audience to decrease shame. We hold a debriefing session with the child after the event to help the child understand that their safety is of utmost importance. If we continually have to use physical Interventions with a child or they cannot be safe in the community, we hold a meeting of our administrative, residential, and clinical staff to evaluate whether or not we are the right facility to treat the child.

At Whetstone, if a child needs to have a separate place to de-escalate, we place them on a 1:1 with a staff in an area close to the group, like a picnic table, so they can continue to de-escalate, yet still feel part of the community.

Children often advocate for a quiet space to relax. We believe in providing those opportunities through our Brain Barn's quiet space, hammocks and other quiet relaxation areas available to all of our students. Our students are always supervised by staff.