OPINION

A little restraint

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For many parents with autism, the ultimate goal is to have their children lead lives that are as ‘normal? as possible ? and that includes attending mainstream schools, where their child would be just like everyone else.

The problem is, many of these children are not like everyone else, and aren?t treated that way. Yesterday?s *New York Times* ran a **horrifying article** chronicling a rising trend in schools of abusing children with special needs.

Maybe I am naïve, but I found myself gasping as I read it. Teachers are locking up children ? in one case, at least 31 times in one year ? holding children down, tying them to chairs, even accidentally suffocating them in their attempts to restrain them.

Perhaps it?s unsurprising that these problems have surfaced: according to the article, the school system serves 600,000 more special education children than it did a decade ago. And has, I bet, not nearly the number of teachers with the skills needed to help those children.

But given that that?s the case, what?s the solution? Is enrolling children with autism or Asperger syndrome in a mainstream school really such a good idea? Or is it, perhaps, time to pull back?