

**SUPPORT [SHB 1795](#), Reducing restraint or isolation
in public schools and educational programs**



- Bans dangerous types of restraint
- Strengthens existing protections
- Clarifies limits
- Continues statewide support to reduce restraint & isolation
- Stops new isolation rooms (Sensory/calming spaces still allowed)

[About 1795](#) (from the [Coalition to End Isolation and Reduce Restraint](#))

Talking points:

- Restraining and isolating someone in distress does not resolve behavior. Safe relationships, co-regulation, and skill-building do.
- We must defuse, not accelerate dysregulation.
- We know from neuroscience that restraint and isolation push youth into escalating cycles of flight or fight, followed by even more restraint and isolation. This creates unsafe environments for the child, classmates and staff. For the child, this causes nightmares, school refusal, suicidal thoughts, depression, and anxiety that last well into adulthood. Repeated cycles lead to complex PTSD. Restraint also impairs relationships because of eroded trust and startle to touch.
- Restraint and isolation can be eliminated with training and support to create safe learning spaces. What works instead:
 - Social and emotional learning
 - Inclusive practices promoting safety and belonging that build trust.
 - Tiered supports that help students communicate safely and learn problem-solving skills.
 - Training to help staff regulate their reactions, so they can defuse situations and dig deeper to explore the why behind complex behavior.
 - School systems that identify and address student trauma with early intervention and support
 - Awareness that children experiencing trauma or developmental delays and disabilities often learn, communicate, and experience life differently. They need support, not force.

THE PROBLEM: Escalating cycles, lasting harm

All children need support developing problem-solving and relationship-building skills. Some children need focused support, especially if they have developmental delays or a history of trauma. Others need support navigating and finding ease in their environment.

When we lean into practices that do not address these issues, we waste precious time. And when we allow practices that cause harm, like isolation or dangerous types of restraint, we push overwhelmed students already in flight or fight mode into escalating cycles of dysregulation.

Using restraint and isolation causes more restraint and isolation, leaving behind trauma that plays out across a child's education and into adulthood. It affects their ability to have healthy relationships, hold a job, and participate in their community.

Schools are not safer. Children and staff are not safer. And learning takes a hit.

THE SOLUTION: Pivot to what works

If a situation has already escalated, co-regulation in a safe environment with a trusted adult is effective. But the true goal is to **prevent escalation**. That requires safe relationships, a safe environment, and support to build skills or process trauma.

This is work the state has been supporting for years. It includes our [social and emotional learning framework](#), [inclusionary practices](#), and [multi-tiered systems of support](#).

And for focused support, the state has invested in technical assistance, provided free online training centered on student skill development, and developed demonstration sites for other schools to learn from. It has also increased special education funding for individualized instruction and services, if called for in a student's IEP.

NEXT STEP:

Substitute [HB 1795](#) bans certain dangerous restraint practices in all settings and steers us toward continued elimination of isolation. It includes intent language that says the state would like to improve the safety and well-being of students and staff; ban isolation by 2031 in preschool to grade 12; and provide technical assistance for this.