

This bill prohibits the restraint and use of chemical irritant sprays on students, 10 and under, by peace officers and school security personnel, unless they pose a serious risk of harm to themselves or others.

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What does HB 2975 do?

- HB 2975 amends Section 37.0021 of the current Education Code in Texas.
- The bill states that a peace officer or school security personnel performing related duties on school property or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity may not restrain a student 10 years of age or younger unless the student poses a serious risk of harm to themselves or others.
- Prior to this, there was no clear policy authorizing when personnel can use restraints or chemical irritant sprays. This lack of clarity led to several unfortunate circumstances in elementary schools.

How will children in schools benefit from this bill?

- Children ages 10 and younger in Texas have been restrained for minor offenses such as causing a disturbance in class, or even violating dress-code.
- During the 2018-2019 school year, in Texas, there were nearly 45,000 incidents in which students were restrained. Students with disabilities experience 91% of all reported restraints though they make up just under 10% of all students. These statistics illustrate that restraint is too often resorted to for children exhibiting non-violent behavior in the classroom.
- Ultimately, this legislation will help keep children safe by protecting them from physical and emotional trauma in the classroom and preventing them from being criminalized early in life.
- Julian Ford, a clinical psychologist and director of the Center for Trauma Recovery and Juvenile Justice in Connecticut asserted that restraints may trigger problems in sleep, learning, relationships, and trust. Years will pass before a child may recover.

How will peace officers in schools benefit from this bill?

- This legislation relieves personnel from the undue responsibility of deciding when it is appropriate to use restraints or chemical irritant sprays for disruptive children.
- Furthermore, researchers found that among officers without prior trauma exposure, there was a positive correlation between cases involving children and the development of post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Put simply, limiting traumatic interactions between peace officers and children is just as beneficial to peace officers as it to children.

Questions?

Please contact either of our staff members below for more information.

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