

Tip Sheet

SUPPORTING STUDENT BEHAVIOR: STANDARDS FOR THE EMERGENCY USE OF SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT

Seclusion is a last resort emergency safety intervention that provides an opportunity for the student to regain self-control. Seclusion is the confinement of a student in a room or other space from which the student is physically prevented from leaving and which provides for continuous adult observation of the student. A room or area used for seclusion:

- Must not be locked;
- Must not prevent the student from exiting the area should staff become incapacitated or leave that area; and
- Must provide for adequate space, lighting, ventilation, viewing and the safety of the student.

Time and Duration – Emergency seclusion (prohibited for pre-school students) should not be used any longer than necessary to allow a student to regain control of his/her behavior, but generally:

- Elementary school students – no longer than 15 minutes; and
- Middle and high school students – no longer than 20 minutes.
- If an emergency seclusion lasts longer than the suggested maximum time, the following are required:
 - Additional support (e.g., change of staff, introducing a nurse or specialist, obtaining additional expertise); and
 - Documentation to explain the extension beyond the time limit.

Physical Restraint is a last resort emergency safety intervention involving direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's movement. Restraint is an opportunity for the student to regain self-control. Physical restraint is not intended to forbid actions undertaken:

- To break up a fight
- To take a weapon away from a student
- The brief holding by an adult in order to calm or comfort
- The minimum contact necessary to physically escort a student from one area to another
- Assisting a student in completing a task/response if the student does not resist or resistance is minimal in intensity or duration
- To hold a student for a brief time in order to prevent an impulsive behavior that threatens the student's immediate safety (e.g., running in front of a car)

Time and Duration – Restraint should not be used:

- Any longer than necessary to allow students to regain control of their behavior; and
- Generally no longer than ten minutes
- If an emergency restraint lasts longer than ten minutes, the following are required:
 - Additional support (e.g., change of staff, introducing a nurse or specialist, obtaining additional expertise); and
 - Documentation to explain the extension beyond the time limit

Reoccurring Behavior – Should a pattern of behavior emerge, or be anticipated, which may require the use of emergency restraint, the school personnel must:

- Conduct a functional behavioral assessment;
- Develop or revise a PBSP to facilitate the reduction or elimination of the use of restraint;
- Develop an assessment and planning process conducted by a team knowledgeable about the student, including:
 - The parent
 - The student (if appropriate)
 - People who are responsible for implementation of the PBSP
 - People who are knowledgeable in PBS

Documentation and Reporting – Each use of an emergency seclusion and the reason for each use shall be:

- Documented in writing and reported to the building administration immediately;
- Reported to the parent or guardian immediately or as soon as possible; and
- Documented in a written report for each use of seclusion (including multiple uses within a given day) and given to the parent or guardian within 24 hours.