



About Millcreek Township School District

Located in a suburb of Erie, Pennsylvania, the Millcreek Township Public School district serves 7,000 students from kindergarten through 12th grade. **1,100 of Millcreek's students need special education.** To accommodate that population, it has nine autism support classrooms and 11 emotional support classrooms.



Millcreek Township
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Building Foundations for Life

Challenges

Restraint was a hot button issue for parents, and the district wanted to find a way to eliminate the practice. After going through a very challenging case that involved a student being restrained, Millcreek's Director of Pupil Services, Ed Nientimp, heard about Ukeru online and **decided to attend a training at Grafton** (Ukeru's parent organization in Winchester, Virginia). *"I really went there as a skeptic,"* says Nientimp. *"I had been trained in four different approaches to crisis management... but the comfort versus control approach really hit home for me."*

"It took a little bit of convincing. But after the last training we did, a teacher came up to me to tell me how great it was. We are slowly winning people over by having them see it firsthand."

KATE BARBARO
Special Education
Supervisor at Millcreek
Township School
District

Working with Ukeru

The district gained buy-in of staff by explaining how Ukeru would decrease injuries to staff and reduce workers' compensation cases.

Approximately **20 special education teachers have been trained in Ukeru, as well as 40 para-professionals, five principals, two school psychologists, and four guidance counselors.**

Ukeru was implemented in three of the highest-need classrooms in January 2017.

After the pilot, shields were ordered to support all autistic and emotional support classrooms. The following school year, **Ukeru expanded to 17 special education classrooms.** Millcreek has since implemented a policy that requires staff to utilize de-escalation and Ukeru prior to consideration of restraint.

Results

- Before Ukeru, 47 students were restrained annually (2015-16 school year). **After Ukeru was implemented, zero students have been restrained.**
- During the first year of full implementation (2017-18), Ukeru was used 130 times with 16 students. **Ukeru prevented the use of restraints 100% of the time.**
- One year after implementing Ukeru, there were **no student or staff injuries.**
- Using Ukeru's trauma-informed approach has led to fewer time-outs and more students **staying in the learning environment.**
- Feedback from staff who have gone through Ukeru training has been **overwhelmingly positive.**
- The district is **expanding its Ukeru program** to other off-campus programs. It's also planning to train its general education teachers in trauma-informed care.

"We decided we had an obligation to our students and staff to give this a try."

ED NIENTIMP

Director of Pupil Services at Millcreek Township School District

100%

Restraint Reduction



Trauma-informed approach led to fewer time-outs



Plans to expand Ukeru to all educators