

The availability of seclusion as a safety measure is a critical tool for ensuring students with significant behavioral needs can remain in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Without the brief, de-escalating option of seclusion—often used for only a few seconds or minutes to manage an immediate safety threat—schools would frequently be forced to resort to more restrictive measures. These alternatives, such as implementing homebound instruction, calling law enforcement, or significantly altering the student's school day, ultimately reduce the student's access to their peers and instruction. The ability to use seclusion strategically, sometimes for as little as a few seconds, can be the precise intervention that allows a student to safely enjoy a full school day of learning. When we remove this tool, we fail to do justice to these students by forcing them into homebound placements, involving law enforcement, or shortening their instructional days, which severely compromises their educational opportunity and social development. Crucially, the responsible use of seclusion also serves to protect the safety of other students and staff from injury when a student's behavior poses an imminent threat.

Speaking from my experience as a setting 4 special education teacher, I have utilized seclusion specifically to keep other students in my classroom safe when they were targets of severe physical aggression. The necessity of this intervention becomes clear when it is unavailable; I recall a day when the seclusion room was inaccessible for a particular student, resulting in the student biting me so severely they removed my entire thumbnail, and another staff member receiving a significant concussion that ended their career. While these are painful, real-world examples in our environment, we remain dedicated to our students. Seclusion is a necessary tool in emergencies to ensure the physical safety of ourselves, our staff, and the students we serve.

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