



## **USE OF REASONABLE FORCE IN RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS TRAINING GUIDELINES (INS-G004)**

### **1.0 PURPOSE:**

1.1 To provide training information for district staff regarding the use of reasonable force in the restraint of students to correct or restrain a student or prevent bodily harm or death to the student or to another person.

### **2.0 RESPONSIBILITY:**

2.1. Responsibility is shared by the Chief Academic Officer, Chief Human Resource Officer, the Director Exceptional Children's Services, the Risk Management/Safety Coordinator, the Professional Development Coordinator and the School Administrators.

Principals/Department Chiefs are responsible for ensuring all principals, teachers, school bus drivers or other school personnel receive annual familiarization training on the use of reasonable force in restraint of students.

### **3.0 KEY TRAINING POINTS:**

**Who:** Principals, teachers, school bus drivers or other school personnel.

**What:** Familiarization/awareness training in the use of reasonable force to restrain students in emergency situations to correct or restrain a student or prevent bodily harm or death to the student or to another person.

This training IS NOT intended as a substitute or replacement Certified Restraint Training (CRT), which is required training for select district staff. This training IS intended to familiarize district staff with the circumstances under which reasonable force may be used, to clarify what constitutes reasonable force and to provide strategies for diffusing potential emergency situations.

**Why:** To ensure both student safety and employee safety.

**When:** At the start of the school year or as soon as practicable after that.

**Where:** Training will be conducted by administrative/supervisory staff or designee in conjunction with the annual required employee refresher training.

**How:** Administrators/Supervisors will obtain verification of training using [HUM-F041](#), Employee Training Verification provide a copy to Human Resources by stated deadline.



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### **4.0 TRAINING CONTENT:**

#### **Use of Reasonable Force for Student Restraint**

Pursuant to TCA 49-6-4107, principals, teachers, school bus drivers or other school personnel may, in exercising their lawful authority, use reasonable force in emergency situations to correct or restrain a student or prevent bodily harm or death to the student or to another person during the conduct of classes and on school buses (going to/returning from school/school activities).

School personnel may use reasonable force to restrain students only when they determine the situation to be of an emergency nature due to circumstances arising as a result of a student's behavior posing threat of bodily harm or death to the student or another person.

Reasonable force is considered to be the minimum physical force required, lasting for the shortest practicable time possible, to correct or restrain the student and reduce the risk of bodily harm or death to the student or to another person.

Reasonable force is typically through physical holding restraint which is the use of bodily contact by school personnel with a student to restrict freedom of movement or to restrict normal access to the student's body to correct or restrain the student or prevent bodily harm or death to the student or to another person.

The most common form of reasonable restraint is to firmly wrap one's arms around the student's body or hold the student's arms.

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### Reasonable Restraint/Minimum Force



**SPECIAL NOTE:** These photos are intended as a point of reference and represent only a snapshot of the process necessary to restrain students. Whenever possible, school personnel should enlist the assistance of a CRT-trained staff member to restrain students. However, recognizing that emergency circumstances may necessitate that non-CRT trained staff may have to restrain students in an emergency situation, these photo are intended to provide a visual example of correct methods for student restraint.

### What Reasonable Force Is Not

#### Reasonable Force Does Not Include:

- using ‘chemical restraint’ (medication used to restrict a student’s freedom of movement)
- using ‘mechanical restraint’ (application of a mechanical device, material or equipment designed to restrict the student’s freedom of movement),
- using ‘noxious substances’ (use of any defense spray or substance to restrict a student’s freedom of movement),
- using ‘life threatening restraint’ (use of an restraint that restricts the flow of air into a person’s lungs, whether by chest compression or any other means), or
- using corporal punishment as a means of correction or student restraint.
- using physical force on a child while in a state of anger,
- displaying anger through yelling or the use of uncivil language,
- slapping, hitting or kicking a child for any reason,
- grabbing a student and throwing him or her up against a wall or onto the ground, or
- placing hands or arms on or around a student’s neck.

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### Nonexamples for Physical Restraint



**SPECIAL NOTE:** These photos are intended as a point of reference and represent only a snapshot of the process necessary to restrain students. Whenever possible, school personnel should enlist the assistance of a CPI-trained staff member to restrain students. However, recognizing that emergency circumstances may necessitate that non-CPI trained staff may have to restrain students in an emergency situation, these photo are intended to provide a visual example of correct methods for student restraint.

### Using Restraint On Students Receiving Special Education Services

Students receiving special education services should only be restrained in emergency situations. Whenever possible they should be only be restrained by school personnel who have completed certification in Certified Restraint Training (CRT).

School personnel not certified in CRT should only restrain students receiving special education services in those situations they assess to be one that may result in serious bodily harm or death to the student or to another person and no staff member trained in crisis intervention is available to restrain the student.

School personnel who impose restraints or isolation on a student receiving special education services in an emergency situation must report the incident to the school principal or principal designee as soon as practicable after the incident so that the principal may take action as appropriate in accordance with [SPE-P006](#), Isolation and Restraint Procedure.

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### **Strategies for Managing Agitated Students**

Staff should try to avoid both overreaction and under-reaction when responding to an agitated student. There are two ways a hostile person vents aggression or hostility: verbally and physically. Verbal acting out requires verbal intervention, and physical acting out requires physical intervention.

Using a “hands-on” or physical intervention to calm down a verbally agitated individual may result in the individual acting out physically. This is like running up to a fire and throwing gasoline on it to put it out. It does not work and makes matters worse.

Using a verbal intervention to manage a physically acting-out person is also typically ineffective. Words are an ineffective intervention when a person is hitting, biting, or choking you. This is like using a squirt gun to douse a bonfire; it is ineffective.

Staff response to situations which may lead to the need for physical restraint of students can escalate the situation or it can de-escalate the crisis. Initially, agitated students display physical signs of anxiety by expending built-up energy. When this happens, staff should demonstrate a supportive, empathetic response by actively listening to the student. Staff should not judge the student nor should they dismiss the student’s concerns as complaints. Typically, staff response should be verbal. Touching or trying to direct the student through physical touching may escalate the situation.

If the student loses rationality and starts displaying verbal belligerence and hostility, staff must remain in control of the situation by setting clear and simple limits for the student in a non-threatening manner. Staff should remain calm and keep communication simple. Staff should not use negative, ‘do this or else’ ultimatums. It isn’t about controlling the student; it is about maintaining control of the situation and helping the student make a positive choice about the limits the staff sets for them.

If the student does not respond to staff’s attempts to set enforceable limits, the student may lose total control and turn to physical assault. If the student is no longer responding to reason and presents a danger to himself or herself or to other people, physical control of the student’s behavior may be staff’s only option. When possible, staff should enlist the support of CRT trained staff members. If a CRT trained staff member is not available, physical restraint should be used only as a last resort.

Why staff should try to avoid physical intervention –

1. Legal implications associated with physical restraint
2. Physical intervention can be dangerous for both the student and the staff
3. Using a hands-on approach increases the likelihood of escalating a situation which might have been defused through verbal means





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Why staff might have to use physical intervention –

1. Prevent bodily harm or death to the student or to another person

### **5.0 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS:**

- 5.1 [INS-A051](#), Isolation and Restraint for Students Receiving Special Education Services
- 5.2 [INS-A064](#), Restraint of Students Using Reasonable Force
- 5.3 [SPE-P006](#), Isolation and Restraint Procedures for Students Receiving Education Services
- 5.4 CMCSS Student Code of Conduct, Application of Code
- 5.5 TCA 49-6-4107
- 5.6 TCA 49-10-13
- 5.7 Tennessee Rules & Regulations, Chapter 0520-01-09.23
- 5.8 Certified Restraint Training Program, 2014

**\*\*\*End of Training Guidelines\*\*\***