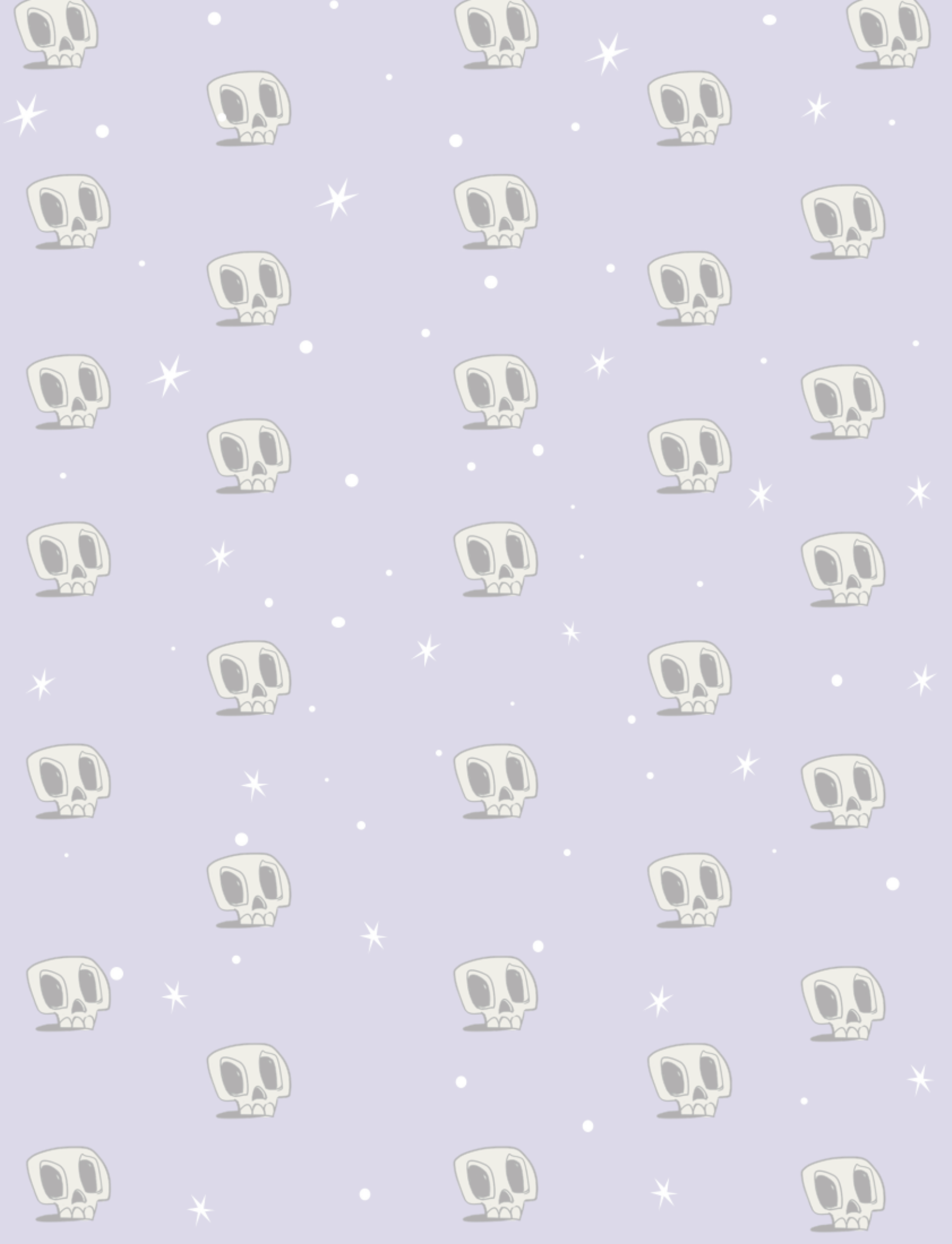


The Satanic Temple's Guide to Religious Freedom in Public Schools



Brought to you by The Satanic Temple

www.thesatanictemple.org



Basic Guidelines

RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION IN SCHOOL MUST:

- ★ Be respectful of others
Not coerce others into doing anything they do not want to do
- ★ Not disrupt school instruction, operations, or activities
- ★ Not infringe on the rights of others
- ★ Not promote illegal activities



DISCLAIMER

These statements are guidelines based on legal precedents and should not be deemed legal advice. If you have any specific questions about any legal matter you should consult an attorney.

NOTE TO MEMBERS OF THE SATANIC TEMPLE

If you go to a public school where students are at risk for being placed in solitary confinement, physically restrained, subjected to corporal punishment, or deprived of bathroom access, please reach out to us at: www.protectchildrenproject.com



Q: Can I pray to Satan in school?

A: Yes. Students may pray, read religious texts, and even share and promote their beliefs with others as long as it is voluntary and follows the basic guidelines.

Q: Can a school prohibit religious expressions that are considered offensive?

A: No, provided the religious expressions adhere to the basic guidelines.



Q: Can I hand out satanic pamphlets and texts?

A: Yes, as long as the process adheres to the basic guidelines.

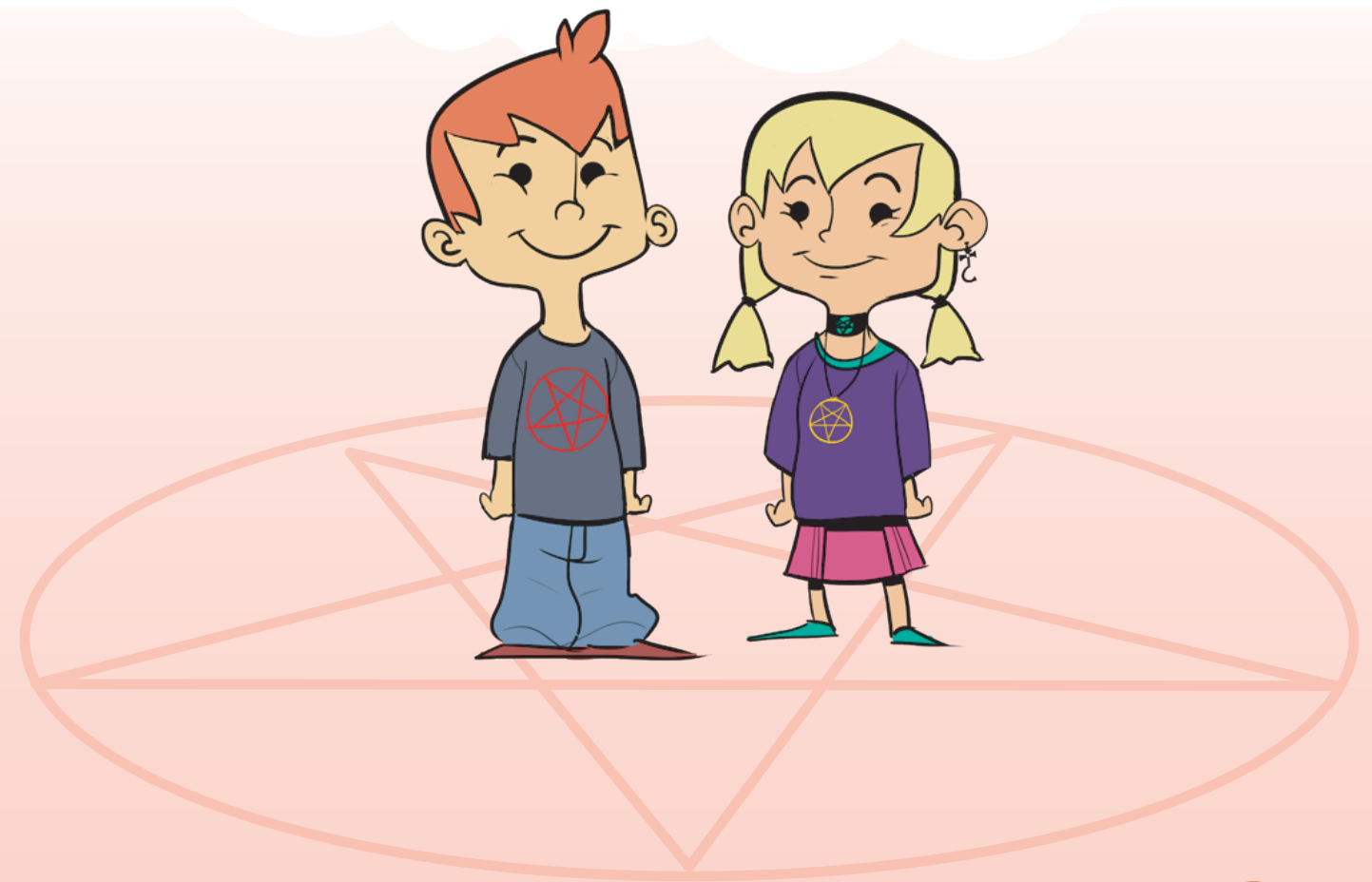
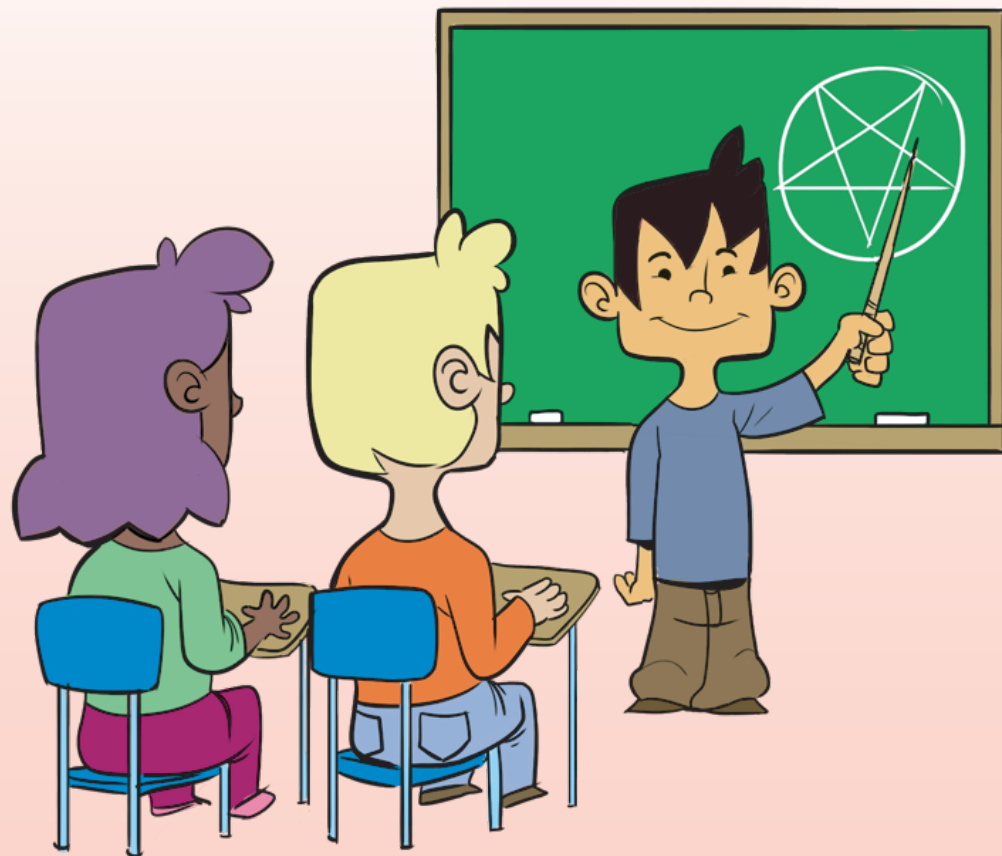


Q: Can satanic teachings be expressed in class or be used as scholastic resources for school assignments?

A: Yes, if they are relevant to the class discussion and/or consistent with the demands of the assignment.

Q: Can I wear clothes or jewelry that proclaim my allegiance to Satan?

A: Yes, if they adhere to the basic guidelines.



Q: Can I form a satanic club at my school?

A: Yes, if the school receives federal funds and permits non-scholastic clubs to meet after school hours.

In addition, your satanic club would be entitled to the same resources afforded to any other non-scholastic club.

Q: My school has a policy that does not permit satanic worship and/or the wearing of satanic clothing. What should I do?

A: That is unconstitutional. Contact your local ACLU and The Satanic Temple. We will notify your school board that their policy is illegal.



Q: Do I have the right to be exempt from activities and class content that contradicts my satanic beliefs?

A: Yes. You may still be required to participate in a different activity, though.



Q: My school does not hit kids, but punishes students by placing them in solitary confinement, a.k.a. "isolation rooms." Can I claim a religious exemption from this?

A: This is a form of psychological torture that violates the sincerely held beliefs of members of The Satanic Temple. Again, courts have not ruled on this, but contact The Satanic Temple to see if we can protect your constitutional rights.

Q: As a member of The Satanic Temple, can I legally be hit by a school official in one of the states that permits corporal punishment?

A: This would be a violation of your religious beliefs and civil rights; however, courts have not ruled on this issue and might decide that they believe the need to senselessly beat children is more important than the right of religious expression. Please reach out to The Satanic Temple so that we can see if we can protect your constitutional rights.



Q: What should I do if my principal refuses to acknowledge my religious beliefs and I am hit or placed in solitary confinement or deprived bathroom access?

A: Notify The Satanic Temple, the ACLU, and local law enforcement. Keep careful notes about exactly what happened and be as accurate as possible. Violent interferences with civil rights are criminal acts, although the legal system must ultimately make that determination.



Q: I am not a member of The Satanic Temple. Can I claim that my religion prohibits me from being hit in school?

A: Possibly not. Objections on religious grounds must be sincere. Having sincerely held beliefs might be sufficient if they are announced in advance, but at least one court has ruled that recognized religions must be comprehensive in their teachings, have “*formal and external signs,*” and “*address fundamental and ultimate questions having to do with deep and imponderable matters.*”

Q: My parents signed a form saying that I can be hit. Does that invalidate my beliefs?

A: In a just world, your beliefs should prevail, but courts have increasingly issued rulings that suggest that children are barely more than property. Whether schools should honor your beliefs over a parent's sadistic whims will have to be decided by the courts.



Corporal Punishment Fact Sheet

- 1 Corporal punishment is not only physically painful, it is mentally damaging as well. It has been linked to depression, mania, anxiety disorders, personality disorders, as well as drug and alcohol abuse. ^{i ii}
- 2 Corporal punishment has been linked to long-term cognitive impairment including lower IQ scores, poor grades, smaller vocabularies, and lower executive-functioning abilities. ^{iii iv}
- 3 Associations have been found between corporal punishment and a child's physical health. Higher rates of hospitalizations, injuries, asthma, and habits such as smoking, underage drinking, and fighting have all been linked to corporal punishment. ^v
- 4 Corporal punishment has been linked to an increase in anti-social behaviors such as bullying, cheating, lying, delinquency, and criminal activity. ^{vi vii}
- 5 Children who experience corporal punishment are more likely to exhibit violence as adults and are more likely to physically abuse their spouse or partner. ^{viii ix}
- 6 Corporal punishment is associated with increased aggression in children. ^{xixii}
- 7 Children subjected to corporal punishment are less likely to learn the lessons that the person hitting them wants them to learn than children disciplined without violence. ^{xiii}
- 8 Seventeen percent of all public school students in the US are African-American, but they comprise 36% of those who are subjected to corporal punishment. ^{xiv}
- 9 Even when a parent is given the opportunity to request their child not be hit in a school that practices corporal punishment, principals may legally ignore that request and hit children without parental consent. ^{xv}
- 10 Beatings of children in school are often brutal, with many children requiring treatment at hospital emergency rooms.

viii. See Note iii

ix. Taylor, C. A. et al (2012), "Use of Spanking for 3-Year-Old Children and Associated Intimate Partner Aggression or Violence," *Pediatrics* 126(3), 415-424

x. Gershoff, E. T. (2002), "Corporal punishment by parents and associated child behaviors and experiences: A meta-analytic and theoretical review," *Psychological Bulletin*, 128(4), 539-579; see also E. T. Gershoff (2008), Report on physical punishment in the United States: what research tells us about its effects on children, Center for Effective Discipline, Columbus, Ohio

xi. Ohene, S. et al (2006) "Parental Expectations, Physical Punishment, and Violence Among Adolescents Who Score Positive on a Psychosocial Screening Test in Primary Care", *Pediatrics* 117(2): 441-447

xii. Ulman, A. & Straus, M. A. (2003) "Violence by children against mothers in relation to violence between parents and corporal punishment by parents," *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 34: 41-60

xiii. See Note i

xiv. Corporal Punishment and Paddling Statistics by State and Race" Center for Effective Discipline

xv. See e.g. Student/Parent Information Guide and Code of Conduct 2008-2009, Alexander City Schools, Alabama, USA, p.51.

i. Smith, J.R., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (1997) "Correlates and consequences of harsh discipline for young children," *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, 151(8):777-786

ii. Afifi, T. O. et al (2012), "Physical Punishment and Mental Disorders: Results From a Nationally Representative US Sample," *Pediatrics*, 2 July 2012

iii. Victoria Talwar, Stephanie M. Carlson and Kang Lee. Effects of a Punitive Environment on Children's Executive Functioning: A Natural Experiment. *Social Development*, 26 July 2011

iv. Smith, J.R., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (1997) "Correlates and consequences of harsh discipline for young children," *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, 151(8):777-786

v. Lau, J. T. F. et al (1999), "Prevalence and correlates of physical abuse in Hong Kong Chinese adolescents: A population-based approach," *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 23: 549-557

vi. See Note i

vii. Brenner, V., & Fox, R.A. (1998) "Parental discipline and behavior problems in young children," *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 159(2): 251-256

Solitary Confinement Fact Sheet

- 1 The United Nations has deemed that solitary confinement of anyone under age 18, for any duration, constitutes cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. ⁱ
- 2 No evidence-based research has ever demonstrated that the use of solitary confinement or physical punishment has any therapeutic benefit or is effective at promoting pro-social behavior. ⁱⁱ
- 3 Despite successful efforts to dramatically reduce the use of solitary confinement in prisons on the grounds that it is inhumane and ineffective, use of solitary confinement in schools continues to increase. ^{iii iv}
- 4 The use of solitary confinement may cause or exacerbate mental disabilities or other serious mental health problems in adolescents. ^v
- 5 Solitary confinement can also cause adverse cognitive effects such as memory loss, impulsive behavior, and impaired thinking. ^{vi}
- 6 Use of solitary confinement can also impact physical health by causing anxiety, loss of appetite, headaches, and frequent nightmares, and it also disrupts sleep habits resulting in lethargy and trouble sleeping. ^{vii}
- 7 Use of seclusion and restraint promotes aggressive behavior. ^{viii}
- 8 Use of solitary confinement has been attributed to physical self-harm and, in some cases, even suicide. ^{ix}
- 9 Allowing school faculty to confine and restrain children has profoundly chilling constitutional implications. ^x
- 10 A US Government Accountability Office report determined that hundreds of cases of abuse and death were attributable to the use seclusion and restraints. ^{xi}

vii. See note v

viii. National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), Seclusion and Restraint Position Statement as Revised by NASMHPD Forensic Division and Accepted by NASMHPD Membership (7/15/07), http://www.nasmhpd.org/general_files/position_statement/S&R%20position%20statement.Forensic%20Div.%20prop.%20approved%20by%20NASMHPD.07.07.final.pdf

ix. National Disability Rights Network, School is Not Supposed to Hurt, 7 (2009), <http://www.ndrn.org/sr/SR-Report.pdf>, Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Inc., Unsafe in the SchoolHouse: Abuse of Children with Disabilities, 4 (2009), http://www.copaa.org/pdf/UnsafeCOPAA-May_27_2009.pdf, D.E. Miller, The Management of Misbehavior by Seclusion, 4(1) Residential Treatment for Children and Youth 63, 63-73 (1986).

x. Kennedy SS, Mohr WK. A prolegomenon on restraint of children: implicating constitutional rights. *Am J Orthopsychiatry* 2001 January;71(1):26-37

xi. GAO-09-719T: Seclusions and restraints-selected cases of death and abuse at public and private schools and treatment centers: Testimony before the Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, 111th Cong. 3 (2009) (testimony of Gregory D. Kutz).

i. UN Human Rights Council, Interim Report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, Juan Mendez, U.N. G.A. Doc. A/66/268, August 5, 2011.

ii. L.M. Finke, The Use of Seclusion is Not an Evidence-Based Practice, 14 *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing*, 186 (2001); K.H. Millstein & N.S. Cotton, Predictors of the Use of Seclusion on an Inpatient Child Psychiatric Unit, 29 *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry* 256, 256-64 (1990); W. K. Mohr & J.A. Anderson, Faulty Assumptions Associated With the Use of Restraints With Children, 14 *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing* 141 (2001); D.E. Miller, The Management of Misbehavior by Seclusion, 4(1) *Residential Treatment for Children and Youth* 63 (1986)

iii. Weiser, Benjamin. "New York State in Deal to Limit Solitary Confinement." *NY Times*. Feb 19, 2014.

iv. Kuriakose, Sabina. "Seclusion Rooms Used 23,000 Times in Connecticut Schools." *NBC Connecticut*. Nov 20, 2013. <http://www.nbcconnecticut.com/investigations/LWRD-Seclusion-Rooms-Used-23000-Times-in-Connecticut-Schools-232611351.html>

v. Growing Up Locked Down: Youth in Solitary Confinement in Jails and Prisons Across the United States. Human Rights Watch/ACLU October 2012. Page 23.

vi. Grassian, Stuart, "Psychopathological effects of solitary confinement" *American Journal of Psychiatry Online* 1983; 140: 1450-1454.

