

# Preventing student-related injuries

## Objective

Discuss strategies for preventing injuries while addressing disruptive behavior; discuss changes to the environment that may reduce injuries.

**Background:** Behavior-related incidents have increased in recent years, and many school districts are looking for ways to prevent these injuries. This guide is meant to start a discussion and provide suggestions. However, districts should review their own efforts to determine if there are other measures, including intensive behavioral intervention training, that may benefit employees.

**Ask:** Has anyone experienced disruptive or aggressive behavior in the classroom? What did you do to address it?

**Share:** Here are some ideas for preventing injuries related to clothing and jewelry.

- Wear loose or baggy clothing that you can easily slip out of if it is grabbed or pulled. Wear long sleeves and long pants whenever possible to protect from bites or scratches. Bite guards, shin guards, or padded jackets can be worn for added protection.
- Wear safety glasses when working with students known to spit or throw objects.
- Wear ear plugs or ear muffs when supporting students who scream.
- Avoid necklaces and ties, or tuck them into clothing. If wearing a tie, consider a clip-on so it will break free if pulled. Use clip-on identification tags or break-away lanyards.

- Avoid wearing rings, especially with protruding stones. Turn stones inward to avoid scratching or getting caught. Dangling or hoop earrings should not be worn. Consider not wearing jewelry or clothing that can be easily pulled or caught.
- Tie back long hair, but be aware that a pony tail may be grabbed. Wearing a knit hat is another strategy for preventing hair pulling.
- Wear sturdy, stable closed-toe shoes with non-slip soles.

**Ask:** How can we make the environment safer around disruptive students?

**Maintain good housekeeping standards.** Pick up any items immediately that have been dropped or left on the floor. Keep school supplies organized and safely store them out of reach. Avoid clutter.

**Limit student access to items that can be thrown.** Consider substituting with safer learning tools.

**Use safe tools and equipment and ensure that it is in good repair.**

**Ask:** Any safety concerns or suggestions?