

This webinar on PPRA focuses on the definitions used in relation to restraints and seclusion.

Different types of Physical Interventions:

The different types of physical interventions range on a continuum from least restrictive to most restrictive. We are going to review each of the options on this continuum from least restrictive to most restrictive briefly starting with positive physical touch. We will then take a deeper look at each of the different types of physical intervention. Seclusion will be covered in depth in another webinar.

Positive Physical touch:

A common association when teaching the use of restraints and seclusion is that touch should be used seldomly and with caution, sometimes promoting a lack of physical contact with students. Positive physical contact is important for a student's development

From the time we are in the womb through our elderly years, touch plays a primary role in our development and physical and mental well-being. New studies on touch continue to show the importance of physical contact in early development, communication, personal relationships, and fighting disease.

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/why_physical_touch_matters_for_your_well_being

Typically, we touch others without much thought, as touch comes from a natural instinct of providing comfort. Physical touch needs to be a conscious decision and not a impulsive action, where you acknowledge to yourself, I am going to touch before engaging in the action.

It is important to always ask before touching, as some individuals do not like to be touched and touch can be a trigger for unwanted emotions and behaviors.

Positive physical contact includes prompting a child, or a young person to demonstrate how to hold an instrument or how to execute a movement In PE. Physical contact includes providing encouragement through light pat on the shoulder, forearm, or holding a younger students hand while crossing the street for the purpose of safety.

Positive Physical contact can be for the purpose of providing comfort during times of distress or for nurturing which is more associated with younger students. For older student a side hug in some situations might be appropriate.

Some children/young people may require positive physical contact (i.e., physically prompted, encouraged, or guided), to participate in activities, or to be guided away from situations that could potentially escalate into critical incidents such as breaking up a fight.

Physical Intervention:

Physical Intervention: The use of any physical action or any response to maintain the health and safety of an individual or others during a potentially dangerous situation or event.

Physical interventions are used to prevent students from engaging in dangerous actions such as preventing a student from running out in front of a car, prevent self-harm if a student is aiming a fist at a window or leaning over a handrail at a dangerous height.

Physical intervention can include placing a hand on a student's shoulder or elbow to guide or prompt a student to move in a particular direction. Holding s students' hand for comfort or guidance. Breaking up a fight. Blocking is considered t be a physical intervention placing yourself between the student and objects they want to obtain or preventing them from putting a hand through a window or climbing a bookshelf.

Physical Escort:

Physical Escort: a temporary touching or holding of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is acting out to walk to a safe location. Under PPRA Physical Escorts are not considered to be a restraint.

Seclusion:

Seclusion: means the placement of a student alone in a room from which egress is involuntarily prevented. Seclusion is viewed as a less restrictive option than a physical restraint. With seclusion the student is not personally restricted in that movement is not immobilized.

Physical Restraint:

Physical Restraint: a personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces the ability of a student to move his or her torso, arms, legs, or head freely. The term physical restraint does not include a physical escort.

PPRA defines a restraint as being Any method or device used to involuntarily limit the freedom of movement, including but not limited to:

- Bodily physical force
- Mechanical devices
- Chemical restraint
- Physical restraint
- Seclusion

A physical restraints does not include the following:

- Holding of a student in a position other than a prone position for less than one minute by a staff person for the protection of the student or others;
- Brief holding of a student by one adult for the purpose of calming or comforting the student, not to include holding a student in a prone position;
- Minimal physical contact for the purpose of safely escorting a student from one area to another;

Minimal physical contact for the purpose of assisting the student in completing a task or response.

House Bill 22-1376:

HS (House Bill) 22-1376 made some adjustments to the PPRA definition of a restraint. The previous definition, which is no longer active defined a hold as being 4:59 minutes or less and 5 minutes or longer

was defined as a restraint. HB22-1376, which was approved on May 26th 2022 change the definition to Less than one minuet constituting a hold and anything longer than one minute is now defined as being a restraint.

Differentiating Between a Physical Intervention and a Physical Restraint:

A simple way to think about the difference between a physical intervention and a physical restraint is that a physical intervention allows for the freedom of movement, where the student can escape from school staff if they would like. With a physical restraint this involuntarily limits freedom of movement meaning that the student cannot escape from staff as their freedom of movement is restricted.

Staff can physically intervene with a student without restraining a student.

Prone Restraints:

From the Code of Colorado Regulations “Prone Position” means a face-down position. “Prone Restraint” means a restraint in which the individual who is being restrained is secured in a prone position.

“Prone restraint” shall not be used by public education agencies except: When prone restraints are used on a student who is openly displaying a deadly weapon, as defined in Section 2.00(3).

Another exceptions is when used by armed security officers who: Have received documented training in defensive tactics utilizing handcuffing procedures and restraint tactics utilizing prone holds; and have made a referral to a law enforcement agency.

Chemical restraints

“Chemical Restraint” means administering medication to a student (including medications prescribed by his or her physician) on an as-needed basis for the sole purpose of involuntarily limiting the student’s freedom of movement.

“Chemical Restraints” **shall not be used** by public education agencies.

Chemical Restraint” does not include:

Prescription medication that is regularly administered to the student for medical reasons other than to restrain the student’s freedom of movement (e.g., Asthma-cort, medications used to treat mood disorders or ADHD, Glucagon);

The administration of medication for voluntary or life-saving medical procedures (e.g., EpiPens, Diastat).

Mechanical Restraints

“Mechanical Restraint” means a physical device used to involuntarily restrict the movement of a student or the movement or normal function of his or her body.

“Mechanical Restraint” does not include:

- Devices recommended by a physician, occupational therapist, or physical therapist and agreed to by a student’s IEP Team or Section 504 Team and used in accordance with the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan;

- Protective devices such as helmets, mitts, and similar devices used to prevent self-injury and in accordance with a student's IEP or Section 504 Plan;
- Adaptive devices to facilitate instruction or therapy and used as recommended by an occupational therapist or physical therapist, and consistent with a student's IEP or Section 504 Plan;
- Positioning or securing devices used to allow treatment of a student's medical needs.

"Mechanical Restraints" shall not be used by public education agencies, except:

When mechanical restraints are used on a student who is openly displaying a deadly weapon, as defined in Section 2.00(3).

When used by armed security officers who: Have received documented training in defensive tactics utilizing handcuffing procedures and restraint tactics utilizing prone holds; and have made a referral to a law enforcement agency.

Exceptions to the regulations:

The provisions in these Rules shall not apply to Peace Officers, as defined in Section 16-2.5-101, C.R.S. et seq. who are acting within the scope of their employment or in accordance with Section 16-3-109, C.R.S. Code of Colorado Regulations 8

The provisions in these Rules shall not apply to any public education agency while engaged in transporting a student from one facility or location to another facility or location when it is within the scope of that agency's powers and authority to effect such transportation.