

Time-Out Room Advocacy

Presented by: Stefanie Krantz and Emily Lamarca

Background

Complaints to the P&A System

- DLC – Protection and Advocacy Agency in Massachusetts
- Monitored time out rooms across Massachusetts
- On site, photographs, interviews, and data review
- Public, collaborative, and private approved schools

Survey

- DLC Posted a survey – New survey link in chat
- Large number of responses
- Reported trauma to students, teachers, and administrators
- Physical and emotional harm

Sample Survey Results

My daughter was placed in the time-out space over 50 times. The time-out space is a padded room with nothing in it and a lock on the door. The impact this has had on her is intense fear of school and fear of people, particularly authority figures. I asked the school to stop putting her in the time-out room and they refused.

The room is about the size of a very small bathroom and is made of solid cement. The door to this room only has a door handle on the outside & a small glass peek window above the door handle.

My son was placed in a time-out room many times and the room did the opposite of calming him and resulted in further escalation. On one occasion, he was so upset he disrobed and urinated on the floor.

A school staff member reported:
Time out rooms are used because teachers don't have the skills to handle students when they get frustrated or upset and they place kids in an empty/barren room. The kid goes into the room upset and this doesn't improve the situation. There is no long-term sustainable growth for the child.

Inclusionary vs. Exclusionary

Inclusionary Time Out

- Student remains in the learning environment

Exclusionary Time Out

- Student is removed from the learning environment
- DLC focus is on involuntary not student directed

Examples of Time Out Rooms

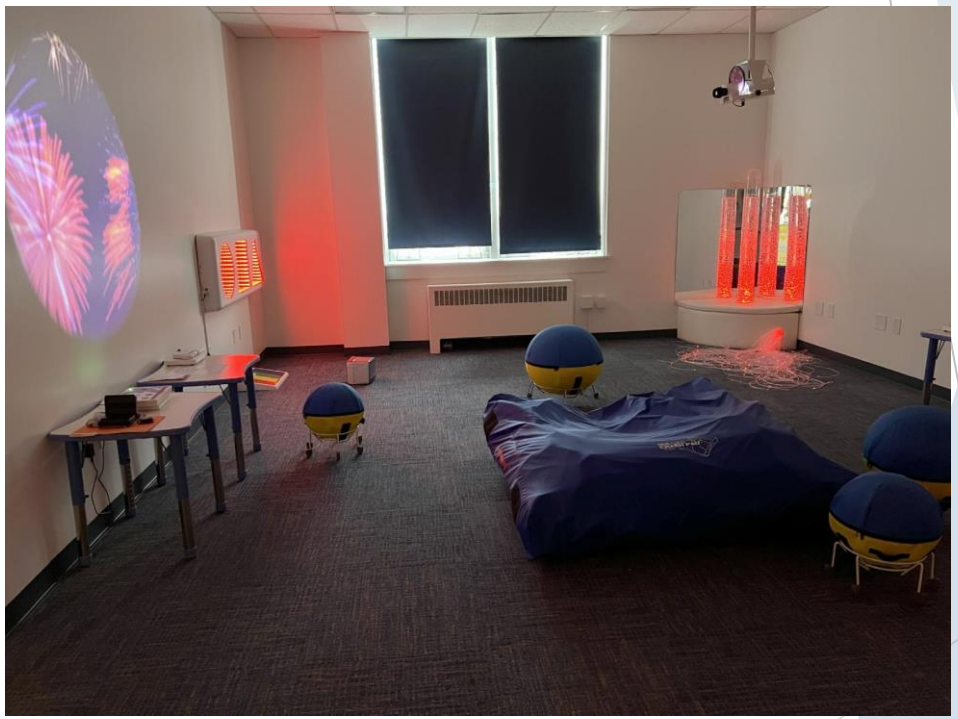






Sensory Spaces





DESE

- **September 2021 Advisory**
  - Reducing and Eliminating the Use of Time-out
- **2024 – DESE Issued 1.5 Million**
  - Reduce or eliminate the use of exclusionary time-out rooms and increase the amount of time students spend learning alongside their peers
- **August 17, 2026 – New Regulations (Stakeholder meetings)**
- **2026 – DESE Issued 3.6 Million**
  - Support the implementation of updated DESE Regulations
- **August 17, 2029**
  - Schools required to develop plans to reduce or eliminate the use of seclusion by August 2029.

Ross Greene Training Materials

- In partnership with Lives in the Balance, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is making training resources available to support implementation of Massachusetts' updated restraint and emergency seclusion requirements.

- **Module 1: Moving from Crisis Management to Crisis Prevention**
- **Module 2: Introduction to Collaborative and Proactive Solutions**
- **Module 3: Implementing Collaborative and Proactive Solutions**
- **Collaborative and Proactive Solutions Implementation Guide**

New Regulations

- Updated Definitions of Seclusion and Time-out
- Required safeguards prior to the use of seclusion
- Physical requirements for any room or area used
- Reporting and notification requirements for seclusion

https://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr46.html?section=all

Concerns

- Time-out Definition – Free to leave
- Seclusion – Now allowed (with safeguards)
- Seclusion – Loophole (with or without adult supervision)
- Data Collection – Not required for time-out
- Data Collection – June 30th for Seclusion
- Confusion on the ground


ALLIANCE AGAINST
SECLUSION
&RESTRAINT
Change is Needed
WE CAN AND MUST DO BETTER
TIME
FOR
CHANGE
IT IS TIME FOR CHANGE

Alternative Strategies

- **Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS)**
  https://livesinthebalance.org/
- **Applied Educational Neuroscience (AEN)**
  https://revelationsineducation.com/
- **Self-Reg**
  https://self-reg.ca/
- **The Alliance Against Seclusion & Restraint**
  https://endseclusion.org/
- **Ukeru Systems**
  https://www.ukerusystems.com/
- **The Regulated Classroom**
  https://www.regulatedclassroom.com/
- **Supportable Solutions**
  https://supportablesolutions.com/
- **LASER (The Low Arousal Approach)**
  https://www.studio3.org/education-laser
- **Think Kids**
  https://thinkkids.org/
- **Dr. Mona Delahooke**
  https://monadelahooke.com/

Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS)

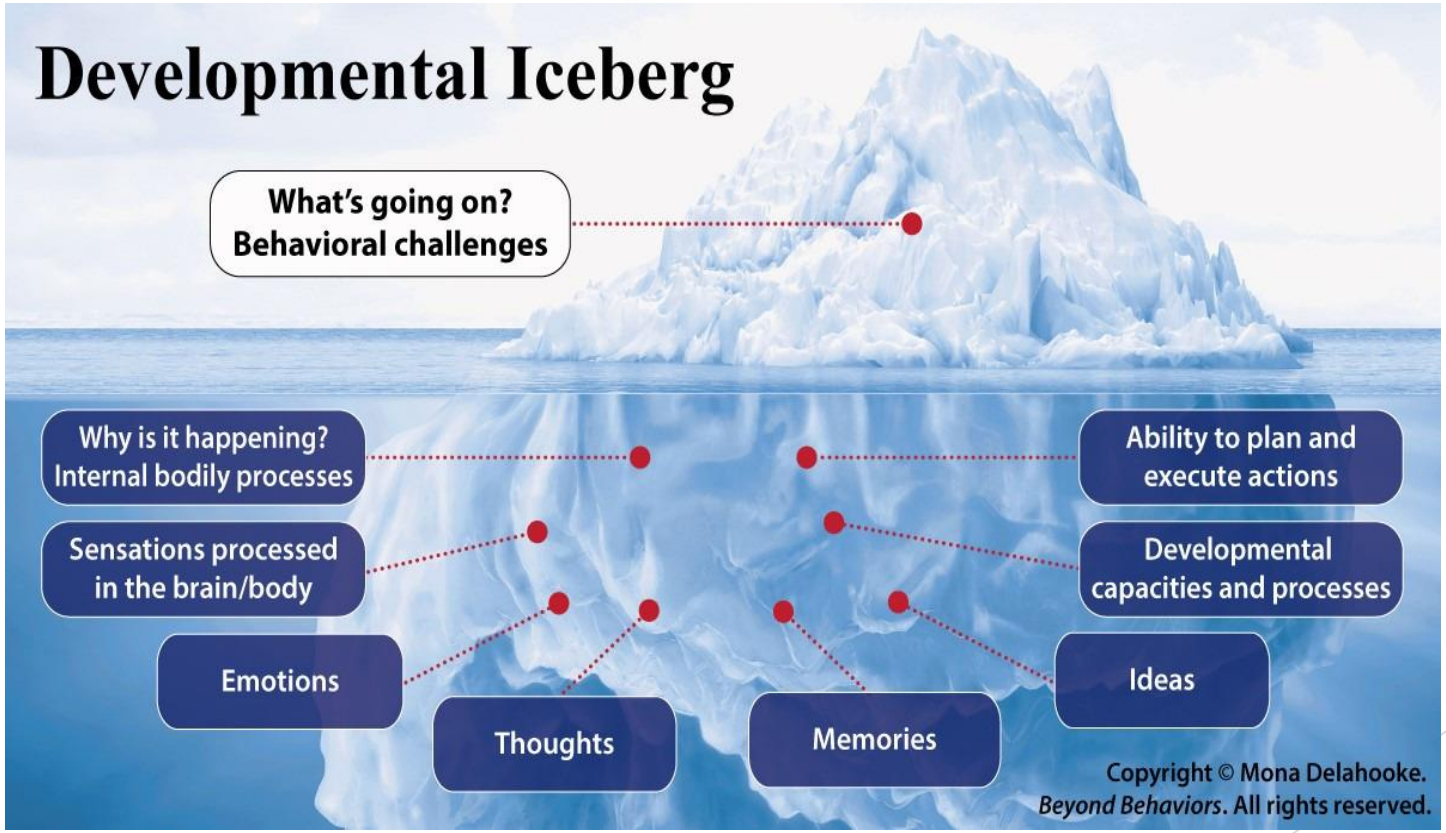


- Dr. Ross Greene, Lives in the Balance,
- *"Kids do well if they can"*
- Instead of relying on rewards and punishments, CPS focuses on identifying and solving the underlying problems that trigger challenging behaviors
- Challenging behaviors occur when demands placed on a child exceed their capacity to respond adaptively
- Work collaboratively with the student to find solutions to unsolved problems that often focus on delays in:
    - Development
    - Communication
    - Executive Functioning
    - Emotional Regulation
    - Cognitive Flexibility
    - Social Skills

Dr. Mona Delahooke



- Psychologist and Author
- Behaviors are protective adaptations and communication from a developing nervous system
- Developmental Iceberg: Traditional approaches using rewards and consequences only target the visible tip of the iceberg. Addressing what is underneath allows us to build relational safety and resolve the root causes of stress.



Dr. Mona Delahooke

Red Pathway — Fight or Flight



Eyes
- ☐ Open, squinted or closed eyes
- ☐ May have direct, intense eye contact
- ☐ Eyes roll upward
- ☐ Eyes look quickly around the room

Body
- ☐ Fingers spread out
- ☐ Arched back, tense body position
- ☐ Constant motion
- ☐ Demands space by pushing, shoving, and getting into other's space
- ☐ Biting, hitting, kicking, jumping throwing
- ☐ Bumps into things, falls
- ☐ Threatening gestures (shakes finger or fist)

Face
- ☐ Wide, open mouth
- ☐ Anger, disgust
- ☐ Frown, grimace
- ☐ Fake, forced smile
- ☐ Clenched jaw or teeth

Voice
- ☐ High-pitched crying, yelling or screaming
- ☐ Loud
- ☐ Hostile or grumpy
- ☐ Sarcastic
- ☐ Out of control laughing

Rhythm/Rate of Movement
- ☐ Fast movements
- ☐ Impulsive movements

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Green Pathway — Social Engagement



Eyes
- ☐ Bright, shiny eyes
- ☐ Looks directly at people, objects
- ☐ Looks away for breaks, then returns to eye contact
- ☐ Seems alert, takes in information

Face
- ☐ Smiles, shows joy
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Can express all emotions

Body
- ☐ Relaxed with good muscle tone
- ☐ Stable, balanced and coordinated movements
- ☐ Infant moves arms and legs toward center of the body
- ☐ Infant molds body into a caregiver when held
- ☐ Moves faster or slower depending on environment

Voice
- ☐ Laughing
- ☐ Tone changes

Rhythm/Rate of Movement
- ☐ Changes smoothly to respond to the environment
- ☐ Movements not too fast or too slow

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Blue Pathway — Shutting Down



Eyes
- ☐ Glazed-glassy eyes (looks through rather than at)
- ☐ Looks away for a long time, looks down
- ☐ Seems drowsy/tired
- ☐ Does not look around the room for interesting items
- ☐ Looks at things more than people

Face
- ☐ Flat/blank
- ☐ Mouth turned down, sad

Voice
- ☐ Flat
- ☐ Makes few to no sounds
- ☐ Sounds cold, soft, sad, too quiet

Body
- ☐ Slumped/slouching
- ☐ Low muscle tone
- ☐ Little or no exploring play or curiosity
- ☐ Wanders
- ☐ Frozen or slow-moving

Rhythm/Rate of Movement
- ☐ Slow movements
- ☐ Slow to start moving

Adapted from Infant/Child Mental Health, Early Intervention, and Relationship-Based Therapies: A Neurorelational Framework for Interdisciplinary Practice, by Connie Lillas and Janiece Turnbull. Copyright © 2009 by Interdisciplinary Training Institute LLC and Janiece Turnbull. Used by permission of W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

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Applied Educational Neuroscience (AEN)



- Dr. Lori Desautels, Revelations in Education, Professor at Butler University, Author & Researcher

- For more than three decades her work has explored the powerful connection among the nervous system states, relationships, behavior, and learning*

- Developed a MTSS for Adults – Lasting transformation begins with the adults who serve and lead

- The AEN framework is a trauma-responsive, neurodiversity affirming framework that introduces brain science, developmental psychology, and somatic practices into the school day.

- Built upon 4 important pillars:
    - The Educator Brain State
    - Co-Regulation
    - Connection and Attachment
    - Understanding the Nervous System

*Revelations in Education Webpage

Self-Reg



- Dr. Stuart Shanker, The MEHRIT Centre
- *"See a child differently, see a different child"*
- Self-Reg works to reframe behavior - Recognize stress and its sources, rather than enforcing self-control.
- Stress is anything that requires our bodies to burn energy. When stress is excessive, and we cannot restore energy properly, our systems can become dysregulated, causing a stress cycle that affects how we:
    - Feel
    - Think
    - Learn
    - Connect
    - Behave
- Provides practical strategies for educators (and parents) to help children manage stress and improve self-regulation

The Alliance Against Seclusion & Restraint



- Guy Stephens, Founder of the Alliance Against Seclusion & Restraint
- The Alliance unites parents, educators, advocates, and self-advocates to transform how schools and care systems respond to behavioral challenges
- The Alliance is driven by a clear mission to reduce and eliminate punitive and exclusionary discipline and disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline
- Behavior is biology
- Training Framework Focuses on Five Principals:
    - Trauma-informed
    - Neuroscience-aligned
    - Neurodiversity-affirming
    - Relationship driven
    - Collaborative

ALLIANCE AGAINST SECLUSION & RESTRAINT

A Better Way

TIME TO ADVOCATE



Relationship-Driven

The more healthy relationships a child has, the more likely she will be to recover from trauma and thrive. Relationships are the agents of change; the most powerful therapy is human love.



Trauma-Informed

The adverse childhood experiences study (ACES) tells us that nearly 1 in 6 had experienced four or more types of ACEs. Today, many children entering our classrooms have experienced trauma.



Collaborative

Rather than always doing things to children, we need to shift to working with children. We should foster a collaborative partnership between adults and kids to create better outcomes.



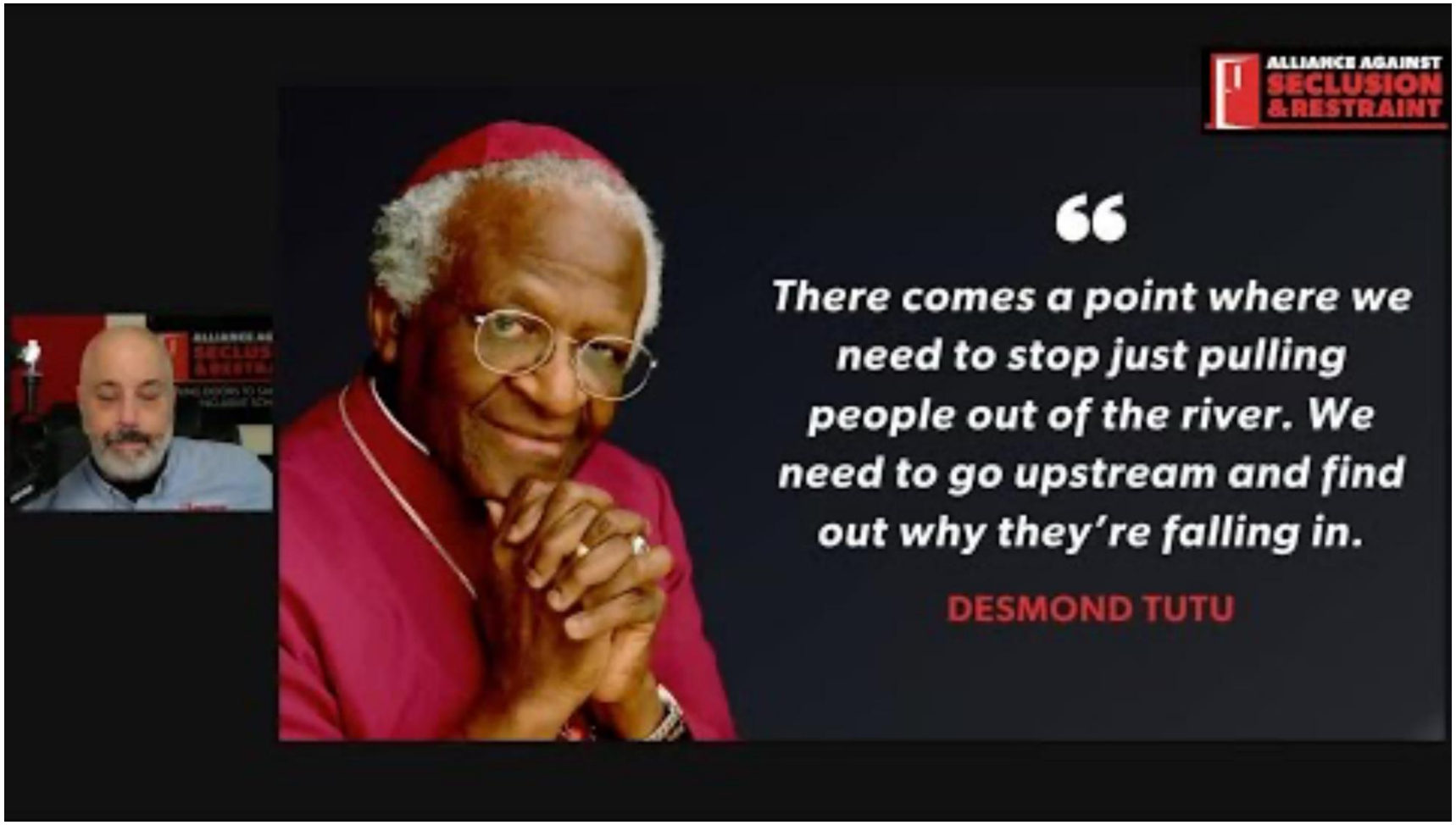
Neuroscience-Aligned

Understanding stress-based responses helps us to understand that not all behavior is volitional. We must focus on teaching adults and children about brain state and co-regulation.



Neurodiversity-Affirming

We value neurodiversity. We respect and celebrate individual differences and abilities. We believe that individual differences are natural and not deficits that need to be fixed.


ALLIANCE AGAINST
SECLUSION
& RESTRAINT
“
There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they’re falling in.
DESMOND TUTU

Q&A

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skrantz@dlc-ma.org

Web Materials / Webinar Links
https://www.dlc-ma.org/time-out-room-advocacy/

Time-Out Survey
https://www.dlc-ma.org/school-time-out-rooms-and-calming-spaces/