

WAPSD

Wyoming Advisory Panel for
Students with Disabilities

Position Paper #2010-01
Emergency Seclusion and Restraint

WAPSD prepared this position paper for consideration by the Wyoming Department of Education as policy regarding seclusion and restraint is developed.

WAPSD Mission

The mission of the WAPSD, as a diverse group, is to raise a common voice to advise the State Superintendent of Public Instruction on the unmet needs of the students with disabilities by advocating for and commenting on the improvement of education opportunities.

WAPSD Vision

The vision of the WAPSD is to provide guidance on education policies for all students with disabilities that create opportunities for them to become compassionate, productive and contributing citizens of their communities.

General Tenets of Emergency Seclusion and Restraint

WASPD believes that the following concepts should be considered for inclusion by WDE for Policy regarding the use of Emergency Seclusion and Restraint in school settings:

- Emergency seclusion and Restraint **should not be** a tool for behavior modification or consequence for misbehaving. Emergency seclusion and Restraint **is** a response to an emergency to self/other
- Emergency seclusion and restraint should be implemented *after* all other forms of preventative strategies (see definition section) have been attempted
- Policies and procedures for effective, research-based preventative strategies and emergency seclusion and restraint should be in place in every school district, for all students
- Emergency seclusion and restraint should not be part of Individual Education Plans (IEP's) or Behavior Plans
- Students should have the option to utilize 'time-out' techniques
- All teachers and staff (including related service providers, administrators, para-educators, and substitute teachers) should be trained in effective and research-based preventative techniques
- Specific staff or a crisis team should be trained in emergency seclusion and restraint techniques, as warranted, at a specific site
- A comprehensive policy should include a system that would debrief and track all incidents of emergency seclusion and restraint
- A comprehensive policy should include time limits for duration of emergency seclusion and restraint
- Emergency seclusion and restraint should not be used if it could re-traumatize a student who has previously experienced physical or psychological trauma/abuse
- Training in emergency seclusion and restraint should be provided by a service provider that:
 - Uses established, effective and research-based techniques
 - Emphasizes positive behavior support as primary preventative strategy
 - Provides age appropriate methods
- Training in preventative strategies should be included in undergraduate and graduate teacher education/training programs at University of Wyoming.

Definitions:

Preventive Strategies:

Districts and individual schools should identify, develop and promote the use of effective de-escalation strategies in every educational environment (classroom, hallways, cafeteria, recess, buses).

- All staff that interact with students on a routine basis should be trained in positive behavior supports including how to de-escalate behaviors and provide responsive and safe classroom environments
- Using a positive and research-based or best-practice model school wide approach to behavior management is strongly recommended (e.g. PBIS, Boys Town Model)
- Every building should have a crisis response team that has been trained to safely and appropriately implement emergency seclusion and restraints using a positive and best-practice or research-based model

Emergency seclusion and restraint are predominantly to be used when a student is an immediate danger to themselves or others (this does not include damage to property and if all other de-escalation techniques have been attempted without success)

Emergency Seclusion: As a last resort, use of seclusion can provide an opportunity for a student to regain control of his or her behavior. Seclusion is confinement in another room or designated space in which a student is physically prevented from leaving. Continuous adult supervision is required.

WAPSD recommends that the following criteria be considered when using seclusion:

- Should not be confused with time out strategies
- Room should not be locked, unless locking mechanism is an automatic release lock.
- Must not be used as a substitute for adequate staffing
- Student should be continuously observed and monitored for duration of seclusion; periodic observations are not sufficient
- Must provide adequate space, lighting, ventilation and viewing
- May not be considered as part of the Least Restrictive Environment
- May not be included as a consequence in the Behavior Modification Plan or as a written intervention in the IEP

- Students must be given opportunities to leave the seclusion room as soon as his or her behavior is under control and they are deemed safe
- Students must never, under any circumstances, spend lengthy (extended hours or days) periods of time in seclusion
- Students should not be completing schoolwork in the seclusion room. If a student is calm enough to do school work, emergency seclusion is no longer necessary.

Emergency Restraint- This response should only be used when a student poses an imminent risk of safety to him/herself or others. The definition of restraint includes three distinct types; physical, chemical and mechanical. The only type of restraint that is deemed appropriate in a school setting is physical. Both chemical and mechanical restraints should be prohibited for use by school staff and administrators, and used only by medical or law enforcement professionals.

- Physical restraint involves direct contact with a student, and should only be used as a last resort to stop a behavior that is an immediate danger to the student in question or others in the area
- Physical restraint can be used for instances of immediate danger when all other de-escalation techniques have failed. These instances may include:
 - To break up a physical fight
 - To take a weapon from a student
 - To hold a student for a brief time to stop an impulsive behavior (e.g., running in front of a car)
 - To stop a student from self-harming
- WAPSD recommends the following limitations be placed on the use of restraint in educational settings:
 - Only staff that has been trained in safe restraint techniques may engage in this intervention. Building administrators should be involved in decisions regarding student restraint
 - Not to be used as a form of punishment/discipline
 - Not as a substitute for less restrictive alternatives
 - Not for convenience or as a substitute for staff
 - Not to be included in the Behavior Intervention Plan as a strategy for curbing undesirable behaviors
 - Never to be used for lengthy time periods, only enough time to prevent the imminent risk

Documenting, Reporting and Debriefing: It is essential that documenting, reporting and debriefing processes occur when seclusion and restraint are utilized.

Positive Behavior Intervention Supports – It is WAPSD position that every school district in Wyoming implement a behavior support system such as PBIS, Boys Town Model etc. These are research-based, intervention frameworks that focus on improving student behavior by implementing skill building, school wide behavior expectations and promoting pro-social skills

Training- WAPSD also holds the position that all districts need to provide ongoing training for their staff at all educational levels regarding positive behavior techniques and strategies.

Each building should establish and train a *crisis intervention team for utilization of safe restraint and seclusion techniques* using a best practice approach (such as MANDT or CPI).

Indications-

It is the belief of the WAPSD that many problem behaviors that are used to justify seclusion and restraint could be prevented with intensive early intervention, early identification of behavior antecedents, and consistent implementation of school-wide behavior supports.

References-

Debunking the Myths of Restraint and Seclusion- paper developed by TASH-Organization for providing equity, opportunity and inclusion for people with disabilities and their sub group APRAIS- retrieved from www.TASH.org on 4/25/10

Michigan Department of Education (2006) *Supporting Student Behavior- Standards for the Emergency Use of Seclusion and Restraint.*

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports www.PBIS.org

Horner, R. and Sugai G. (2009) *Considerations for Seclusion and Restraint Use in School-wide Positive Behavior Supports-* OSEP Center on PBIS and Effective School-wide Interventions.