

Phenomenological Study of Students, Teachers, and Parents Affected by Restraint and/or
Seclusion Use in Alternative School Settings

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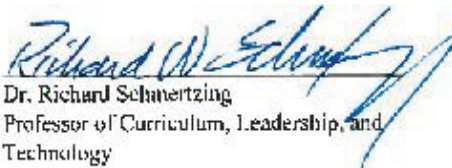
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ABSTRACT

Restraint and seclusion practices have transitioned from psychiatric institutions into public school systems. Teachers use these methods to prevent students from causing harm to others or themselves. Currently, there is no federal legislation in place guiding the implementation of these procedures. On the state level, some states have laws in place while others do not. The use of restraints and/or seclusion on students in alternative school settings has become highly controversial because these disciplinary approaches have caused injury and even death. Research studies on using these techniques in schools are limited in that researchers tend not to explore the lived experiences of individuals involved with restraints and/or seclusion. This phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of students, teachers, and parents involved with these interventions in three alternative schools located in the state of Georgia. In-depth interviews were conducted with four students, four teachers, and four parents to examine their experiences with these practices. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. Interview transcripts were created and examined using Mark Vagle's (2014) whole-parts-whole technique. Using this method, the researcher identified 17 different themes, which were arranged into four different categories. Based on the findings generated by this investigation, the participants acknowledged that school staff need to use the procedures to keep students safe, but they should not use these methods to punish students' behaviors. Recommendations were made for future research on this topic.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will introduce my reasons for researching *physical restraints* and *seclusion* in alternative school settings. I shall identify gaps in the current literature and demonstrate why my investigation is pertinent to filling in these gaps. I will provide a concise description of my research questions and explain how the answers to these questions can advance the body of knowledge on restraints and seclusion. Finally, I shall summarize my theoretical framework and conceptual framework, briefly describe the methods I used throughout the research, identify limitations, and define key terms related to my project.

Life Changing Incident

“You are hurting me, and I wish you would stop!” were the last words from Brice, one of my former middle school students, as I heard his arm snap in half. Brice’s words have forever shaped my views towards my use of restraints and seclusion in schools.

October 26, 2010, started as a normal day. I conducted my morning meeting with my paraprofessional, reviewed my lesson plans, and completed my breakfast duty. I walked to my room because it was time for my students to arrive for the day. As my students entered the classroom, I noticed that Brice appeared to be very upset. His psychiatrist diagnosed him with emotional and behavioral disorders, and it was common for him to be angry. I questioned Brice to find out what was wrong. He said, “I can’t stand this fucking place! I wish it would burn down!” I immediately took Brice to my

school's "time-out room," a separate room located outside of my classroom, to allow him to calm down. Once he relaxed, I escorted Brice back into my classroom, where he sat at his desk.

As I walked towards the front of my classroom, one of my students shouted, "Help, Mr. Roberts!" I turned around and observed Brice attempting to stab the student with a pen. I quickly separated him from the student and obtained the pen. My paraprofessional and I placed Brice onto the classroom floor and placed him in a physical restraint. During the restraint, he squirmed repeatedly and shouted obscenities while trying to escape. I then heard a "pop" sound and observed Brice agonizing in pain as his left arm lay dangling on the floor.

After conducting an inquiry of the incident, my principal cleared me from any malpractice because I followed my school's restraint and seclusion protocol. Yet, I felt like quitting the teaching profession because I failed to protect Brice from injury. I thought about possible alternative interventions I could have used to avoid the incident. I also replayed the event in my head several times and wondered if I were in Brice's position, would I continue to fight and struggle during a restraint? As a parent, I speculated about how I would have reacted if my child's school principal called me and stated that my child's arm was broken. Hence, the episode with Brice has been instrumental in my efforts to research individuals' *lived experiences* (Vagle, 2014) with restraints and/or seclusion and to learn how these interventions affected their lives. My curiosity related to restraints and seclusion allowed me to identify a problem educators face in an area that needs more research-based attention.

Statement of the Problem

Research on restraints and seclusion in alternative schools is a relatively new phenomenon, and researchers have conducted very few studies in the field (Barnard-Brak, Xiao, & Xiaoya, 2014). According to Barnard-Brak et al., educators physically restrain and seclude students in school settings daily. The researchers also found that teachers disproportionately restrain and seclude students with disabilities. The rate of restraint for students with disabilities is exponentially higher than for students without disabilities, even though there are fewer students with disabilities in classrooms (Barnard-Brak et al., 2014).

The federal government leaves the decision-making power for creating restraint and seclusion guidelines to the states (LeBel, Nunno, Mohr, & O'Halloran, 2012). However, states do not agree on how to govern these practices. As a consequence of inconsistent state policies regarding restraint and seclusion, teachers have injured students (LeBel et al., 2012), and in some cases, students have died as a result of educators' using these methods (Fantz, 2008; Ross, Hill, & Mosk, 2012; U.S. Department of Education, 2009; U.S. GAO, 2009; Wong & Vasquez, 1998). Thus, due to the lack of federal government oversight guiding school staff's use of these procedures and U.S. states' inability to come to a consensus on governing these practices, conducting research in this area is essential to adding to the body of knowledge on this topic.

Purpose

In Murrayville, GA, journalist Ashley Fantz (2008) reported a tragic story about Johnathan King, a 13-year-old middle school student diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and depression. Johnathan told his parents that his teachers often put

him into a time-out room. Johnathan's parents were unaware that school personnel used this type of room to punish students' misbehaviors. In November 2014, a teacher escorted Johnathan into the room because he misbehaved in class. While in the room, the teacher noticed Johnathan did not have on a belt, so she gave Johnathan a rope to secure his pants. She then exited the time-out room and sat on the outside. The teacher allegedly supervised Johnathan from a window located on the seclusion room door. Johnathan used the rope to hang himself.

Like Johnathan King, Cedric Napoleon also passed away in a school setting (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). On May 19, 2009, Toni Price, a foster mother, testified before the House Education and Labor Committee about the death of her foster son, Cedric Napoleon (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Cedric was age 14 and in the eighth grade in Killeen, TX. Prior to living with Ms. Price, he lived with an extremely poor family, and he often had to scavenge for food. As a result, individuals withholding food from Cedric triggered misbehaviors. On the day of his death, a middle school teacher with whom he had difficulties getting along did not allow him to eat his lunch at the regular time period because he had not completed all of his work. Cedric became upset and stood up at his desk. Despite the teacher's verbal reprimands, he would not sit back down. The teacher then implemented a *prone restraint*, in which an individual's face is positioned to the ground. The teacher, who was approximately 230 pounds, sat on Cedric, who was very little and had a small frame. Cedric yelled, "I can't breathe" (U.S. Department of Education, 2009, p. 1)! The teacher retorted, "If you can speak, you can breathe" (U.S. Department of Education, 2009, p. 1). Cedric stopped speaking, and unbeknownst to the teacher, he stopped breathing. Paramedics later pronounced him

dead. A grand jury ruled Cedric's death a homicide, but the jury did not indict the teacher.

Both Johnathan and Cedric's stories show the dangers of teachers using restraints and/or seclusion on students in schools. These real-life examples left me with many unanswered questions. Why did Johnathan take his life? For Cedric, what was the psychological impact on his parents and other students? What were the teachers' perspectives in each of these incidents? How did these practices affect the lives of the participants involved? My curiosity and concern over these unanswered questions were part of my desire to learn more about what happens—and what results—when school officials employ restraint and seclusion practices in schools. In a real sense, what happened to Jonathan and Cedric directly influenced the development of the specific research questions that guided this study.

Research Questions

My goal for this research project was to understand how the lives of students, teachers, and parents were affected by restraints and/or seclusion in public schools. To carry out my investigation, I completed a phenomenological study, a research design that focusses on individuals' lived experiences with phenomena (Vagle, 2014). The following research questions guided the research project:

1. What are the lived experiences of K-12 students, teachers, and parents who have been involved with the use of restraints and/or seclusion in alternative school settings?
2. How have the participants' lived experiences regarding restraints and seclusion affected their lives?

3. Based on the participants' experiences and reflections on those experiences, what suggestions/recommendations would the participants make to school professionals related to the use of restraints and/or seclusion in school settings?

Significance and Limitations

The exploration and discovery of answers to my research questions indicated that my research was significant to the body of knowledge on restraints and seclusions. I also found, however, that my study had limitations that needed to be addressed. My research study captured the lived experiences of students, teachers, and parents affected by restraint and/or seclusion approaches and demonstrated how these techniques impacted these individuals' lives. My examination of the literature indicated that, despite the frequency with which these strategies were used, all of the studies except for one did not capture the human element of these crisis interventions (Barnard-Brak et al., 2014; Bon & Zirkel, 2014; Couvillon, Peterson, Ryan, & Scheuermann, & Stegall, 2010; Freeman & Sugai, 2013; LeBel et al., 2012, Westling, Trader, Smith, & Marshall, 2010). Moreover, the literature failed to account for the psychological or physical impact of these procedures on individuals (Miller, 2011; Nishimura, 2011; Ryan & Peterson, 2004; Shah, 2012; Stewart, 2011). In response to the aforementioned gaps in the current research, this study was conducted to capture these experiences and add to the extant body of knowledge on restraints and seclusion. Because there is no federal legislation in place to guide the use of these practices, there is a possibility that this investigation could inform local, state, or federal representatives of the need to finally enact legislation to guide these controversial practices.

There are limitations to this study. The study is confined to four students, four

teachers, and four parents in public alternative schools located in the state of Georgia, which may not make this study generalizable. I knew many of the research participants, which could be a potential sampling issue. To mitigate these limitations, I took considerable measures to minimize my biases, such as recognizing my personal biases and trying to reduce their impact on my research, using non-leading questions, and reviewing audio recordings to identify potentially biased questions. Finally, I used a process called member checking where I reviewed interview participants' transcripts with them to ensure accuracy, which I will discuss in detail in the methods chapter of this study. Despite these steps, my presence and my role as a researcher could have possibly influenced the participants' responses because many of the participants know my views on restraints and seclusion.

Now that I have overviewed the significance and limitations of my research study, I shall briefly discuss the theories and ideas that helped shape my research topic. I will provide more in-depth detail to these items in Chapter 2.

Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Framework

As stated early in the statement of the problem, there is a lack of research on restraints and seclusion in school settings. I interviewed four students, four teachers, and four parents to add information in this area (See Appendix A). As noted previously, this study is based on the lived experiences of these individuals, as framed by my experiential knowledge accumulated as a result of my professional roles as a community counselor and special education teacher. Two theoretical frameworks, the Readiness Model and the Positive Behavior Support Model, guided my research (Amos, 2004). The Readiness Model is based on the premise that teachers must address students' misbehaviors as the

behaviors occur. Under this model, teachers use restraints and seclusion as retaliation techniques to cause students' physical injuries and emotional traumas. Conversely, the Positive Behavior Support Model posits that teachers must deal with children's problem behaviors when behaviors are not occurring (Amos, 2004). Under this model, teachers only use restraints and seclusion to prevent students from engaging in life threatening behaviors after less-intensive methods such as verbal redirections have been exhausted. Together, my conceptual framework and theoretical framework are important to narrowing my scope on restraints and seclusion based on the experiences of students, teachers, and parents. I shall explain in detail how they connect to my research in Chapter 2. In the next section, I shall briefly describe the methods I used for the study.

Brief Overview of Methods

From my investigation, I found that students, teachers, and parents have been affected, often dramatically, by physical restraints and/or seclusion in schools. To arrive at this conclusion, I used the methods of two phenomenologists named Irving Seidman and Mark Vagle. I selected participants using purposive selection and interviewed each individual using Seidman's (2013) three-part interview technique where I spoke to participants on three different occasions. I recorded and transcribed each interview and created interview transcripts. Using Vagle's (2014) whole-parts-whole method, I analyzed each transcript by identifying, describing, and analyzing each individuals' experiences with restraints and/or seclusion in public school settings. I compared each participants' transcripts and identified patterns, which I formed into themes. I then organized the themes into categories. I identified 17 different themes, which I arranged into four different categories. As I was completing this process, I identified several

technical terms that required explanation in order not to confuse readers, which will be discussed in the upcoming section.

Definition of Terms

There are certain key terms that appear throughout the research study. Each term needs clarification to explain its use in the project.

Aversive behaviors occur when teachers assault students, use physical restraints to inflict pain upon students, seclude students in locked rooms unsupervised, and use humiliating language to embarrass students (Amos, 2004).

An *Individualized Education Program (IEP)* is a formal plan tailored to describe individualized, specialized services for students with disabilities (Zirkel & Hetrick, 2016). According to Zirkel and Hetrick, an IEP team is not limited to but inclusive of, students, teachers, parents, school psychologists, special education directors, and community members, all of whom have a voice in creating this IEP document.

A *Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)* is an instrument that school officials use to understand the causes of behavior. Students' IEP teams use data gathered from FBAs to write student behavioral goals for IEPs (Simonsen, Sugai, Freeman, Kern, & Hampton, 2014).

Least restrictive environments refer to general classroom settings where students with disabilities are in the same classrooms as students without disabilities (Amos, 2004).

Physical restraint is defined as “any physical method restricting an individual’s freedom of movement, physical activity, or normal access to his/her body” (Couvillon et al., 2010, p. 6).

Restrictive environments are smaller, self-contained classroom settings away from

general education classrooms (Amos, 2004).

Seclusion is a method of isolating students in rooms where they are unable to leave (Freeman & Sugai, 2013). Total seclusion is outlawed in the state of Georgia (GADOE, 2012). To avoid breaking the law, teachers sit in seclusion rooms with students, who are unable to leave without teachers' permission. For the purpose of this study, when I mention seclusion, I am referring to it in this manner.

Time-out is an intervention where educators place students in parts of classrooms or in different classrooms away from other students (Bon & Zirkel, 2014). Bon and Zirkel, researchers on seclusion case law, noted that some research sources use seclusion and time-out as interchangeable terms, but others characterize these methods as distinct from each other. For the purposes of this study, I will refer to time-out and seclusion synonymously. Some of the schools I used for this study refer to time-out rooms as *Opportunity Rooms*, which are rooms separate from classrooms where teachers take students to redirect them away from negative behaviors.

This introduction has provided brief descriptions of the various areas I will address in upcoming chapters of my dissertation. In the subsequent chapter, I will provide a review of the literature available on restraints and seclusion in school settings. I will also discuss my theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter, I will explore the origins of physical restraints and seclusion and how U.S. lawmakers were responsible for transitioning these procedures from mental asylums into public schools. I shall discuss literature defining physical restraints, explaining the various types of restraints, and suggesting safety procedures. I will also examine research studies defining seclusion, proposing seclusion recommendations, and illustrating restraint and seclusion statistics in schools. Additionally, I will explore school-related literature and discuss proposed federal legislation that would guide the use of restraints and seclusion. I will describe current state legislation and analyze current research on restraints and seclusion in learning environments. Next, I will discuss my conceptual framework and theoretical framework. Finally, I will provide a succinct description of my research questions and explain how the answers to these questions can advance the body of knowledge on restraints and seclusion.

History of Restraints and Seclusion

In the article “Physical Restraint in School,” Ryan and Peterson (2004) described how restraints and seclusion began. During the 18th Century, a psychiatrist named Phillippe Pinel and his assistant Jean Baptiste worked with patients who were extremely violent. These patients caused numerous injuries and deaths among staff and clients. To decrease these incidents, Pinel and Baptiste developed restraint and seclusion practices. Asylum staff used these interventions to immobilize violent patients, which prevented

these patients from hurting themselves or others. After examining several trials related to staff using these procedures, Pinel and Baptiste discovered these methods were responsible for reducing staff and patients' injuries and deaths.

There were, nevertheless, those who opposed staff use of these procedures in asylums and hospitals (Ferleger, 2008). In Hanover, England, the Middlesex County Asylum Board of Directors appointed Dr. John Connolly as the superintendent of the Middlesex County Asylum, and he ended restraint practices immediately (Ryan & Peterson, 2004). Another historical report of Connolly's decision by Ferleger (2008) indicated staff members were responsible for the deaths of 40 of the 800 patients at the asylum because they used physical, mechanical, and chemical restraints. Ferleger's account further established Dr. Connolly as the person who introduced the "No Restraint Policy," which called for asylum employees to cease using restraining methods. Dr. Connolly stated, "In a properly constructed building with [enough attendants], restraint is never necessary, justifiable, and always injurious" (Ferleger, 2008, p. 154).

Ryan and Peterson (2004) stated that Dr. Connolly was not the only individual against employees using restraints in psychiatric asylums. Instead, one of the key messages of the Quaker Movement was to end these practices because they believed staff using restraints violated Biblical teachings. Due to the efforts of Dr. Connolly and the Quaker Movement, some psychiatric hospital officials who were once proponents of using restraints and seclusion outlawed these techniques (Ferleger, 2008). Other hospital and asylum staff, however, continued to engage in these procedures because they believed restraints and seclusion kept patients and staff safe (Ryan & Peterson, 2004).

Restraints and seclusion started in mental asylums and hospitals to address the

behaviors of violent patients and remained as part of the discipline regimen despite efforts on the part of certain mental health practitioners to discontinue their use. Later, the federal government allowed these practices to transition into school settings unrestricted, as addressed in the next section.

The Inclusion Movement

Federal lawmakers were responsible for creating the legislation that allowed restraints and seclusion to be introduced into school systems (Villani, Parsons, Church, & Beetar, 2012). Previously, teachers educated students with disabilities in separate classrooms, and federal policies did not afford these students equal educational opportunities in relation to their nondisabled peers. In 1975, Congress passed the Education Act for All Handicap Children Act (EAHC), which “extended free educational opportunities to students with special needs” (Villani et al., 2012, p. 296). Under EAHC, legislators authorized students to receive free educational opportunities such as behavioral modification programs, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and free meals (Villani et al., 2012).

In 1997, Congress amended the EAHC, and they passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which provided “free and appropriate education to students with disabilities from birth through age 21” (Villani et al., 2012, p. 296). IDEA mandated school districts to provide students with free student educational services such as access to assistive technology, small group instruction, and early school entrance for disabled students. Tavakolian and Howell (2012) explained IDEA as they traced the events that led up to the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. Under the act, lawmakers required school professionals to provide safe learning environments for

students by using interventions to prevent student misbehaviors. The law prohibited school officials from suspending students if behaviors were manifestations of students' disabilities. For misbehaving students, IDEA mandated that teachers create behavioral intervention plans to address students' behaviors. Finally, the measure compelled school staff to educate students in least restrictive environments, which was instrumental in allowing restraint and seclusion practices to transition into schools.

IDEA required teachers to educate students with disabilities in the same classrooms as general education students (Villani et al., 2012). Villani et al. observed 35 classrooms where teachers regularly had to deal with disruptive students. The researchers found that teachers dealt with more behavioral problems than they had previously. As a result of the increase in enrollment of students with disabilities, teachers in the Villani et al. study indicated that some of the students' behaviors led to violence with other students and teachers. To prevent students from injuring others or themselves, teachers used restraints and seclusion (Villani et al., 2012).

Congress's passage of the EAH, IDEA, and NCLB were instrumental in introducing the practices of restraints and seclusion in schools. Use of these methods has led to students being injured (Ferris, 2012; Freeman & Sugai, 2013; LeBel et al., 2012) and even dying (Fantz, 2008; Ross et al., 2012; U.S. Department of Education, 2009; U.S. GAO, 2009; Wong & Vasquez, 1998), which has generated considerable public backlash (e.g., *Covington v. Knox County School System*, 2000; *Jefferson v. Yselta Independent School District*, 1987; *Lewandowski v. Ypsilanti School District Board of Education*, 1997; U.S. GAO, 2009). Ironically, despite the adverse consequences associated with restraint and seclusion, there is a lack of research, on these controversial

practices. The following section, however, will address the research that does exist on the topic.

Restraints and Seclusion in Public Schools

Despite lawmakers authorizing schools to use restraints and seclusion, research on these procedures is a relatively new phenomenon, and researchers have conducted very few studies in the field (Barnard-Brak et al., 2014). The limited amount of research available does validate for Barnard-Brak et al. that educators physically restrained and secluded students in school settings daily. In most cases, according to Barnard-Brak et al., teachers disproportionately restrained and secluded students with disabilities, and the rate of restraints for students with disabilities was higher than for students without disabilities, even though there were fewer students with disabilities in classrooms.

Race was also a factor when school staff restrained students (Butler, 2012; Shah, 2012). In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights conducted a study of 72,000 public schools (Shah, 2012). According to Shah, a scholar on race and disability, the department discovered that the student disability population of the examined schools consisted of 21% African Americans, but these students were involved in 44% of mechanical restraint cases. According to Butler (2012), an author for the Autism National Committee, African American students made up 15.8% of the student population in Connecticut, but they experienced 24.3% of the restraints and seclusions in Connecticut schools. Butler also noted that African Americans represented 12% of the student population in Minnesota schools, but these students were involved in 37% of prone restraints, 35% of physical restraints, and 34% of seclusions.

Currently, the federal government leaves the decision-making power for creating

restraint and seclusion guidelines to states. However, states lack consistency when creating restraint and seclusion guidelines (Nishimura, 2011). Twelve states including Alaska, California, Idaho, and Missouri do not have restraint or seclusion guidelines (U.S. Department of Education, 2010; See Appendix B). Subsequently, teachers often restrain or seclude students in ways that cause students physical or emotional injuries (LeBel et al., 2012). In the worst cases, students have died from improper utilization of restraints and/or seclusion (Fantz, 2008; Ross et al., 2012; U.S. Department of Education, 2009; U.S. GAO, 2009; Wong & Vasquez, 1998). Parents then often sue school districts, and districts in most cases pay large punitive damages (e.g., *Covington v. Knox County School System*, 2000; *Jefferson v. Yselta Independent School District*, 1987; *Lewandowski v. Ypsilanti School District Board of Education*, 1997; U.S. GAO, 2009).

The practices related to restraining and secluding students are dangerous. They are unrestricted, unmonitored, and unclear in schools. Restraint and seclusion practices have not been researched thoroughly and consequently are contributing to problems in the educational environments that need attention. Each will be addressed separately in upcoming sections.

Restraints

Despite the limited research on restraints, some literature is available. In 2010, Couvillon et al. reviewed 125 crisis intervention programs used in schools across the United States. Their review offered a comprehensive discussion of various forms of restraints and will be used as the defining source for the upcoming discussion of eight strategies for restraints. Couvillon et al. also pointed out the advantages, disadvantages, and dangers of each. They began with a definition of physical restraints as “any physical

method restricting an individual's freedom of movement, physical activity, or normal access to his/her body" (Couvillon et al., 2010, p. 6). Other names for physical restraints include "ambulatory restraints, manual restraints, physical interventions, or therapeutic holdings" (Villani et al., 2012, p. 296). Teachers physically restrain students by restricting students from moving their "arms, legs, body, or head freely" (Freeman & Sugai, 2013, p. 430).

Couvillon et al. (2010) identified three types of floor restraints, which they termed *prone*, *supine*, and *side floor* in order to reflect the restrained student's posture. Prone restraints occur when school personnel position pupils face down. Supine restraints occur when teachers place children face up. Side floor restraints take place when educators turn students on their side. Couvillon et al. found side floor restraints to be the most dangerous—and most commonly used—restraints in schools. The researchers also stated that when staff use these restraints, they can easily injure themselves through slips and falls. Furthermore, students can suffer injuries such as choking or breathing loss; in worst cases, students can die from staff applying pressure to their bodies.

Teachers do not just use restraints with students on the floor, but they also restrain students in standing positions and in chairs. According to Couvillon et al. (2010), standing restraints involve procedures where staff members place their hands and bodies around students' arms to prevent students from moving or striking others. Unlike floor restraints, these restraints pose minimum risks of injury or death because everyone (including the children) are standing up, which prevents staff from placing their weight on students and keeps students from striking staff with their arms and feet (Couvillon et al., 2010).

Students are also restrained while sitting in desks, and these restraints are called *seated restraints*. According to Couvillon et al. (2010), during this procedure, staff members interlock children's arms while they are seated. There is a drawback to using this type of restraint. Staff experience increased risks of injury because they are near pupils and can be easily kicked or punched (Couvillon et al., 2010). Teachers use other types of restraints besides floor, standing, and seated restraints. In some states, educators are able to use *chemical* and *mechanical restraints* on pupils, which are prohibited in other states (Freeman & Sugai, 2013; See Appendix C). Freeman and Sugai (2013) defined chemical restraints as non-prescribed drugs or medications preventing individuals' movements and controlling behaviors. They described mechanical restraints as devices professionals use to restrict students' movements and stated school staff members should never use chemical or mechanical restraints. Despite the concerns about chemical and mechanical restraints, the authors found that school personnel use these procedures. According to Butler (2012), only 11 states, including Colorado, Idaho, and Virginia, prohibited teachers from using mechanical restraints (See Appendix C). Additionally, Butler pointed out that only seven states including, Connecticut, Colorado, and Tennessee, forbid school staff from using chemical restraints (See Appendix C).

There are several risks associated with physical restraints (Couvillon et al., 2010). According to Couvillon et al., children can injure staff members by kicking, biting, or punching during restraining. Conversely, school personnel can injure pupils by improperly restraining them, potentially resulting in psychological problems for the students. The researchers noted that in extreme cases, teachers can trigger students to choke, suffocate, or suffer bodily harm. Despite these risks, there are no federal laws or

accreditation agencies guiding restraints in schools, unlike in hospitals, psychiatric institutions, and law enforcement agencies (Couvillon et al., 2010).

To minimize these risk factors, Couvillon et al. (2010) called for school administrators to enact safety procedures before allowing staff to use physical restraints on students. They proposed several recommendations: (1) there must be a time limit in place whenever teachers restrain pupils; (2) once students are no longer dangerous towards themselves or others, educators should immediately stop the procedure; and (3) when restraining children, more than one staff member should be involved. Additional staff personnel are vital in reducing risks of injury and observing pupils' physical and mental well-beings.

Couvillon et al. (2010) did not stop with suggestions for staff. They also suggested physical restraint procedures school officials need to adopt. First, teachers must document all physical restraint incidents. Second, administrators need to report all staff and students' injuries to appropriate reporting agencies. Finally, prior to using physical restraints, school supervisors should require school staff members to participate in restraint training and become certified to use these interventions. If school personnel are not certified, then administrators must prohibit them from using physical restraints.

Despite the lack of research on physical restraints, Couvillon et al. defined physical restraints and described the different types of physical restraints. The researchers discussed how teachers use these procedures on students. They also identified risk factors educators and students face with these methods and described ways school officials can minimize these factors. The Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (CCBD) provided a similar analysis for seclusion (Council for Children with Behavioral

Disorders, 2009).

Seclusion

In my experience, restraints are not the only interventions teachers use to de-escalate students' crises; they also use seclusion. According to Villani et al. (2012), seclusion is "the involuntary confinement of a person in a room alone so that the person is physically prevented from leaving" (p. 296). In some cases, educators lock children in rooms (Freeman & Sugai, 2013). In commenting upon seclusion, the CCBD (2009) stated:

Anytime a student is involuntarily alone in a room and prevented from leaving [it] should be considered seclusion regardless of the intended purpose or the name applied to this procedure or the name of the place where the student is secluded. (p. 235)

Some researchers refer to seclusion and timeouts as interchangeable terms (Bon & Zirkel, 2014). Conversely, other researchers view these terms as distinct from each other. According to Bon & Zirkel, these researchers define seclusion as methods by which teachers lock students in unsupervised rooms while they describe timeouts as interventions where teachers place students in isolated areas of classrooms away from other students. The students are separated from their classmates, but teachers are still able to supervise them. As a teacher who has engaged in these practices, my colleagues and I have referred to these terms synonymously because we place students in separate rooms located outside of classrooms where we supervise them. These interventions will be used interchangeably throughout this research project.

According to Bon and Zirkel (2014), they defined the three types of seclusions:

inclusion time-outs, exclusion time-outs, and seclusion time-outs. The researchers described an inclusion time-out as an intervention where teachers direct disruptive students into different parts of classrooms, but students remain inside of classrooms and can see their classmates. They identified an exclusion time-out as a method where educators take students outside of classrooms and supervise students. Bon and Zirkel defined a seclusion time-out as a technique where teachers escort students into rooms separate from classrooms, and students are in unlocked rooms by themselves. This type of seclusion is not allowed in the state of Georgia and will not be address in this research study. For the purposes of this study, whenever the term seclusion is mentioned, it refers to an inclusion or exclusion time-out, which are the most common interventions teachers employed in the schools I used for my research study.

In some schools, seclusion rooms are often mistaken for “safe place or cool-down rooms” that are rooms similar in structure to seclusion rooms (CCBD, 2009, p. 235). There are differences between the two types of rooms. According to the CCBD, upset students go to safe place or cool down rooms on their own free will. Children are able to enter and leave these rooms and return to their classrooms at any time, unlike seclusion rooms where teachers place students against their will (CCBD, 2009).

The CCBD proposed several recommendations to guide teachers using seclusion rooms (CCBD, 2009). The Council advised that teachers should not use seclusion as a strategy for punishing student misbehavior. Instead, the CCBD recommended that school personnel apply this method to remove pupils from environments that will further incite misbehavior. The Council also suggested that staff members should use seclusion to allow children to calm down after being upset. Teachers can appropriately use seclusion

whenever their classrooms are out of control due to students' misbehaviors. To do this, the CCBD proposed educators send disruptive pupils out of classrooms and bring them back after educators are able to get control of the class. Finally, the CCBD recommended that school administrators need to allow teachers to use this practice whenever students refuse to comply with classroom directions.

The Council identified several problems with seclusion rooms based on their investigations (CCBD, 2009). According to the CCBD, seclusion rooms in some schools were unfit to accommodate pupils because several of the rooms had poor lighting, inadequate ventilation, and lack of heating and cooling. The Council identified court cases where children died or became seriously injured through "suicide, electrocution, and self-injury due to cutting, pounding, and head banging" (p. 236) while located in seclusion rooms. The organization noted documented cases where teachers denied secluded pupils' "access to toilets, food, or water" (p. 236).

Unlike seclusion use in hospitals and psychiatric wards, there are no accreditation agencies that guide seclusion in school settings (CCBD, 2009). As a result, the CCBD suggested several policies to govern school staff members' seclusion use. The organization urged that school principals ensure staff members are adequately trained prior to using seclusion procedures. They recommended that trainings should focus on eliminating conflicts, understanding students' crises, and administering CPR/First Aid. The CCBD advocated the need for school administrators to offer personnel required and ongoing training in which they receive certificates for training completion. They suggested that teachers must never use seclusion as a technique to punish students for misbehaviors. Instead, according to the CCBD, teachers need to use this procedure as a

last resort to stop children from injuring themselves or others. Once students are no longer at risk of harm, the CCBD recommended that staff members should return students to their classrooms.

The Council recommended steps school professionals need to initiate once seclusion takes place (CCBD, 2009). They suggested staff members should document incidents and notify parents/guardians as soon as possible. Moreover, school administrators must arrange debriefings between seclusion participants and students' parents within 48 hours of the seclusion event. The CCBD advised administrators to include pupils in debriefings. At debriefings, the Council proposed team members should discuss seclusion incidents and ways to prevent staff members from using these procedures on children in the future. The CCBD urged that school personnel take minutes, keep meeting documentation for school records, and provide parents with meeting minute copies.

The CCBD also proposed ideas for school administrators on how to design seclusion rooms (CCBD, 2009). They recommended that rooms needed to be large enough to allow students to sit or lay down and must have appropriate heating/cooling systems and adequate lighting. Inside the rooms, there should be no safety hazards such as electrical outlets or any other devices that could cause children to become physically injured. The CCBD called for school supervisors to ensure that room designs contained windows through which staff can constantly watch pupils to minimize injury risks and that staff and students should be able to easily enter and exit rooms without the danger of rooms being locked.

The CCBD made other propositions for schools to follow (CCBD, 2009). They

suggested that staff members should allow secluded students to have bathroom and water breaks when requested. Further, the Council proposed officials such as fire marshals inspect these rooms annually. The CCBD stated that IEP teams must not write amendments in IEPs requiring teachers to seclude pupils because that would allow teachers to use seclusion as punishment instead of protecting students from injuring themselves or others. Finally, according to the organization, states and schools must have written policies in place prior to using seclusion.

Like the Couvillon et al. (2010) did for physical restraints, the CCBD defined seclusion and discussed how teachers apply this technique on students. The CCBD identified problems with seclusion rooms based on their investigations and recommended seclusion guidelines schools should follow with students. Both Couvillon et al. and the CCBD demonstrated why these interventions are controversial. Statistical data on restraints and seclusion also demonstrated a need for more research on this issue.

Statistics on Restraints and Seclusion

In discussing the literature so far on restraints and seclusion, I defined each intervention, identified risk factors, and discussed proposed recommendations on how these practices should be used in schools. Literature exploring the statistical data on these interventions demonstrates why these practices are so contentious (Barnard-Brak et al., 2014; Committee on Education, 2012; Ferriss, 2012; Freeman & Sugai, 2013; Simonsen et al., 2014; U.S. Department of Education, 2010; U.S. GAO, 2009). Freeman and Sugai (2013) reported that school superintendents underreport data on the number of restraints and seclusions that take place in schools. In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education reported over 39,000 restraints occurred in schools from 2009-2010 (Ferriss, 2012). The

Child Welfare League of America estimated 8 to 10 children die each year from restraints (Barnard-Brak et al., 2014). The League estimated that school personnel caused one-third of those deaths due to improperly restraining students. The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) reported that teachers restrained 26,766 students with disabilities and 12,026 students without disabilities during the 2009-2010 school year (Simonsen et al., 2014). According to the OCR, students with disabilities experienced 69% of the physical restraints during the 2009-2010 school year (Simonsen et al., 2014).

Freeman and Sugai (2013) stated that the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report that discussed the difficulties in obtaining data on restraints and seclusion due to a lack of “systematic data reporting” (p. 428). The GAO (2009) was unable to give an accurate reading on the number of restraints occurring in public schools, but GAO officials did report that between 1990 and 2009 they received notifications of several hundred student deaths that occurred in restraint situations at schools or where students were placed in seclusion at schools. The GAO concluded in a 2009 report that educators restrained and secluded students as a means of retaliation rather than safety, and school personnel used these practices disproportionately on students with special needs. In the same year, the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates (COPAA) wrote a report called *Unsafe in the Schoolhouse: Abuse of Children with Disabilities* (Barnard-Brak et al., 2014). In the report, the COPAA cited 185 abuse incidents from teachers using restraints and seclusion. The authors stated that of the 185 abuse incidents, 64% of the cases involved restraints, 58% involved seclusion, and 30% involved aversive procedures such as hitting, fighting, or kicking.

Students continue to be restrained and secluded daily, and school officials do not

collect adequate data on school staff using these procedures. The available data indicate that in some cases, teachers cause students' injuries and deaths due to applying these procedures inappropriately. As a result of the issues surrounding restraints and their use, the U.S. government has attempted to get involved with schools using these interventions, but with little success.

Failed Precedent and Proposed Federal Legislations

Failed Precedent

In 2000, the federal government passed the Children's Health Act, which expanded research on childhood diseases such as asthma, cancer, diabetes, birth defects, and injuries to the brain; it also provided healthcare coverage to uninsured children (Barard-Brak et al., 2014). In mental health facilities, the act regulated professionals' use of restraints on children (Barnard-Brak et al., 2014). Despite this landmark legislation, Barnard-Brak et al. stated that the federal government remained silent on teachers' use of restraints in school settings. In fact, according to the authors, the federal government left the power of restraint policies to individual states. Twelve states do not have restraint or seclusion guidelines (U.S. Department of Education, 2010; See Appendix B). Amazingly, according to the Committee on Education (2012), only 24 states have guidelines in place where school officials must contact parents after children have been restrained or secluded, but legislators have considered the idea (See Appendix C).

Proposed Legislations

The U.S. House of Representatives made efforts to pass laws similar to laws that guide restraint and seclusion interventions in mental health facilities. U.S. Representatives George Miller of California and Tom Harkin of Iowa introduced a

federal restraint guideline for schools in 2009 called the Keeping All Students Safe Act (Stewart, 2011). According to Stewart, the Act outlawed seclusion, mechanical restraints, chemical restraints, and other restraints that jeopardized students' health and safety. The bill mandated that school staff could only use restraints as methods of last resort, and school administrators were required to train staff members at the start of each school year prior to using these practices (Stewart, 2011). Despite momentum among legislators, Stewart noted the bill passed in the House of Representatives but failed to pass in the Senate due to non-bipartisan support.

In 2009, Senator Christopher Dodd of Connecticut, working in conjunction with members of the U.S. House of Representatives, proposed another national restraint bill called the Preventing Harmful Restraint and Seclusion Act (GovTrackUs., 2009). Like the Keeping All Students Safe Act, the bill prohibited mechanical and chemical restraints, and school officials could only use restraints after all other methods to redirect students were exhausted. The legislation required staff members to participate in mandatory restraint training each year, and school employees had to notify parents that their children were restrained within 24 hours (GovTrackUs., 2009). Despite the popularity of the bill, it passed in the House of Representatives but failed in the Senate (GovTrackUs., 2009).

In several states, educators restrain and seclude students without any established protocols. On the national level, government officials have attempted to establish ground rules to guide school officials' use of these interventions, but their efforts have been met with resistance. Some states, such as Georgia, are leading the way by passing laws regulating these procedures.

The State of Georgia's Restraint and Seclusion Policy

I conducted the research study in public school settings in the state of Georgia. Thus, a review of how the state of Georgia guides these practices is warranted. According to the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE) (2012), unlike other U.S. states, the state of Georgia has taken the initiative and created policies guiding school personnel's use of restraints in public schools. In 2010, the Georgia General Assembly passed Rule 160-5-1-.25, better known as the Seclusion and Restraint for All Students Act (GADOE, 2012). Under this law, the GADOE forbids teachers from secluding students, but allows school personnel to physically restrain students under certain conditions. Additionally, teachers are forbidden to use mechanical, chemical, or prone restraints.

The Act lays out 10 guidelines school staff must follow (GADOE, 2012). First, teachers must always use verbal redirections and other less intensive interventions prior to using restraints. Second, school professionals can only use restraints when students are in danger of compromising the safety of themselves or others. Teachers can never use restraints as forms of punishment. Third, once students are no longer dangerous to themselves or others, school personnel must end restraints immediately. Fourth, if restraints occur outside of classrooms, the teachers who did the restraining must return students to classrooms after they determine students are no longer at risk of harm. Fifth, school officials must notify parents about restraint policies prior to students enrolling. Sixth, staff must attend annual trainings on restraints before they are able to restrain students. Seventh, whenever restraints occur, school professionals must make sure restraining areas are free of dangers such as sharp objects or items that could cause bodily harm. Eighth, after completing restraints, teachers and students must discuss incidents

and seek remedies to avoid engaging in restraining behaviors in the future. Ninth, if students have medical conditions with medical documentation, educators cannot restrain them. Finally, staff must document all restraint incidents and notify parents immediately.

The state of Georgia has a policy in place guiding school officials using restraints and seclusion on students in school settings. Despite this state establishing a protocol for these interventions, school officials in other states without restraint and seclusion policies continue to restrain and seclude students, which leads to students becoming injured and even dying. Thus, it is essential that states without restraint and seclusion guidelines and the federal government pass laws and policies guiding these practices in schools.

As stated earlier, there is a lack of research on this subject matter. The upcoming section describes the research studies that do exist.

Current Research on Restraints and Seclusion in Schools

After consulting 22 databases using terms like seclusion, restraint, timeout, isolation, and classroom management, and consulting a research librarian on three different times, we concluded that there is minimal research on the topics of restraint and seclusion. This is one of the reasons I am conducting a research study in this area. In examining the research, there was only one study that looked closely at several of the issues about which I am concerned. Westling et al. (2010) conducted a quantitative study on restraints, seclusions, and aversive procedures at Western Carolina University. They distributed a 23-question online survey to parents and guardians affiliated with the Alliance to Prevent Restraint, Aversive Interventions, and Seclusion (APRAIS) to determine if their children had been participants in seclusion, restraints, or aversive procedures. Using a web-based application, the researchers transmitted the surveys to

APRAIS, who dispersed the surveys to members. The researchers were unaware of how many members had access to the surveys, but they received 1,300 surveys back.

According to the results, 837 of the 1,300 participants responded that their children were restrained, secluded, or subjected to aversive procedures. Respondents from 659 different households reported that teachers physically restrained their children, and 597 participants replied educators placed their children in seclusion rooms. When the researchers asked survey participants if their children were victims of aversive procedures such as spankings, pinchings, or losing food privileges, 277 participants indicted school staff used these procedures.

The researchers also discovered school officials restrained and secluded students with disabilities between the ages of 6 and 10 more often than any other surveyed group. On average, staff members restrained students between 5 and 30 minutes. Surprisingly, Westling et al. reported 551 participants declared school personnel seldom and or did not notify participants that their children experienced restraint, seclusion, or aversive practices.

In the study, Westling et al. (2010) identified several limitations. The authors used a convenience sample, which did not allow researchers to obtain an accurate representation of the population. The researchers did not ask the individuals who completed the survey to identify their relationship to the student about whom they were referring and had no clear way to tell if participants were parents, guardians, children, teachers, or other individuals. Also, by using the Internet, Westling et al. could not follow up with participants because they had no clear way of identifying participants.

The Westling et al. (2010) study differed from my work in methods, sample, and

location. Besides Westling et al., I was not able to locate any other research studies similar to my research study (see Appendix D). There were a few research studies and journal articles I found addressing restraints and seclusion in public schools (LeBel et al., 2012; Miller, 2011; Simonsen et al., 2014; Villani et al., 2012), and I will briefly discuss each of these four.

A Descriptive Study of the Use of Restraint and Seclusion in a Special Education School

Villani, Parsons, Church, and Beetar (2012) examined whether students with disabilities who engaged in injurious behaviors towards themselves or others could be managed in a day school setting. They also gathered data on teachers' frequency using restraints and seclusion in the setting to explore what the data would illustrate. To answer these questions, Villani et al. administered a 6-year research study in a special education program in a nonpublic school. The Villani group made comparisons between special education programs at different grade levels, which were lower/middle school and high school.

The researchers conducted a 4-day crisis intervention training for teachers in the program. They hired instructors who taught teachers how to de-escalate student misbehavior and prevent student/staff injuries. The coaches also instructed educators on how to recognize differences between dangerous and non-dangerous student behaviors and when staff needed to restrain or seclude students. Finally, the coaches taught teachers on how to safely restrain students, verbally redirect pupils during restraints, and later debrief students on ways to avoid restraining behaviors in the future (Villani et al., 2012).

Following the training, Villani et al. collected data on staff using restraints and seclusion at the school over a 6-year period. The team's data collection methods revealed

teachers restrained students who were in the lower/middle school more than students in the high school, but the restraint duration of high school pupils lasted longer than it did for pupils who were in the lower/middle school. Over the time period, the researchers gathered more restraint and seclusion data, which did not follow a consistent pattern for any grade level.

The researchers made several recommendations. Villani et al. (2012) suggested that school administrators need to form committees consisting of special educators, school psychologists, and behavioral specialists to review and scrutinize restraint and seclusion data for the purposes of reducing school personnel's use of these techniques in the future. Further, due to the physical severities of these practices, they urged medical communities have oversight of these committees. Finally, Villani et al. emphasized school supervisors need to ensure staff receive frequent trainings on ways to reduce restraining and secluding students.

Unlike Villani et al. (2012), LeBel et al. (2012) examined research studies that authors wrote on restraints and seclusion. They then made recommendations on these practices based on these studies.

Restraint and Seclusion Use in U.S. School Settings

LeBel, Nunno, Mohr, and O'Halloran (2012) published a journal article called "Restraint and Seclusion Use in School Settings," which addressed restraints and seclusion in public schools. The authors completed a meta-analytical study on school personnels' use of restraints and seclusion. Based on their research, LeBel et al. believed school administrators need to collaborate with mental health institutions to develop procedures on restraints and seclusion because these techniques are highly regulated in

mental health institutions. Furthermore, they cautioned that school staff use of restraints and seclusion can cause serious physical injuries, emotional traumas, and even deaths. The researchers added that if school officials use these techniques improperly on students, then they are at risk of facing civil lawsuits and can receive criminal charges.

The LeBel et al. (2012) suggested other policies for school staff. They believed school personnel must review their restraint and seclusion guidelines and work with states and the federal government to create national guidelines. The team further recommended that school officials should never use restraints and seclusion as forms of punishment for rule compliance; rather they need to use these methods to prevent students from engaging in violent behaviors towards themselves or others. LeBel et al. also stated that administrators should never allow teachers to use these methods unless they have established strict guidelines governing these practices. Finally, the researchers recommended educators review each restraint and seclusion incident to find ways of minimizing the use of these procedures in the future.

The researchers recommended a method for reducing teachers' use of restraints and seclusion in schools called the Six Core Strategies (LeBel et al., 2012). The six components are (1) leadership, (2) using data to inform practice, (3) utilizing individualized crisis prevention tools, (4) workforce development, (5) debriefing, and (6) youth and parent participation. They explained the first component called for school administrators to establish cultures minimizing educators' restraint and seclusion use as interventions to manage students' behaviors in positive manners instead of punitively. In the second component, they claimed school officials should measure the number of times students are restrained or secluded, evaluate the effectiveness of these procedures for

managing students' behaviors, and determine whether these interventions are decreasing or increasing each school year. In the third component, LeBel et al. focused on the need for school supervisors to make students' crisis intervention plans available to teachers. They stated that plans should describe students' misbehaviors, antecedents triggering misbehaviors, and potential interventions to use to manage misbehaviors. LeBel et al.'s strategy used collaborative teams including parents, students, teachers, school officials, and other natural supports to develop these plans. In the fourth component, they recommended school managers should make sure teachers and other school officials receive proper and sufficient training to deal with problematic students' behaviors. According to the authors, possible training could center on de-escalation and crisis techniques. In the fifth component, the researchers suggested that participants who are involved in restraints must be debriefed in 1 to 2 days, and debriefings should center on antecedents leading to restraints and methods to use to avoid restraints in the future. In the sixth component, they stated that teachers need to meet with students' families to learn about students' behaviors, and school administrators should obtain parents' informed consent prior to restraining children and encourage parents to become involved in meetings based on these measures.

LeBel et al. (2012) created recommendations for restraints and seclusion after examining various literature from previous research studies on these interventions. Similarly, Simonsen et al. (2014) constructed recommendations after studying the U.S. Department of Education's (2010) suggestions on restraints and seclusion.

Ethical and Professional Guidelines for Use of Crisis Procedures

In "Ethical and Professional Guidelines for Use of Crisis Procedures," Simonsen,

Sugai, Freeman, Kern, and Hampton (2014) reviewed recommendations from the U.S. Department of Education (2010) on restraints and seclusion. After reviewing these recommendations, they presented an alternative to current teachers' practices regarding restraint and seclusion. They advocated that school staff need to adopt Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS), which is a behavioral system based on tiers in which teachers instruct students on developing positive behaviors. According to the authors, other researchers found that school principals who used PBIS had reductions in student discipline referrals, increases in student academic improvement, and decreases in teachers using crisis procedures.

As part of their support for PBIS, Simonsen et al. advocated parents play essential roles when school staff seek remedies for students' behaviors. When assessing students' behaviors, teachers frequently use instruments called Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBA) that assist Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams with developing interventions to manage student behaviors. The researchers suggested that parents should be members of IEP teams because they are able to provide information that will be extremely important when discussing students' troubling behaviors on FBAs. According to the authors, once IEP teams identify students' behaviors, parents can collaborate with team members on interventions to address behaviors. Finally, Simonsen et al. said that parents are vital because school staff can explain crisis procedures thoroughly to them and obtain parents' permission to use these procedures when pupils become harmful to themselves or others.

Unlike Simonsen et al. (2014), Miller (2011) did not base his research on recommendations from a U.S. governmental department. Instead, Miller examined a

federal law related to special education and proposed recommendations and an alternative to guide restraint and seclusion practices.

Physical Education: Amending the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act

Like Simonsen et al., Miller (2011), author of “Physical Education: Amending the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act,” proposed an alternative strategy to the use of restraints and seclusion. He examined the historical background of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), a federal legislative act granting students with disabilities a free and appropriate education. Following his examination, he found that the law did not set guidelines for teachers using restraint and seclusion practices on students. He believed lawmakers need to revise IDEA and implement protocols school personnel need to follow when using these techniques. Miller argued that educators’ restraint and seclusion options should not be eliminated, but school managers must place limitations on these practices.

To aid lawmakers, Miller (2011) proposed guidelines they should add into IDEA that govern staff members’ administration of these practices. He stated that teachers need to use restraint and seclusion procedures whenever students become dangerous to themselves or others. He further posited school officials must receive instructional training on using these practices prior to utilizing these procedures on pupils. Miller went on to emphasize that school administrators need to provide parents with opportunities to consent to these procedures being used on their children. When secluding students, he cautioned teachers should monitor students, or they need to use video and audio equipment to supervise secluded students. He insisted that school managers must authorize educators to only use these procedures for no more than 30 minutes, and teachers need to discontinue these practices once students are no longer threats to

themselves or others. Miller, as with LeBel et al. (2012), emphasized the importance of educators notifying parents within 24 hours of their children being restrained or secluded. Finally, he concluded that Congress needs to pass federal legislation to ensure school officials are consistent across the boards when applying these techniques.

Studies related to teachers' use of restraints and seclusion are limited. Most articles discussed here proposed guidelines and alternatives towards educators' use of restraint and seclusion in schools and were based on authors' experiences, preferences, and knowledge of a related field. Based upon my review of the literature, there are no studies that focus on the essence of the experiences of individuals affected by the practices of restraints and/or seclusion in schools (See Appendix D). This study addressed the gap in literature. In the next section, I will discuss my conceptual and theoretical frameworks, establish my experiential knowledge related to restraint and seclusion, and examine two theories related to models of the Readiness and Positive Behavior Supports.

Conceptual Framework

This research study examined how K-12 students, teachers, and parents were affected by restraints and/or seclusion in alternative school settings. In the conceptual framework section, I first set forth my experiential knowledge with the use of restraints and seclusion in my roles as a community counselor and a special education teacher. Next, I defined the Readiness Model and the Positive Behavior Supports Model (Amos, 2004), theoretical models related to restraints and seclusion in schools. Finally, I differentiated the models.

Experiential Knowledge

Practices related to restraining students or putting them in seclusion rooms affects me personally in my roles as a community counselor and a special education teacher. I have been a community counselor for over 10 years, and I counseled families who were self-referred or referred through agencies such as the Department of Family and Children Services and Behavioral Health Services. As a community counselor, I counseled parents and students whom school personnel damaged emotionally and physically by using these practices. In counseling sessions, parents shared stories with me about the mental anguish they suffered as a result of teachers exposing their children to these measures. In other sessions, children disclosed to me that being placed in restraints or in seclusion rooms created feelings of helplessness. In fact, several adolescents expressed fears of going to school because they were afraid their teachers would subject them to these practices again.

In addition to being a community counselor, I am a special education teacher. As such, I am a participant in restraints and seclusion of students. Over the course of 6 years, I was involved in incidents that resulted in students being restrained 159 different times, and I participated in placing students in a secluded space 55 times. In the process, I suffered numerous physical injuries such as sprained ankles, cuts, scrapes, and scratches. I am also affected emotionally from observing staff injure children as a result of these therapeutic interventions.

In everyday conversations with other teachers and counselors, several of my colleagues divulged their experiences of restraining and secluding students. The colleagues' experiences varied. Some teachers were disturbed by their own use of these

measures on pupils, but they believed if they did not use these practices, then pupils would injure them or in worse cases, other students. Other colleagues were not conflicted by their use of restraints and seclusion because they believed these procedures were effective ways to discipline students engaging in misbehaviors. These educators expressed their belief to me that students did not receive appropriate discipline at home, and it was their duty to correct students' behaviors. Despite Georgia lawmakers prohibiting school officials from using restraints and seclusion as school discipline, some teachers continue to use these practices in this manner and believe they are justified in doing so. There are also school personnel who, like myself, maintain that staff and faculty must only apply these techniques when pupils become dangerous to themselves or others. I am in agreement with the governmental prohibition and believe that educators should never use these crisis intervention approaches as punishment methods.

During my first 2 years of teaching, I participated in 134 restraints and 45 seclusions of students, which I later came to believe was an unacceptably high number of use for any single teacher. I attended a teaching workshop during my third year of teaching that used Joyce Epstein's Six Types of Involvement: Keys to Successful Partnerships (Epstein et al., 2008) as the curriculum for the training. The six types of involvement presented were parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. Through Epstein's involvement method, I was able to form relationships and partnerships with parents and children in several ways. For students, I engaged in practices of observing my students' strengths and weaknesses, building rapport, identifying students' behavioral triggers, and keeping lines of communication open. For parents, I continually updated parents on their child's

progress, involved them in decision-making, and provided opportunities for parents to become active in their child's education. I believe learning about and applying Epstein's technique was a major reason my involvement in restraints and seclusion declined in frequency. In my last 4 years of teaching, I participated in 25 restraints and 10 seclusions.

My views towards restraints and seclusion have been shaped by my roles as a community counselor and a special education teacher. In the upcoming section, I will discuss two models, the Readiness Model and the Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Model, which serve as the theoretical frameworks for restraints and seclusion practices.

Theoretical Framework

According to Patricia Amos (2004), author of "New Considerations in the Prevention of Aversives, Restraint, and Seclusion," there are two basic approaches to the use of restraints and seclusion in school settings, the Readiness Model and the PBS Model. Amos stated proponents of the Readiness Model believe teachers must address students' misbehaviors in *restrictive settings*, which means smaller classroom settings away from general classrooms, and through interventions such as modeling and role-playing appropriate behaviors. Within this framework, Amos explained educators do not apply actions to children's misbehaviors until they engage in misbehaviors. Also, according to Amos, pupils do not leave restrictive settings immediately. Instead, teachers gradually move students from restrictive settings into *least restrictive settings*, which are general classroom settings, as students make progress towards overcoming their misbehaviors (Amos, 2004). Once teachers move children back into least restrictive settings, educators then work with the students on skills to enhance their quality of life.

Amos (2004) identified several problems with the Readiness Model. She stated

that teachers often work with pupils with severe behavioral problems, and some of these students have emotional and behavioral problems, making them more aggressive and destructive towards others. Under this model, according to the author, these children remain in restrictive environments for longer periods of time. To address behaviors, Amos said some educators used aversive interventions in the past. Some of these methods included assaulting students, performing restraint techniques to immobilize students, secluding students in isolation, inflicting methods causing students pain, and using humiliating language (Amos, 2004). Amos argued these teachers' actions resulted in children developing feelings of dehumanization, of mistrust, and of fear of going back into classrooms.

Unlike the Readiness Model, Amos (2004) noted that advocates of the PBS Model believe pupils' behaviors must be addressed in natural settings such as classrooms and homes instead of in restrictive settings. She observed that proponents of the PBS Model believe teachers must deal with children's problem behaviors when behaviors are not occurring. Under the PBS Model, educators use research-based strategies such as social skills activities to teach pupils how to behave appropriately. They recognize students for demonstrating appropriate behaviors by using techniques such as effective praise and giving students tangible rewards (Amos, 2004). Teachers do not criticize or punish children for engaging in inappropriate behaviors. Instead, according to Amos, they are concerned with building healthy relationships and earning students' trust.

Amos did not identify any problems with this model. From my experiences with using this model, however, some issues do arise. I witnessed students taking advantage of the PBS Model by only behaving appropriately to obtain the rewards associated with

good behavior. After obtaining the reward, students then reverted to negative behaviors. I also observed teachers experiencing classroom management issues because students viewed teachers as their friends and not professionals, due to teachers being required to build relationships with students and not punishing students for behaviors while practicing this model.

The Readiness and the PBS Models are two different approaches teachers use to manage the behaviors of students. Each of these models shapes school officials' views on whether to use restraints and/or seclusion in alternative school settings and also serves as a basis for the research questions guiding this study. Although these theories address the content focus of the study, the theoretical foundation for the methods and directions of the study was phenomenology. I will provide an in-depth discussion of this research method in Chapter 3.

Research Questions

Both the Readiness Model and the PBS Model are ideologies that determine whether and how teachers use restraints and/or seclusion on students. Thus, these models have piqued my curiosity in desiring to understand the following research questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of K-12 students, teachers, and parents who have been involved with the use of restraints and/or seclusion in alternative school settings?
2. How have the participants' lived experiences regarding restraint and seclusion affected their lives?
3. Based on the participants' experiences and reflections on those experiences, what suggestions/recommendations would the participants make to school

professionals related to the use of restraints and/or seclusion in school settings?

To obtain answers to these questions, I completed a phenomenological study.

In this chapter, I discussed the history of restraints and seclusion, demonstrated how these practices transitioned into public schools, and overviewed and analyzed research studies based on these interventions. I also presented my conceptual framework. Finally, I reviewed my research questions. As I demonstrated in this chapter, I found no studies focused on the lived experiences of students, teachers, and parents involved with physical restraints and/or seclusion in school settings. I found no studies that discussed the impact of these interventions on the lives of these individuals. Thus, my research study offered a start to filling in these gaps with restraints and seclusion in school settings. In the forthcoming chapter, I discuss the methods I used to select participants, gather and analyze data, and draw conclusions.

Chapter III

METHODS

In this chapter, I will discuss my subjectivity and how it affected the results of my research. I will explain phenomenology and describe the phenomenological theories of prominent phenomenologists used in the study. I will depict my research settings, participants, and sampling techniques/criteria. I shall then disclose the participant recruitment methods and procedures for collecting data and analyzing data. Finally, I will review validity issues.

Subjectivity

Alan Peshkin (1998), author of “In Search of Subjectivity,” defined subjectivity as personal qualities of researchers that affect the results of their research. Peshkin identified personal qualities as researchers’ “classes, statuses, and values” (p. 17). He noted investigators cannot eliminate their subjectivity when conducting research. Instead, Peshkin declared they must be aware that their subjectivity will affect every aspect of their research. As a qualitative researcher, several of my personal qualities have affected my study on physical restraints and/or seclusion of students in school settings.

Early Life

I am an African American, and I grew up in a middle class, two parent household. My father is a retired correctional officer and is now a small business owner. My mother retired from the U.S. government and currently works as a librarian. Both of my parents grew up on farms where their parents taught them lessons of spirituality, hard

work, perseverance, giving back to the community, and the importance of family. They passed these same values on to my sister and me.

Our family motto is “Every generation must do better than the past generation.” My parents demonstrated this philosophy to me by integrating into an all-White neighborhood in southern Georgia. Upon moving, they faced considerable resistance from some of the residents who did not want African Americans living next door to them. As a child, I can recall neighbors placing for sale signs in our front yard and putting anonymous letters saying “no coons allowed” in our mailbox. Neighborhood children used to tease me by saying, “You are going to drive down the property values.” Despite these negative actions, my parents refused to move. Today, they continue to live in this same integrated neighborhood, which now contains three other African American families. My parents’ actions planted seeds in me that assisted me in overcoming one of my biggest obstacles in my life: being placed in special education classes.

Special Education Classes

At the age of seven, I moved from Washington, D.C. to Valdosta, GA, and school officials placed me in special education classes due to a speech impediment. In these classes, my classmates consisted of students who were nonverbal, blind, and severely mentally disabled. I witnessed teachers use mechanical, chemical, and physical restraints on the students, which put a great deal of fear in me as a youth. To add insult to injury, my general education classmates ridiculed my special education classmates and me by calling us “slow.” Some of the individuals insulted me specifically by labeling me “Stuttering Cedric.”

As I was in special education classes, I fell behind in grade level and was highly

discouraged. Undeterred by my hardships, my parents never gave up, and they worked tirelessly to ensure that I received extra help with my class assignments. Their efforts paid off when my fourth-grade teacher made the decision to take me out of these classes and put me in the gifted program due to my high standardized test scores. Despite my educational successes, I never forgot my experiences in special education. These events influenced my career decision to become a special education teacher and a community counselor in order to help others in need. The values my parents passed onto me as well as my life experiences created a curiosity and desire to explore the lived experiences of students, teachers, and parents affected by restraints and/or seclusion use in alternative school settings. Thus, I completed a phenomenological study to explore this interest. A discussion of phenomenology will take place in the upcoming section.

What Is Phenomenology?

Imagine a supervisor is forced to lay off employees because sales have declined due to a poor economy, and a phenomenologist is conducting research on the company. The researcher would not be concerned with how the company plans to increase sales. Nor would he be worried if the company went bankrupt following the layoffs. Instead, the phenomenologist would be interested in the supervisor's experiences of having to make such a decision. Further, he would be curious how the employees experienced the layoffs and how their lives were impacted.

Phenomenologists are concerned with phenomena, or individuals' lived experiences (Patton, 2002). Patton noted phenomena can take a variety of forms. For example, he described phenomena as emotions such as happiness, sadness, and hatred. Patton depicted phenomena in "relationships, marriages, or jobs" (p. 105). He stated that

individuals can be seen studying phenomena within schools, businesses, or churches.

Like Patton, Mark Vagle (2014), a phenomenologist, provided a description of phenomenology. He stated that phenomena are not viewed as belonging to individuals, but to societies of which individuals are a part. In other words, individuals do not have ownership of phenomena they experience, the society does. Vagle described phenomena in three different ways-*encounters*, *ways of living*, and *crafts*.

Phenomena can consist of *encounters* (Vagle, 2014). Vagle referred to encounters as situations individuals experience without having to ask many questions because individuals already understand the encounter. My example of an encountered phenomena is imagining a Middle Eastern foreign exchange student sitting in an introductory U.S. college lecture about foreign policy relations between Arabs and Israelis. The student naturally understands his professor's discussion topics because these policies have affected the student most of his life. Hence, he does not have to ask the professor very many questions. Instead, the student will be able to add more information to class discussions because he has had frequent experiences with Middle Eastern foreign policy.

Ways of living is another depiction of phenomena (Vagle, 2014). Vagle used this descriptor to emphasize that changes are always inevitable. My understanding of Vagle's ways of living phenomena can be realized in a teacher-based situation. Some teachers never imagined that students with disabilities would be educated in the same classrooms as students without disabilities, yet that is currently the case. Previously, general education teachers only taught students without disabilities, and special education teachers exclusively educated students with disabilities. Federal and state legislatures passed laws requiring educators to teach each type of student in the same classrooms. The

law changed a teacher's way of life and way of functioning in classrooms, resulting in a change of life phenomena.

Vagle's (2014) final description of phenomena involved seeing phenomena as *crafts*. He declared individuals should not just settle in life, but they should continually strive to improve their lives. From my perspective, this can best be illustrated by a student wanting to become a therapist. The student obtains her undergraduate and graduate degrees to achieve this goal. Following graduate school, she goes into private practice. As the student continues to work in the field, she does not limit her learning to her collegiate coursework. Instead, the student continues to sharpen her craft by engaging in continuing education courses and reading often about the latest information on therapy. The phenomena of lifelong learning are evident in the way she crafted her personal growth.

Patton (2002) and Vagle (2014) provided unique definitions and descriptions of phenomena. After consulting the works of these qualitative researchers, along with another phenomenologist, Irving Seidman (2013), I was able to craft a combination of their approaches to phenomenology to answer my research questions on the impact of restraints and/or seclusion on the lives of students, teachers, and parents. In the upcoming section, I will describe my research settings, participants, sampling techniques, and recruitment methods.

Research Settings

The Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS) schools are alternative public schools serving students diagnosed with emotional and behavioral disorders. Currently in Georgia, there are 24 sites (GNETS, 2015). I met with the GNETS

director of the southern region and obtained permission to conduct my study at the program's three school sites, which are located in three South Georgia counties. I referred to each of these sites as the T. Z. Academy to protect the confidentiality of each site. Each of these sites consists of a coordinator who acts in the role as a case manager. A director, who acts in the capacity as a principal and is located off campus supervises the coordinator and staff. The T. Z. Academy does not have an on-campus principal or an assistant principal that handles discipline. Teachers handle student discipline within their classrooms. Teachers at each of these sites are trained in using physical restraints. Only two of the sites use seclusion rooms. The Department of Education forbids the other site from using a seclusion room after a former student sued the site for using their seclusion room inappropriately. The GNETS schools in South Georgia consist of 400 students and 65 teachers. I chose these three sites for my research study because of their location and proximity to me. School leadership teams place students in these schools because students engage in repeated classroom misbehaviors such as physical aggressions and classroom disruptions in regular classroom settings (GNETS, 2015).

The student and teacher populations at the GNETS sites allowed me to select participants to accomplish the goals of my research endeavors. A description of my research participants is discussed in the next section.

Participants

The research study used four students, four teachers, and four parents. The ages of the students were 11, 12, 13, and 17 years. Two of the students were African Americans, and two were European American. Two of the students were male, and two were female. The grade levels of the students were fifth, sixth, seventh, and eleventh. From 2013-2016,

the number of restraints the student participants experienced was 8, 15, 18, and 20, respectively. Also, during the 2013-2016 time period, the number of seclusions for the student participants was 0, 5, 11, and 15.

The teachers' ages were 28, 48, 51, and 52 years. Two of the teachers were African American, one teacher was Latin American, and one teacher was European American. Two of the teachers were male, and two were female. The teacher participants had between 6 and 14 years of teaching experience. The number of teacher participants' restraint incidences for the 2013-2016 period ranged between 8 and 43 episodes. During this time, the number of participants' seclusions of students was between 3 and 22 episodes.

For the parents, the ages ranged from 29 to 38 years. Two of the parents were African Americans, one was Mexican American, and one was European American. Three of the parents were female, and one was male. For the 2013-2016 period, the number of restraints the parents' children participated in was between 9 and 19. During this time period, the number of seclusions for the parents' children ranged from 4 to 16 episodes.

Table 1

Student Participant Demographic Information

Pseudonym	Age	Grade	Gender/ Ethnicity	# Times of Restrained	# of Times Secluded	Total Interview Time
Mark	12	6th	Male/ European American	20	0	139 min.
Johnathan	11	5th	Male/ African American	8	5	98 min.
Susan	13	7th	Female/ European American	15	15	100 min.
Kelly	17	11th	Female/ African American	18	11	112 min.

Table 2

Teacher Participant Demographic Information

Pseudonym	Age	Gender/ Ethnicity	# of Teaching Years	Total # of Times Restrained Students	Total # of Times Secluded Students	Total Interview Time
Rebecca	28	Female/ African American	6	50	20	176 min.
Steven	48	Male/ European American	8	70	25	115 min.
Paul	52	Male/ African American	10	70	40	97 min.
Hope	51	Female/ Latin American	14	30	11	105 min.

Table 3

Parent Participant Demographic Information

Pseudonym	Age	Gender/ Ethnicity	# of Times Child Restrained	# of Times Child Secluded	Total Interview Time
George	38	Male/ European American	13	15	91 min.
Heather	29	Female/ Mexican American	10	4	86 min.
Karla	35	Female/ African American	19	16	112 min.
Shelly	30	Female/ African American	9	6	122 min.

My research participants were diverse in terms of age, ethnicity, and gender. In selecting these individuals, I followed a selective criterion because of the nature of my research questions. An explanation of this process is forthcoming.

Sampling Techniques/Criteria

The research project used purposive sampling techniques. I chose this approach because I was not looking to make generalizations about a population. Instead, I wanted to focus on unique characteristics of individuals to address my research questions. For the research project, I desired to use between 4-5 students, 4-5 teachers, and 4-5 parents. Because I was working with human beings, I completed an Institutional Review Board (IRB) Form (See Appendix E). Initially, I required students to be under the age of 12 and to have been restrained and/or secluded at least five times. As I was not able to find

enough of these participants, I submitted a revised change to the Valdosta State University Institutional Review Board after I received interest from other age groups at the GNETS schools (See Appendix E). The change resulted in the age requirement being altered from under the age of 12 to under the age of 19. I required educators to have restrained and/or secluded students at least five times while employed at a GNETS Program from 2013-2016. Teachers needed to have taught at least 5 years at a GNETS Program and participated in at least five restraints and/or seclusions from 2013-2016. I originally sought parents who had a child under the age of 12 whom school officials had restrained and/or secluded at least five times while enrolled at a GNETS Program from 2013-2016. After I received permission from the IRB, parents with children under the age of 19 could participate in my study. Students I interviewed did not have to be related to the parents I interviewed and vice versa. Teachers who participated in the study were not required to have restrained and/or secluded a student who participated in the study.

In my research study, I was concerned about understanding the experiences of individuals affected by restraints and/or seclusion in alternative school settings. The selection criteria allowed me to focus on students, teachers, and parents who possessed unique characteristics who could provide information to address my research questions. Once these criteria were defined, I began to recruit research participants for my study. I will discuss my recruitment procedure in the next section.

Recruitment

For recruitment, I used two methods. I sent out an email with an attached flyer on the GNETS' listserve (See Appendix F), of which I am a part, detailing my study to teachers at the three sites. The GNETS Director previously gave me permission to use

this tool. Each site's principal also granted me permission to provide students with flyers requesting participation from parents and children in my study (See Appendix F). I emailed the same flyers containing my contact information to teachers. Potential participants contacted me, and I sent them a demographic questionnaire to be completed by email or in-person to determine if they met the criteria for my study (See Appendix G). Participants had to complete questionnaires within 5 days. I gave participants the option of emailing me their responses or placing the forms in boxes I setup up at each site called "Mr. Roberts' Research Study." I previously received permission from the GNETS director to place boxes at each site. I then reviewed each form to determine if the participants met the research study criteria. For applicants who did not meet the criteria, I shredded their questionnaires and sent the participants thank you cards for completing the forms. Participants who met the criteria were notified by phone or email that they had been selected. At that point, I set up a day, a time, and a setting to meet with them to start interviewing.

Initially, I selected five students, five teachers, and five parents, but I encountered various problems with my interview participants. I could not complete my interview process with one of the students because his mother violated a Department of Family and Children Services protective order, and his mother's case worker placed him into foster care. Further, I initially interviewed a teacher, but I could not complete the interview process with the teacher because he resigned from his position during the interview process for undisclosed reasons. Finally, I started the interview process with one of the parents, but I was unable to complete the process because the parent received military orders to deploy to Afghanistan. My sample size was reduced to four students, four

teachers, and four parents.

Following the recruitment phase, I began data collection procedures during which I interviewed four students, four teachers, and four parents (See Appendix A). These procedures are discussed in the next section.

Data Collection Procedures

I desired to interview participants outside of school settings, but I let the participants choose where and when interviews occurred. The settings chosen were in schools, libraries, and homes. I conducted each interview face-to-face and recorded each interview using an audio recorder. After completing the interviews, I transcribed interviews within 48 hours.

Prior to interviewing students, I discussed two of my interview policies. I explained to parents and students that if parents wanted to sit in on an interview and students did not want parents present, then I would honor the parents' wishes. If students did not comply, I would immediately end the interview. No parents sat in on any of the interviews with the students.

At the initial interview, I provided and explained the Valdosta State University Informed Consent Forms (See Appendix H; See Appendix I). For participants under the age of 18, I also supplied and explained the Valdosta State University Child Assent Form to them and their guardians (See Appendix J). At the start of each interview, I clarified to interviewees that their participation was voluntary, and they could refrain from answering questions they were not comfortable answering. I told my subjects that participants could stop the interview process at any time, and I would discard any interview data I obtained.

When interviewing students, teachers, and parents, I used Vagle's (2014)

interview approach and modified Seidman's (2013) in-depth phenomenological interview technique. I used Vagle's unstructured interview format, in which I did not ask each participant the same questions in the same manner because I desired for each interview to be individualized instead of generic. For example, during the first interview for Mark, a student, I asked him to tell me about his earliest memory of school. In another first interview with Johnathan, also a student, I asked him to describe his life as a child. Vagle's approach allowed me to learn how each research participant experienced restraints and/or seclusion.

Seidman's (2013) method consisted of three different types of interviews. In the first Seidman interview, researchers ask participants to detail their life histories up until the time they experienced the phenomena. In the second interview, I asked interviewees to go into detail about their experiences with the phenomena. For the final interview, participants reconstructed meaning out of their life experiences from information given during the previous interviews.

I used Seidman's (2013) technique in several ways. I conducted three separate interviews for each participant at 2-week intervals. These interviews lasted up to 90 minutes each (See Appendix A). Many of the participants knew I was a special education teacher, and I believe they did not have to use a lot of their interview times explaining technical terms such as seclusion or restraint. Also, the participants were aware I was familiar with several of the policies and procedures at the three sites, which may explain why many of interviews did not last at least 90 minutes, which is the typical time length for researchers using Seidman's interview technique (Seidman, 2013).

In the first Seidman (2013) interview, I asked participants open-ended questions

about their life histories and the events leading up to the participants experiencing restraints and/or seclusion. For example, when interviewing Rebecca, a teacher, I asked her to describe her experiences growing up on a farm. During the second Seidman interview, I asked each individual deeper and more specific open-ended questions for the purposes of receiving concrete details about their involvement with restraints and/or seclusion. In Rebecca's case, during the second interview, I asked her about her feelings on restraining students. For the final Seidman interview, I probed participants to reflect on the meanings of their experiences with restraints and/or seclusion and how these experiences may affect them in the future. Hence, I asked Rebecca to reflect on how her life has been affected after restraining and secluding students. After each interview, I analyzed my interview data. The data analysis process is described in the following section.

Data Analysis Procedures

In my research study, I completed three different interview transcripts on my research participants. I used Mark Vagle's (2014) whole-parts-whole process to analyze transcribed data. The steps to the six-part method are as follows:

1. Holistic readings of the entire text
2. First line-by-line readings
3. Follow-up questions
4. Second line-by-line readings
5. Third line-by-line readings
6. Subsequent readings.

I will demonstrate this technique by describing how I used it with Rebecca, a

teacher. I used an audio recorder to record each of Rebecca's interviews. Following the interviews, I transcribed interview data and completed transcripts by indicating pauses and noting emotions. Once transcripts were completed, I listened to the audio recorder two different times to ensure that the interview transcripts were accurate representations of the interview, and I made corrections if needed. Following this procedure, I reviewed the interview transcripts with Rebecca through a process called member checking, during which we analyzed transcripts for errors (Maxwell, 2013). If errors were identified, I immediately corrected them.

The next step began within 48 hours of the interviews. I used the whole-parts-whole process on the edited transcripts without taking notes for the purposes of reacquainting myself with Rebecca's interview data. Following this process, I conducted an in-depth reading of her transcript through *first line-by-line readings* where I took notes on Rebecca's interview data, formed additional questions to be used for the second interview with Rebecca, and jotted down my thoughts on the phenomena demonstrated in Rebecca's first and subsequent interviews through a practice called *bridling* (Vagle, 2014). According to Vagle, bridling "allows one to harness what is being read and thought" (p. 99). In using this process, I created a notebook where I wrote down my thoughts and assumptions about the phenomena I observed in each of Rebecca's interviews. I revisited each of my assumptions prior to and after completing successive interviews for the purposes of creating more defined assumptions about the observed phenomena. I illustrate bridling in the following first interview excerpt on Rebecca. I asked Rebecca what made her become a teacher. She stated the following:

I switched careers because I wanted to help kids. I also wanted to be on the other

side of the spectrum and not be considered the ‘bad guy.’ When families are on the other side looking at you because you are their DFCS worker, there is a negative light shed on you from them. Most families believe DFCS just wants to take your kids, which is not the case. I figure that in the education system that it would be different because you are trying to help kids be where they need to be.

Through the process of bridling, I made the following notation:

Rebecca believes society portrays DFCS negatively because the agency is responsible for taking away children who live in unfit homes. Rebecca switched careers because she did not want to be viewed in this manner. She became a teacher because she wanted to help students to become successful in life.

There are additional steps in Vagle’s whole-parts-whole technique that I used to analyze Rebecca’s interview transcripts. I re-reviewed Rebecca’s first interview transcript and formed follow-up questions. For example, during the first interview, I asked Rebecca to describe her least fondest memory as a teacher, and she recalled an incident where a student physically assaulted her, which led to Rebecca and her paraprofessional restraining the student. In the second interview, I used information from this question to have Rebecca describe how she started restraining students as a teacher. After forming additional questions, I conducted another reading of the transcript, which Vagle called *second line-by-line readings*. During this reading, I made more notes on Rebecca’s observed phenomena, and I formed more interview questions. Following this step, I then cut and pasted highlighted parts of Rebecca’s first interview excerpt into a new document to create her phenomenological experience (Vagle, 2014). For example, some of the information I pasted into the new document were Rebecca’s experiences growing up on a

farm, her involvement at DFCS, and a student injuring Rebecca with a chair, which formed parts of her phenomenological experience.

I completed two more final steps when analyzing Rebecca's first interview transcripts. In the first part, I completed *third line-by-line readings* where I provided my analytical analysis on Rebecca's excerpts placed in the new document (Vagle, 2014). In the new document, I created Rebecca's phenomenological experience. I made the following statement about this experience:

Rebecca grew up on a farm where she had to tend to animals and provide crops to others in needs. As a result of these values, Rebecca developed a passion for helping special education students in need by ensuring that all students reached their highest potential.

In the final step, I performed additional readings on Rebecca's transcript. In the process of reviewing Rebecca's transcript, I also interviewed other teachers, students, and parents. I conducted Vagle's whole-parts-whole method on each of these individuals' transcripts. I looked for similar patterns across each individuals' transcript. Whenever I identified a pattern, I classified it as a theme. I shall demonstrate this process with excerpts from teachers Rebecca, Steven, Paul, and Hope.

- Rebecca (teacher): "Normally, I develop relationships with my students, which helps me avoid having to restrain or seclude them."
- Paul (teacher): "Teams consisting of principals, teachers, parents, and students should meet quarterly to review restraint and seclusion incidents for the purposes of evaluating or improving school officials' use of these methods."

- Hope (teacher): “Relationships, relationships, relationships between parents, students, and school staff are important to reducing restraint use.”

After examining these excerpts, I noticed a pattern of teachers believing that school officials forming relationships with students and parents could reduce or minimize seclusion or restraint use. Thus, I classified this as a theme. I continued this process with each of my other interview participants, and I identified 17 different themes. While conducting this process, I evaluated my validity issues, which are discussed in the subsequent section.

Validity

When completing this research study, there were several validity issues I addressed. First, I explored ways that I could have been wrong (Maxwell, 2013). Prior to interviewing participants, I had to come to the realization that restraints and seclusion may not have affected students, teachers, and parents. Further, the impact of these practices could have been minimal. If this were the case, I would have been very disappointed due to being unable to record any remarkable or shocking experiences that highlighted the dangers of these practices. Additionally, I had to be cognizant that during interviews, participants may view these interventions as nonhazardous. In fact, they could have possibly considered these procedures as safe and not understand the importance of my research study.

To minimize my validity issues in this area, I had to be willing to accept the possibility that I could have been wrong yet not believe my research efforts were a complete failure. After spending countless hours researching this topic, I learned a lot. As a doctoral student, I have found in the dissertation process that sometimes researchers’

views towards research problems are wrong. In cases where that happens, opportunities are still created for future research ideas, and the non-example can also provide valuable learning experiences.

Second, I had to account for bias (Maxwell, 2013). I have several biases towards restraints and seclusion in schools. As I stated earlier, I have counseled individuals affected by these practices and engaged in these methods with students. I have mixed reactions towards school officials using these procedures. In some cases, I am convinced teachers are justified in using these measures when students are threats to themselves or others. In other cases, I believe teachers unfairly restrain and/or seclude students when they use these methods for punishment. Moreover, I am certain that there are several untold stories of students, teachers, and parents who have been impacted in ways of which we are not aware by these procedures. As a counselor, I am trained to use questioning techniques representing my life views and sometimes not the interviewees' perspectives.

According to Maxwell (2013), I cannot eliminate my biases, but I need to recognize my biases towards my research and work to contain them. Prior to interviewing participants, I brainstormed questions that refrained from my life views. I had my questions cleared through committee members to check for possible biases. In my research, I conducted three separate interviews with participants. After each interview, I reviewed audio recordings and listened for any biased questions I asked participants and made adjustments to questions for upcoming interviews.

I paid close attention to my reactivity when selecting study participants (Maxwell, 2013). It was very difficult to eliminate my reactivity because I was very familiar with

each setting I used in my research study. I understood the problems each setting presented when faced with restraints and seclusion. Also, I knew many of the potential participants because I attended several trainings and meetings with them.

To minimize my reactivity, I desired to interview participants away from school settings, but I asked participants to select the settings. During interviews, I avoided leading questions at all costs. Because I knew many of the potential participants, I selected participants using purposive sampling techniques. This technique allowed me to select participants who answered my research questions but whom I selected based on pre-selection criteria.

Finally, I used two elements from Maxwell's (2013) checklist, which were rich data and respondent validation. Maxwell stated that researchers collect rich data during interviews by transcribing interviews instead of simply taking notes on what they thought was important during interviews. Following each interview, I transcribed interviews and memoed my reactions. After completing each interview transcript, I used respondent validation, which is also called member checking, according to Maxwell. I allowed participants to review transcripts to make sure I did not misinterpret what they were conveying during an interview. If an error was found, I immediately completed a revised transcript.

In this chapter, I discussed my subjectivity and research methods. I described my research settings, participants, and sampling techniques. I also explained my recruitment methods, data collection procedures, and data analysis methods. Finally, I reviewed my validity issues and how these issues affected my research based on explaining the phenomena of the lived experiences of students, teachers, and parents affected by

restraints and/or seclusion. In the upcoming chapter, I will explain my results by introducing each participant, telling the participants' stories, reflecting on my interview experiences with the participants, and summarizing each student, teacher, and parent group.

Chapter IV

NARRATIVES

In my research study, I explored the lived experiences of K-12 students, teachers, and parents who have been involved with the use of restraints and/or seclusion in alternative school settings. I conducted this project because I participated in restraints and seclusion of students. From these experiences, I was affected emotionally and physically. Upon researching this topic, I discovered that there was little research that existed, despite these procedures being used daily in public school settings. I decided to use a qualitative approach to address my curiosity in this field because as Patton (2002) noted, “Qualitative methods facilitate study of issues in depth and detail” (p. 14). Maxwell (2013) stated that when researchers use qualitative methods, “the designs are flexible rather than fixed, and inductive rather than following a strict sequence or derived from an initial decision” (p. 2). Within the field of qualitative research, there is a research approach called phenomenology, which explores human experiences (Patton, 2002). As I was concerned about lived experiences, I decided to use this research design to address the following research questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of K-12 students, teachers, and parents who have been involved with the use of restraints and/or seclusion in alternative school settings?
2. How have the participants’ lived experiences regarding restraints and seclusion affected their lives?

3. Based on the participants' experiences and reflections on those experiences, what suggestions/recommendations would the participants make to school professionals related to the use of restraints and/or seclusion in school settings?

I obtained data to answer these research questions by interviewing four students, four teachers, and four parents (See Appendix A). I conducted three different interviews with each participant, recorded each interview, transcribed data, and made transcripts. The first interview was based on the individuals' life histories up to the point where they experienced the phenomena of restraints and/or seclusion. The second interview focused on each participants' experiences with the phenomena. The final interview concentrated on the participants' reflections upon the phenomena and how their lives have changed as a result. Following each interview, I used Vagle's (2014) whole-parts-whole data analysis technique to analyze each transcript where I restructured the interview data to construct a narrative of each interviewees' phenomenological experiences, as I understood them, as opposed to the transcript structure of the order in which we spoke about the experiences. I then identified themes and organized the themes into categories.

In this chapter, I will describe my participants whom I assigned and identified with pseudonyms. I shall then present the results of my findings in relation to the above listed research questions and cite the themes from my results.

Participant Narratives

I made the decision to use a phenomenological study because I wanted to understand the experiences of students, teachers, and parents involved with restraints and/or seclusion in school settings. During interviews, I recorded each individuals' lived experiences related to these interventions. In the upcoming section, I will tell the stories

of each participant I interviewed for the purposes of allowing readers to understand the essence of their experiences with these practices. In telling the stories, I presented the participants' stories from a first-person point of view. To ensure the stories were readable, I eliminated words such as "um" and "ah" and excluded repeated words and phrases. I did not use the real names of my interviewees; instead, I assigned and used pseudonyms to protect their identities.

Students

Mark

Let me introduce you. Mark is in the sixth grade and is a European American male. He resides in a two-parent household and lives on a farm. His psychiatrist diagnosed him with Emotional Behavior Disorder (EBD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) as an adolescent. An Individualized Education Program (IEP) team placed Mark into a Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Supports (GNETS) Program during the fourth grade because he was involved in multiple fights with students and school staff.

Mark's story. I am the baby child and the only child in my parents' home. I have three brothers and one sister. They all tell me that I am spoiled because my parents always let me get my way. They also tell me that I was an accident because my parents did not plan me. My brothers and sister were out of the house before I was born. When my mother was pregnant, she slipped and fell while mopping the kitchen floor. I was born early. I had to stay in the hospital for 5 months because I never gained any weight and had a brain injury. Every year, I get my brain scanned because I have headaches all the time. My mother thinks that my brain injury causes me to misbehave. I hate going

inside of the brain machine because it is too cold. I will be glad when I no longer have to keep getting scans.

My teachers have always told me that I was very bad. I have been kicked out of every school I have attended for fighting. When I was little, I could not stay in Pre-K because I fought four different kids for bothering me. I have no friends because everyone is afraid of me. People at school call me “Bones” because whenever I fight, I always try to hurt someone in a way that they will always remember me. Teachers do not like me because they always say I have a bad attitude. I guess they are right because I don’t like to be messed with.

Since I was six, I have been to several doctors for my behavior. My parents sent me to a place like Greenleaf—an in-patient counseling facility—for hitting my mom in the face and kicking my dad. Looking back at it, I don’t know why I did it. I had a headache that would not go away, and I just blanked out in my mind and lost it. I stayed there for 3 weeks. To be honest, I did not listen to those counselors. I only went there because they cook very good food. My doctor released me, and I was sent to the T. Z. Academy.

My reputation as Bones followed me to the T. Z. Academy. On my first day of school, I overheard some teachers talking about me. One teacher said that I needed to be in a hospital and should never be allowed at school. The other teacher said that I was nothing more than a bully who needed to be taught a lesson. I liked hearing what they were saying because it only made me realize that they were weak and scared of me. I decided to terrorize every student and teacher that I came across. This backfired on me. I found out that the teachers were not afraid of students, and they had no problem

restraining you. My teachers restrained me for talking back, bothering other students, sleeping in class, and being disrespectful. I think I was restrained at least 10 times during my first school year at the T. Z. Academy. I learned very quickly that T. Z. teachers were a lot different than my normal teachers. They don't play the radio.

As a sixth grader, I still do not like going to the T. Z. Academy. The teachers are very mean, and they still restrain you for no reason. Teachers have restrained me five times this school year, and at least 20 times since I have been at the academy. I mostly have been retrained for trying to fight other students. Teachers restraining me is getting very old because I hate for someone to throw me onto the ground and place their body on top of me so that I cannot move. Sometimes, I am unable to breathe. All I can do whenever a teacher is on top of me is scream and cry. After a restraint is over with, I am very sore for several days. One time, I could not lift my arm without it hurting because a teacher had me laying on it for a long period of time during a restraint.

During the fifth grade, a teacher broke my arm during a restraint. Prior to the restraint, I hit another student for trying me. He knew I had a girlfriend, and he kept trying to make me and my girlfriend breakup. I felt disrespected, and I beat him up. I was getting the best of him, and a teacher stepped in and broke up the fight. I then hit the teacher on accident. I did not mean to this time around. The teacher threw me onto the ground and landed onto my arm. I heard my arm make a "pop" sound. All I could do was hold it and scream out in pain. The teacher got off me, and all I could remember was screaming that my arm was broken. I had to wear a cast for 3 months. My parents were pissed and thought about suing the school.

I am afraid of going back into that teacher's classroom because I do not want to

be restrained or see other students restrained. I just don't see the point in teachers restraining students. All teachers should do is send students to detention or call their parents. I never had to worry about a teacher injuring me at my regular school. I only became injured there when I caused the injury myself by fighting other students. I cannot wait to leave the T. Z. Academy and return to my regular school because teachers do not restrain students there.

An Opportunity Room sounds like a good idea for a school to use to take bad students. My school does not use an Opportunity Room. After you described the room, I think that it is a better way for teachers to calm down students instead of restraining them. Anything is better than teachers putting their bodies on top of you and holding you down. At my school, teachers are only supposed to restrain students when they are a danger to themselves or others. Teachers have restrained me for having a bad day before coming to school, and I did not even hit another student or cause harm to myself. If teachers would have taken me into an Opportunity Room, then they could have separated me away from the rest of my classmates and asked me what was wrong. I would have been glad to tell them. Once I was calm, they could have returned me back into the classroom. I can see how teachers use Opportunity Rooms for students.

From my time at the T. Z. Academy, I have several ideas for teachers to follow who restrain students. First, teachers must understand that students are people too and not animals. I feel like a caged animal whenever someone is on top of me. Second, teachers should not restrain students because they do not like them. I think some of my restraints were caused because my regular school teachers told my T. Z. Academy teachers about my reputation, which made the T. Z. Academy teachers not like me. Teachers should

only restrain students when students hurt others. Third, teachers must understand that they are bigger than us. I weigh only 120 pounds, and my teachers weigh at least 200 pounds or more. When they restrain me, I have problems breathing because of their extra weight. Finally, teachers should try to talk to students first, which may avoid restraints. That is why I like the Opportunity Room because I believe it is a place where teachers can talk to you instead of yelling at you like during a restraint.

Reflections on Mark. During interviews, I met with Mark at his home along with his mother and two brothers. His father was never home during the interviews. His two younger brothers attempted to play with him prior to the start of each of the interviews. Mark never wanted his brothers to bother him. He often responded to his brothers by saying, "Get the hell out of my face because you are making my head hurt." I also heard him tell his mother and siblings "I can't stand you dumb motherfuckers." Whenever Mark talked in this manner, I observed his mother telling him to stop using profanity and be respectful to his brothers. Mark then talked back to his mother, and his mother would say nothing else.

At the start of the second interview, Mark's mother verbally reprimanded him again for disrespecting his brothers. Mark responded to his mother by saying, "Shut the fuck up." The mother pretended to ignore Mark despite being a couple of feet away from him. After completing the interviews, I discovered that Mark did not just bully teachers and students at school, but he also bullied family members.

Prior to engaging in bad behaviors, Mark complains about his head hurting. His earlier head injury could be a reason he gets into multiple fights. Mark experienced four different headaches during our interviews. I noticed that his tone changed from being

very calm and mellow to nervous and impatient whenever he complained that his head was hurting. I stopped the interviews several different times so that Mark could compose himself. I asked Mark if he desired to continue with the interview process. He replied, “Yes,” and I continued each time. In the interviews, I learned that Mark enjoys his reputation of being a violent person towards others. For example, whenever I addressed him with his first name of Mark on some occasions, he told me to refer to him as “Bones.” Whenever I called him this name, he often smiled and became a lot more interested in answering the interview questions.

Teachers have restrained Mark numerous times, which has caused him to develop negative perceptions towards these procedures. He does not like to be touched. I tried to shake his hand numerous times, and he would not extend his hand. Each time an educator restrains Mark, he reflects on the time that his arm was broken, and he fears that teachers will break another one of his limbs. This negative experience is the reason he likes the idea of teachers using Opportunity Rooms because he views these areas as safe locations where educators will not restrain, touch, or injury him.

Jonathan

Let me introduce you. Unlike Mark, Johnathan shared a different perspective. He is in the fifth grade and an African American male. Johnathan lives in a single parent household with his mother. Johnathan’s psychiatrist diagnosed him with EBD. He disclosed that his IEP Team placed him into a GNETS school due to him frequently engaging in emotional outbursts and classroom disruptions.

Johnathan’s story. I have been living in Georgia since I was born. I can’t stand the heat. It is always too hot in the summer, and we never have a snowy winter. When I

grow up, I want to leave Georgia and go somewhere where it is cold all the time. I watch the travel channel all the time, and I want to go somewhere like Europe. I have big dreams, and I don't ever want to live in Georgia again because I need to live somewhere else.

My mom and I are very poor. We live in the "PJ's" a.k.a. the projects. It seems like there is a shooting everyday where I live. I can't go outside and play because my mom is afraid someone is going to rob or hurt me. I have friends that live near me and go to my same school, but my mom does not allow me to play with them. I play with them at school though. Last night, one of my friends had to go to the hospital because his stepdad beat him up. I was sad because that type of stuff happens in the PJ's every day. I just want to grow up and move away because there is too much drama that goes on where I live.

It has always been me and my mom. I don't have a relationship with my pops. I mean I see him around the neighborhood, and I speak to him. But, I just don't hang around him. I don't want a relationship with him because he is only my sperm donor. He does not pay any child support or help me and mom out in anyway. He has a girlfriend who has three kids, and I see him spend time with them all the time. It makes me very sad because he cares nothing about me. I look just like him. I will never turn my back on my kids when I get grown because I know what it is like for your pops not to love you.

My mom told me that she met him when she was 16. She became pregnant with me a few months later and had to drop out of high school to get a job because my nanna and papa were very poor and could not take care of another child. My mom was an honor roll student, and she was going to college to play basketball. She would have made it to

the WNBA—Women’s National Basketball Association—because she was that good. It is funny how life turns out. One minute you are up and then you are down.

To take care of me, my mom has had a lot of jobs. At one time, she worked at a truck stop. During another time, she worked for a call center and a hotel. Now, she works at a fast food restaurant and a nursing home. Her schedule is crazy. She goes from one job to the next job, and she does not get a lot of sleep. When she is not off, I stay with my nanna. She is my favorite person in the world, and she likes me around because my papa died 2 years ago. My nanna will do anything for me. On my birthday this year, she bought me a hover board because my mom did not have enough money to afford one. Whenever I am down, she encourages me to do better. My nanna always tells me that I can do anything in Christ. I simply need to believe.

I am afraid that my nanna maybe dying soon because she has cancer. She has had cancer for the last 5 years, and I have been helping her through it. My nanna has breast cancer, and her doctors have already cut off one of her breasts. On some days, she has all of her strength. On other days, she is very weak from taking chemo. I don’t know what I am going to do if she dies because she is always there for me. Life is not fair sometimes.

Several men have been in and out of my life because my mom has had several boyfriends. I do not care for most of her boyfriends because they hit my mom and use drugs. She had one boyfriend that I liked whose name was Tony, her last boyfriend. He used to take me everywhere. I have been to Atlanta, Birmingham, Knoxville, and Jackson. Jackson was my favorite place to go to because there are a lot of things to do. I miss Tony very much. Tony had a job at a furniture store, but he also sold drugs on the side. A man shot him in the face because Tony sold him some bad drugs. I was very sad

about Tony, and my mom has never gotten over Tony's death. God bless the dead. May he rest in peace.

We have had to move to a lot of places. I have been to eight different schools. It seems like once I get settled at one school that we move. I keep making new friends over and over. I also meet new teachers, whom I can't get very close to. Currently, I go to the T. Z. Academy, and this is the longest I have attended one school. I have met several friends there. I love several of the teachers there. My mom told me recently that she may have a new job, and we may move again. I hope we do not.

I love the T. Z. Academy. All my teachers are great, and they really care about me. I came to the T. Z. Academy in the third grade because I used to disrupt class by crying, screaming, and fighting all the time. I don't do well in classrooms with a lot of students. My third grade class had over 30 students when I was in regular school, and my T. Z. classroom has only six students. This makes a difference with me because I feel a lot more better in a small classroom.

This year I have been restrained four times, and I have been put in the Opportunity Room two times. I deserved to be restrained and taken to the Opportunity Room because I am just plain bad sometimes. On my last restraint, I hit another student because we were cutting jokes with each other. He said something about my mom, and I hit him. My teacher restrained me. I have also been sent to the Opportunity Room. My teachers sent me to this room twice this year because I said threatening things towards students in my classroom. I do not know why I do that sometimes. Sometimes my anger just gets the best of me.

Teachers restraining me and sending me to the Opportunity Room helps me. It

helps me get myself together. I remember only one bad incident I had when a teacher restrained me. This teacher was three times my size, and he laid across my body. I almost passed out. After the teacher got off me, I had to go to the school nurse where I was seen.

I have learned several things from teachers restraining me. If I cut up in school, then there will be consequences. It is same thing that happens in life. If someone commits a crime, then they must do the time. This is one of the reasons I do not have anything to say about teachers who restrain students. There is a reason we are sent to the T. Z. Academy. We are bad. I would rather for a teacher to stop a kid from hurting me than to be hurt. I feel very safe and comfortable in class because I know if students try to hurt me, then my teachers are going to restrain them.

Reflections on Johnathan. I met Johnathan at his home for each interview. Upon arriving at his residence, his mother instructed me to call her first. Instead of driving through the front entrance to her home where her neighbors were congregating, she directed me to come through the back entrance where no one was present. She advised me to follow this procedure because her neighbors would consider me an undercover police officer or a Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) case worker, who were hated in the neighborhood. The mother also did not want anyone to think she was “snitching” on someone by talking to me. As she stated, “Snitches get stitches where I live.”

Johnathan has numerous issues going on in his life. He does not like his home environment because of the danger of violence that exists. His mother is scared to allow him to play outside. There are frequent shootings that take place in the area. Johnathan does not see his mother often because she is working two jobs for the family’s survival.

He is very close to his grandmother, but he lives in constant fear of his grandmother dying due to having cancer. He does not have a relationship with his father despite seeing his father often around his neighborhood. Based upon my observations, these life experiences contribute to Johnathan being involved in frequent fights at school because he is upset with his life and takes out his anger on others.

The teachers at the T. Z. Academy serve as an extended family for Johnathan, which is one of the reasons he does not want to move again. Johnathan is very fond of his school environment because several of the teachers have taken an interest in his well-being by buying him school clothes, supplies, food, and household items. Prior to coming to the T. Z. Academy, whenever teachers chastised him in regular school settings, Johnathan became verbally and physically harmful to them. On the contrary, he has learned to accept the consequences of his actions whenever T. Z. Academy teachers verbally reprimand him.

Susan

Let me introduce you. Contrary to Johnathan, Susan shared a different experience. She is in the seventh grade. Susan is a European American female, and she lives with both of her parents. Her family lives in the city. In the fourth grade, Susan's doctor diagnosed her with EBD and ADHD. Shortly thereafter, she started attending a GNETS school. Susan's IEP team placed her into this school due to Susan threatening to take the lives of other students and teachers.

Susan's story. I can't stand my mother! She makes me so sick sometimes. I have a younger sister who was born with a birth defect. My mother feels sorry for her and treats her differently than me. My sister gets everything she wants. When I ask for something, I

don't get it most of time. I then complain, and my mother tells me to stop being so jealous. I just don't understand her sometimes. It is too much favoritism that goes on at home with my sister.

My father works all the time. He works at a boat company where he works overnight. He comes home after I go to school in the mornings. On most weekends, he works overtime. In his spare time, he chooses to spend time hunting instead of doing anything with me. We do not have a good relationship because he is all about himself, and I never see him.

There is one person that I admire who is my grandmother. She did not live too far from me. Before she died, I went to her house all the time. She took the time to really get to know me. I can remember times when I spent the night with her, and it was just me and her. I miss those days. My grandmother died when I was in the fourth grade. She was my rock and best friend. Upon her death, I was in a very dark place. I thought about killing myself or someone else. I was sent off to a hospital. Those were some of the hardest days of my life. All I could think about was that I was alone in the world and no one would be there for me. My mother did step up during this time. She stopped giving all her attention to my younger sister and gave me some attention. My mother told me that she could not lose both her mother and her daughter. For once in my life, I felt special. This lasted only a short period of time. My mother went back to doing what she had done before once she thought I was better. I was left alone in the world with no one to turn to.

I have never recovered from my grandmother's death. I was in regular school during this time, and I had a hard time. My teachers used to call on me to answer

questions. I shut down and would not say anything. I sat at my desk and cried all the time. My grades went from passing to failing. I went to the school counselor a lot of different times, but this did not help. My mother took me to a psychologist, and he diagnosed me with EBD and Depression. He put me on several different medications such as Zoloft, Seroquel, and Depakote. I hate taking these medications because they make you feel like a zombie, and I am not aware of what is going on around me. It is like the world is moving at a slow pace when I take those medicines.

After seeing the psychologist, some of my teachers met with my mother, and they made the decision to place me into the T. Z. Academy. I have mixed experiences with this place. Some days have been great, but other days have been bad. I had to make new friends and meet new teachers. I had an awful experience during the fifth grade. A teacher picked on me and restrained me for no reason. He restrained me for anything such as not having my school supplies, talking to neighbors, not completing classroom assignments, or sleeping in class. He was later fired for restraining me and other students for no apparent reasons. This teacher affected my life because I have a difficult time trusting teachers. I don't know if they are here to help or hurt me.

My current teacher has restrained me once this school year. As I told you before, my grandmother was my best friend. I cannot stand for anyone to say anything bad about her. This girl who does not like me called my grandmother a "bitch." I threw a desk at her, which hit her legs. My teacher slammed me onto the ground and restrained me. All I could remember was that I was screaming and trying to get out of the restraint to get to the girl. My teacher was correct when restraining me because I would have killed that bitch.

Teachers use the Opportunity Room at my school. I like this better than being restrained because teachers do not touch you. Instead, they let you sit in the room with them until you are able to calm down. Once you are calm, teachers talk to you about coming up with a plan to control your behavior in the future. This year I have been to this room once. I cursed out a student who kept bothering me. My teacher took me to this room until I was able to get myself together. My teacher then returned me back to my classroom.

There are several things teachers need to think about when restraining and secluding students. I believe restraints and seclusion should only be used if students are threats to themselves or others. They should never be used to punish children for simple misbehaviors like talking or refusing to follow instructions. That is plain dumb to inflict that type of pain on students. Also, I notice that some teachers do restraints in one way and others in another way. Teachers need to be on the same page because I don't ever want students to go through what I have experienced. They need to also realize that they are bigger than us. Students are hurting when someone is on top of them.

Reflections on Susan. I met with Susan at a local library for each interview. Susan's mother accompanied her to the library at the initial interview. I observed that there was a lot of tension between the two individuals because they did not speak to each other and made very little eye contact. Whenever the mother asked Susan a question, Susan never responded and instead rolled her eyes. Susan did not say much during the first interview because her mother was present in another room located near the interview room. On the subsequent interviews, Susan talked a lot because her mother was located outside of the library in a car. Before the start of an interview, Susan said, "I wish I had

another mother.”

Susan has never recovered from her grandmother’s death. Susan viewed her grandmother like her mother despite her real mother being in her life. She became very emotional during interviews, and I had to stop interviews to allow her to compose herself on numerous occasions. She attributes her grandmother’s passing as the reason she cannot meet her exit criteria goals to leave her GNETS school and enter back into a general classroom setting.

She has a lot of disdain for her parents, in particular her mother. Susan feels that her mother does not treat her and her sister equally. Following the second interview, Susan raised her voice at her mother and sister as they were leaving the library to go home. Susan directed profanity at her mother for treating Susan differently from her sister. Susan’s mother referred to Susan as a disrespectful and disobedient child who needs to come to terms that her grandmother is dead. The grandmother died 3 years ago. The mother desires for Susan to move on with her life and not take out her anger and frustration out on everyone due to be being upset about the grandmother’s passing. The mother shared that Susan becomes physically aggressive with anyone that refers to the grandmother negatively, and she is afraid Susan will go to jail if Susan cannot control her emotions.

Susan developed feelings of distrust with her teachers due to her traumatic experiences with her fifth-grade teacher. Susan’s experiences illustrated how some teachers use restraints to punish aversive behaviors when they should only use these procedures to prevent students from hurting themselves or others. Although she has a different teacher, she still has fears that her new teacher will restrain her for conduct

behaviors. These fears have contributed to Susan not doing well academically in school.

Kelly

Let me introduce you. Like Susan, Kelly had mixed experiences. She is in the eleventh grade and is an African American female. A foster family adopted Kelly, and she lives in an urban area. An IEP team placed Kelly into a GNETS school in the fifth grade after she engaged in emotional behaviors such as arguments with other students and fights with school staff members.

Kelly's story. My mother left me at the DFCS office when I was nine. All I could remember on that day was my mother telling me that she loved me and could no longer take care of me. She was on drugs very badly. She dropped me off at the office because her DFCS case manager informed her that a case was going to be opened because there were allegations that my mother was leaving me by myself at home at night while she went to prostitute for money. Just like that, my mother was gone out of my life.

I only remember happy times with my mother. She was very funny and always cooked. My favorite meal was fish and grits. She followed this dish up with chocolate cake. I enjoyed eating cake and ice cream with her. We sat around the table telling stories to each other about things that were happening in our lives.

Life was not all that bad with my mother. You see, we had a normal household prior to my mother getting on drugs. My father was living with us. I can remember us going on vacations and doing family things such as picnics. I was the only child, and they would get me anything I wanted. But, my world was rocked when my mother came home early from work one day. She caught my dad sleeping with another woman. That was the last time I ever saw him.

My mother was heartbroken. I can remember her going around to different

neighborhoods looking for my dad. I am not sure if she ever found him, but she became very depressed. She used to tell me that my father was her first and only love. He also contributed to the household bills, and my mother could not do it all by herself. We got behind on rent, car payments, and other bills. I can remember times when we were without food and had no lights or water. Also, my mother took out a title pawn on her car and could not pay it. The title pawn people towed her car away. The furniture company repossessed all our furniture. Since my mother's job was not paying enough, she started working as a stripper and then eventually became a prostitute. Soon, she got on drugs.

The drugs ruined my mother. She was addicted to crack cocaine. I remember times coming home from school and hearing the smoke detector beeping. When this happened most of the time, my mother would be asleep on the floor while she was cooking dinner. I had to grow up very quickly and did not have much of a childhood. I would do anything so that my mother and I could be together. My attitude then was that I did not want to go into foster care because of all the horror stories people told me. I stole items out of local stores to help out. I'm surprised that I never got caught. It seemed like every time I brought home stolen items that my mother would pawn the items to buy crack. Her addiction got out of hand. My mother would do anything to buy crack. Sensing that she could no longer take care for me, she made the decision to turn me over to DFCS.

My experiences were good and bad living in foster homes. I have never been molested, which happens in a lot of homes. But, I had arguments with foster parents who tried to control me. I lived in five different homes. The parents at the first three homes were very strict and would not allow me to do anything. The parents at my fourth home

retired. Now, in my current home I get along very well with the parents. They don't treat me like I am a throwed away kid. Instead, they treat me like a member of their family. I plan to go to college near them so that I can live with them for a long time.

Everyone in town knew that my mother was a prostitute. People used to pick on me a lot for this at my regular school. I used to get into a lot of arguments and fights with other students, which led to teachers writing me up. I had several office referrals, and I met with an IEP team to discuss my special education services. They made the decision that I did not have any control over my emotions. They placed me at the T. Z. Academy.

I hated attending the T. Z. Academy at first. They had too many rules for me to follow, and I hate following rules. We had one rule where students had to tuck in their shirts, which I thought was pretty stupid. My attitude changed when I started the sixth grade. While in this grade, I had a wonderful teacher, and I became comfortable at the school. I made a lot of friends, and I became active at school where I participated in extracurricular activities such as the Community Service Club and the Art Club.

Currently, as an eleventh grader, I still attend the T. Z. Academy.

In total, teachers have restrained me at least 18 times and placed me into the Opportunity Room at least 11 times while at the academy. During this school year, teachers have restrained me three times and placed me into the Opportunity Room twice. Most of my incidents resulted from fighting the same girl three different times because she keeps picking on me about being in foster care and my mother. I just don't like her. Some of my other incidents were based on stabbing myself with pencils because I became depressed about my life. I am hoping that if I keep my restraints down that I will be able to return to my regular school during my senior year.

I have not had any physical injuries from restraints, but it is very uncomfortable when teachers are on top of me because it is like a heavy weight on your body that you cannot move. I am fearful of teachers when they restrain me or other students. I get nervous and start shaking. It is like I walk into the classroom everyday sitting on egg shells for fear of teachers restraining me. I just don't like that feeling. I become less nervous in the Opportunity Room because teachers do not put hands on me there. I have heard of other students having broken bones from teachers using restraints. I don't want that to happen to me.

Teachers must understand that students are at these types of schools because they have problems. They should not just try to restrain students or put students into the Opportunity Room every time students disrupt class. I think some of my restraints could have been avoided if my teachers would have just sat down and talked to me instead of picking on me further by making negative comments. But, I also understand that teachers have a job to do. I would rather for teachers to restrain students and prevent them from hurting themselves or other students. So, I am back and forth on the issue.

Reflections on Kelly. Prior to the start of the second interview with Kelly, she showed me a picture album. The picture album contained pictures of Kelly's parents and previous foster families. I noticed that Kelly placed an "X" over her father whenever he was displayed in pictures. I asked Kelly about her actions. She replied, "I can't stand that bastard. He is the reason I am here and not where I want to be, which is with my mother." From this experience, I learned why Kelly has deep-rooted hatred in her heart towards her father. In Kelly's mind, if her father were not cheating on her mother, then her mother would not have turned to using drugs. The family would still be together, and Kelly

would not be in foster care.

At the start of the third interview, Kelly showed me another picture album that contained recent pictures of Kelly. I observed that in each picture, Kelly did not smile despite everyone around her smiling. I compared the second album with the first album and I noticed that Kelly smiled in each picture contained in the first album. To understand this phenomenon, I asked Kelly about this disparity. She said, “I used to blame my dad for me being in foster care. Now, I do not smile in pictures because I blame my mother as well for turning to drugs.” I determined that Kelly loves her mother, but Kelly has a lot of resentment towards her mother for placing her into DFCS custody. Kelly considers her mother to be very selfish for turning to drugs instead of focusing her energy on her.

Being placed in DFCS custody has taken a toll on Kelly. Kelly has a history of not getting along with foster parents. She does not like for the parents to tell her what to do because Kelly believes only her biological mother has that right. Kelly’s attitude has resulted in her being placed into five different foster homes. She gets along with her current foster parents for the most part, but Kelly still has some issues whenever they advise her on decision-making.

When students ridicule Kelly about her mother and living in foster care, she becomes irate and commits offenses that trigger teachers to restrain and/or seclude her. She may be using her physical altercations with others as coping skills to deal with these issues. Further, she wants teachers to talk to her prior to a restraint because she wants attention from others. When educators refuse to act in this manner, Kelly becomes angry, which leads to teachers having to restrain her for longer periods of time.

From the Student Group to the Teacher Group

Each student had different experiences with restraints and/or seclusion. Mark suffered a physical injury during a restraint and developed fears of going to school. Johnathan experienced both restraints and seclusion, and he believed that teachers were justified using these interventions on him due to his behaviors. Unlike Mark and Johnathan, Susan had mixed experiences with these practices. On one hand, she declared teachers must be consistent when applying restraints and/or seclusion and only use these methods if students are threats to themselves or others. On the other hand, she advocated that teachers should not restrain and/or seclude students for non-life threatening reasons such as classroom disruptions. Kelly had similar experiences to Susan. Like Susan, Kelly asserted restraints and seclusion should only be used for students who are harmful to themselves and others. She also agreed that teachers have a responsibility to make sure that school classrooms are safe.

In the upcoming section, I will present personal narratives on the teachers who I selected for my study, explain how they experienced restraints and/or seclusion, illustrate how these methods affected their lives, and reveal their recommendations on these interventions to other teachers. Like the students, I shall use pseudonyms to protect their identities.

Teachers

Rebecca

Let me introduce you. Rebecca has been teaching for over 5 years in a GNETS school. She is an African American female. She believes that she has engaged in over 50 physical restraints and 20 seclusions of students.

Rebecca's story. At the age of 23, I married my high school sweetheart. We have three daughters, and their ages are 15, 16, and 17. My family is my joy, and I would not know what to do without them. My husband and I lived in the same town together where we attended a small high school. It was the type of high school where everyone knew each because we were either kin or close neighbors. There were 30 people in my graduation class. After high school, I went off to college. I moved back to my hometown after my college graduation.

I grew up on a farm with my parents and brother. We grew crops such as cotton, tobacco, cucumbers, and tomatoes. We also had several animals we tended to such as cows and horses. After getting out of school, my schedule was to do my homework and feed the animals. During the summer months, I helped our workers pick tobacco, and I also picked cotton during the fall months. Growing up on a farm taught me values of hard work and dedication.

My mother died when I was a child. Since she was not around, my father was my biggest influence in my life. I witnessed him helping his fellow brothers in need. He often shared excess crops with neighbors and donated food to those in need. These events molded my decision to go into the human services business. After graduating from college, I began a career with the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) where I served as an investigator. I was responsible for ensuring parents provided their children with basic needs. Later on, I switched careers because I wanted to help kids. I also wanted to be on the other side of the spectrum and not be considered the “bad guy.” When families are on the other side looking at you because you are their DFCS worker, there is a negative light shed on you from them. Most families believe DFCS just wants

to take your kids, which is not the case. I figured that in the education system that it would be different because you are trying to help kids be where they need to be.

I work with special needs children who have emotional and behavioral problems. These students are the worst-of-the-worst students who general education teachers refer to as “castaways” because their behavior prevents them from coming back to regular school settings. I have always viewed my students as people who need a little extra help. So, I have a never-quit-attitude when it comes to them. I wish parents would take more of an active role in their children’s lives, which I think is very important to reduce teachers using restraints on students.

At the T. Z. Academy, I have witnessed teachers restrain and seclude students. I have also been a participant in several restraints and seclusions. From 2013-2016, I have been a part of 43 restraints and 16 seclusions. I never try to restrain or seclude students because I don’t like using them. Normally, I develop relationships with my students, which helps me avoid having to restrain or seclude them. But, I will use these procedures to protect my students whenever they are at risk of causing harm or threatening other students and staff. That is just the way that it is right now.

Teachers have been guilty of using aversive practices at my school. As a senior teacher, I verbally reprimand several of these teachers. Further, I have provided training sessions for negligent teachers to correct their inappropriate use of restraints and/or seclusion. For frequent violators, I sat in administrative hearings where administrators suspended or terminated the teachers. I always tell teachers that whenever they use restraints, they need to put themselves in the shoes of students’ parents and not restrain students for inappropriate reasons. They must always follow our restraint and seclusion

protocol to prevent unnecessary legal liability.

There was an incident where a student injured me, which changed my life forever. On the day in question, I verbally redirected the student to stay on task. The student told me that he was not going to do a “damn thing.” I then asked the student to come with me to go to the principal’s office. I had my back turned to him, and he threw a desk at my leg, which led to my femur breaking into three different places. My paraprofessional and I restrained the student. Following the restraint, I noticed that I had a hard time walking. I asked the school secretary to call 911, and I was rushed to the hospital where surgeons put several screws into my femur. My leg was in a cast for over 8 months. From this experience, my life was forever changed. That leg still bothers me, and I am afraid that I am going to take pain medication for the rest of my life. I am fearful of turning my back away from students because I am still in fear of being injured again.

As a veteran teacher, I have seen many restraints and seclusions. I want to share some suggestions for teachers to follow who use these practices. Teachers must always follow their school’s restraint and seclusion policies to avoid unnecessary suspensions or terminations. Teachers must also get to know their students to understand what triggers their students. Finally, restraints and seclusion should be used as methods of last resort because I believe that teachers in some cases can calm down students instead of applying these interventions.

Reflections on Rebecca. Throughout my interviews with Rebecca, it was very evident that she has a passion for serving students. I observed her office, and I saw numerous awards, letters from students, and pictures of her students who graduated. My interviews with her had to be interrupted several different times because students either

stopped by her office or phoned her for help with problems. When addressing these students' needs, she spoke with a lot of concern in her voice and did everything within her power to aid them. I also learned that Rebecca earned the respect of her colleagues because they frequently stopped by her office to commend her on a job well done for completing school tasks.

Rebecca's career as a teacher has been influenced by her earlier experiences working on a farm. She learned several skills, which makes her an effective teacher today. On the farm, she had to learn skills such as nurturing and communicating with her families' farm animals to get farm tasks accomplished. To minimize her involvement with physical restraints, Rebecca had to learn how to nurture and form relationships with her students. Finally, farmers overcome some type of adversity such as having a poor crop season. Rebecca works with students who have made mistakes at previous schools, and she aids students in overcoming their mistakes and returning to regular school settings.

One of Rebecca's traits is that she follows rules and procedures. She is not the type of educator who uses restraints for punishing students. Her school policy dictates that staff must restrain students who are dangerous to themselves or others. She complies with this policy, and her administrators have never reprimanded her for violating this rule. She expressed in the interviews that teachers must follow their school's procedures to avoid unnecessary consequences such as suspensions or termination.

She has been affected mentally from the student breaking her leg. Rebecca's office desk and classroom workstation were located in places where she does not have to look behind her shoulder if someone passes by her. Everyone has to pass in front of her.

During the second interview, Rebecca and I had to go to another room because school custodians were cleaning her carpet. In the new location, I was positioned in front of the door, and she had her back towards the door. As individuals walked past the door, I counted Rebecca looking over her shoulders 63 different times.

The injury continues to affect Rebecca physically. She complained of leg pain throughout the interviews. She had to prop her leg up on a stool. When the pain did not subside, we stopped the interviews, and she had to take pain medication. She expressed fears of becoming addicted to pain medication. Rebecca exclaimed that her leg pain was a clear reminder of the dangers of her chosen profession.

Steven

Let me introduce you. Unlike Rebecca, Steven shared a different perspective with using restraints and seclusion. Steven has been teaching for over 5 years in a GNETS school. He is a European American male. Steven estimated that he has been involved in at least 70 restraints and 25 seclusions of students.

Steven's story. I grew up in the city with both of my parents. When I was born, my father retired from the military, and my mother was a housewife. I am the middle child. I have an older sister and a younger brother. My childhood was normal. I had several friends and cousins that I played with all the time. My parents used to make us volunteer and help those in need all the time. We often played on the same recreational basketball and football teams. We took turns spending the night with each other. I wish I could be a child again. Life was a lot simpler then because I did not have any responsibilities.

Since I was from the city, I often saw homeless people, and I was always bothered

when I saw people living in this manner. Some people were living in cardboard boxes, on benches, and in sewers. When it snowed, I saw people frozen to death or complained that their limbs had been frostbitten. As I was riding on a school bus, I remember one guy who sat on a bench with a sign asking for food. I was amazed because on the sign, he stated that he was a veteran. I always thought that America took care of its veterans because the government certainly took care of my dad when he retired. I learned that I was wrong.

After graduating from high school, I enlisted into the military, and I served 20 years. I was stationed in a lot of third world foreign countries. Some of those countries were Honduras, Haiti, and South Korea. While there, I saw a lot of homelessness and starvation. I was bothered seeing little girls who could not be more than 10 prostituting for food and money. These experiences affected me, and I knew I wanted to do something to help people avoid these conditions.

My oldest son was born, and I knew that I needed to be home a lot more instead of traveling around the world or being deployed to war. I made the decision to retire and pursue my dream of becoming a teacher. In the military, I was a field instructor where I taught soldiers combat drills. Making the switch to teaching in the civilian world was an easy transition. My teaching purpose was to reach young people by educating them so that they would not experience homelessness or starvation. Young people must understand that they must work hard in life to get ahead.

After graduating from college, I began a job at an elementary school. I did not enjoy this setting because most of the students came from privileged backgrounds and had the resources to make it in life. I wanted to help marginalized students. Also, in an

elementary classroom, students are touchy-feely, which I do not like. One day, I helped a special education teacher with a classroom activity, and I really enjoyed mingling with her students. I knew right then that working with special education students was my true calling. So, in the middle of the year, I applied for a job at the T. Z. Academy, and my principal hired me.

At this school, I work with students who have behavior and emotional problems. I took over a classroom that did not have any classroom discipline. So, I felt it was my job to break bad practices such as profanity use, classroom disruptions, and fights with other students. At the time, I believed these students developed these habits because several of their parents enabled them. I believed it was my job to teach my students proper behaviors since they were not being taught at home. I accomplished this task by engaging in over 40 restraints and 10 seclusions of students during my first 2 years at the school. I am not going to lie to you, but I restrained many of the students for aversive behaviors instead of life threatening behaviors. My students' parents filed several complaints against me at the school board, and my principal reprimanded me and mandated that I receive extra training because I was using restraints to punish behaviors instead of using it as a crisis intervention measure.

As an eighth-year teacher, my views towards correcting classroom behaviors have evolved. I had to do something differently because my body has taken a toll from all the restraints I did on students. I still believe kids are different than kids were in the past. Also, I believe they do not respect authority figures, which is why these techniques are needed. On the other hand, restraint and seclusion practices should only be used when students are threats to themselves or others. I adopted a point system to punish aversive

behaviors and reward appropriate behaviors. In my system, students lose classroom privileges for failure to obtain an acceptable point total, but they earn privileges for achieving an allotted total. When the point system fails, I take my students to the Opportunity Room until they can get themselves together. I try to be as hands-off as possible now to avoid injuries.

I made several mistakes as a beginning teacher, and I have some advice for my colleagues when it comes to restraining and secluding students. First, teachers should always think about the possibility of being terminated or sued prior to restraining and/or secluding students. When I was faced with the parents' complaints, I thought I was going to lose my job. Second, two or more people need to perform restraints to prevent staff and student injuries. So often, teachers try to engage in these procedures by themselves and end up suffering worse pain than students. Third, when secluding students, teachers need to make sure the environment is safe and secure. I know teachers who have almost killed students by restraining in rooms that had safety hazards. Finally, teachers should not apply all their weight on students during restraints for the purposes of minimizing students from being injured or even dying. My students often complain that I am too heavy whenever I am restraining them, and I am now aware of my weight distribution.

Reflections on Steven. At Steven's home, there were several pictures of his grandmother. He disclosed that his grandmother was an immigrant who migrated to the United States from Europe. His grandmother was very poor and slept in homeless shelters. She had a hard time speaking the English language and could not get a job. To eat, the grandmother often scavenged through trashcans for food. Later, the grandmother met Steven's grandfather, and they were married. During the second year of their

marriage, they discovered oil on their land and lived the rest of their lives in wealth. Despite being rich, the grandmother taught Steven that he should never look down upon people who are poor and should always help others whenever he can. Steven cherishes this value today, which explains why he is so compassionate about homeless individuals and educating students to avoid this condition.

Steven values organization and order. I interviewed Steven at his home twice and his office once. I noticed that both his home and office were very organized and impeccably clean. For example, he had several military awards that were neatly arranged and placed on his walls. He had papers neatly stacked and organized in file folders. Despite having kids, there were no objects such as toys on the floors in his home. He had everything categorized into its own unique place. From observing these settings, I learned why Steven used restraints and seclusion as aversive techniques during his first 2 years of teaching. He cannot stand disorganization, and he wanted to bring order to a dysfunctional classroom.

The military affected Steven's career as a teacher. In the military, superiors give soldiers orders, which soldiers followed to accomplish a mission. As a beginning teacher at a GNETS Program, he attempted to instill this same procedure in his students because Steven wanted them to be successful in life. When Steven's students failed to follow his commands, he punished his students illegally. After entering his sixth year, he realized he had to change his discipline protocol or risk being terminated. Henceforth, he developed a point system to reward and punish students' behaviors.

Paul

Let me introduce you. Similarly, Paul expressed complementary views as Steven.

He has been teaching for over 9 years in a GNETS setting. He is an African American male. He has participated in at least 70 restraints and 40 seclusions.

Paul's story. I grew up on a farm where my family raised cows. We provided milk and meat to our community. Working on a farm was very hard. My task was to milk the cows every morning before going to school. This was very difficult work because if you milk a cow wrong you can easily get kicked. Cows have kicked me several times, and I am surprised that I did not have any serious injuries.

My dad used to take me to the slaughterhouse. I helped him load the cows onto the back of our moving truck. After arriving at the slaughterhouse, I helped my father kill the cows by shooting them in the head with a stun gun, and I hated doing this because I felt sorry for the cows. I raised several of the cows from calves to adults, and I used to cry whenever it was time to take them to the slaughterhouse. When soothing me, my dad used to tell me that it was a part of life that I needed to accept.

From doing this type of work, I knew that I did not want to spend the rest of my life doing this. Although the dairy farm had been in my family for several generations, I needed to chart my own path. So, I dedicated myself to school, and I made all A's. I even began tutoring my friends, and I made so much money that I did not have to work on the farm anymore. Education just came so easy to me, which is why I became a teacher.

My brother is disabled. He was born with paralysis and did not have any feeling from his waist down. He cannot walk and uses a wheelchair. As a youth, I helped my mother care for his needs. My brother and I became very close. We were so close that whenever somebody tried to pick on him, I fought the person. My brother did not have a choice of being paralyzed, and no one should ever hold that against him. From my

experiences with my brother, I always knew that I wanted to become a special education teacher. After graduating college, I accepted a job at the T. Z. Academy. I was very excited.

While working at the academy, I worked with students who had behavioral disabilities, mental disabilities, and physical disabilities. A lot of the students needed guidance because they came from home environments, which were not very structured. I can recall several experiences where I saw my students yelling, shouting, and using profanity at their parents in IEP meetings. I used to think to myself that my parents would have never allowed me to get away with that type of behavior. In fact, they probably would have beaten me with a belt senselessly. So, I began using physical restraints on students, which I hate to use. I participated in at least 50 restraints during my first 3 years of teaching. This cost me because I sustained broken fingers, wrists, and ankles. I continue to go to therapy today due to constant arthritis. Something had to change because I did not want to keep suffering injuries.

To reduce my participation in restraints, I took students who engaged in behaviors that normally led to physical restraints into my school's Opportunity Room. I sat with them until they could calm down and be safely returned to the classroom. After implementing this practice, I reduced my restraint participation and minimized my injuries. Currently, I have participated in only 20 restraints during my last 6 years. This is a big reduction from my first 3 years.

Schools need to use both restraint and seclusion practices because children's behaviors have changed. Children are more violent today than they were when I was growing up. I could remember a time when teachers paddled students who misbehaved in

class, and parents were very involved with their children's education. Now, these practices are no longer common in schools. Some parents expect teachers to raise their children, and they refuse to discipline their children. Teachers simply do not have enough hours in a day to teach lessons and discipline students. Until parents become more involved in their children's education, teachers must continue to use these practices.

Using restraint and seclusion practices have taken a toll on my life both physically and mentally. I suffer from chronic arthritis at a young adult age where I have physical therapy appointments for my fingers, wrists, and ankles. I am in so much pain sometimes that I often contemplate if I want to continue to work at the T. Z. Academy because I know I am going to have to restrain students. Also, I am seeing a psychologist to manage emotional pains I experience from seeing children in anguish after being restrained.

From being in the special education business, there are several suggestions I want to offer to school staff when it comes to restraints and seclusion. Schools must offer ongoing training to teachers instead of a once-a-year training, which is the norm at my school. I believe that teachers must develop relationships with parents, which is an important step to minimizing teachers' use of these practices. Finally, teams consisting of principals, teachers, parents, and students should meet quarterly to review restraint and seclusion incidents for the purposes of evaluating or improving school officials' use of these methods.

Reflections on Paul. The slaughterhouse triggered negative memories for Paul. While there, he unwillingly killed cows and then witnessed slaughterhouse workers cut the cows up into pieces to make food. This early experience made Paul despise violence. As a beginning teacher, he did not view physical restraints as a procedure where teachers

can become violent towards students. He viewed these methods as a way for adults to restore order in children who were misguided. As he continued to be a participant and witness others use these techniques, his opinions shifted, and he saw teachers using physical restraints as a way to conduct violence against students. Paul compared this experience to his earlier memories of seeing helpless cows going to the slaughterhouse to be killed.

Like Rebecca, Paul is suffering long-term effects from using restraints on students. I met with Paul in his office, and he showed me how he manages his physical pain. Paul had braces for his feet and arms. He takes pain medication on an as needed basis. The medications he takes are Prednisone and Methotrexate. Paul expressed that he takes these medications at least once a day. Whenever he does not take his medications, Paul exclaimed that he has nagging body aches. During this summer, he will be going to a pain management clinic to detox his body from these medications.

Paul's parents ran a very structured household. Every family member knew their role and place within the family. Despite having a special needs brother, Paul's parents disciplined Paul and his brother similarly. Paul tried to instill values into his students because he believed that his students' parents were enabling them. Like Steven, when Paul's efforts failed, he used restraints as aversive procedures on students. This resulted in Paul suffering physical and psychological injuries. To protect himself from further injuries, Paul adapted a classroom management plan where he used his school's Opportunity Room for student discipline.

Hope

Let me introduce you. Hope offered another point of view on this topic. She has

been teaching for over 14 years. Hope is a Latin American female. She estimated that she has restrained at least 30 students and secluded 11 students.

Hope's story. I grew up in Latin America, and I am the only child. Both of my parents work in coal factories. It was always their dream to move to the United States for better opportunities. As a child, I learned how to play the violin, and I toured throughout Latin America playing with orchestras. When I was not touring, my parents made me give free concerts at the local orphanages to give back to our community. During my senior year in high school, I met a visiting professor from California, and he encouraged me to apply to music colleges in the United States. I knew that my parents did not have enough money to send me to college in the U.S., and I applied for several scholarships. A music director offered me a scholarship to attend the University of Florida, and I accepted the offer.

While in college, I did very well. I made numerous friends that I keep in contact with today. I completed the requirements of my music scholarship, but I became burnt out with playing the violin. After careful consideration, I made the decision to become a teacher because I had a passion for learning and teaching others. I majored in education and completed the program. Originally, my plan was to return to my country and teach because where I am from, citizens do not value education. Life happened and I met my husband. We got married. Shortly thereafter, I became a citizen of the United States.

During my student teaching, I worked at three different schools. I worked at a high school during my first assignment, a middle school during my second assignment, and a high school special education program during my last assignment. I liked my last assignment better because I could tell I was really making a difference in students' lives.

Some of the students did not know how to add or subtract, and I was able to teach them these skills within 2 months. After the completion of this assignment, a principal offered me a job at the T. Z. Academy, and I accepted.

Restraining and secluding students was a new experience for me. In my native country, it was common for teachers to chastise students with paddles during the middle of class lectures, but I could never imagine my teachers wrestling students to the ground. I do not like using restraints on students, but since it is a part of my job duties, I comply. I would rather restrain a student from hurting himself or others than to do nothing at all. In my teaching career, I have probably restrained at least 30 students and secluded at least 11. I normally try to reach students who engage in negative behaviors towards themselves or others by using calming techniques such as deep breathing, journal writing, or counting to 20 backwards.

During my fifth year of teaching, I had a life changing experience. One of my students stabbed another student with a pencil. My paraprofessional and I immediately separated the two students and restrained the student who committed the act. While restraining the child, I put too much pressure on his body and fractured his ribs. In the act of the restraint, I accidentally placed his body on top of a rusty nail, which poked the child in the side of his body, which resulted in him later receiving a Tetanus shot. I reported the incident to my administrator and later spoke to my student's parents about the incident. Surprisingly, his parents did not pursue legal action against the school or me. From this incident, I now pay attention to how hard I am pressing against students' bodies during restraints to minimize injuries. I try to avoid restraining or secluding by using my verbal skills. I have also learned to check my surroundings and move dangerous objects before

restraining or secluding children. If I must make a choice, I am going to send students to the Opportunity Room first before restraining them because teachers are less likely to cause student injuries using this setting.

There are several suggestions I want to make to teachers who restrain or seclude students. Restraints and seclusion should never be done with one person because a teacher always needs a second set of eyes to report an incident. School programs need to be consistent on the reasons they restrain students and must avoid restraining students who engage in aversive behaviors. Teachers need to write incident reports immediately after a restraint and/or seclusion, and they must immediately notify parents.

Relationships, relationships, relationships between parents, students, and school staff are important to reducing restraint use.

Reflections on Hope. Some general education teachers consider T. Z. Academy students as outcasts because these students are segregated in school campuses away from regular schools. These teachers consider GNETS students very violent and unteachable because of the students' emotional and behavior diagnoses. Hope understands this stereotype because she was born in a native country that is known for murder and corruption. Individuals in the United States have considered Hope as a dangerous individual because she was born in that country. As a result, Hope understands how GNETS students feel when general education teachers unfairly label them.

Hope has a very strong accent, and she cannot disguise it. When Hope speaks, others automatically stereotype her as a foreigner and not a citizen of the U.S. Similarly, GNETS students have a difficult time hiding their emotional and behavioral problems. This results in other students insulting them through name-calling. Like these students,

Hope has experienced others viewing her negatively because she cannot hide a distinguishable characteristic.

While interviewing Hope, I saw the fear in Hope's eyes when she discussed using restraints on students. She cried several times when she reflected on her failed efforts of verbally deescalating students, which lead to her having to restrain students. Further, I recognized that Hope is afraid that she will injure another student if she continues to engage in restraint practices. It was highly evident that Hope battles with emotional pains of participating and witnessing her colleagues use these practices.

From the Teacher Group to the Parent Group

Each teacher presented various experiences. Rebecca, who after suffering an injury from a student, minimized her restraint and seclusion participation by developing relationships with her students. Contrary to Rebecca, Steven has a military background, which he identified as a factor for using restraints in aversive manners. He has discontinued his former approach to restraints and seclusion and has instead adopted a student behavioral management system. Paul, like Steven, participated in multiple physical restraints during his early teaching years at his GNETS school. After suffering numerous injuries, he used his school's Opportunity Room to correct his students' behaviors. Finally, Hope had a life changing event in which she injured a student. This experience forced her to consider her restraint positioning and observe her surroundings when restraining students.

In the next section, I shall present descriptions of parents who participated in my research study, explain how each individual experienced restraint and/or seclusion, and provide their recommendations about these practices. Like the students and teachers, I assigned and used pseudonyms to protect their identities.

Parents

George

Let me introduce you. George is in his thirties. He is a European American male who is a single father. He works in the agricultural industry. George has three children. One of his children attends a GNETS school where teachers restrained his child at least 13 times and secluded him 15 times. The child is in the process of transitioning back from his GNETS school to a general education school due to meeting exit criteria goals.

George's story. My wife and I separated when my son was an infant. A judge awarded me custody of my son after our divorce because his mother had a drug addiction problem. I did not know this at the time because she hid the problem from me. She was addicted to cocaine. Now, she is a big crystal methamphetamine user. Whenever she has visits with our son, DFCS staff must supervise them. I believe she may have been using drugs when she was carrying him because my son has a difficult time staying still for long periods of time. He has also been diagnosed with ADHD.

While living with his mother, my son went to regular school. She was not giving him his ADHD medication because she was taking and selling his pills. My son could never focus in his regular school. An IEP team committee put him at the T. Z. Academy because he refused to follow his teachers' directions, bullied others, and made verbal threats against his teachers. My son acted out then when he could not get his way because he was so used to living in his mother's unstructured environment. A few months after he arrived at the T. Z. Academy, the police arrested his mother for drug possession. DFCS placed him into my custody. A judge later gave me permanent custody.

As a single father, I run a very strict household. I believe like the *Bible* teaches; a

parent has a responsibility to raise their child up to be successful in life. When my son first came to live with me, he thought he was going to run my home. Boy, was he wrong. He learned very quickly that it was my way, or he could get a new zip code. I broke his behavior and got him back together. This is the reason that he will be returning to his regular school next semester.

I like the T. Z. Academy. I have seen how this academy has positively influenced my child. I understand why teachers must restrain and seclude students. Students are simply bad, including my son. Teachers have hard jobs. They must protect other students from students who are dangerous. My son deserved each of his restraints because he knew his school's expectations. I don't see the big deal with all the outrage on teachers restraining students. We signed a form prior to our kids entering the schools that our kids could be restrained. As I always teach my son, if you do the crime, you must suffer the consequences.

My son's school does not just restrain students. They use a room called an Opportunity Room where teachers take children who misbehave. My son has been taken to this room several times. I like this room because it helps students calm down, and the teacher is not hurt from restraining a student. As I stated before, teachers need to do whatever it takes to get children's behaviors together. Teachers are already under enough pressure with the Common Core Standards, and they just do not have the time to keep stopping classes to deal with students' behaviors because other students will not be able to learn.

There is too much attention being focused on GNETS Program like the T. Z. Academy due to teachers restraining students. I actually like for teachers to use restraints

on students. I think teachers at the T. Z. Academy are doing a great job and have a hard job, and I do not have any recommendations to offer to teachers who use these techniques. I simply want the federal and state government to support these programs a lot more because staff at these schools are working with violent students. I don't know of too many professions where you have the risk of injury without receiving some sort of hazardous duty pay.

Reflections on George. George is having a tough time being a divorcee. I interviewed George at his home, and I noticed that he still had on his wedding ring. George expressed that he still believes in his marriage, despite being divorced from his wife. He referenced that his parents had marital problems, but they stayed together and were married for over 40 years. George is at a crossroads because he wants his family again, but he cannot deal with his wife's drug addiction. He was very frustrated that his ex-wife did not get the help that she needed, which he believes destroyed their family. He also expressed that their son would not be at the T. Z. Academy if he and his wife were together.

He was very excited that his son was transitioning back to his regular school. George believed that his son needed the small classroom environment that the T. Z. Academy offers because his son had to focus on his behavior. Teachers are able to provide individualized attention in this type of school environment setting. He supported teachers using restraints because these procedures provided a deterrent for students engaging in life-threatening behaviors.

He also credited operating a strict home environment as a factor for his son turning around his behavior. George expressed that his parents were military, and they

ran a structured household. According to George, his siblings knew the consequences for their actions because their parents were consistent with their household rules. After regaining custody of his son, he implemented some of his parents' rules, and he saw instant results with his son. George stated, "Those rules were put in place to put my son back in the place of a child and not an adult."

Heather

Let me introduce you. Unlike George, Heather had different ideas about her child being in a GNETS setting. She is in her twenties and is a Mexican American. Her son has been restrained at least 10 times and secluded four times since attending the T. Z. Academy.

Heather's story. Mexico is a very poor country. My mother and I lived together because my father died when I was a little girl. My mother never remarried again out of respect for my father. We lived in a two-bedroom home. My mother always preached to me that I needed to get out of Mexico so that I could live a better life. It was always her dream to live in the United States. She made sure that I learned how to speak English because in Mexico, you get better jobs by speaking English. Those who did not speak the language worked in the fields, which is what so many of our relatives did before me.

In 2003, I worked at a resort as a housekeeper in Mexico. My supervisor made me the head housekeeper because I was bilingual and could easily communicate with guests. I was responsible for overseeing the work of other housekeepers. I saw tourists from all over the world at the resort. My husband was one of the guests that I met. We dated for 10 months. After my mother passed away, I moved from Mexico and joined him in the U.S. Shortly thereafter, we were married. We have been married for over 10 years, and I

truly love my husband and my life.

Being a good mother to my children has always been my goal in life. Despite my mother being without a husband, she was a very good mother to me. I felt it was my duty to follow after her footsteps. I am a stay-at-home mother, and I raise two sons. My husband works in construction, and he is frequently out-of-town, which is one of the reasons that I do not work. My oldest son attends the T. Z. Academy, and he has been in attendance at this program since he was in the first grade. He is currently in the sixth grade.

Ever since he was an infant, my son has always had problems with controlling his behaviors. He has an anger problem, and he does not know how to control it. My son's anger causes him to punch walls, hit others, and self-mutilate himself. My husband and I have taken him to counseling appointments, used corporal punishments, and taken away privileges. Nothing has seemed to work. School staff placed him at the T. Z. Academy after he stabbed another student in the neck with a pencil.

My son's teachers have restrained him numerous times. I have several problems with my son's teachers handling him in this way. They are not consistent when restraining him. For example, one day teachers restrained him for being disrespectful. On another day, staff restrained him for not doing his classwork. On other days, school officials restrained him for hitting others. I don't have a problem with teachers restraining my son because I know he can easily hurt someone. But, they must be consistent on the reasons they restrain him. Further, my son's teachers do not notify me when he is restrained sometimes. I have to find out about it through secondhand sources like other parents and teachers I know.

There was an incident at the T. Z. Academy where my son was hurt from a restraint and had to receive medical care. He hit another student and then a teacher. His teacher immediately restrained him. My son was 100 pounds at the time, and the teacher was over 250 pounds. During the restraint, the teacher broke my son's finger. Following the incident, the school secretary contacted me, and school officials rushed him to the hospital. I went to the school the next day to complain, and they agreed to pay his medical bills. See, those are the dangers of using restraints. Sometimes kids get hurt.

His school uses an Opportunity Room, which is a room teachers take students to calm them down. I think this is a better alternative than restraining students because teachers and students are one-on-one. No one gets hurt. My son has had to go to this room four times this year. Once my son was able to get himself together, his teacher returned him to the classroom.

Since you asked, there are several recommendations I have for teachers who use restraints and the Opportunity Room. Teachers need to try to use restraints as less as possible and try interventions such as Opportunity Rooms to prevent injuries. Relationships need to be formed between parents and teachers. If these relationships are established, parents can help teachers manage their children's behaviors. Also, school administrators need to have forums with parents and community stakeholders to come up with solutions to reduce restraint use.

Reflections on Heather. Heather's mother influenced her life tremendously. Like her mother, Heather believes it is her duty to take care of the home while her husband provides for the home. She values motherhood and wants to do a good job as the family's matriarch. Upon arriving at her home, Heather was constantly cleaning. When Heather's

sons arrived home from school, she prepared afternoon snacks. Also, Heather arranged dinner preparations prior to her husband getting off from work. When Heather's husband arrived home, I observed Heather running his bathwater and ironing his clothes for the next workday. I conducted my interviews with Heather as she completed household tasks.

When interviewing Heather, I saw a lot of pain and anger in her eyes when she discussed her oldest son. Heather and her husband have been dealing with their son's behavior problems for a very long time. She was clearly frustrated with her son because he does not act like her younger son. Based on my observations, the youngest son is very well-mannered and respectful. Heather does not understand why her oldest son acts out despite having everything a child could have in life.

Heather is not in denial of her son's behavioral problems. She does not have problems with teachers restraining her son, but she wants teachers to be consistent on the reasons they restrain him. She desires for her son's school to notify her each time a teacher restrains him. Also, according to Heather, school officials must involve parents more on restraint discussions to reduce teachers from using these procedures because she does not want school officials to injure her son or another child again. Henceforth, she wishes for her son's school to use the Opportunity Room more, which she believes to be a solution to minimizing restraint use.

Karla

Let me introduce you. Karla provided a similar perspective to Heather. She is in her thirties and is an African American female. She has two sons at the T. Z. Academy. One son has been restrained at least 10 times, and the other son has been restrained at least nine times while enrolled at this academy. Teachers have secluded one son at least

six times, and they have secluded the other son at least 10 times.

Karla's story. I am a single mother, and I have two children. Life was not supposed to be this way for me. I dated my sons' father in high school, and I had my first son then. We had plans of getting married after I graduated from college. My dream was to become a lawyer. I was doing very well in college, but I had to dropout during my junior year to take care of our household. My sons' father went to jail for drug possession, and I found out that I was pregnant with my youngest son. A federal judge sentenced him to 20 years in prison for trafficking drugs across state lines. We lost everything. The federal government took our home, cars, money, and personal belongings. My life was flipped upside down because I had no money to finish my last year in college, and I did not know where to turn. I eventually made the decision to move back home with my grandmother until I was able to get back on my feet.

My cousin was a manager at a hotel, and he hired me as a housekeeper. I work at this job because I have two children at the T. Z. Academy, and I needed a job that offered flexible scheduling. I am often called out to the school due to my sons' behavioral problems. One of my sons is in the seventh grade, and the other son is in the sixth grade. They are at this school because their father was sentenced to an additional 15 years for a murder conviction. I think they are acting out because he is not around. He will not be out of jail until our sons are adults. A single mother can only take boys so far.

I have various opinions about the T. Z. Academy. I believe my sons needed to go to this school because they have anger problems. But, I just don't like how some of the teachers, not all, treat them. Teachers restrain at least one of my sons at least once a month and seclude them at least twice a month. I am so tired of hearing about my sons

being restrained. Do they have any other ways to address their behaviors?

My sons have suffered injuries when restrained. One day a teacher restrained my youngest son. Now, the teacher was three times the size of my son. He kept telling the teacher that he could not breathe. He stated that the teacher told him that if he was talking then he could breathe. My son briefly passed out, and the school secretary notified me about the incident. I left my job immediately. I arrived at the school and took him to the hospital where doctors believed his breathing passage was partially obstructed.

There was another restraint incident involving my oldest son. He had an IEP meeting. During the meeting, his teacher was describing his classroom behaviors. My son became upset, and he threw a chair in the direction of the teacher, which fortunately missed her. Staff members at the meeting restrained him. My son needed to be restrained because he could have killed that teacher with that chair.

Teachers need to listen to parents like me when it comes to restraints. They need to be aware that they may be bigger in size than students and should closely monitor students during restraints. If students are restrained, then schools need to notify parents in a timely fashion. I am tired of my sons telling me that they were restrained, and I heard nothing from the schools. Further, schools need to involve parents in discussions on restraints and seclusion to minimize teachers using these practices. I believe that teachers should try to seclude students first before physically restraining them if possible because I consider seclusion a safer alternative than physical restraints. Finally, teachers need to be on one accord when restraining students because one teacher restrains for talking and another restrains for hitting someone. Teachers just need to get it together.

Reflections on Karla. I spoke to Karla informally prior to the start of the

interviews. Despite her husband being locked up for several years, Karla desires to be with him upon his release. Karla expressed that she knew what she was getting into when she became involved with a drug dealer. She stated, “There are highs and lows to any relationship. I think it is important for us to be together for the sake of our sons. Although we cannot make up for lost time, our family will be a lot more together when he is home.”

Karla still has a hard time adjusting to life since her husband was incarcerated. She showed me pictures of her previous home. The home had five bedrooms and was over 3100 square feet. It was located in an affluent neighborhood. She currently lives in a two-bedroom single-wide mobile home. Karla expressed that she felt very unsafe in the area because a lot of crime takes place in the neighborhood. She also stated that she misses her former life.

Stress has clearly affected Karla. She expressed a great deal of frustration with her sons’ school. She is doing the best that she can for her sons, but her sons’ school constantly calls her to pick up her sons, which results in Karla taking off from work. In turn, she is not able to make enough money at her job, which results in Karla having difficulties paying her household bills. Further, Karla is not in denial that her sons have behavioral difficulties, but like Heather, Karla wants to be notified whenever school officials restrain her sons. She also wants to assist school staff with improving restraint protocols, so injuries are reduced at schools.

Shelly

Let me introduce you. Unlike Heather and Karla, Shelly expressed similar views about restraints and seclusion to George. Shelly is an African American female, and she

is in her thirties. She has a child at the T. Z. Academy who has been restrained at least nine times and secluded at least six times.

Shelly's story. I grew up in a rural town called Grooverville. It was a really small town, and we had no traffic lights. At the end of every street, there were stop signs. All of the roads were dirt roads except for one. This road was paved with gravel. We had one gas station and one supermarket. To go to the post office, we had to go to neighboring towns. I remember riding a bus 30 miles in one direction to attend school. Life was really simple then.

My father was a Baptist preacher, and my mother was a homemaker. They were very strict parents. As children, we did not get away with anything without receiving some form of discipline. My parents built a church where all our neighbors attended. We had White, Black, and Mexican church members. It was so funny because I did not see color growing up because everyone knew everyone. It was not until I moved to a bigger town that I began to see the divide between different races of people.

I did not live too far from my husband growing up. His family also attended my church, and they lived four houses down from me. He used to always play with my older brothers. My husband and I did not start dating until we both graduated from high school. I guess he never asked me out because he was afraid of my brothers who were overprotective of me. He joined the military and fought in Afghanistan. He hurt his back during the conflict, and the Navy retired him. We were later married and have been married for 10 years.

The federal government is our employer. We made the decision to work for the government so that we are able to have a regular work schedule to raise our two

daughters. Our oldest daughter attends the T. Z. Academy. She has had behavioral problems since she enrolled at school. We have tried everything to correct her behaviors such as taking away privileges and using corporal punishment, but nothing seems to work. Her school required her to go to the T. Z. Academy after she continued to get into arguments with students and teachers. My daughter deserved to be in GNETS because she needs to get her life together.

I view the T. Z. Academy very favorably. Look, teachers at these academies have a hard job. They have to teach at-risk youth who general education teachers failed to educate. Teachers have to restrain and seclude students. There is a reason these kids are at these schools, and parents must remember this. I don't know of any other profession where employees are scrutinized for protecting themselves or others from injuries. Those teachers have my prayers.

Teachers restrained and secluded my daughter. She has suffered carpet burns during a restraint. That was part of the consequences for my daughter's actions. If my daughter made a better decision to not attack another student, then she would not have been restrained. When my daughter's teacher restrained her, it taught my daughter that she must follow rules or suffer the consequences.

There are two recommendations I have for teachers at the T. Z. Academy. Teachers must continue to support each other despite the increased attention in the news about restraints and seclusion. I know it must be tough for these teachers to see their colleagues being sued or going to jail for using these techniques on students, but they must stick together. School principals need to continue to involve parents on discussions about restraints and seclusion because parents will understand that restraints and

seclusion are not tools to use to punish students' behaviors. Instead, they will understand that the purpose of these interventions is to protect others from injuries.

Reflections on Shelly. Shelly is a no-nonsense parent and believes that punishments must fit crimes. She obtained this persona growing up in a household with her parents who punished misbehavior based upon the *Bible*. In her home, she had biblical verses posted on her walls. A verse that stood out stated, "Spoil the child, spare the rod." She had four different pictures around her home that displaying this verse. I learned that Shelly uses biblical teachings, like her parents, when disciplining her children.

She wants her daughter to be successful in life, which is one of the reasons Shelly desires for her daughter to take responsibility for her actions. Shelly believes that her daughter is at the T. Z. Academy because she blames everyone else for her problems. As a parent, she believes that she must mold her daughter into the adult woman she must become. Shelly is very aware that society is different for children. According to Shelly, children are exposed to a lot more than she was living in Grooverville. Thus, she operates a strict household to aid her daughter with avoiding pitfalls in life.

During interviews, she expressed disappointment with the media's portrayal of GNETS programs because Shelly stated that the media focusses on the negative aspects of this program. Shelly stated that the media should tell the stories of the countless children who have graduated from GNETS programs or who have gone back to their regular schools and now live successful lives. She believes that her daughter would have continued on the wrong path if the daughter never attended a GNETS school.

From the Student Group to the Teacher Group to the Parent Group

Like the students and teachers, each parent shared their experiences on restraints and seclusion. George and Shelly believe teachers are justified when using restraints and/or seclusion on students because they believe students are at GNETS schools for a reason. They did not understand why other parents view these practices unfavorably. Conversely, Karla and Heather had mixed reactions regarding these procedures. Both parents had children injured from these methods and believe that teachers should use other methods besides restraints such as taking students to Opportunity Rooms.

Following my interviews, I began my data analysis process where I identified themes and organized them into categories. A listing of the identified themes and categories is presented in the upcoming section.

Categories/Themes

After interviewing participants, I transcribed data and created transcripts. I examined each transcript using Vagle's (2014) whole-parts-whole technique. This technique allowed me to recognize patterns from my student, teacher, and parent sections. I formed these patterns into themes. After forming the themes, I organized them into two types of categories. The first category consisted of general themes that resulted from the student, teacher, and parent groups combined. The second, third, and fourth categories consisted of specific themes that were prevalent from each individual group. I identified themes as major when they were prevalent among at least three of the four participants in each of the student, teacher, and parent groups for the general category and three out of the four in particular participant groups. Themes were considered minor when I identified themes in at least two of the four members in each group. There were

14 major themes and three minor themes. I have listed each category and theme below. In Chapter 5, I shall provide a description of each category and theme.

Table 4

Themes for Category 1

Grand Themes Across All Student, Teacher, and Parent Categories	
Category 1: Overall Restraint and Seclusion Experiences	
Themes	Type of
Theme	
Theme 1. Restraints are dangerous interventions that can cause injuries and even deaths, but these practices are needed to keep students and staff safe.	Major
Theme 2. Seclusion is a better alternative than restraints because physical contact is averted.	Major
Theme 3. More collaboration between students, teachers, and parents is needed to guide restraint and seclusion methods.	Major

Table 5

Themes for Category 2

Students' Specific Themes	
Category 2: Students' Experiences With Restraints and/or Seclusion	
Themes	Type of Theme
Theme 4. Each student had poor family dynamics.	Major
Theme 5. During restraints, school staff need to pay attention to their weight distributions to avoid causing student injuries such as suffocation, choking, and bodily harm.	Major
Theme 6. Teachers must be consistent when they apply seclusion and/or restraints.	Major
Theme 7. Prior to restraining students, educators should use deescalating techniques first to avoid restraining students.	Major

Table 6

Themes for Category 3

Teachers' Specific Themes	
Category 3: Teachers' Experiences With Using Restraints and/or Seclusion	
Themes	Type of Theme
Theme 8. Each teacher grew up in stable home environments where they were taught values such as respecting authority figures and following rules.	Major
Theme 9. Teachers used restraints early in their careers and minimized use of these techniques as they progressed in their careers.	Major
Theme 10. Creating relationships with students may decrease teachers' use of restraints.	Major
Theme 11. Most teachers do not like using physical restraints, but it is a part of the job.	Major
Theme 12. Parents are expecting teachers to raise their children, which is the reason teachers must use these procedures.	Major
Theme 13. Teachers must avoid restraining students for aversive behaviors.	Major

Table 7

Themes for Category 4

Parents' Specific Themes	
Category 4: Parents' Experiences With Restraint and/or Seclusion	
Themes	Type of Theme
Theme 14. Schools need to involve parents more on discussions about these procedures.	Major
Theme 15. Schools need to notify parents in a timely manner whenever their child is restrained or secluded.	Minor
Theme 16. Teachers need to be consistent when using these procedures on students.	Minor
Theme 17. Teachers have difficult jobs teaching students in GNETS settings.	Minor

As stated earlier, each category and theme will be discussed in the upcoming Chapter 5. In Chapter 4, I summarized my research participants, provided a description of my research participants, and identified and categorized themes. For the next chapter, I provide an overview of each category and discuss each emerging theme.

Chapter V

RESULTS

In my dissertation, I investigated the lived experiences of K-12 students, teachers, and parents who were affected by restraints and/or seclusion in alternative school settings. As a special education teacher, I have been involved in restraints and seclusion of students, which has affected me. These experiences have been influential in my decision to research this topic. The following research questions guided my research.

1. What are the lived experiences of K-12 students, teachers, and parents who have been involved with the use of restraints and/or seclusion in alternative school settings?
2. How have the participants' lived experiences affected their lives?
3. Based on the participants' experiences and reflections on those experiences, what suggestions/recommendations would the participants make to school professionals related to the use of restraints and/or seclusion in school settings?

When researching this topic, I discovered there was limited research (Barnard-Brak et al., 2014). I added to the body of knowledge by interviewing four students, four teachers, and four parents on their experiences with this subject matter. I recorded, transcribed, and made interview transcripts. I analyzed each transcript using Vagle's (2014) whole-parts-whole technique. This method allowed me to identify 14 major themes and three minor themes, which I grouped into categories. In this chapter, I will present and explain each category and theme. This chapter presents examples that are

developed in Chapter 6.

Category 1: Overall Restraint and Seclusion Experiences

This category was created from themes that appeared in all three groups. Each student, teacher, and parent presented various experiences with restraints and seclusion. During interviews, students told me stories of suffering physical injuries such as broken bones. Teachers described experiences when they have been affected psychologically from using these methods. Parents disclosed emotional trauma they experienced from seeing their child injured from these interventions. Despite these physical and emotional injuries, there was a common consensus among group members that restraints are needed, but they believed that seclusion is a safer alternative. Finally, each group expressed that collaboration between students, teachers, parents, and school administrators needs to take place to discuss these practices. These themes are discussed in the upcoming section of my research study.

Theme 1. Restraints Are Dangerous Interventions That Can Cause Injuries and Even Deaths, but These Practices Are Needed to Keep Students and Staff Safe

Theme 1 was a major theme because it was evidenced among each member of the student, teacher, and parent groups. Students Mark, Johnathan, Susan, and Kelly suffered physical and/or emotional injuries from teachers using restraints and seclusion. Rebecca, Steven, Paul, and Hope, who were teachers, either injured students or were hurt from using these interventions. George, Heather, Karla, and Shelly, who were parents, had children injured during a physical restraint. Despite these injuries, there was a consensus among each individual in the student, teacher, and parent groups that teachers need to use physical restraints to keep other students safe. There was a general agreement that

educators must use restraints only when students are dangerous to themselves or others instead of using these procedures to punish aversive behaviors. When asked to reflect on their experiences with physical restraints, the students, teachers, and parents supported this major concept, as indicated in the following statements:

- Mark (student): “A teacher broke my arm during a restraint. . .Teachers should only restrain students when students hurt others.”
- Johnathan (student): “I remember only one bad incident I had when a teacher restrained me. This teacher was three times my size, and he laid across my body. I almost passed out. . .Teachers restraining me and sending me to the Opportunity Room helps me. . .I would rather for a teacher to stop a kid from hurting me than to be hurt.”
- Susan (student): “A teacher picked on me and restrained me for no reason. . . This teacher affected my life because I have a difficult time trusting teachers. . .My current teacher has restrained me once this school year. . .My teacher was correct when restraining me because I would have killed that bitch.”
- Kelly (student): “I am fearful of teachers when they restrain me or other students. I get nervous and start shaking. . .I would rather for teachers to restrain students and prevent them from hurting themselves or other students.”
- Rebecca (teacher): “That leg still bothers me, and I am afraid that I am going to take pain medication for the rest of my life. . .I will use [restraints] to protect my students whenever they are at risk of causing harm or threatening other students and staff.”

- Steven (teacher): “Restraint and seclusion practices should only be used when students are threats to themselves or others. . .I had to do something differently because my body has taken a toll from all the restraints I did on students.”
- Paul (teacher): “I participated in at least 50 restraints during my first 3 years of teaching. This cost me because I sustained broken fingers, wrists, and ankles. I continue to go to therapy today due to constant arthritis. . .Schools need to use both restraint and seclusion practices because children’s behaviors have changed. Children are more violent today than they were when I was growing up.”
- Hope (teacher): “While restraining the child, I put too much pressure on his body and fractured his ribs. . .I would rather restrain a student from hurting himself or others than to do nothing at all.”
- George (parent): “I understand why teachers must restrain and seclude students. Students are simply bad, including my son. . .[Teachers] must protect other students from students who are dangerous.”
- Heather (parent): “During the restraint, the teacher broke my son’s finger. . .I don’t have a problem with teachers restraining my son because I know he can easily hurt someone.”
- Karla (parent): “My sons have suffered injuries when restrained. . .My son needed to be restrained because he could have killed that teacher with that chair.”
- Shelly (parent): “Teachers restrained and secluded my daughter. She has suffered carpet burns during a restraint. . .Teachers have to restrain and seclude students. There is a reason these kids are at these schools, and parents must remember this.”

Theme 2. Seclusion is a Better Alternative than Restraints Because Physical Contact is Avoided

Theme 2 is a major theme in each participant category. There were three references that seclusion was the better alternative than restraints in the student category. Those references came from Mark, Susan, and Kelly. Johnathan did not distinguish which intervention was better for teachers to use on a student because he believed both interventions were effective for teachers to use on students who engaged in life-threatening behaviors. Among the teachers, three believed this practice was better than restraints, and these teachers were Steven, Paul, and Hope. Rebecca does not like using restraints or seclusion. Finally, for parents, three viewed seclusion as a better alternative than restraints, and these parents were George, Heather, and Karla. Parent Heather thought both procedures were effective because these measures served as consequences for students who misbehaved.

When sharing their experiences with restraints and seclusion, several of the members in each participant group remarked that seclusion was a better alternative than physically restraining children because teachers do not have to apply physical contact to children. Occurrences of injuries could be minimized. Also, this intervention allowed teachers the opportunity to evaluate what was bothering students and attempt to use coping strategies to redirect them. The following students, teachers, and parents shared the following narratives to support this theme:

- Mark (student): “An Opportunity Room sounds like a good idea for a school to use to take bad students. . .After you described the room, I think that it is a better way for teachers to calm down students instead of restraining them.”

- Susan (student): “Teachers use the Opportunity Room at my school. I like this better than being restrained because teachers do not touch you. Instead, they let you sit in the room with them until you are able to calm down.”
- Kelly (student): “I become less nervous in the Opportunity Room because teachers do not put hands on me there.”
- Steven (teacher): “When the point system fails, I take my students to the Opportunity Room until they can get themselves together. I try to be as hands-off as possible now to avoid injuries.”
- Paul (teacher): “To reduce my participation in restraints, I took students who engaged in behaviors that normally led to physical restraints into my school’s Opportunity Room. . .After implementing this practice, I reduced my restraint participation and minimized my injuries.”
- Hope (teacher): “I do not like using restraints on students, but since it is a part of my job duties, I comply. . .If I must make a choice, I am going to send students to the Opportunity Room first before restraining them because teachers are less likely to cause student injuries using this setting.”
- George (parent): “[My son’s school uses] a room called an Opportunity Room where teachers take children who misbehave. . .I like this room because it helps students calm down, and the teacher is not hurt from restraining a student.”
- Heather (parent): “His school also uses an Opportunity Room, which is a room teachers take students to calm them down. I think this is a better alternative than restraining students because teachers and students are one-on-one. No one gets hurt.”

- Karla (parent): “I believe that teachers should try to seclude students first before physically restraining them if possible because I consider seclusion a safer alternative than physical restraints.”

Theme 3. More Collaboration between Students, Teachers, and Parents Is Needed to Guide Restraint and Seclusion Methods

Theme 3 is a major theme evidenced in each student, teacher, and parent group. Three students, Mark, Susan, and Kelly, noted that interactions between students, teachers, and/or parents is needed to make the practices of restraints and/or seclusion better. Teachers Rebecca, Paul, and Hope recommended that more collaboration should take place between students, teachers, and parents. Finally, Heather, Karla, and Shelly, who were parents, believed that discussions need to take place between students, teachers, and parents. This theme was supported by the following students, teachers, and parents’ transcript excerpts:

- Mark (student): “Teachers should try to talk to students first, which may avoid restraints. That is why I like the Opportunity Room because I believe it is a place where teachers can talk to you instead of yelling at you like during a restraint.”
- Susan (student): “Once you are calm, teachers talk to you about coming up with a plan to control your behavior in the future.”
- Kelly (student): “I think some of my restraints could have been avoided if my teachers would have just sat down and talked to me instead of picking on me further by making negative comments.”
- Rebecca (teacher): “Normally, I develop relationships with my students, which helps me avoid having to restrain or seclude them.”

- Paul (teacher): “Teams consisting of principals, teachers, parents, and students should meet quarterly to review restraint and seclusion incidents for the purposes of evaluating or improving school officials’ use of these methods.”
- Hope (teacher): “Relationships, relationships, relationships between parents, students, and school staff are important to reducing restraint use.”
- Heather (parent): “School administrators need to have forums with parents and community stakeholders to come up with solutions to reduce restraint use.”
- Karla (parent): “Schools need to involve parents in discussions on restraints and seclusion to minimize teachers using these practices.”
- Shelly (parent): “School principals need to continue to involve parents on discussions about restraints and seclusion because parents will understand that restraints and seclusions are not tools to punish students’ behaviors.”

Each of the previous themes presented were common among each student, teacher, and parent I interviewed for my research project. In the upcoming discussion, I will introduce themes that were specific to each group.

Category 2: Students’ Experiences with Restraints and/or Seclusion

Each student I interviewed shared unique experiences about their participation in restraints and/or seclusion. As stated earlier, some of those students were in favor of teachers using these interventions. Some of the students, however, viewed these practices unfavorably. After evaluating each of their interview transcripts, I discovered three different themes that were common among the students.

Theme 4. Each Student Had Poor Family Dynamics

This was a major theme displayed among the students. Each of the students I

interviewed had poor relationships with family members in their households, which may correlate to teachers restraining them more than students who have positive relationships with family members. During interviews, I observed students either directing profanity at one of their parents or referring to them negatively. If the students are demonstrating these types of behaviors in their households, they are more than likely demonstrating these same behaviors in school, which will result in teachers being more prone to restraining them. This theme was supported by the following students' excerpts:

- Mark (student): When replying to his mother and brothers, he stated, "I can't stand you dumb motherfuckers."
- Johnathan (student): "I don't have a relationship with my pops. I mean I see him around the neighborhood, and I speak to him. But, I just don't hang around him. I don't want a relationship with him because he is only my sperm donor."
- Susan (student): "I can't stand my mother. She makes me so sick sometimes. I have a younger sister who was born with a birth defect. My mother feels sorry for her and treats her differently than me. . .It is too much favoritism that goes on at home with my sister. . .[My father] chooses to spend time hunting instead of doing anything with me. We do not have a good relationship because he is all about himself, and I never see him."
- Kelly (student): "My mother left me at the DFCS office when I was nine. All I could remember on that day was my mother telling me that she loved me and could no longer take care of me. . .But, my world was rocked when my mother came home early from work one day. She caught my dad sleeping with another woman. That was the last time I ever saw him."

Theme 5. During Restraints, School Staff Need to Pay Attention to Their Weight Distributions to Avoid Causing Student Injuries Such as Suffocation, Choking, and Bodily Harm

Each student referenced staff weight distribution during physical restraints. Each student I interviewed was smaller in size than the teachers I interviewed. The students frequently complained that whenever staff members placed them into restraints, they experienced suffocation, choking, and bodily injuries due to school personnel placing their bodies on top of them. The students' indicated their concerns about the weight of those who restrained them in the following statements:

- Mark (student): "I hate for someone to throw me onto the ground and place their body on top of me so that I cannot move. Sometimes, I am unable to breathe. All I can do whenever a teacher is on top of me is scream and cry."
- Johnathan (student): "I remember only one bad incident I had when a teacher restrained me. This teacher was three times my size, and he laid across my body. I almost passed out."
- Susan (student): "[Teachers] need to also realize that they are bigger than us. Students are hurting when someone is on top of them."
- Kelly (student): "I have not had any physical injuries from restraints, but it is very uncomfortable when teachers are on top of me because it is like a heavy weight on your body that you cannot move."

Each student I interviewed experienced a degree of discomfort from teachers restraining them. In most cases, students are smaller in size than teachers. It is very important that teachers pay attention to their restraint positioning and students' vital signs

to avoid injuring students and themselves.

Theme 6. Teachers Must Be Consistent When They Apply Restraints and/or Seclusion

Students Mark, Susan, and Kelly agreed with this major theme. Johnathan, who dissented with the students, believes that teachers are consistent when they apply restraints and/or seclusion to students. In GNETS schools, school policy dictates that teachers can only restrain or seclude students when they are threats to others or themselves. Policy prohibits teachers from restraining students for aversive behaviors. Mark, Susan, and Kelly shared experiences where they observed or were involved in restraints for behaviors that were inconsistent with GNETS' restraint and seclusion policies. The following students' statements support this theme:

- Mark (student): "Teachers have restrained me for having a bad day before coming to school, and I did not even hit another student or cause harm to myself."
- Susan (student): "A teacher picked on me and restrained me for no reason. He restrained me for anything such as not having my school supplies, talking to neighbors, not completing classroom assignments, or sleeping in class."
- Kelly (student): "[Teachers] should not just try to restrain students or put students into the Opportunity Room every time students disrupt class."

Theme 7. Prior to Restraining Students, Educators Should Use Deescalating Techniques

First to Avoid Restraining Students

Each student I interviewed experienced numerous physical restraints. During interviews, students Mark, Susan, and Kelly made references to teachers using verbal redirections first prior to using restraints. These students believed that several of their restraints could have been avoided if teachers used verbal redirections or took them to

time-out rooms to calm down. Johnathan, on the other hand, did not have any issues with the way his teachers dealt with him when it came time for him to be restrained. Johnathan expressed that his teachers restrained him only when he needed to be restrained. He was not in favor of teachers using deescalating tactics first prior to using a restraint. The following students' excerpts supported this major theme.

- Mark (student): "Teachers should talk to students first, which may avoid restraints. This is why I like the Opportunity Room because I believe it is a place where teachers can talk to you instead of yelling at you like during a restraint."
- Susan (student): "Teachers use the Opportunity Room at my school. I like this better than being restrained . . . Instead, they let you sit in the room until you are able to calm down."
- Kelly (student): "I think some of my restraints could have been avoided if my teachers would have just sat down and talked to me instead of picking on me further by making negative comments."

Based upon the themes listed above, the students are concerned about avoiding injuries, teachers being consistent with using restraints and/or seclusion, and educators deescalating them first prior to using restraints. In the upcoming section, I will discuss the themes that surfaced from the teachers I interviewed.

Category 3: Teachers' Experiences with Using Restraints and/or Seclusion

Each of the teachers I interviewed provided unique experiences about restraints and/or seclusion. Based on my interviews, the teachers experienced problems with building relationships with students and parents, fear of using these interventions, child home rearing practices, and using these procedures appropriately. The themes are

presented and explained below. Each theme is supported with teachers' interview testimonies.

Theme 8. Each Teacher Grew Up in Stable Home Environments Where They Were Taught Values Such as Helping Others in Need

Unlike most of the interviewed students, each teacher grew up with both parents in the household. As youth, the teachers' parents provided them with structure. Several of the teachers worked on farms where they had chores that had to be completed. The parents instilled values in the teachers that they had a duty to help others in need. The following teachers' excerpts supported this major theme.

- Rebecca (teacher): "I grew up on a farm with my parents and brother. . .After getting out of school, my schedule was to do my homework and feed the animals. During the summer months, I helped our workers pick tobacco, and I also picked cotton during the fall months. . .My mother died when I was a child. Since she was not around, my father was my biggest influence in my life. I witnessed him helping his fellow brothers in need. He often shared excess crops with neighbors and donated food to those in need."
- Steven (teacher): "I grew up in the city with both of my parents. When I was born, my father retired from the military, and my mother was a housewife. I am the middle child. I have an older sister and a younger brother. My childhood was normal. I had several friends and cousins that I played with all the time. My parents used to make us volunteer and help those in need all the time."
- Paul (teacher): "I grew up on a farm where my family raised cows. We provided milk and meat to our community. Working on a farm was very hard. My task was

to milk the cows every morning before going to school . . . My brother is disabled . . . I helped my mother care for his needs.”

- Hope (teacher): “I grew up in Latin America, and I am the only child. Both of my parents work in coal factories. It was always their dream to move to the United States for better opportunities. As a child, I learned how to play the violin, and I toured throughout Latin America playing with orchestras. When I was not touring, my parents made me give free concerts at the local orphanages to give back to our community.”

Theme 9. Teachers Used Restraints Early in Their Careers and Minimized Use of These Techniques as They Progressed in Their Careers

As beginning teachers, each interviewee used restraints to address life-threatening behaviors of students. Some of the educators used the procedures to punish aversive behaviors. The teachers sustained injuries or caused harm to other students. As a result, each teacher experienced life changing moments such as emotional trauma where he or she needed to reduce their restraint participation. The following excerpts support this major theme:

- Rebecca (teacher): “From 2013-2016, I have been a part of 43 restraints and 16 seclusions. . . I had my back turned to him, and he threw a desk at my leg, which lead to my femur breaking into three different places. . . My leg was in a cast for over 8 months. From this experience, my life was forever changed. That leg still bothers me, and I am afraid that I am going to take pain medication for the rest of my life. I am fearful of turning my back away from students because I am still in fear of being injured again.”

- Steven (teacher): “At this school, I work with students who have behavior and emotional problems. I took over a classroom that did not have any classroom discipline. So, I felt it was my job to break bad practices such as profanity use, classroom disruptions, and fights with other students. . .I accomplished this task by engaging in over 40 restraints and 10 seclusions of students during my first 2 years at the school. I am not going to lie to you, but I restrained many of the students for aversive behaviors instead of life threatening behaviors. . .As a eighth year teacher, my views towards correcting classroom behaviors have evolved. I had to do something differently because my body has taken a toll from all the restraints I have did on students.”
- Paul (teacher): “I can recall several experiences where I saw my students yelling, shouting, and using profanity at their parents in IEP meetings. . .So, I began using physical restraints on students, which I hate to use. I participated in at least 50 restraints during my first 3 years of teaching. This cost me because I sustained broken fingers, wrists, and ankles. . .To reduce my participation in restraints, I took students who engaged in behaviors that normally lead to physical restraints into my school’s Opportunity Room. I sat with them until they could calm down and be safely returned to the classroom. After implementing this practice, I reduced my restraint participation and minimized my injuries. Currently, I have participated in only 20 restraints during my last 6 years.”
- Hope (teacher): “In my teaching career, I have probably restrained at least 30 students and secluded at least 11. . .During my fifth year of teaching, I had a life changing experience. One of my students stabbed another student with a pencil.

My paraprofessional and I immediately separated the two students and restrained the student who committed the act. . . I try to avoid restraining or secluding by using my verbal skills.”

Theme 10. Creating Relationships with Students May Decrease Teachers’ Use of Restraints

Like the students, most of the teachers I interviewed believed if their colleagues developed relationships with students, then teachers would reduce their restraint use. Teachers Rebecca, Paul, and Hope made references to this theme. Steven made no mention of this theme in his interview testimony because of the variance in questions I used. Educators’ interview excerpts supporting this major theme are listed below.

- Rebecca (teacher): “Normally, I develop relationships with my students, which helps me avoid having to restrain or seclude them.”
- Paul (teacher): “I believe that teachers must develop relationships with parents, which is an important step to minimizing teachers’ use of these practices. Finally, teams consisting of principals, teachers, parents, and students should meet quarterly to review restraint and seclusion incidents for the purposes of evaluating or improving school officials’ use of these methods.”
- Hope (teacher): “Relationships, relationships, relationships between parents, students, and school staff are important to reduce restraint use.”

Theme 11. Most Teachers Do Not Like Using Physical Restraints, but It Is a Part of the Job

To work at the T. Z. Academy, teachers are required to restrain students. To comply with school policies, the educators performed these procedures on students. From

the interviews, Rebecca, Paul, and Hope do not like using these procedures. Steven liked using these methods and thought they were necessary due to children being different than children in the past. The teachers made the following statements about this major theme:

- Rebecca (teacher): “I never try to restrain or seclude students because I don’t like using them. . .But, I will use these procedures to protect my students whenever they are at risk of causing harm or threatening other students and staff.”
- Paul (teacher): “So, I began using physical restraints on students, which I hate to use.”
- Hope (teacher): “I do not like using restraints on students, but since it is a part of my job duties, I comply.”

Theme 12. Parents Are Expecting Teachers to Raise Their Children, Which Is the Reason Teachers Must Use These Procedures

A commonality I discovered during interviews was that most of the teachers felt parents expected them to raise their children. Teachers Rebecca, Steven, and Paul referenced this major theme. They believed if parents disciplined students at home then teachers would not have to use restraint procedures so prevalently. Hope did not mention this belief in any of her interviews. The educators made the below statements.

- Rebecca (teacher): “I wish parents would take more of an active role in their children’s lives, which I think is very important to reduce teachers using restraints on students.”
- Steven (teacher): “I took over a classroom that did not have any classroom discipline. . .At the time, I believed these students developed these habits because

several of their parents enabled them. I believed it was my job to teach my students proper behaviors since they were not being taught at home.”

- Paul (teacher): “A lot of the students needed guidance because they came from home environments, which were not very structured. . .Some parents expect teachers to raise their children, and they refuse to discipline their children.”

Theme 13. Teachers Must Avoid Restraining Students for Aversive Behaviors

T. Z. Academy policy states that teachers can restrain students for engaging in behaviors that are threatening to others or themselves. Each of the teachers I interviewed either used restraints inappropriately to punish aversive behaviors, or they witnessed other teachers use these procedures in this manner. Teachers’ interview statements in alignment with this major theme follow below.

- Rebecca (teacher): “Teachers have been guilty of using aversive practices at my school. As a senior teacher, I verbally reprimand several of these teachers. Further, I have provided training sessions for negligent teachers to correct their inappropriate use of restraints and/or seclusion. For frequent violators, I sat in administrative hearings where administrators suspended or terminated teachers.”
- Steven (teacher): “I am not going to lie to you, but I restrained many of the students for aversive behaviors instead of life threatening behaviors.”
- Paul (teacher): “A lot of the students needed guidance because they came from home environments, which were not very structured. . .So, I began using physical restraints on students.”

- Hope (teacher): “School programs need to be consistent on the reasons they restrain students and must avoid restraining students who engage in aversive behaviors.”

Based upon the aforementioned themes, most of the teachers were apprehensive about performing restraints on students due to risks of injury. They mentioned several suggestions, such as colleagues forming relationships with students and parents rearing their children to minimize these procedures from being used. Many of the educators admitted that they performed restraints to punish aversive behaviors or witnessed others perform these procedures in this manner. In the next section, I will present the categories and themes from the parents I interviewed for this research study.

Category 4: Parents’ Experiences With Restraint and/or Seclusion

Like the students and teachers, each of the parents provided a variety of experiences about their children whose teachers restrained or secluded. The parents expressed concerns about being involved in school officials’ discussions on restraint and seclusion procedures, being notified following their children being restrained, educators’ consistency using these interventions, and the difficulties of teaching in GNETS settings. I shall present and discuss each theme. Finally, I will offer parents’ excerpts to support each theme.

Theme 14. Schools Need to Involve Parents More on Discussions About These Procedures

Parents are required to sign a form authorizing schools to use restraints and/or seclusion on students prior to their children enrolling in GNETS schools. Within this form, school officials inform parents that they will be contacted in the event their child

was restrained or secluded. Following each restraint, the form mentions that parents will be involved in meetings to discuss ways to minimize teachers having to use these procedures on their children. Finally, the document states that school administrators will invite parents to quarterly meetings to discuss ways to minimize teachers' use of these methods on students. Some of the parents interviewed expressed concerns that school officials have not contacted them or have stopped notifying them about attending these meetings. Parents Heather, Karla, and Shelly provided the following statements in supporting this major theme.

- Heather (parent): "School administrators need to have forums with parents and community stakeholders to come up with solutions to reduce restraint use."
- Karla (parent): "Schools need to involve parents in discussions on restraints and seclusion to minimize teachers using these practices."
- Shelly (parent): "School principals need to continue to involve parents on discussions about restraints and seclusion because parents will understand that restraints and seclusion are not tools to use to punish students' behaviors."

Theme 15. Schools Need to Notify Parents in a Timely Manner Whenever Their Child Is Restrained or Secluded

At the T. Z. Academy, school policy dictates that school officials shall contact parents within 24 hours whenever school officials restrain or seclude their children. During interviews, two of the parents indicated that they were notified within this time requirement, which made this a minor theme. Some parents, however, disclosed that they were not notified at all. The following parents' interview excerpts support this theme.

- Heather (parent): “My son’s teachers do not notify me when he is restrained sometimes. I have to find out about it through secondhand sources like other parents and teachers I know.”
- Karla (parent): “If students are restrained, then schools need to notify parents in a timely fashion. I am tired of my sons telling me that they were restrained, and I heard nothing from the schools.”

Theme 16. Teachers Need to Be Consistent When Using These Procedures on Students

In my research study, I discovered two of the parents did not believe schools were consistent when applying restraints on their children. These parents had children who attended the same T. Z. Academy. According to the parents, some teachers follow the school policy of only restraining students when they are threats to themselves or others. On the contrary, some teachers restrained for non-life threatening behaviors. This minor theme was evidenced by the following parents’ interview stories listed below.

- Heather (parent): “[Teachers] are not consistent when restraining [my son]. For example, one day teachers restrained him for being disrespectful. On another day, staff restrained him for not doing his classwork. On some days, school officials restrained him for hitting others.”
- Karla (parent): “Teachers need to be on one accord when restraining students because one teacher restrains for talking and another restrains for hitting someone. Teachers just need to get it together.”

Theme 17. Teachers Have Difficult Jobs Teaching Students in GNETS Settings

Unlike general education teachers, teachers at the T. Z. Academy do not have a principal or an assistant principal that handles discipline. These teachers simply have a

coordinator, who acts in the capacity as a case manager. In most cases, these teachers address discipline issues within their own classrooms. Parents George and Shelly acknowledged these teachers have difficult jobs because these teachers are at risk of injury when having to restrain and/or seclude students. Parents Heather and Karla did not comment upon on this theme because of the variance in the questions I asked. Parenting statements supporting this minor theme are listed below.

- George (parent): “I think teachers at the T. Z. Academy are doing a great job and have a hard job. . .I simply want the federal and state government to support these programs a lot more because staff at these schools are working with violent students. I don’t know of too many professions where you have the risk of injury without receiving some sort of hazardous duty pay.”
- Shelly (parent): “Look, teachers at these academies have a hard job. They have to teach at-risk youth who general education teachers failed to educate. Teachers have to restrain and seclude students. There is a reason these kids are at these schools, and parents must remember this. I don’t know of any other profession where employees are scrutinized for protecting themselves or others from injuries.”

Unlike the students and teachers, the parents were divided on their views on restraints and seclusion. They agreed that schools needed to include them in discussions about restraints and seclusion. Some of the parents were troubled that teachers were not using restraint and seclusion procedures consistently. Other parents expressed concerns about schools not notifying them about teachers restraining or secluding their children in a timely manner. On the contrary, some parents thought GNETS teachers had a difficult

job and needed more support with their job duties.

In the upcoming and final chapter, I shall interpret my results, identify limitations, and suggest future recommendations for research.

Chapter VI

DISCUSSION

In Chapter 1, I introduced the audience to the stories of Johnathan King and Cedric Napoleon. Johnathan King, who was age 13, committed suicide when his teacher placed him into a seclusion room (Fantz, 2008). Like Johnathan, Cedric Napoleon, who was age 14, also died when his teacher positioned him into a physical restraint, and he stopped breathing (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). These stories made me reflect upon my roles as a special education teacher and a community counselor. As a special education teacher, I conducted restraints and seclusion on students where students and I suffered injuries. In my duty as a community counselor, I listened to the stories of students and parents who were affected by these practices. The stories of Johnathan King and Cedric Napoleon, along with my involvement with restraints and seclusion, influenced my curiosity to investigate this subject matter. Upon reviewing the literature, I found that there was relatively scant research in this area (Barnard-Brak et al., 2014). Most of the information I discovered focused on the origins of these methods (Ferleger, 2008; Ryan & Peterson, 2004), the various types of restraints and seclusions (CCBD 2009; Couvillon et al., 2010), the need for legislators to create state and federal laws to govern these practices (Butler, 2012; LeBel et al., 2012), recommendations from private and governmental organizations guiding these methods (CDBD, 2009; Committee on Education, 2012; Ferriss, 2012; GovTrack.Us, 2009), and one study that examined if students had any involvement with these methods (Westling et al., 2010). The literature

failed to record individuals' lived experiences with these procedures or how they were affected from these techniques. Thus, I made the decision to conduct a phenomenological study to add this component to the literature.

Prior to my research efforts, I had three assumptions about restraints and seclusion. First, I believed that these procedures affected students, teachers, and parents. Second, upon exposure, these methods changed people's lives in some manner. Finally, I assumed affected individuals would offer suggestions that could improve these practices. Thus, the following research questions guided my study:

1. What are the lived experiences of K-12 students, teachers, and parents who have been involved with the use of restraints and/or seclusion in alternative school settings?
2. How have the participants' lived experiences affected their lives?
3. Based on the participants' experiences and reflections on those experiences, what suggestions/recommendations would the participants make to school personnel related to the use of restraints and/or seclusion in school settings?

To answer these questions, I interviewed four students, four teachers, and four parents in three schools located in the state of Georgia. These schools were a part of the Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS), which are alternative schools that serve students whom psychologists have diagnosed with emotional and behavioral disorders. I conducted three different interviews using Irving Seidman's (2013) questioning process. In the first interview, I asked questions to participants that led up to their phenomenological experiences; in the second interview, I designed questions where interviewees described their experiences with restraints and/or

seclusion; and in the final interview, my questions directed participants to discuss how their experiences affected them. I asked individuals questions in an unstructured format because I wanted each interview to be individualized (Vagle, 2014). I recorded, transcribed, and made interview transcripts. Once this process was completed, I analyzed each transcript using Vagle's (2014) whole-parts-whole technique. I then identified 17 different themes and arranged them into four different categories.

After completing this process, I discovered that restraints and seclusion affected K-12 students, teachers, and parents. In fact, I found that these procedures altered many of the participants' lives, and they are still coping with mental and physical ailments resulting from these methods. Finally, the participants offered suggestions that could possibly be used to improve these interventions.

In the upcoming section, I will answer my research questions and analyze how each theme that developed from my research results relates to the literature that exists on this topic. I will show how my results are similar and different than results from previous studies.

Answers to Research Questions

I interviewed four students, four teachers, and four parents to answer my research questions. In this section, I will present each question, and I will provide each participants' responses to the questions.

RQ 1. What are the lived experiences of K-12 students, teachers, and parents who have been involved with the use of restraints and/or seclusion in alternative school settings?

Mark (student)

- Teachers restrained him 20 times, and they have never placed him in a seclusion room.
- Educators have placed him in restraints where he has been unable to breathe.
- A teacher broke his arm during a restraint.

Johnathan (student)

- Teachers restrained him 11 times, and they have secluded him five times.
- He believes teachers restraining and secluding him helps his behaviors.
- A teacher caused him to almost pass out during a restraint.

Susan (student)

- Teachers restrained her 15 times, and they secluded her 15 times.
- A teacher restrained Susan for non-life threatening behaviors such as not having her school supplies, talking to neighbors, not completing class assignments, and sleeping in class.

Kelly (student)

- Teachers restrained her 18 times and secluded her 11 times.
- Educators mainly restrained her for fighting another student.
- Teachers also restrained Kelly for stabbing herself with a pencil.

Rebecca (teacher)

- She has restrained 50 students and secluded 20 students over a 6 year teaching career.

- She does not like using restraints or seclusion on students.
- Instead, Rebecca develops relationships with students where she can minimize her use of these techniques.
- She has verbally reprimanded teachers who use restraints as aversive methods.
- Rebecca has also provided training and sat in administrative meetings on teachers who are repeat offenders of using these methods inappropriately.
- A student injured her during a restraint.

Steven (teacher)

- He has restrained 70 students and secluded 25 students over an 8 year teaching career.
- Early in his teaching career, Steven used restraints on students to correct behaviors such as profanity use, classroom disruptions, and fights with other students.
- His principal reprimanded him for using restraints inappropriately, and the principal required Steven to receive extra training on using restraints.

Paul (teacher)

- He has restrained 70 students and secluded 40 students over a 10 year teaching career.
- Early in his teaching career, Paul used restraints on students who yelled, shouted, and used profanity at their parents or school officials.
- He changed his views on restraints after suffering injuries.

Hope (teacher)

- She has restrained 30 students and secluded 11 students over a 14 year teaching career.
- She does not like using restraints and seclusion on students, but she uses these methods because it is a part of her job duties.
- She tries to avoid using restraints by using calming techniques such as deep breathing, journal writing, or counting to 20 backwards with students.

George (parent)

- Teachers have restrained George's child 13 times and secluded him 15 times.
- He believes his son deserves each of his restraints because his son knew the school expectations.
- Educators have taken George's son several times to the Opportunity Room to calm him down.

Heather (parent)

- Teachers have restrained Heather's child 10 times and secluded him 4 times.
- Educators are not consistent when restraining her child. One teacher restrained Heather's son for not doing his classwork, and another teacher restrained Heather's son for hitting others.
- Teachers do not notify Heather when her son is restrained.
- A teacher injured her son during a restraint.

Karla (parent)

- Teachers have restrained Karla's children 19 times and secluded them 16 times.

- Teachers restrain at least one of her sons once a month and seclude them at least twice a month.
- Her sons have experienced injuries from restraints.

Shelly (parent)

- Teachers have restrained Shelly's child 9 times and secluded her 6 times.
- Her daughter suffered carpet burns during a restraint.

As a teacher who has restrained and secluded students, I was very surprised at student Johnathan's beliefs that restraints and seclusion help him. Most students that I have restrained and secluded expressed to me that teachers only use these interventions to punish them. They do not view teachers using restraints and seclusion as methods to prevent life threatening behaviors. Like teachers Steven and Paul, as a novice teacher, I inherited a classroom where students engaged in numerous classroom misbehaviors. To restore order, I used restraints and seclusion on these students for non-life threatening behaviors such as profanity use, talking back, refusing to follow my directions, and sleeping in class. Unlike Steven, my coordinator never disciplined me for using these procedures inappropriately because I never received any parent complaints and was never caught. On the contrary, my body suffered both physical and emotional injuries, and I minimized my use of these procedures like the two teachers.

I frequently encounter parents like George, Heather, Karla, and Shelly. Like George and Shelly, I have parents who share similar views. These parents, in most cases, are embarrassed that their child is at an alternative school and believe that their child deserves whatever discipline teachers use at the school. I also encounter parents like Heather and Karla where teachers physical restrain their child, and the teachers do not

notify them in a timely fashion about the incident. In most cases, unlike Heather and Karla, these parents sue GNETS Programs. In the upcoming section, I shall provide participants' responses to the second research question.

RQ 2. How have the participants' lived experiences affected their lives?

Mark (student)

- He has fears of going into his teacher's classroom who restrained him.
- He has suffered emotional trauma from seeing teachers restraining other students.

Johnathan (student)

- Teachers restraining and secluding Johnathan has taught him that there are consequences to negative behaviors.
- He feels very safe at the T. Z. Academy because he knows if students try to hurt him, then teachers will restrain them.

Susan (student)

- Susan has a difficult time trusting teachers due to a bad experience with a teacher restraining her inappropriately.
- She has had good experiences with the Opportunity Room because she is able to calm down and come up with a plan to control her behavior in the future.

Kelly (student)

- She has not experienced any physical injuries when teachers restrained her, but she has experienced discomfort.
- Kelly is afraid of teachers when they restrain her, and she becomes very nervous and starts shaking when encountering these teachers.

- Kelly has fears of going into the classroom because she is afraid her teacher will restrain her.
- She feels safe in the Opportunity Room because teachers talk to her there and do not restrain her.

Rebecca (teacher)

- Her femur was broken into three different places after being injured from a restraint incident with a student.
- Rebecca takes pain medications on an ongoing basis and has to prop her leg up on a stool when sitting for long periods of time.
- She cannot sit in a desk with her back faced behind others. If Rebecca does, she will constantly look over her shoulder.

Steven (teacher)

- He has suffered several physical injuries and tries to be as hands-off as possible so that he does not suffer anymore injuries.
- Instead of restraining and secluding students for non-life threatening behaviors, Steven restrains students when students are threats to themselves or others.
- He adopted a point system to punish non-life threatening behaviors.
- Steven also uses the Opportunity Room more to get students to calm down and control their behaviors.

Paul (teacher)

- During restraints, he suffered broken fingers, wrists, and ankles.
- He goes to therapy due to having constant arthritis.
- He has braces for his feet and arms.

- Paul takes pain medications on an as needed basis.
- He attended a pain management clinic to detox from these pain medications.
- To avoid restraining students, he takes students to the Opportunity Room until they are able to calm down and be safely returned to the classroom.

Hope (teacher)

- She restrained a student and put too much pressure on his ribs, which led to the students' ribs fracturing. Also, during this restraint, she placed the students' body on a rusty nail.
- From this incident, she now pays attention to how hard she presses against a students' body and checks her surroundings to eliminate safety hazards prior to restraining students.
- Hope tries to avoid restraints and seclusion by using verbal redirections with students. If this fails, she takes students to the Opportunity Room.

George (parent)

- He has not been affected by teachers restraining and secluding his son.
- He likes teachers restraining students because teachers do not have time to keep stopping classes to deal with students' behaviors.

Heather (parent)

- A teacher broke her son's finger during a restraint, and she experienced emotional trauma from this incident.

Karla (parent)

- Her son passed out during a restraint with a teacher and had to be rushed to the hospital.

- She experienced emotional trauma from this incident.
- School officials do not notify her sometimes when a teacher restrains one of her sons.

Shelly (parent)

- She has not been affected by restraint and seclusion procedures.

I have a lot of regrets using restraints on students. As I stated in Chapter 1, I was responsible for breaking Brice's, one of my former students, arm. Each time that I restrain students, I always think about this experience. This incident allows me to easily sympathize with students like Mark, Susan, and Kelly when they express fears about being restrained. Like the students, I am very fearful when I have to apply these techniques because I do not want another incident like I had with Brice. I err on the side of caution before restraining students.

In the state of Georgia, educators must complete 30 years of teaching service to become eligible for retirement. Like teacher Paul, I question if I will be able to complete all of my remaining teaching years at the T. Z. Academy because of previous and current injuries of using restraints on students. I do not want to be like teachers Rebecca and Paul and take pain medications for the rest of my life. After completing each school term at the T. Z. Academy, I contemplate if I want to return.

As a parent of two children, I do not know what I would do if a school official at one of my children's schools called me and stated that a teacher injured them during a restraint. After hearing the stories of parents Heather and Karla, I have the upmost respect for them because I do not know how they held their emotions together after receiving one of those calls. Prior to restraining students, I put myself in the role of a parent, and I try

every option to avoid restraining them such as using deescalate techniques or taking students into the Opportunity Room. If one of my children were in a restraining situation, I would want teachers to exercise the same patience and attempt to avoid restraining at all costs. In the next section, I shall provide my participant responses to my final research question.

RQ 3. Based on the participants' experiences and reflections on those experiences, what suggestions/recommendations would the participants make to school personnel related to the use of restraints and/or seclusion in school settings?

Mark (student)

- Teachers should use physical restraints as last resorts on students after methods such as verbal redirections have been exhausted.
- Educators should only use physical restraints on students when they hurt other students.
- Teachers must pay attention to their weight distributions during physical restraints.
- Educators should use the Opportunity Room before restraining students.

Johnathan (student)

- He did not offer any recommendations.

Susan (student)

- Teachers should only use restraints when students are threats to themselves or others.
- These procedures should never be used to punish students for non-life threatening behaviors.

- Educators need to be consistent on how they apply restraints on students.
- Teachers must pay attention to how they distribute their weight during restraints.

Kelly (student)

- Students are at GNETS schools because of misbehaviors, and teachers should not use restraints or put students in seclusion rooms because of their misbehaviors every time.
- Teachers need to talk to students first before restraining them.
- Educators should never make negative comments towards students, which incites students towards engaging in life threatening behaviors.
- Teachers should use physical restraints when students are a danger to themselves or others.

Rebecca (teacher)

- Teachers must always follow their schools' restraint and seclusion policy to avoid unnecessary suspensions or terminations.
- Educators must form relationships with their students to understand what triggers them for engaging in life threatening behaviors.
- Teachers must use restraints and seclusion as methods of last resort and should attempt to deescalate students first.

Steven (teacher)

- Before restraining or secluding students, teachers need to think about the possibility of being sued or terminated.
- Two or more schools officials need to perform a restraint on a student to prevent staff and student injuries.

- Teachers need to make sure seclusion rooms are free of safety hazards.
- Educators must pay attention to their weight distributions when restraining students.

Paul (teacher)

- School administrators need to offer teachers on-going training on using restraints and seclusion on students.
- Teachers must develop relationships with parents to minimize teachers using restraints and seclusion.
- Teams consisting of principals, teachers, parents, and students must meet quarterly to review restraint and seclusion incidents for the purpose of improving school officials' use of these methods.

Hope (teacher)

- Two or more people must perform restraints on students.
- School officials need to be consistent on the reasons they restrain students.
- Educators must write incident reports immediately following a restraint or seclusion and must notify parents immediately.
- To minimize restraint and seclusion use, relationships must be formed between parents, students, and school officials.

George (parent)

- He did not have any recommendations for teachers who use restraints and seclusion.
- George wants the federal government to support GNETS programs a lot more because these programs are working with violent students.

- Teachers need to receive hazardous duty pay due to working with troubled students.

Heather (parent)

- Opportunity Rooms are a better alternative than restraints because no one gets hurt.
- Relationships need to be formed between parents and teachers to minimize teachers' use of restraints and seclusion.
- Forums need to take place between parents and community stakeholders to brainstorm solutions to reduce restraint use.

Karla (parent)

- Teacher must watch their weight distributions during restraints.
- School officials need to notify parents following a restraint of a student.
- School officials need to involve parents in discuss about minimizing restraints.
- Educators should seclude students first prior to restraining them because seclusion is a safer alternative.
- Teachers must avoid restraining students for non-life threatening behaviors.

Shelly (parent)

- GNETS teachers must continue to support one another despite attention in the news about restraints and seclusion.
- School principals must continue to involve parents in discussions about restraints and seclusion so that parents will understand the purpose of teachers using these interventions.

As an educator, I have been guilty of being closed-minded to the ideas of others

outside of the teaching field on restraints and seclusion. When discussing this topic previously, I only entertained ideas from colleagues. During my early teaching years, I thought that the manner in which teachers used restraints and seclusion on students was proper and fair because parents expected teachers to raise their children. Also, I believed that teachers needed to do whatever was necessary to restore order in classrooms. My earlier views have changed because I have seen so many students and teachers injured from physical restraints. As a seasoned teacher, I now understand that educators do not have all of the answers when it comes to guiding restraints and seclusion, and we must seek guidance from individuals outside of the teaching field. Many of the suggestions that I gathered from the students, teachers, and parents I interviewed gave me new ideas that can guide restraints and seclusion. For example, I am a large size man, and I never considered that I need to pay attention to how I distribute my weight during a restraint. I also never thought about the idea of hosting a forum with parents and community members to work together to minimize restraint and seclusion use. After completing this research project, I learned that everyone has a stake in helping to solve the problem of restraint and seclusion use.

Each participant provided valuable input for my research. I discovered that students, teachers, and parents have experiences with restraints and/or seclusion. In most cases, their lives have been affected. Several of the participants offered recommendations that can guide teachers using these interventions in school settings. In the upcoming section, I shall relate the 17 themes I discovered to prior literature on restraints and seclusion.

Themes Relating to Prior Literature

I created transcripts for four students, four teachers, and four parents. I then

analyzed the transcripts using Vagle's (2014) whole-parts-whole technique, and I identified 17 different themes. In this section, I examined if researchers discussed the themes in prior literature that exist on restraints and seclusion.

Theme 1. Restraints Are Dangerous Interventions That Can Cause Injuries and Even Deaths, but These Practices Are Needed to Keep Students and Staff Safe

According to Barnard-Brak et al. (2014), the Child Welfare League estimated that 8 to 10 students die each year from restraints. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) received numerous reports of school staff causing students' deaths by using physical restraints from 1990 to 2009. Couvillon et al. (2010) noted physical restraints are dangerous interventions where school staff can cause students to choke, suffocate, and even die. Teachers can also suffer physical injuries when students kick, bite, and punch them in the process of applying these methods. Despite these ramifications, according to the researchers, these procedures are necessary--with restrictions in place--to prevent students from engaging in life-threatening behaviors.

During interviews, each student, teacher, and parent, told me stories of being injured or witnessing others who suffered injuries. There were accounts of students passing out, teachers suffering broken bones, and parents experiencing psychological problems from their children enduring these techniques. Despite these horrific experiences, there was a consensus among the students, teachers, and parents that these practices are needed because these procedures protect the safety of students and teachers. As Shelly, a parent, remarked, "Teachers have to restrain students. There is a reason these kids are at these schools, and parents have to remember this."

Theme 2. Seclusion Is a Better Alternative than Restraints Because Physical Contact Is Avoided

This theme was not supported in past literature. Instead, previous literature criticized school staff for using seclusion to manage students' behaviors. For example, the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (2009) examined several schools that had seclusion rooms, and they found that many of these rooms were not safe for students. The council also investigated court cases and discovered that there were incidents where pupils died from self-inflicted injuries such as suicides after teachers placed them into these rooms. Like the CCBD, the GAO (2009) reported that school officials use seclusion as a method to punish and retaliate against students. Further, according to Barnard-Brak et al. (2014) the Council of Parents Attorneys and Advocates (COPAA) cited in a 2009 report that there were 185 abuse cases that took place between teachers using restraints, seclusion, and aversive methods on students. The COPPA also reported that 58% of the cases involved teachers using seclusion (Barnard-Brak et al., 2014).

Despite these circumstances, the students, teachers, and parents I interviewed were in favor of school staff using these rooms. I gathered from participants that seclusion rooms were better alternatives because teachers can take students into these rooms to redirect them. As student Susan stated, "Teachers use the Opportunity Room at my school. I like this better than being restrained because teachers do not touch you."

Theme 3. More Collaboration between Students, Teachers, and Parents Is Needed to Guide Restraint and Seclusion Methods

According to the CCBD (2009), following a seclusion, school staff need to setup meetings with parents and students to discuss incidents and ways to prevent teachers

from using these interventions in the future. Villani et al. (2012) suggested that schools form committees consisting of students, parents, school staff, and community support members for the purposes of reviewing restraint and seclusion incidents to improve teachers using these procedures. LeBel et al. (2012) recommended that debriefings take place between school officials and families following restraint and seclusion occurrences. Also, the authors proposed that schools meet with parents to understand students' behaviors to reduce restraint and seclusion incidents. Simonsen et al. (2014) advised that school administrators need to involve parents in discussions about students' behaviors whenever they are assessed with instruments such as Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBA), which are designed to understand behaviors.

Collaboration is a major concern with the research participants. Three students, three teachers, and three parents remarked that if more discussions took place between schools and families, then restraints and seclusion could be minimized or even eliminated. Paul, a teacher, best supports this assertion when he stated, "Teams consisting of principals, teachers, parents, and students should meet quarterly to review restraint and/or seclusion incidents for the purposes of evaluating or improving school officials' use of the methods."

Theme 4. Each Student had Poor Family Dynamics

This theme was not supported in previous literature. I was unable to find any studies that showed any parallels between students' family dynamics and school staff restraining them. All the students had poor family relationships with one or both parents. I observed students directing profanity at their parents and refusing to follow their directions. Like the parents, some of the students did not have good relationships with

their siblings. They referred to their siblings in negative tones and did not get along with them. On the contrary, some of the students had close relationships with other family members such as grandparents. If students had difficulties forming relationships with family members, then they are more than likely going to have difficulties forming relationships with school officials. This lack of a relationship may make teachers more prone to restraining and/or secluding students because they do not know the students or the triggers that cause the students to engage in life threatening behaviors. This theme was best evidenced prior to my interview with student Mark. I observed Mark's mother getting onto him for disrespecting his brothers. Mark responded to his mother by stating, "Shut the fuck up." He told his brothers, "Get the hell out of my face because you are making my head hurt."

Theme 5. During Restraints, School Staff Need to Pay Attention to Their Weight Distributions to Avoid Causing Student Injuries Such as Suffocation, Choking, and Bodily

Harm

Couvillon et al. (2010) noted that most school officials use side floor restraints, which are the most hazardous, but most frequently used, on students. During this restraint, according to the researchers, teachers apply pressure against students' bodies by using their weights, which can cause students to suffocate, choke, or even die. On the other hand, the team described another type of physical restraint called a standing restraint where educators place their bodies around students, but their weights are evenly distributed because both the professional and pupil are standing up.

Teachers restrained the students I interviewed mostly with side floor restraints. Very few of the students experienced standing restraints. As a result of educators using

these procedures, the students experienced loss of breathing, choking, and in some cases, broken bones. As student Mark remarked, “I hate for someone . . . to place their body on top of me so that I cannot move. Sometimes, I am unable to breathe.”

Theme 6. Teachers Must Be Consistent When They Apply Seclusion and/or Restraints

The state of Georgia’s Seclusion and Restraint for All Students Act, authorizes school officials to use restraints to protect the safety of students; it prohibits staff from using these procedures as aversive methods (GADOE, 2012). Amos (2004) defined aversive techniques as physical assaults, physical restraints, isolations, emotional abuse, and other methods to inflict pain. According to the CCBD (2009), teachers continue to address students’ behaviors in this manner, and the organization recommended that school staff should never use seclusion or other methods to punish aversive behaviors. Instead, according to the Council, these interventions should be used to prevent students from injuring themselves or others. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) (2009), in agreement with the CCBD, disclosed in a report that teachers restrained and/or seclude students as forms of retribution instead of using these methods to protect students from injury. Further, the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates (as cited in Barnard-Brak et al., 2014) cited a report where they examined 185 abuse cases, and they discovered 30% of the cases involved educators using aversive methods to punish students.

Three of the students in the study mentioned that teachers sometimes restrained and/or secluded them for engaging in behaviors such as profanity use, talking to others, and being disrespectful in class. According to the students, teachers sometimes restrained and/or secluded them for life-threatening behaviors such as fighting others and throwing

objects at staff. As student Mark expressed, “My teachers restrained me for talking back, bothering other students, sleeping in class, and being disrespectful.”

Theme 7. Prior to Restraining Students, Educators Should Use Deescalating Techniques

First to Avoid Restraining Students

There were three research articles in the literature that supported this theme. In the first study, LeBel et al. (2012) suggested that trainers should teach teachers how to deescalate students prior to using physical restraints. Similarly, in the second study, the CCBD (2009) proposed that school leaders need to conduct trainings where school officials learn how to deescalate students prior to sending them to seclusion rooms. Finally, Villanni et al. (2012) hired coaches who instructed teachers on how to deescalate violent students.

Three of the students I interviewed felt that if teachers used deescalating techniques first, then restraints could have been avoided. The students mentioned that teachers should take them away from classroom settings and into separate rooms such as Opportunity Rooms to calm them down. Kelly, a student, supported this claim by stating, “I think some of my restraints could have been avoided if my teachers would have just sat down and talked to me instead of picking on me further by making negative comments.”

Theme 8. Each Teacher Grew Up in Stable Home Environments Where They Were Taught Values Such as Respecting Authority Figures and Following Rules

This theme was not supported in prior literature on restraints and seclusion. I did not locate any research studies that showed any correlations between teachers’ childhood values and their propensity to restrain students. Each teacher that I interviewed grew up in stable home environments where their parents implemented

household rules. As Rebecca, a teacher, stated, “I grew up on a farm with my parents and brother After getting out of school, my schedule was to do my homework and feed the animals. During the summer months, I helped our workers pick tobacco, and I also picked cotton during the fall months. Growing up on a farm taught me values of hard work and dedication.”

Theme 9. Teachers Used Restraints Early in Their Careers and Minimized Use of These Techniques as They Progressed in Their Careers

This theme was not supported in past literature on restraints. Each teacher engaged in numerous restraints with students early in their teaching careers. This experience led to the teachers suffering physical injuries and emotional trauma. Some of the teachers caused injuries to students. Teachers adjusted their approaches to restraining after these experiences and invented discipline systems such as using a behavior point system and taking students into Opportunity Rooms. Other teachers now watch their body positions when encountering students. Steven, an educator, best supported this theme when he stated, “As an eighth year teacher, my views towards correcting classroom behaviors have evolved. I had to do something different because my body has taken a toll from all the restraints I did on students.”

Theme 10. Creating Relationships with Students May Decrease Teachers’ Use of Restraints

Amos (2004) discussed the Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Model when addressing student behaviors. In this system, according to the author, teachers reward students with tangible items when they observe students demonstrating appropriate behaviors. He stated that teachers are encouraged to build trust and relationships with

students when using PBS. This was the only study that supported this theme. Several of the research studies used in my project discussed the importance of schools developing relationships with parents (CCBD, 2009; LeBel et al., 2012; Simonsen, 2014). The CCBD (2014) described the importance of including students and parents in debriefings following restraints, but the organization never mentioned the importance of school officials developing relationships with students to avoid restraints. Likewise, LeBel et al. (2012), advocated the importance of school administrators establishing relationships with mental health institutions to develop restraint and seclusion protocols. The authors also expressed the importance of school officials creating relationships with students' families to understand students' behaviors. Still, LeBel et al. failed to account for the importance of teachers developing relationships with students. Finally, Simonsen (2014) recommended the idea of parents being a part of IEP teams and participants in student behavioral instruments such as Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA). The group failed to discuss the importance of relationship formations between educators and pupils to reduce restraint and seclusion practices.

Three teacher participants believed relationship building between students and teachers is essential to reducing restraint use. One teacher proposed an idea that quarterly meetings should take place between principals, teachers, parents, and students to review restraint and seclusion incidents. As Hope, a teacher, expressed, "Relationships, relationships, relationships between parents, students, and school staff are important to reduce restraint use."

Theme 11. Most Teachers Do Not Like Using Physical Restraints, but It Is a Part of Their Job

This theme was not supported in any of the current literature on restraints and seclusion. Three of the teachers confirmed this theme. They expressed that they did not like using physical restraints because of risks of injury, but they had to use these interventions to protect themselves and other students. Rebecca, a teacher, supported this claim by stating, “I never try to restrain or seclude students because I don’t like using them But, I will use these procedures to protect my students whenever they are at risk of causing harm or threatening other students and staff. That is just the way that it is right now.”

Theme 12. Parents Are Expecting Teachers to Raise Their Children, Which Is the Reason Teachers Must Use These Procedures

This theme was not supported by any of the literature on restraints and seclusion. Three of the teachers believed that parents are not disciplining students at home. Due to parents’ inaction, students engage in life-threatening behaviors at schools, which results in teachers using restraints and/or seclusion. Paul, a teacher, remarked, “Some parents expect teachers to raise their children, and they refuse to discipline their children.”

Theme 13. Teachers Must Avoid Restraining Students for Aversive Behaviors

In a 2009 report, the GAO cited that teachers used restraints and seclusion to seek revenge against students instead of using these techniques to protect students (Freeman & Sugai, 2013). The COPAA examined 185 abuse incidents in schools involving these procedures, and they discovered that 30% of these incidents involved educators using the methods as aversive procedures (as cited in Barnard-Brak et al., 2014). In a survey,

Westling et al. (2010) discovered that 277 of the participants in their study had a child whose teachers used aversive practices against.

All of the teachers I interviewed expressed they have used or witnessed colleagues apply these methods in a retaliatory manner. There was a general agreement that these procedures should be used to protect and not punish students. As Hope, a teacher, mentioned, “School programs need to be consistent on the reasons they restrain students and must avoid restraining students who engage in aversive behaviors.”

Theme 14. Schools Need to Involve Parents More on Discussions About These Procedures

The CCBD (2009) proposed that following seclusion, school officials need to meet with students and their parents to discuss ways to prevent teachers from having to use these practices in the future. Villani et al. (2012) suggested that school administrators must establish advisory boards consisting of children, parents, school officials, and community stakeholders to analyze restraint and seclusion data for the purposes of improving these practices. LeBel et al. (2012) urged school officials to meet often with students’ parents to design plans to understand students’ behaviors and seek remedies to reduce restraint and seclusion use. Simonsen et al. (2014) advocated the importance of school staff utilizing parents when completing behavioral assessments on students.

Two of the parents I interviewed brought up this theme and were in support of this theme. One parent believed schools officials need to strategize with parents to reduce teachers’ use of these procedures. Another expressed school leaders must host seminars with parents to minimize teachers using these procedures. As parent Shelly stated, “School principals need to continue to involve parents on discussions about restraints and

seclusion. If parents continue to be participants in these dialogues, then they will understand that restraints and seclusion are not tools to use to punish students' behaviors.”

Theme 15. Schools Need to Notify Parents in a Timely Manner Whenever Their Child Is Restrained or Secluded

The CCBD (2009) outlined that following a seclusion that school officials need to notify parents as quickly as possible. Miller (2011) argued that school staff need to contact parents within 24 hours of a physical restraint or seclusion. Likewise, the failed proposed legislation Preventing Harmful Restraint and Seclusion Act, suggested that following a restraint or a seclusion, school leaders must notify parents within this same timeframe (GovTrackUs., 2009).

I interviewed parents who made similar suggestions. One noted that she was concerned because her son's school does not let her know when her son is restrained; instead, she has to find out from the child. As Karla, a parent, expressed “If students are restrained, then schools need to notify parents in a timely fashion. I am tired of my sons telling me that they were restrained, and I heard nothing from the schools.”

Theme 16. Teachers Need to Be Consistent When Using These Procedures on Students

Westling et al. (2010) distributed online surveys to a national restraint and seclusion prevention organization, and 277 of the respondents expressed that school staff used aversive tactics on their children. LeBel et al. (2012) advocated the need for school principals to establish cultures where teachers use restraint and seclusion procedures for life threatening reasons instead of as rule compliance tactics.

Two of the parents I interviewed agreed with these researchers. One stated that

teachers restrained her child for non-life threatening reasons such as being disrespectful and not doing his classroom assignments. As parent Karla said, “Finally, teachers need to be on one accord when restraining students because one teacher restrains for talking and another restrains for hitting someone. Teachers just need to get it together.”

Theme 17. Teachers Have Difficult Jobs Teaching Students in GNETS Settings

This theme was not supported in previous literature. Based on my examinations, this study may be the first exploring GNETS parents’ perspectives on teachers using restraints and seclusion. There were two parents I interviewed who supported this theme. One expressed that teachers in these settings have a hard job, and they desired for the federal government to support GNETS settings more. As parent Shelly noted, “Look, teachers at these academies have a hard job. They have to teach at-risk youth who general education teachers failed to educate. Teachers have to restrain and seclude students. There is a reason these kids are at these schools, and parents must remember this. I don’t know of any other profession where employees are scrutinized for protecting themselves or others from injuries.”

Ten of the themes from my research study were supported in past literature on restraints and seclusion. There were seven themes that were not supported, and researchers could possibly use these themes to conduct new studies on restraints and seclusion. In the upcoming sections, I shall state my study’s limitations, implications, recommendations for future research, and conclusion.

Limitations

I attempted to explore the lived experiences of students, teachers, and parents who were affected by restraints and seclusion in alternative school settings. In gathering this

information, there were certain limitations that were a part of this study. Although restraint and seclusion practices began in the 18th Century in psychiatric wards (Ryan & Peterson, 2004) and later transitioned from these facilities into schools (Villani et al., 2012), there is limited research that exists on this topic (Barnard-Brak et al., 2014; See Appendix D). Thus, I did not have established precedent for my study. Further, the research setting took place in Georgia Alternative Network for Educational and Therapeutic Supports (GNETS) schools and did not encompass other schools. Also, I am employed at one of these schools, and I knew many of the participants in the study. My relationships with the participants could have possibly influenced their responses. Further, the study is confined to a small setting in the state of Georgia, and the results were not intended to be used to generalize.

The research study has limitations. Despite these circumstances, it adds to the body of knowledge on restraint and seclusion use in alternative school settings. In the next section, I will discuss the implications for my study and later explain how it can be used to influence future research on restraints and seclusion.

Implications of the Study

Barnard-Brak et al. (2014) expressed that there is a lack of research on restraint and seclusion. In my examination of the past literature, studies focused on the need to enact federal legislation to guide these practices (Barnard-Brak et al., 2014), proposed recommendations to govern these methods (LeBel et al., 2012; Simonsen et al., 2014), addressed reforming federal laws such as the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act (IDEA) to become stricter with school officials' use of these practices (Miller, 2011), and how these interventions were regulated in the medical field (Lloyd, Law, Heard, &

Kroese, 2008; Mann-Poll, Smith, Doeselaar, & Hutschemaekers, 2013; Martin & Mathisen, 2005; Pearch, 2005). I was unsuccessful with finding any studies that focused on the lived experiences of individuals who were associated with these practices or how they were affected. My study added to the body of literature by providing perspectives of individuals affected by these procedures in school settings. In accomplishing this goal, my research focused more on the individual and less on the need to reform these practices through passing laws.

Couvillon et al. (2010) stated that there are no federal laws or governmental agencies that guide these practices. As mentioned earlier, legislators attempted to pass two laws to guide these practices, which were called the Keeping All Children Safe Act and the Prevent Harmful Restraint and Seclusion Safe Act, but the Senate failed to pass each legislation due to a bipartisan divide (GovTrackUs., 2009; Stewart, 2009). In examining the real-life experiences of individuals involved with these practices in school settings, this study could possibly convince local, state, or federal legislators of the need to pass laws to regulate these practices by opening their eyes to the traumas students, teachers, and parents experience with these practices.

In the upcoming section, I shall present recommendations for future research on this topic.

Recommendations for Future Studies

I interviewed four students, four teachers, and four parents to obtain their lived experiences on restraints and seclusion. After examining the interview transcripts of these individuals, I discovered 17 themes. Ten of the themes related to information that is already in the literature about restraints and seclusions, but there were seven themes that

introduced new ideas that could be used for future research endeavors. I will offer recommendations that could be used to explore each theme in the future.

Students, teachers, and parents viewed teachers using seclusion favorably when addressing students who engaged in life threatening behaviors towards themselves or others. Researchers who conducted prior research on this technique did not view this method approvingly (Barnard-Brak et al., 2014; Freeman & Sugai, 2013). Future research could focus on how educators using seclusion could minimize emotional and physical harm to students and staff. Also, studies could determine if teachers using seclusion on students are more effective methods than using physical restraints.

Building relationships was a prevalent theme in the research study. Each student that I interviewed had poor relationships with family members. I observed several students directing profanity at parents and referring to siblings negatively. There were no studies that examined if there are any correlations between students' family dynamics and their likelihood of teachers restraining them.

Further, several of the research studies used in this project focused on the need of school staff creating relationships with parents to address students' behaviors, which could minimize teachers' restraint use. No studies showed how the impact of teachers forming relationships with students could reduce teachers' using restraints. Future studies could focus on this topic.

Along with relationship, another prominent theme was teachers risking injuries and being liable for injuring students during restraints and/or seclusion. Many of the teachers suffered emotional and physical injuries resulting from using these procedures. The teachers were afraid of suffering any more injuries. Two of the teachers were afraid

of being sued from using restraints and seclusion on students. Future topics could discuss alternatives teachers could use besides these interventions such as Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS), which can minimize teachers suffering injuries and being held liable for students injured during restraints and/or seclusion.

Parents' child rearing practices was another theme in the research study. Three of the teachers believed that their only job should be educating students. Yet, according to the educators, parents are expecting them to raise students as well, which contributes to them restraining students. Researchers could explore if parenting rearing practices are factors that contribute to teachers restraining students.

Two of the parents in the research study indicated that GNETS teachers have difficult jobs because community members portray these teachers negatively due to using restraints and seclusion on students. Future studies could describe teachers' experiences working in these settings and the difficulties they encounter working with students diagnosed with emotional and behavioral disorders.

Each of the themes presented new ideas future researchers could explore to add to the body of knowledge on restraints and seclusion in alternative school settings. In the final section, I shall conclude my study.

Conclusion

This research study explored the lived experiences of K-12 students, teachers, and parents involved with the use of restraints and seclusion in alternative school settings. It examined how these practices affected these individuals, and participants offered suggestions on how to improve school officials use of these interventions. From this research, I made several discoveries. I have been affected physically and emotionally

from these practices, and I found that I was not the only individual who suffered from these experiences. Further, when school officials follow proper restraint and seclusion protocol, injuries between school staff and students can be minimized. Also, it is clear to me that the use of these procedures as aversive methods by educators is still prevalent and must be stopped because of risks of injury, liability lawsuits, and deaths. Finally, until legislators pass federal laws to govern these practices, schools are going to continue to be inconsistent in how they use these practices. More school officials are going to be injured and face legal action from parents. Most importantly, more students are going to suffer physical and emotional trauma. In the worst cases, they will die until the federal government regulates these practices.

EPILOGUE

Should asylum staff be allowed to use restraints on patients? This question caused great debate during the 18th Century within asylums (Ryan & Peterson, 2004). According to Ryan and Peterson, there were several injuries and deaths that took place in asylums among staff and patients. To resolve this problem, Phillippe Pinel, a psychiatrist, developed a restraint procedure whose purpose was to minimize injuries and deaths in asylums (Ryan & Peterson, 2004). According to Ferleger (2008), Dr. John Connolly, a superintendent at an asylum, opposed Pinel's restraint intervention because he believed these practices did not keep patients safe. Dr. Connolly expressed that asylum employees used these techniques on patients as retaliatory techniques for the purpose of causing harm to patients, and he outlawed these practices at the asylum he operated (Ferleger, 2008). Pinel and Connolly caused a divide among individuals on whether these practices should be used in asylums (Ryan & Peterson, 2004). Thus, Pinel's and Connolly's stances on restraint practices continue to be debated today within general hospitals, mental health hospitals, and nursing homes. Pinel and Connolly created a conundrum that is also present today in schools. Should school officials continue to allow teachers to restrain and seclude students despite the risks of injury that both teachers and students can suffer from these techniques? Or, should school officials discontinue use of teachers using these techniques because many of them use these techniques as retaliation tactics?

As a teacher, I am in favor of both Pinel's and Connolly's positions on restraints. Similarly to Pinel's asylum restraint policy, I believe that restraints and seclusions are needed for students because students are becoming increasingly violent towards themselves and others, which I am basing off my years as a teacher. As a first year teacher, I did not

have very many incidents of students attempting suicide, causing self-harm to themselves and others, or injuring teachers. In fact, most of the students' incidents related to less severe incidents such as students not completing class assignments, using profanity, and sleeping in class. As a ninth year teacher, I have had more of the severe incidents that have happened this year than the less severe incidents. Based on this observation, I believe teachers must use restraints to protect themselves and other students.

On the other hand, I support Dr. Connolly's position on restraints. Like the asylum employees, I have observed several teachers who take out their frustrations on students by using restraints. In fact, I recently attended an administrative hearing involving a teacher located in another county who broke a student's arms and legs during a restraint because the student refused to pick up his pencil off the classroom floor. The school superintendent terminated the teacher's contract and reported the teacher to the professional standards commission.

How can this conundrum be resolved? The federal government continues to be divided on establishing rules and regulations to guide restraints and seclusion in school settings. Some state governments have restraint and seclusion laws in place, but there are still several states that do not regulate these practices. After conducting this research project, I believe that students, teachers, and parents are going to have to take matters into their own hands to force federal and state governments to resolve this conundrum. As I have learned from this project, students, teachers, and parents need to build relationships with each other and work together on brainstorming solutions to prevent staff and students from suffering anymore injuries. They must take the initiative to resolve this conundrum and present their ideas to lawmakers and force lawmakers to pass laws to

guide these procedures through the power of the vote. If students, teachers, and parents cannot come together, then more students and staff are going to continue to suffer injuries. Most importantly, students are going to continue to die from these procedures.

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Appendix A:
Interview Scheduling Information

Appendix A

Interview Scheduling Information

Students

		Dates	Length of Time
<u>Mark</u>	Interview 1	May 15, 2016	45 Minutes
	Interview 2	May 30, 2016	60 Minutes
	Interview 3	June 16, 2016	34 Minutes
<u>Johnathan</u>	Interview 1	May 14, 2016	30 Minutes
	Interview 2	May 29, 2016	39 Minutes
	Interview 3	June 17, 2016	29 Minutes
<u>Susan</u>	Interview 1	January 7, 2017	33 Minutes
	Interview 2	January 23, 2017	42 Minutes
	Interview 3	February 11, 2017	25 Minutes
<u>Kelly</u>	Interview 1	January 9, 2017	35 Minutes
	Interview 2	January 27, 2017	47 Minutes
	Interview 3	February 13, 2017	30 Minutes

Teachers

		Dates	Length of Time
<u>Rebecca</u>	Interview 1	May 17, 2016	70 Minutes
	Interview 2	June 5, 2016	66 Minutes
	Interview 3	June 21, 2016	40 Minutes
<u>Steven</u>	Interview 1	May 14, 2016	38 Minutes
	Interview 2	May 30, 2016	42 Minutes
	Interview 3	June 19, 2016	35 Minutes
<u>Paul</u>	Interview 1	May 15, 2016	30 Minutes
	Interview 2	May 31, 2016	39 Minutes
	Interview 3	June 20, 2016	28 Minutes
<u>Hope</u>	Interview 1	May 15, 2016	32 Minutes
	Interview 2	May 30, 2016	40 Minutes
	Interview 3	June 21, 2016	33 Minutes

Parents

		Dates	Length of Time
<u>George</u>	Interview 1	May 10, 2016	27 Minutes
	Interview 2	May 26, 2016	31 Minutes
	Interview 3	June 12, 2016	33 Minutes
<u>Heather</u>	Interview 1	May 17, 2016	27 Minutes
	Interview 2	June 2, 2016	33 Minutes
	Interview 3	June 18, 2016	26 Minutes
<u>Karla</u>	Interview 1	May 9, 2016	32 Minutes
	Interview 2	May 28, 2016	36 Minutes
	Interview 3	June 20, 2016	44 Minutes
<u>Shelly</u>	Interview 1	May 13, 2016	40 Minutes
	Interview 2	May 31, 2016	42 Minutes
	Interview 3	June 19, 2016	40 Minutes

Appendix B:

States without Restraint or Seclusion Guidelines

Appendix B

States without Restraint or Seclusion Guidelines

According to the U.S. Department of Education (2010), the following U.S. states do not have restraint or seclusion guidelines:

Alaska	Oklahoma
California	Rhode Island
Idaho	South Dakota
Louisiana	Utah
Missouri	Vermont
New Jersey	Wyoming.

According to the U.S. Department of Education (2010), the following U.S. territories do not have restraint or seclusion guidelines:

- America Samoa
- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
- Guam
- Republic of the Marshall Islands
- Federated States of Micronesia
- Puerto Rico
- Republic of Palau
- U.S. Virgin Islands.

Appendix C:
States Prohibiting Mechanical Restraints

Appendix C

States Prohibiting Mechanical Restraints

According to Butler (2012), the following U.S. states prohibit school officials from using mechanical restraints on students:

Colorado	Montana
Idaho	North Carolina
Illinois	Pennsylvania
Massachusetts	Virginia
Maine	Maryland.
Tennessee	

States Prohibiting Chemical Restraints

According to Butler (2012), the following U.S. states ban school personnel from using chemical restraints on students:

Connecticut
Colorado
Illinois
Massachusetts
Maine
Tennessee
New Hampshire.

States Requiring School Officials to Notify Parents

According to the Committee on Education and the Workforce (2012), officials stated only 24 states have requirements for school staff members to notify students' parents when they restrain or seclude students. The article did not list the states whom had this requirement.

Appendix D:
Limited Research

Appendix D

Limited Research

I met with Ms. Emily Rogers, a Valdosta State University Reference Librarian, on January 22, 2015 at 5:00 P.M. for the purposes of locating additional articles for my research project. So far, I have only been able to find a limited number of articles. Ms. Rogers used a general search in Galileo with the following keywords: crisis procedures, restraints, seclusion, public schools, imminent danger, ambulatory restraints, mechanical restraints, chemical restraints, emotional and behavioral disorders, behavioral disorders, and therapeutic holding. This search resulted in articles I had previously reviewed. Ms. Rodgers limited the search by searching within three Galileo databases called ProQuest, Psychological and Behavioral Sciences Collection, and PsycARTICLES. Through these efforts, I found two articles I had not included previously in my research study. Those articles were called “Restraint and Seclusion: A Distressing Treatment Option?” and “Human Services Restraint: Its Past and Future.” Finally, Ms. Rogers and I looked for articles that explored the lived experiences of individuals affected by restraint and/or seclusion. We were unable to find any articles.

On July 17, 2015 at 1:00 P.M., I met with Ms. Emily Rogers, a Valdosta State University Reference Librarian, on July 17, 2015 at 1:00 P.M. for the purposes of locating additional articles for my research project. I have only been able to find a limited number of articles. Ms. Rogers used Google Scholar and located an article called “New Considerations in the Prevention of Aversive, Restraint, and Seclusion.” After reading the article, I used the information from the article in my conceptual framework. Ms. Rodgers and I used Galileo and limited the search to dissertation databases. We found several

dissertations that discussed the need to create federal legislation for seclusion and restraint practices in public schools, but the dissertations included articles I had already reviewed. In some cases, the articles were older than 10 years or were not related to my research questions. Finally, Ms. Rogers and I looked for articles that explored the lived experiences of individuals affected by restraint and/or seclusion. We were unable to find any articles.

On December 14, 2016 at 4:30 P.M., I met with Ms. Emily Rogers, a Valdosta State University Reference Librarian. for the purposes of locating additional articles for my research project. The purpose of my meeting with Ms. Rogers was to find additional articles for my research study. Ms. Rogers and I found one additional article called, “The Time-Out and Seclusion Continuum: A Systematic Analysis of the Case Law” by Bonn and Zirkel (2014).

Appendix E:
Approved IRB Form

Appendix E

Approved IRB Form



Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Research Participants

NEW PROTOCOL APPROVAL

PROTOCOL NUMBER: IRB-03347-2016 RESPONSIBLE RESEARCHER: Mr. Cedric Roberts
PROJECT TITLE: Phenomenological Study of Students, Teachers, and Parents Affected by Restraints and Seclusion in Public Schools
APPROVAL DATE: 04/13/2016 EXPIRATION DATE: 04/12/2017

LEVEL OF RISK: Minimal More than Minimal
TYPE OF REVIEW: Expedited Under Category 6 & 7 Convened (Full Board)

- CONSENT REQUIREMENTS:
- Adult Participants – Written informed consent with documentation (signature)
 - Adult Participants – Written informed consent with waiver of documentation (signature)
 - Adult Participants – Verbal informed consent
 - Adult Participants – Waiver of informed consent
 - Minor Participants – Written parent/guardian permission with documentation (signature)
 - Minor Participants – Written parent/guardian permission with waiver of documentation (signature)
 - Minor Participants – Verbal parent/guardian permission
 - Minor Participants – Waiver of parent/guardian permission
 - Minor Participants – Written assent with documentation (signature)
 - Minor Participants – Written assent with waiver of documentation (signature)
 - Minor Participants – Verbal assent
 - Minor Participants – Waiver of assent
 - Waiver of some elements of consent/permission/assent

APPROVAL: This research protocol is approved as presented. If applicable, your approved consent form(s), bearing the IRB approval stamp and protocol expiration date, will be mailed to you via campus mail or U.S. Postal Service unless you have made other arrangements with the IRB Administrator. Please use the stamped consent document(s) as your copy master(s). Once you duplicate the consent form(s), you may begin participant recruitment. Please see Attachment 1 for additional important information for researchers.

COMMENTS: Good luck with your research!

Lorraine Schmertzing

4/13/16

Thank you for submitting an IRB application.

Lorraine Schmertzing, Ed.D., IRB Chair

Date

Please direct questions to irb@vanderbilt.edu or 229-259-5045.

Form Revised: 12.13.12

Appendix F:
Recruitment Email and Flyer

Appendix F

Recruitment Email and Flyer

The following email will be sent to the email addresses of teachers at the GNETS' T.Z. Academy at the three South Georgia sites.

My name is Cedric Roberts, and I am special education teacher with Berrien High School. In my role as a special education teacher over the past 7 years, I have been involved in various restraint and seclusion situations that have made me curious about other people's experiences with these actions. Because I am also a doctoral student at Valdosta State University, I am currently in a situation where I can follow through with my curiosity and actually help give others who have had experiences with restraint and/or seclusion an opportunity to have a voice in the academic conversation related to the topic. I am emailing you to become a part of this conversation.

I am seeking teachers, parents, and students for my research study to explore the experiences of students, teachers, and parents affected by the use of restraint and/or seclusion in public school settings. If you are interested in finding out more about the study, or if you know you would like to meet with me to discuss the matter, please contact me at (229) 251-5041 or at cedric.roberts@berrien.k12.ga.us.

Thank you for your time.

Very Truly Yours,

Cedric Roberts, Special Education Teacher

****Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of the research should be directed to Cedric Roberts at (229) 251-5041 or cedric.roberts@berrien.k12.ga.us. This study has been approved by the Valdosta State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Research Participants. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-333-7837 or irb@valdosta.edu.****

ENTS



Have you ever been placed in one or more of these types of positions?

PARENTS



Have you ever felt like the man in the picture after discovering your child was restrained or secluded in school?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you have an opportunity to tell your story.

TEACHERS

Have you ever administered techniques similar to the drawings below OR placed a student in this type of room and left him/her alone?




cedric.roberts@berrien.k12.ga.us
(229) 251-5041

cedric.roberts@berrien.k12.ga.us
(229) 251-5041

cedric.roberts@berrien.k12.ga.us
(229) 251-5041

cedric.roberts@berrien.k12.ga.us
(229) 251-5041

cedric.roberts@berrien.k12.ga.us
(229) 251-5041

cedric.roberts@berrien.k12.ga.us
(779) 751-5041

cedric.roberts@berrien.k12.ga.us
(229) 251-5041

cedric.roberts@berrien.k12.ga.us
(229) 251-5041

Please contact me, Cedric Roberts. I am a teacher and doctoral student looking for people who have experience with restraint and/or seclusion in schools to talk confidentially to me about the experiences as part of my research work.

Appendix G:
Demographic Questionnaire

Appendix G

Demographic Questionnaire

Instructions: Thank you for your willingness to participate in my research project and for getting in touch with me. There are two parts to complete for this questionnaire. The first section is based on general questions. In the second section, complete the questions of the box that best describes your role at the site of your Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Supports (GNETS) Program. After answering the questions, email the questions back to me at cedric.roberts@berrien.k12.ga.us within 5 days. I will use the answers to the questions to be sure that your situation matches the guidelines for my study and to determine how we should proceed. If you prefer not to email the questionnaire, you may drop it in the box at your schools' office. The box is labeled "Mr. Roberts' Research Study."

Part I

Name _____ Phone Number _____
Email Address _____

What way do you prefer I reach you?

_____ Phone _____ Email _____ Other: _____

To which of the following age brackets do you belong?

5-12 _____ 13-20 _____ 21-35 _____ 36-50 _____ 50+ _____

Which, if any, category of ethnicity would you use to identify yourself?

_____ African _____ Asian _____ Canadian _____ European
_____ American _____ American
_____ American

_____ Hispanic _____ Latin _____ Other
_____ American _____ American

Which one of the following describes you?

_____ Student _____ Teacher _____ Parent _____ Other: _____

Part II

Instructions: Complete the box, which describes your role within your GNETS Program. For example, if you are a student, complete the student box. If you are a parent, complete the parent box. Finally, if you are a teacher, complete the teacher box.

For Students Only

Were you a student at a Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Supports (GNETS) Program from 2013-2016?

_____ Yes _____ No

Which GNETS Site do you attend? Lowndes _____ Berrien _____ Tifton _____

What is your grade level? _____

What is your age? _____

Which describes how many times you were restrained from 2013-2016 at your GNETS school?

_____ 0-4 _____ 5-9 _____ 10 or more

Which describes how many times you were secluded from 2013-2016 at your GNETS school?

_____ 0-4 _____ 5-9 _____ 10 or more

Have you ever been injured from a restraint? _____ Yes _____ No

Have you ever been injured during a seclusion? _____ Yes _____ No

Should school staff be allowed to restrain students? _____ Yes _____ No

Thanks for your participation!

For Teachers Only

Were you employed at a Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Supports (GNETS) Program from 2013-20156?

_____ Yes _____ No

Which GNETS site are you employed at? Lowndes _____ Berrien _____ Tift _____

Have you worked at GNETS Program for at least 5 years?

_____ Yes _____ No

Which describes how many times you restrained a student in the GNETS Program?

_____ 0-4 _____ 5-9 _____ 10 or more

Which describes how many times you secluded a student in the GNETS Program?

_____ 0-4 _____ 5-9 _____ 10 or more

Have you ever sustained a physical injury as a result or restraining or secluding a student in the GNETS program?

_____ Yes _____ No

In what area is your certification? _____

What degrees do you hold? _____

Thanks for your participation!

Appendix H:

Informed Consent Form for Adults

Appendix H

Informed Consent Form for Adults

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY **Consent to Participate in Research**

You are being asked to participate in a research project entitled "Phenomenological Study of Students, Teachers, and Parents Affected by Restraint and/or Seclusion Use in Public School Settings." This research project is being conducted by Cedric Roberts in the Department of Curriculum, Leadership, and Technology at Valdosta State University. The researcher has explained to you in detail the purpose of the project, the procedures to be used, and the potential benefits and possible risks of participation. You may ask the researcher any questions you have to help you understand this project and your possible participation in it. A basic explanation of the research is given below. Please read this carefully and discuss with the researcher any questions you may have. The University asks that you give your signed agreement if you wish to participate in this research project.

Purpose of the Research: This study involves research. The purpose of the study is to examine the experiences of students, teachers, and parents involved in physical restraint and/or seclusion practices in public school settings. The study will also explore the impact of these experiences on these individuals.

Procedures: You will be involved in three interviews. The first interview will trace your life history up until the time you became involved with restraints and/or seclusion. The second interview will focus directly on your experiences with restraints and/or seclusion. The final interview will ask you to reflect on the meaning of your experiences with restraints and/or seclusion and how these experiences may affect you in the future. There are no alternatives to the procedures in the study. The only alternative is to choose not to participate at all. Each interview will last up to 90 minutes. There will be approximately two weeks between each interview. You will have the opportunity to choose the setting in which you prefer to meet for the interview. I will tape record the interview, but I am the only one who will have access to the recordings.

Possible Risks or Discomfort: When retelling stories about your experiences with restraints and/or seclusion, you may feel sadness, embarrassment, uneasiness, or cry. The risk level involved in this project is minimal.

If you experience psychological distress as a result of your participation in this study, please contact Cedric Roberts at (229) 251-5041. Neither the researcher nor Valdosta State University has made special provision for services required to treat psychological distress that results from participation in this research study.

The following community services are available:

Behavioral Health Services	Behavioral Health Services	Behavioral Health Services
201 Hazel Avenue	334 Eldorado Road	3120 N. Oak Street Extension
Nashville, GA 31639	Tifton, GA 31794	Valdosta, GA 31602
(229) 896-4559	(229) 391-2300	(229) 671-6170

***Services fees at these clinics are based on income need.**

By agreeing to participate in this research project, you are not waiving any rights that you may have against Valdosta State University for injury resulting from negligence of the University or its researchers.

Potential Benefits: Although you may not benefit directly from this research, your participation will help the researcher gain additional understanding of restraints and seclusion in public schools. Knowledge gained may contribute to addressing the limited research that exists on this topic in school settings.

Costs and Compensation: Participants will have the cost of self-provided transportation to settings they select outside of school and home settings. Participants will not receive compensation for participation. There will be no alternate activities or compensation for individuals who elect not to participate.

Assurance of Confidentiality: Valdosta State University and the researcher will keep your information confidential to the extent allowed by law. Members of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), a university committee charged with reviewing research to ensure the rights and welfare of research participants, may be given access to your confidential information. The study is not funded by an external sponsor.

Your real name will not be used when results of the study are reported. Rather a pseudonym or fictitious name will be used in

order to protect your identity. All information will be kept in a locked safe at the researcher's home, and the researcher is the only individual who can access the safe. Information can only be removed from the safe when the researcher needs to use the information. Upon finishing with the information, the researcher will return it immediately back to the safe. Three years after the research study is completed, the information will be shredded. Information I gain from you will be reported in the research study in combination with information from other participants who will be referred to by pseudonyms as well.

Voluntary Participation: Your decision to participate in this research project is entirely voluntary. If you agree now to participate and change your mind later, you are free to leave the study. Your decision not to participate at all or to stop participating at any time in the future will not have any effect on any rights you have or any services you are otherwise entitled to from Valdosta State University. The study will involve interviewing, and you may skip any question that you do not want to answer.

Information Contacts: Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of the research should be directed to Cedric Roberts at (229) 251-5041 or carobert04@msn.com. This study has been approved by the Valdosta State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human research participants. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-333-7837 or irb@valdosta.edu.

Agreement to Participate: The research project and my role in it have been explained to me, and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this study. By signing this form, I am indicating that I am 18 years of age or older. I have received a copy of this consent form.

I would like to receive a copy of the results of this study: *Yes* *No*

Mailing Address: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Printed Name of Participant

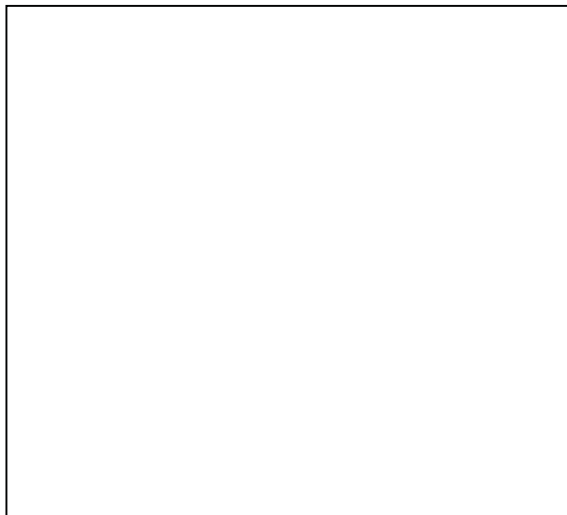
This research project has been approved by the Valdosta State University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Research Participants through the date noted below:

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date



Appendix I:
Informed Consent Form (Parent/Guardian of the Child)

Appendix I

Informed Consent Form (Parent/Guardian of the Child)

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY **Parent/Guardian Permission for Child's/Ward's Participation in Research**

You are being asked to allow your child (or ward) to participate in a research project entitled “Phenomenological Study of Students, Teachers, and Parents Affected by Restraint and/or Seclusion Use in Public School Settings.” This research project is being conducted by Cedric Roberts in the Department of Curriculum, Leadership, and Technology at Valdosta State University. The researcher has explained to you in detail the purpose of the project, the procedures to be used, and the potential benefits and possible risks to your child (or ward). You may ask the researcher any questions you have to help you understand this study and your child’s (or ward’s) possible participation in it. A basic explanation of the research is given below. From this point on in this form, the term “child” is used for either a child or a ward. Please read the remainder of this form carefully and ask the researcher any questions you may have. The University asks that you give your signed permission if you will allow your child to participate in this research project.

Purpose of the Research: This study involves research. The purpose of the study is to examine the experiences of students, teachers, and parents involved in physical restraint and/or seclusion practices in public school settings. The study will also explore the impact of these experiences on these individuals.

Procedures: Your child will be involved in three interviews and the researcher shall ask them open-ended questions. The first interview will trace your child’s life history up until the present time he/she became involved with restraints and/or seclusion. The second interview shall focus directly on your child’s experiences with restraints and/or seclusion. The final interview will ask your child to reflect on the meaning of their experiences with restraints and/or seclusion and how these experiences may affect them in the future. There are no alternatives to the experimental procedures in the study. The only alternative is to choose not to participate at all. Each interview shall last up to 90 minutes. There will be a two week timeframe between each interview. You and your child shall have the opportunity to choose the setting you prefer.

Possible Risks or Discomfort: When your child retells stories about his/her experiences with restraints and/or seclusion, there is moderate risk because your child may feel discomfort that leads to sadness, embarrassment, uneasiness, or crying. The University has taken reasonable safeguards to minimize potential but unknown risks. If your child experiences psychological

distress as a result of his/her participation in this study, please contact Cedric Roberts at (229) 251-5041. Neither the researcher nor Valdosta State University has made special provision for services required to treat psychological distress that results from participation in this research study.

The following community services are available:

Behavioral Health Services	Behavioral Health Services	Behavioral Health Services
201 Hazel Avenue	334 Eldorado Road	3120 N. Oak Street Extension
Nashville, GA 31639	Tifton, GA 31794	Valdosta, GA 31602
(229) 896-4559	(229) 391-2300	(229) 671-6170

***Service fees at these clinics are based on income need.**

By granting permission for your child to participate in this research project, you are not waiving any rights that you or your child may have against Valdosta State University for injury resulting from negligence of the University or its researchers.

Potential Benefits: Although your child may not benefit directly from this research, his/her participation will help the researcher gain additional understanding of restraints and seclusion in public schools. Knowledge gained may contribute to addressing the limited research that exists on this topic in school settings.

Costs and Compensation: Participants will have the cost of self-provided transportation to settings they select outside of school and home settings. Participants will not receive compensation for participation. There will be no alternate activities or compensation for individuals who elect not to participate.

Assurance of Confidentiality: Valdosta State University and the researcher will keep your child's information confidential to the extent allowed by law. Members of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), a university committee charged with reviewing research to ensure the rights and welfare of research participants, may be given access to your child's confidential information.

Your child's real name will not be used when results of the study are reported. Rather a pseudonym or fictitious name will be used in order to protect your child's identity. All information will be kept in a locked safe at the researcher's home, and the researcher is the only individual who can access the safe. Information can only be removed from the safe when the researcher needs to use the information. Upon finishing with the information, the researcher will return it immediately back to the safe. Three years after the research study is completed, the information will be shredded. Information I gain from your child will be

reported in the research study in combination with information from other participants who will be referred to by pseudonyms as well.

Voluntary Participation: Your decision to allow your child to participate in this research project is entirely voluntary. If you agree now to allow your child to participate and you change your mind later, you are free to withdraw your child from the study at that time. By not allowing your child to participate in this study or by withdrawing him/her from the study before the research is complete, you are not giving up any rights that you or your child have or any services to which you or your child are otherwise entitled to from Valdosta State University. Your child may skip any questions that he/she does not want to answer. The study will involve collections of interview data. You can withdraw your child from the study after data collection is complete, and your child's information will be deleted from the database and will not be included in the research results.

Information Contacts: Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of the research should be directed to Cedric Roberts at (229) 251-5041 or carobert04@msn.com. This study has been approved by the Valdosta State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Research Participants. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your child's rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-333-7837 or irb@valdosta.edu.

Agreement to Participate: The research project and my child's (or ward's) role in it have been explained to me, and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I grant permission for my child to participate in this study. By signing this form, I am indicating that I am either the custodial parent or legal guardian of the child. I have received a copy of this permission form.

I would like to receive a copy of the results of this study: *Yes* *No*

Mailing Address: _____

E-mail Address:

**This research project has been approved by
the Valdosta State University Institutional
Review Board for the Protection of Human
Research Participants through the date**

Printed Name of Child/Ward

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

Appendix J:
Child Assent Form

Appendix J

Child Assent Form

Hi. My name is Cedric Roberts. I'm a student at Valdosta State University. Right now, I'm trying to learn about your experiences with being restrained and/or secluded in school. I would like to ask you to help me by being in a study, but before I do, I want to explain what will happen if you decide to help me.

I will ask you questions about your involvement with restraints and/or seclusion at your school. I shall talk to you three different times for up to 90 minutes. I will ask you questions. There are no right or wrong answers. You can choose to not answer a question. I shall use a tape recorder to record our conversations. When answering questions, you may become sad, embarrassed, or feel like crying. By talking to me, you will me understand how restraints and/or seclusions has affected your life.

Your teachers and classmates will not know what you have said. When I talk to other people, I will not use your name, and no one will be able to tell who I'm talking about.

Your mom or dad said it's okay for you to be in my study. But if you don't want to be in the study, you don't have to be. What you decide won't make any difference about what people think about you. I won't be upset, and no one else will be upset, if you don't want to be in the study. If you want to be in the study now but change your mind later, that's okay. You can stop at any time. If there is anything you don't understand you should tell me so I can explain it to you

You can ask me questions about the study. If you have a question later that you don't think of now, you can call me or ask parents to call me or send me an email.

Do you have any questions for me now?

Would you like to talk to me and answer some questions?

NOTES TO RESEARCHER: The child should answer "Yes" or "No." Only a definite "Yes" may be taken as assent to participate.

Name of Child: _____ **Parental Permission on File:** Yes No (*If “No,” do not proceed with assent or research procedures.*)

Child’s Voluntary Response to Participation: Yes No

Signature of Researcher: _____ **Date:** _____

(Optional) Signature of Child: _____