



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES  
STATEWIDE COORDINATOR FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION  
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## DATED AND TIMELY REQUEST

April 2006

TO: District Superintendents  
Superintendents of Schools  
Superintendents of Special Act School Districts  
Superintendents of State-Operated and State-Supported Schools  
Executive Directors of Approved In-State and Out-of-State Private Schools  
Executive Directors of Approved Preschool Programs

FROM: James P. DeLorenzo 

SUBJECT: Use of Aversive or Noxious Stimuli to Reduce or Eliminate Student Behaviors

The Board of Regents of the New York State Education Department will continue a discussion at its May 2006 meeting on a policy relating to the use of aversive or noxious stimuli to reduce or eliminate student behaviors. In preparation for this meeting, we are requesting that all public and private school programs, both in-state and out-of-state, serving New York State students with disabilities submit a response to the following information requests.

1. Do any of the educational/residential programs in your school/agency use any form of aversive or noxious stimuli to reduce or eliminate maladaptive behaviors?
2. If the answer to question #1 is yes, provide an operational definition of the term "aversive therapy" as used by your school/agency and attach a description of how aversive or noxious stimuli are used.
3. If applicable, provide a copy of the school's/agency's written policy on the use of aversive or noxious stimuli.

Attached are examples of aversive or noxious stimuli that should be considered in your responses.

You may submit your response by facsimile to the attention of Patricia Geary at (518) 402-3582 or by e-mail to [pgeary@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:pgeary@mail.nysed.gov). Please identify your school/agency and a contact person in your reply. **A response to this request by April 21, 2006 is requested.** Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter. Questions regarding this request may be directed to Ms. Geary at 518-473-2878.



Attachment

c: Rebecca H. Cort

Examples of Aversive or Noxious Stimuli

- Noxious, painful, intrusive stimuli or activities intended to induce pain such as hitting, slapping, pinching, kicking, hurling, strangling, shoving, or other similar stimulus
- Any form of noxious, painful or intrusive spray or inhalant
- Any form of noxious tastes
- Electric shock
- Water spray to the face
- Pinches and deep muscle squeezes
- Withholding sleep, shelter, bedding, bathroom facilities, clothing, food or drink or essential nutrition or hydration as part of mealtimes
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- Withholding bathroom facilities, visitation or communication with family
- The use of chemical restraints instead of positive programs or medical treatments
- The placement of a child unsupervised or unobserved in a room from which the student cannot exit without assistance