Introduction

- When children are in medical facilities, they often are required to stay still or be immobilized for their personal safety during...
  - Medical procedures and varying medical processes
  - Aggressive episodes.
- While restraint is often necessary for the physical safety of the child or others, the type of restraint that is used, or lack thereof, is an important consideration.
- The goal of this literature review was to identify...
  - the current research and opinions on the use of restraints on children
  - when and why they should be used
  - alternatives to restraint that may be used
  - the ethical issues that come along with it.

Methodology

A literature review was conducted by reviewing the current published literature related to this topic. The following steps were taken in order to conduct the review on this topic:

1. Developed search terms
2. Used search terms to identify relevant topics, articles, and key terms
3. Reviewed the articles found,
4. Selected literate to include in final review,
5. Synthesized the information from all the selected literate,
6. Summarized findings in literature review.

Results

- Any sort of physical restraint or restraint device should be used with caution.
- The main consensus among the literature is that therapeutic holding and alternative methods of restraint are the most humane and should be used if at all possible.
- It is also important to remember that there are many ethical gray areas that must be taken seriously and uniquely considered in each case (Kangasniemi et al., 2014).
- While the safety of children and staff are of the utmost concern, it is important to advocate for the least threatening forms of restraint that are possible in order to prevent negative outcomes and promote the well-being and humanity of the child.

Significance

- The use of child restraint in the medical setting is an essential topic of discussion for the following reasons:
  - Restraint poses physical and psychological risks for the child who is being restrained.
  - There are critical ethical implications for medical staff that come along with the use of restraint.
- While the use of restraint may be unavoidable at times, therapeutic holding should always be used if at all possible due to the risk factors presented by the use of restraint.
  - It is important to note that restraint should only be used when the health and safety of the child and/or staff is in question.

Coverage

- Literature found through Tennessee Technological University Volpe Library search engine and Google Scholar.
- Key Terms used in research:
  - “Child restraint”
  - “Therapeutic holding”
- Definitions:
  - Restraint - the restriction of a person’s movements via physical force from other people or a device in order to keep the restricted person safe
  - Therapeutic holding - the holding of a child that uses less force than restraint, with the goal of helping a child through a procedure or encounter.

Conclusions

- There is evidence of a lack communication and education for medical staff about child restraint and therapeutic holding, and the purpose and the appropriateness of restraint, as well as the alternatives. This MUST be changed!
- Research clearly indicates that inappropriate use of restraint can cause psychological damage and emotional distress to children, and some research points to evidence of increased parental stress as well.
- Protecting the dignity of the child and reducing the use of restraints should be the number one goal in medical settings, as well as care facilities.

References