

Office of Teaching and Learning/Division of Diverse Learners

Seclusion and Restraint

What Are Seclusion and Restraint?

- Physical Restraint: the use of manual restraint techniques that involve physical force applied to restrict the movement of all or part of a person's body
- Seclusion: a procedure that isolates and confines a student in a designated separate room or area until he is no longer an imminent risk of harm to self or others

These practices are not behavior interventions and are not instructional.

Legal and Policy Framework

Federal law provides procedural safeguards for seclusion and restraint:

- Individuals with Disabilities Act ([IDEA](#))
- Americans with Disabilities Act ([ADA](#))
- Louisiana Statute [ACT 479](#)
 - This legislation addresses the behavior management of students with exceptionalities through the revision and enactment of specific provisions in Louisiana law concerning discipline and student safety. It establishes regulations governing the utilization of seclusion and physical restraint, including mandated requirements for reporting and documentation, and stipulates the compulsory installation of cameras within special education classrooms. Furthermore, the statute mandates that teacher preparation programs incorporate training on the appropriate application of seclusion and restraint for students with exceptionalities. Certain obsolete provisions are concurrently repealed, and measures are integrated to ensure the efficacy and adherence to these policies, thereby fostering safer and more accountable practices within educational institutions.

Best Practice

- Implement Proactive Supports: Early, positive, preventative interventions are essential to reduce crisis behaviors' frequency and severity

- Conduct Timely Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) and Develop Effective Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs): Perform FBAs and create comprehensive BIPs to address underlying causes and prevent escalation
- Emphasize De-Escalation: Use de-escalation to maintain a safe learning environment
- Reserve Seclusion and Restraint: Seclusion and physical restraint must be rare and used only as a last resort after all other strategies fail

Authorized Circumstances for Seclusion and Restraint

Physical Restraint:

- When a student's behavior presents a threat of imminent risk of harm to self or others, and only as a last resort to protect the safety of self and others
- To the degree necessary to stop dangerous behavior
- In a manner that causes no physical injury to the student, results in the least possible discomfort, and does not interfere in any way with a student's breathing or ability to communicate with others

Seclusion:

- For student behaviors that involve an imminent risk of harm to self or others
- As a last resort, when de-escalation and other positive behavioral interventions and support attempts have failed, and the student continues to pose an imminent risk of harm to self or others

Seclusion and physical restraint shall not be used as a form of discipline or punishment, as a threat to control, bully, or obtain behavioral compliance, or for the convenience of school personnel.

Resources to Support Positive Behavioral Practices

Several resources are available to help schools improve the use of proactive, safe, and legally compliant behavioral interventions:

- CPI [Crisis Prevention Institute](#): Focus on prevention, de-escalation, and safe responses
 - Provides training and resources focused on prevention, early intervention, and de-escalation strategies to reduce challenging behaviors.

- Emphasizes safe responses that protect the dignity and safety of students and staff.
- LRP: [LRP Media Group](#): Legal guidance and training on compliant, defensible practices
 - Offers legal guidance, professional development, and practical tools to help educators implement compliant and defensible practices.
 - Focuses on special education law, risk management, and aligning school practices with federal and state requirements.

Key Takeaways

Seclusion and physical restraint are emergency safety measures, not interventions. When used appropriately, they are limited, brief, and documented. Early FBAs, strong BIPs, and proactive, positive behavioral supports contribute to reducing the need for these measures. Training, oversight, and accountability support continued improvements.