

Aversives, Seclusion and Restraints in Schools

The Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council supports the views and position of The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) on Seclusion and Restraints in Schools.

NACDD's position is below. This is what it means:

Aversives, restraint, and seclusion

- “Aversives” are treatment or actions used to stop behavior that is dangerous or that breaks school rules by causing discomfort or pain.

“Restraint” means controlling a child's movement by doing things like holding them down, tying their hands, or giving them medication.

“Seclusion” is putting a child in a room or area where they are alone and cannot leave.

- Aversives, restraint, and seclusion are not the best ways to help children learn to behave, act, and follow school rules. They are not the best way to stop violent or aggressive behavior.
- Aversives, restraint, and seclusion can be dangerous. They have led to hundreds of children dying in residential centers and schools.

Behavioral supports must be:

- Positive and should help children with their behavior. They teach children to be safe, responsible, and respectful. Studies show that positive behavioral supports (PBS) work.
- Developed based on the child's individual needs.

- Provided or delivered in a positive way. Behavioral support should not be punishment.
- Always consider making changes to the child's environment.
- Respect each family's beliefs and ways of living
- Respect the child.

Recommendations about what should change:

- No prone restraint. Prone restraint means holding a child face down on the ground to control them. Children have died this way.
- All public schools should stop using aversives, restraint, and seclusion.
- Seclusion in schools is not safe and can hurt children. Instead, schools can use quiet, comfortable, unlocked spaces to support children who need to calm down.
- Support and encourage schools to use positive behavioral supports instead of aversives, restraint, and seclusion.
- Provide money to train teachers and other school staff to use positive behavioral supports. They are positive, respectful, and proven effective.
- Schools need to make sure Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and other education plans for students who have behaviors that affect learning include additional positive behavioral supports.
- Set up a national process to monitor how schools are using positive behavior supports and if they are using aversive, restraint, or seclusion.

NACDD Statement on Seclusion and Restraints in Schools

The use of aversives, restraint and seclusion (ARS) in residential treatment facilities and schools has resulted in hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries among students with developmental disabilities.

NACDD believes that aversives, restraint and seclusion procedures are not consistent with proactive approaches or best practices in addressing the

behavior needs of students with developmental disabilities. Behavioral supports should be person-centered, individually designed, positive, culturally appropriate, and allow for modifying or replacing the environment.

Policy Recommendations

- Ban the use of prone restraint. Hundreds of children nationwide have died and or have been seriously injured using this dangerous technique.
- End the use of aversive interventions in public schools because they directly contradict IDEA's clear preference for positive behavioral supports.
- Recognize that the practice of seclusion in school settings is unsafe, potentially traumatizing, and of questionable value in an emergency. Seclusion should not be confused with the practice of providing a quiet, comfortable, accessible, unlocked space where a child may be supported to calm down and self-regulate.
- Provide incentive for schools across the country to implement Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) programs that reduce and demonstrate effective strategies to eliminate the inappropriate use of restraints, seclusion, and aversive interventions. Under the 1997 Reauthorization of the IDEA, a child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team is required to consider positive interventions.
- Allocate adequate funding for training all personnel, including administrators and support staff, in the use of respectful, proven effective positive behavior supports, supports and include and crisis, reduction and de-escalation techniques.
- Require timely review of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and 504 Plan and require that children whose behavior affects their learning or that of others receive appropriate Functional Behavioral Assessments and Positive Behavioral Intervention Plans as part of their IEP or 504 Plan.

- Require the gathering and reporting of data to the applicable state agency on each restraint, seclusion, and aversive intervention.
- Adopt a comprehensive national mechanism to monitor data, recognize trends, and enforce the requirement for positive behavioral and de-escalation interventions.

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