

# DEBRIEF GUIDE AFTER CHILD/YOUTH RESTRAINT WITH FAMILY

Supporting providers to debrief pediatric restraint



Restraint is inclusive of all types of restraint (chemical, seclusion, physical and mechanical). The goal of debriefing after a restraint event is to learn together, to provide an opportunity to process what happened, to collaboratively update the child/youth's safety plan and care plan, and should take about 10-15 minutes (but may take longer). Consider communication barriers that may exist (i.e. need for interpreters, sign language, neurodiverse approach). Provided here are some possible debriefing questions with family following a restraint event of their child/youth. Please be prepared to take notes.

\*Note "family" may refer to the child/youth's parent, family, caregiver, or guardian.

## Introduction to the debrief:

WHAT TO SAY	RATIONALE
(Name of family member) _____, I would like to talk with you and let you know about a situation that happened today regarding (child/youth's name).	Explain what happened, only the facts; let the parent know how the child/youth is currently doing. Some families may already be feeling disconnected and out of touch/control of the situation and become triggered. Expect feelings of fear, anxiety, anger, etc. Family members tell us how important it is to help them understand what happened and why).
Use of restraint is never our goal and we only use it as a last resort when there is a safety emergency.	
I (health care provider) felt _____ when it happened.	Sharing vulnerability builds trust and connection.
Some kids have told me they've felt angry, ashamed and/or hopeless when an event like this happens.	Provides insight into how their child/youth may be feeling
I want you to know that when people get overwhelmed, things can sometimes escalate and become unsafe, and how they would normally cope is out of reach.	Family members can feel awful that their child/youth "has behaved this way," so it can help them understand where these behaviours came from; to convey compassion.
I am hoping we can work together to make things safer for everyone moving forward. We (will be having / have also had) a conversation with (child/youth's name) on how we could better support them. I would also like to hear from you, to learn how I could have better supported your child/youth today and how we can support your family going forwards. Is that okay? Is this a good time/place to talk? Is there anything I can do to make you more comfortable? Do you need someone to be here with you? Some parents have told me that having someone with them is helpful.	Asking permission, offering choice, meeting needs is providing trauma informed care. Family members should not have to ask for help; they may not know what supports are available or may be too afraid to ask.  Please have information on supports available to offer family.

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## Debriefing with family:

WHAT TO SAY	RATIONALE
<p>How are you feeling? How can I help support you?  <u>Follow up statements:</u>                      I can appreciate why you are feeling this way.                      It has been a (use the words they used to describe) experience/situation.</p>	<p>To facilitate rebuilding of trust &amp; connection; repair of therapeutic rapport builds feelings of psychological safety for both patient/family and staff. Therapeutic rapport is necessary to engage the patient/ family in meeting treatment goals of admission.</p> <p>Use <b>Reflective Listening</b> (understanding what an individual is saying and offering the information to them is validating as it lets them know that you have heard and understood their experience).</p>
<p>As someone who knows (child/youth's name) better than we do, what could care providers have done better to help? It is disappointing that we ended up going to a restraint, and we want to learn from this to better care for your child/youth.</p>	<p>Highlights the importance of a family member's input into the care plan, and focuses the conversation of opportunities to learn.</p>
<p>What has worked before when they were feeling upset/etc.?</p>	<p>Hope-friendly talk is an opportunity to emphasize the child/youth's strengths that may also be then added in the care plan.</p>
<p>Is there anything else you would like to talk about related to what happened or that we can learn from the experience to help prevent this from happening again?</p>	<p>Consider adding in a quiet reflection time of 30 seconds to one minute for them to have time to think/process.</p>
<p>How can I support you to support your child? Is there anything else you need? Are there any potential stressor/changes in the child/youth/family's life (vulnerability factors such as a move, new school, relationship issues)?</p>	<p>Demonstrates that the family is part of the circle of care being provided, and contextualizes what may be impacting the child/youth/family's wellness. More information to consider in the child/youth's care plan.</p>
<p>Thank you for taking the time to talk and debrief the incident. It is so appreciated, and your help is needed to make improvements. This is what we are planning to change/adjust in your child/youth's care plan based on the debriefs. Please let me know if you have more questions / concerns arise.</p>	<p>Gives support, encouragement, and instills hope. Open and transparent communication is providing trauma informed care.</p>

## Cross Reference:

- [Debrief Guide After Restraint with a child/youth](#)
- [Debrief Guide After child/youth Restraint with Health Care Team](#)
- [Debrief Guide After child/youth Restraint with Other Patients](#)
- [Preparing for Debriefing Pediatric Restraint](#)