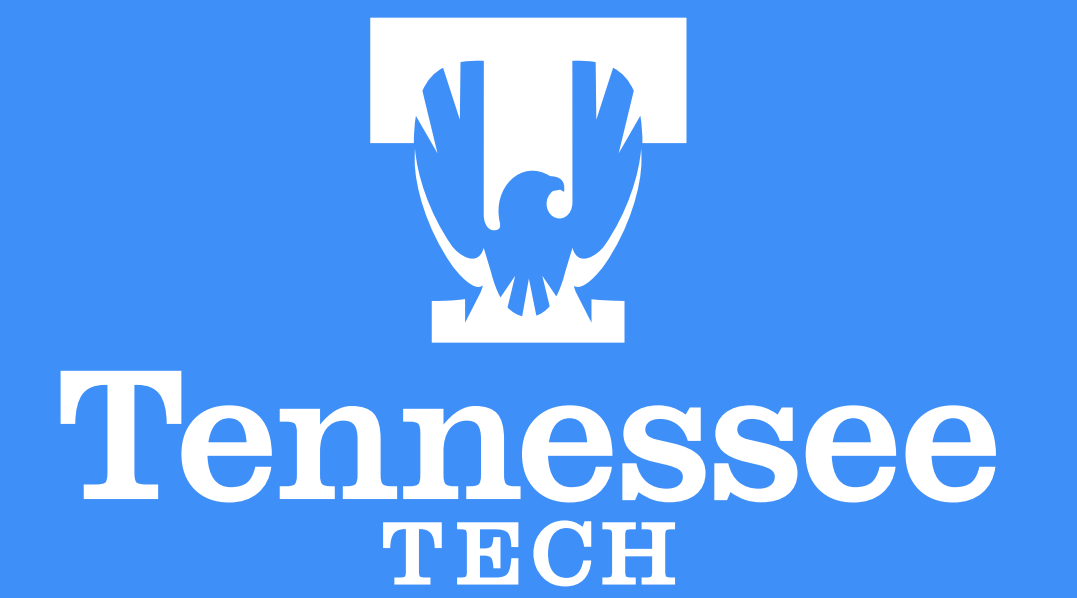


Current Professional Opinions on the Use of Child Restraints: A Literature Review

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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.

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.



[12]

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 articles relevant to topic,
- (3) Reviewed the articles found,
- (4) Selected literature to include in final review,
- (5) Synthesized the information from all the selected literature,
- (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.



[12]

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.

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