

PROHIBITION ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG USE

Policy Statement

The Trumbull Board of Education believes that the use of psychotropic drugs by students is a personal decision to be made by the parent/guardian of the student. Therefore, it is the policy of Trumbull Public Schools, in conformity with State Statute, to prohibit school personnel from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any student and to review this policy annually with all school staff.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the school medical and mental health staff, including; the district's medical advisor, school nurses, school psychologists, school social workers and school counselors, may recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to prohibit a planning and placement team from recommending a medical evaluation as part of an initial evaluation or reevaluation when needed to help the PPT determine a child's eligibility for special education and related services or educational needs for an individualized education program; or to prohibit school personnel from consulting with medical practitioners with the consent of the parents/guardians of a child.

Nor does this policy prohibit Trumbull Public School's consulting physician (e.g. consulting psychiatrist) from directly discussing with parents/guardians the benefits of psychotropic drugs to address behavioral, developmental, emotional or physical problems presented by their child, or to recommend a specific psychotropic drug for them to consider and/or discuss with their child's private physician.

The Board recognizes that the refusal of a parent or other person having control of a child to administer or consent to the administration of any psychotropic drug to the child shall not, in and of itself, constitute grounds for the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to take such child into custody or for any court of competent jurisdiction to order that such child be taken into custody by the department, unless such refusal causes such child to be neglected or abused, as defined in Connecticut General Statutes 46b-120.

Adopted: 02/26/02
Revised: 05/04/04

5141.231/Prohibition on Recommendations for Psychotropic Drugs

Regulations

1. For the purposes of this policy, educational personnel include administrators, teachers, substitute teachers, student teachers, instructional aides, secretaries/clerical staff, speech pathologists, occupational and physical therapists. These educational personnel are prohibited from recommending to parents/guardian the need for a medical evaluation or the use of psychotropic medications for their child.
2. Medical and mental health staff includes the school medical advisor, school nurse, school psychologist, school social worker, school counselor, and consulting physician (e.g., consulting psychiatrist).
3. There may be instances when educational personnel observe behavioral, developmental, emotional or physical symptoms in a child that may benefit from, or require medical attention (e.g., psychotic symptoms including hallucinations, delusions, or highly disorganized thought processes; facial tics; severe depression with or without suicidal ideation; severe hyperactivity, impulsivity, or inattention; self-injurious behavior, obsessions and/or compulsions; severe aggressive outbursts, etc.).

In such instances, educational personnel should communicate these concerns only to the school district's medical or mental health staff, who will share such information with the school administrator.

4. The medical or mental health staff will determine the appropriate course of action as appropriate to the individual student. Options include but are not limited to the following:
 - a) Schedule an Early Intervention, PPT or Staffing meeting to share information, discuss concerns and when needed develop an intervention plan (e.g. classroom observation, teacher consultation, direct student-service, parent counseling, Functional Behavioral Assessment, formal or informal evaluations.)
 - b) Communicate to the parents/guardian that these symptoms have been observed and ensure that they are aware of all of their choices regarding treatment for their children including medical intervention.
 - c) May recommend that an appropriate medical practitioner evaluate a student, in order to determine whether there is a medical intervention that would address the mental health issues for that child.
 - d) Obtain written permission from the parents/guardian in order to speak with or obtain information from the child's pediatrician or medical practitioner.

5141.231/Prohibition on Recommendations for Psychotropic Drugs

Regulations cont'd.

- e) Obtain written permission from the parent/guardian to share appropriate school records and information with this practitioner including PPT, Section 504, or Early Intervention paperwork, report cards, staff reports, etc.)
 - f) Because Trumbull Public Schools has in its employ a consulting physician (e.g., psychiatrist) the parents/guardian may be offered the opportunity, through a PPT meeting, to discuss the observed symptoms with this physician. It will be made clear to parents at the time of such consultation, that they may seek the advise of their own physician or that they may choose to disregard the recommendations made by Trumbull Public School consulting physician. The Trumbull Public School's consulting physician may discuss the benefits of certain psychotropic drugs to address the student's observable symptoms or may recommend a specific psychotropic drug for them to consider and/or discuss with their child's private physician.
5. When a student attending Trumbull Public Schools is being administered psychotropic drugs, educational personnel may verbally or in writing receive information about such medications from parents/guardian. Such information should be conveyed to appropriate medical staff. Any question raised by the parents/guardian or advice sought by parents/guardian about such medications should be directed to medical staff.
6. This policy will be reviewed by the School Psychologist at a faculty meeting at the beginning of each school year.

Adopted: 02/26/02

Revised: 05/04/04

Reference

- P.A. 01-124: An Act Concerning Recommendations for and Refusals of the Use of Psychotropic Drugs by Children and Utilization Review Determinations related to Mental and Nervous Conditions.
- P.A. 03-211: AN Act Concerning the Provision of Medical Care for Students' Health Care Needs.
- Connecticut General Statutes, 46b-120 Definitions.