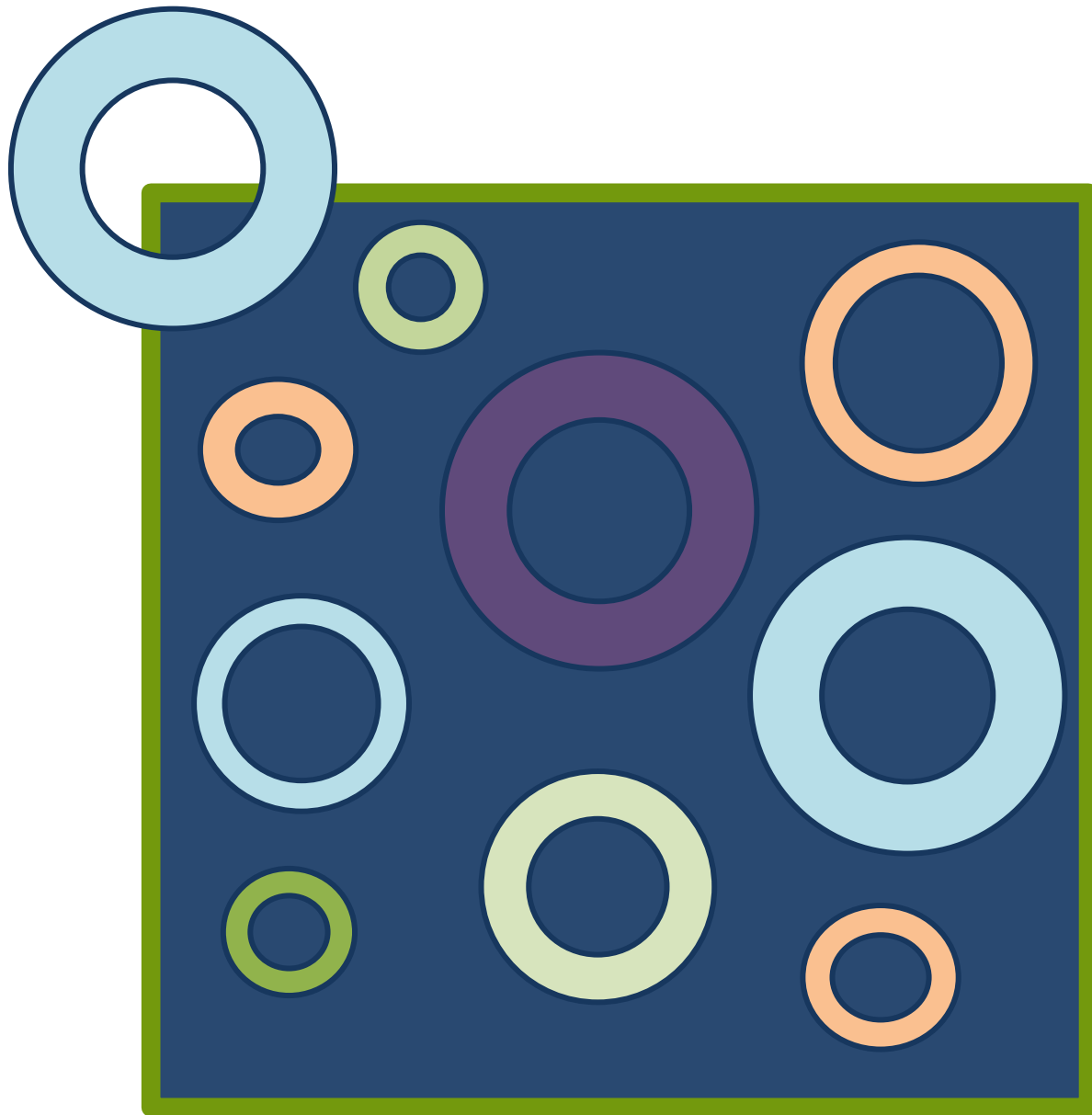# Cultivating Restorative School Communities

Introduction to Restorative Practices Handbook

Center for Relational Practices: RelationalPractices.com
Kerri Berkowitz * Kerri@relationalpractices.com

Restorative Practices in Schools

Promoting Academic Achievement and Positive Behavior through a Welcoming and Safe Relational Learning Environment

Traning Content

Cultivating a Restorative School Community

Building and Sustaining Trusting Relationships and Community

Repairing Relationships and Restoring Community

Resource List

What is School-based Restorative Practices?

In schools, Restorative Practices are multifaceted in nature. The roots of its understanding and practice are grounded in the traditions of Indigenous Cultures around the world that underscore the value of respect, compassion, dignity, accountability and inclusion of all members of the community.

This approach rests with the belief that everyone is an equal member of society and has a contribution to make.

Key Definition:

Restorative Practices is a system of principles and processes that build and sustain a culture of respect, responsibility and accountability.
This is achieved through emphasizing the importance of trusting relationships as central to building community and repairing relationships when harm has occurred.

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Relationship Based Principles

Building/Sustaining   Repairing Relationships
Trusting Relationships   & Restoring Community

</div>

Restorative Practices, when broadly and consistently implemented, will promote and strengthen positive school culture and enhance pro-social relationships within the school community. It includes interventions when harm has occurred, as well as practices that help to prevent harm and conflict by building a sense of belonging, safety, and shared social responsibility throughout the school community.

Restorative Justice Lens:
Behavior infractions are viewed through the lens of restorative justice philosophy. One that brings all parties affected by an incident together in an inclusive process to discover the root cause/s of challenging behavior and explore resulting impact/harms with the intention to repair relationships and restore the community.

This approach views behavior infractions as an offense against individuals and the greater community, and places greater emphasis on the harm/s caused and reparation of relationships/community above the need for assigning blame and dispensing punishment.

"The underlying premise of restorative practices is that people are happier, more cooperative, more productive and more likely to make positive changes when those in positions of authority do things with them rather than to them or for them."

Ted Watchel, The International Institute for Restorative Practices

Restorative Practices allow for a shift in practice that results in a culture which is inclusive, builds fair process into decision-making practices, and facilitates learning through an approach that allows for true accountability, skill building, cooperation, and mutual understanding.

At the core, restorative practices are about building and restoring relationships.

Through restorative practices, members of the school community will:
- Have opportunities to be heard
- Form connections and stronger relationships
- Understand the greater impact of one's actions
- Learn and practice taking responsibility
- Repair the harm one's actions may have caused
- Recognize one's role in maintaining a safe school environment
- Build upon and expand on personal relationships in the school community
- Recognize one's role as a positive contributing member of the school community.

POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

Evidence from practice suggests that by implementing Restorative Practices, schools can expect:

- Improvements in attitudes and relationships across the whole school community.
- An increase in the engagement and learning of students in the classroom.
- Growth in relational and problem-solving skills, both for adults and students across the school community.
- A calmer school environment, with less classroom disruption and more time for teaching.
- Decrease in out-of-school suspension.
- Decrease in school expulsions.
- Decrease in tardies and absences.
- Reduction in racial disproportionate discipline practices.

San Francisco Unified School District, Restorative Practices, www.healthiersf.org/restorativepractices/
Oakland Unified School District, http://www.ousd.k12.ca.us/restorativejustice
Dr. Armour, Marilyn, University of Texas at Austin, Ed White Middle School Restorative Discipline Evaluation, Year 2, 2014
Positive Behavior For Learning, New Zealand Ministry of Education, Restorative Practice Kete Book 1, www.education.govt.nz

School Culture

"Like a hotel or car rental service, you can tell what a school is going to be like the moment you walk in. Is the office staff kind and courteous or do they make you feel like a stranger? Do students welcome and acknowledge you or push you out of the way? Are classroom doors shut, walls bare, and children grimly concentrating on the next passage in their textbook? Or are classrooms buzzing hives of activity with actively engaged children immersed in challenging learning, effortlessly using appropriate technology to demonstrate their knowledge, and sad when the lesson has to come to an end? This is called Culture---and in schools and other organizations, it's everything."
Fullen & Hargreaves, Professional Capital: Transforming Teaching in Every School

The term school culture generally refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, written and unwritten rules that shape and influence every aspect of how a school functions, but the term also encompasses more concrete issues such as the physical and emotional safety of students, the orderliness of classrooms and public spaces, or the degree to which a school embraces and celebrates racial, ethnic, linguistic, or cultural diversity.

Like the larger social culture, a school culture results from both conscious and unconscious perspectives, values, interactions, and practices, and it is heavily shaped by a school's particular institutional history. Students, parents, teachers, administrators, and other staff members all contribute to their school's culture, as do other influences such as the community in which the school is located, the policies that govern how it operates, or the principles upon which the school was founded.

Broadly defined, positive school cultures are conducive to professional satisfaction, morale, and effectiveness, as well as to student learning, fulfillment, and well-being.

The following list is a representative selection of a few characteristics commonly associated with positive school cultures:

- The individual successes of teachers and students are recognized and celebrated.

- Relationships and interactions are characterized by openness, trust, respect, and appreciation.

- Staff relationships are collegial, collaborative, and productive, and all staff members are held to high professional standards.

- Students and staff members feel emotionally and physical safe, and the school's policies and facilities promote student safety.

- School leaders, teachers, and staff members model positive, healthy behaviors for students.

- Mistakes not punished as failures, but they are seen as opportunities to learn and grow for both students and educators.

- Students are consistently held to high academic expectations, and a majority of students meet or exceed those expectations.

- Important leadership decisions are made collaboratively with input from staff members, students, and parents.

- Criticism, when voiced, is constructive and well intentioned, not antagonistic or self-serving.

- Educational resources and learning opportunities are equitably distributed, and all students, including minorities and students with disabilities.

- All students have access to the academic support and services they may need to succeed.

Source: Great Schools Partnership: The Glossary of Education Reform
HTTP://EDGLOSSARY.ORG/SCHOOL-CULTURE/

Strengthening school culture requires, in its most basic form, the following:

1. Consciously identifying the school's influences—the basic underlying assumptions, norms, values, and organizational rules that teachers and administrators have been practicing and that students and parents have been following.

2. Examining publicly how well the underlying norms, assumptions, and practices support—or hinder—the faculty and administrators' (and parents') goals for student learning.

3. Challenging those outdated or incompatible assumptions and practices and replacing them with beliefs and actions that directly or indirectly help improve all students' achievement.

4. Monitoring, assessing, and adjusting the outcomes of these changed behaviors where and when needed to create a school where all students can achieve academically and where teachers feel professionally satisfied that they are doing important and high-quality work.

Source: School Culture and Change as Learning
http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/53502_Kaplan_chapter_1.pdf

How Do We Really Create a Culture Change?

Continuous School Improvement
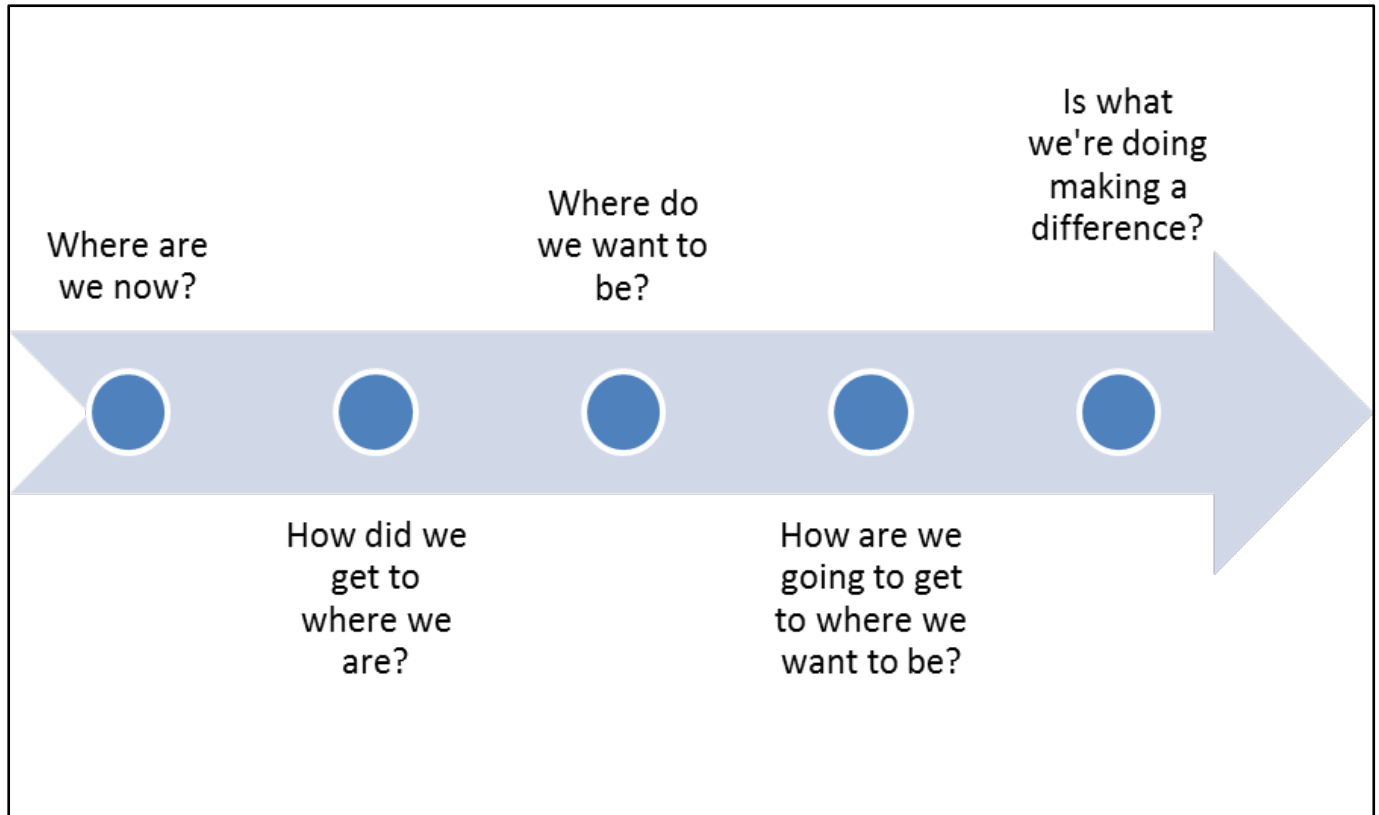
Data Analysis for Continuous School Improvement by Victoria Bernhardt

School Culture: Research

Positive School Culture:

Abundant literature on school climate documents a positive school climate:
- Having a powerful influence on the motivation to learn (Eccles et al., 1993)
- Mitigating the negative impact of the socioeconomic context on academic success (Astor, Benbenisty, & Estrada, 2009)
- Contributing to less aggression and violence (Gregory et al., 2010; Karcher, 2002a)
- Less harassment (Blaya, 2006; Kosciw & Elizabeth, 2006)
- Reduced sexual harassment (Attar-Schwartz, 2009)
- Acting as a protective factor for the learning and positive life development of young people (Ortega, Sanchez, & Viejo, 2011)
- Contributes to academic outcomes as well as the personal development and well-being of pupils (e.g., Haahr, Nielsen, Hansen, & Jakobsen, 2005; OECD, 2009).

Relationships

- Safe, caring, participatory, and responsive school climates tend to foster a greater attachment to school and provide the optimal foundation for social, emotional, and academic learning for middle school and high school students (Blum, McNeely, & Rinehart, 2002; Goodenow & Grady, 1993; V. E. Lee, Smith, Perry, & Smylie, 1999; Osterman, 2000; Wentzel, 1997).
- Research has shown that in schools where students perceive a more structured school, fair discipline practices, and more positive student-teacher relationships, the "probability and frequency of subsequent behavioral problems" is lower (Gregory & Cornell, 2009; Power et al., 1989; M. C. Wang, Selman, Dishion, & Stormshak, 2010).
- When both Chinese and American students perceive teacher-student support and student-student support, these perceptions were positively associated with self-esteem and grade point average and negatively associated with depressive symptoms (Jia et al., 2009).
- If a teacher-student relationship is negative and conflictual in kindergarten, it is more likely that the student will have behavioral and academic problems in later grades (Hamre & Pianta, 2001).
- Teachers' interactions with students can directly affect students' behavioral and emotional engagement in the classroom (E. Skinner & Belmont, 1993).
- When teachers support and interact positively with students, then students are more likely to be engaged and behave appropriately (E. Skinner & Belmont, 1993).
- Students with special needs, those who had Individual Education Plans (IEPs), were only able to benefit from the positive school climate if they felt included and respected by other students, indicating the critical role of peer relationships in the well-being of students with differences (Higgins-D'Alessandro and Sakwarawich, 2011)

Teachers' Work Environment:

- Teachers' work environment, peer relationships, and feelings of inclusion and respect are important aspects of positive school climate. In a study of 12 middle schools, Guo (2012) found that the teachers' work environment, which may be considered an indicator of teachers' relationships with each other and school administrators, highlights the critical foundational role of positive adult relationships for a positive school climate.

Racial School Climate:

Studies confirm that race/ethnicity is an important predictor in explaining perceptions of school climate. The findings reiterate the fact that it is important for school leaders and researchers to have the most complete understanding possible of what a positive school climate would look and feel like for students who identify as belonging to specific races, ethnicities, or cultures in order to improve school climate for all (Schneider & Duran, 2010).

- Using data from 382 African American and 1,456 European American students, showed that positive perceptions of the racial climate were associated with higher student achievement and fewer discipline problems. The study found that racial differences in students' grades and discipline outcomes were associated (Mattison and Aber, 2007),
- Negative racial climate is found to be an inhibiting factor in college preparation (Griffin & Allen, 2006).
- Results from a study by a large sample of elementary and secondary schools in a major urban school district, showed that positive interracial interactions contributed to students' sense of school community whereas negative interracial interactions inhibited that sense (Hallinan, Kubitschek, and Liu 2009).
- Race and ethnicity are significant predictors in explaining variance in discipline referrals (Shirley & Cornell, 2012).
- Students' Race and Ethnicity and Their Perceptions of School Climate Research has shown that race itself is a significant factor in explaining the variation in perceptions of school climate (Koth, Bradshaw, & Leaf, 2008; J. Wilson, Pentecoste, & Bailey, 1984).
- Positive school climate has been considered important for racial minority and poor students (Booker, 2006; Haynes, Emmons, & Ben-Avie, 1997).
- Quantitative survey data from 842 African American and White middle school students, African American, poor, and female students perceived the racial climate in more negative terms than did their White, non-poor, and male counterparts, respectively. (Watkins and Aber, 2009)

School Climate Transformation

Restorative Justice Practices * Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports
Trauma Sensitive & Informed * Social Emotional Learning * Racial Equity
Mindfulness * Mental Health

Implementation Framework

Approach, Paradigm Shifts, Mindset
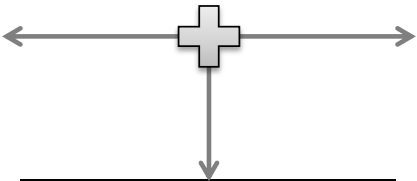
Tier 1 Pro-active School-wide & Classroom Practices

Behavioral Response & Intervention System

Tier 1 Minor Behaviors
Classroom Behavior Interventions & Disciplinary Responses

(When behavior challenges continue after multiple classroom intervention attempts or behavior significantly impacts classroom learning)

Tier 2 & 3 Major Behaviors
Formal Behavioral Interventions & Disciplinary Responses

Data Review and Systematic Screening

Tiered Intervention Teams
Tier 1: School-wide systems and practices
Tier 2 & 3: Student Social-Emotional & Behavioral interventions & progress monitoring

Classroom & School Re-entry

Berkowitz, K (2018)
Santa Rosa City Schools

Relationship-based Restorative Principles

The following principles reflect the values and concepts for implementing restorative practices in the school setting. Under each principle are some of its important implications.

Restorative Practices:

1. **Acknowledges that relationships are central to building community.**
   - Considerable effort and time is spent on building and sustaining positive, trusting relationships among ALL members of the school community.
   - Every student, teacher, administrator, staff member, and parent/guardian is a valued member of the school community.
   - All members of the school community are involved in a process of naming the values and principles to live by within their school community.

2. **Ensures equity of voice among all members of the community. All voices are valued, everyone is heard.**
   - Systems and structures are established to ensure that all members of the school community have equal opportunities for meaningful participation.
   - A culture of non-judgmental, authentic listening and sharing is encouraged and reinforced.
   - Inclusive decision-making practices are utilized to ensure that those impacted by decisions have a voice in the process by providing opportunities for input. Once decisions are made the reason for the decision and new expectations are clearly communicated.
   - Negotiation and cooperation are key components towards building a collaborative classroom and school environment.

3. **Establishes a culture of high expectations with high support, emphasizing doing things "WITH" not "TO" or "FOR".**
   - Supports high standards and expectations for both learning and behavior in the school and classroom community, AND offers high levels of support to create positive change = Doing "WITH".

4. **Builds systems that address misbehavior and harm in a way that strengthens relationships and focuses on the harm done rather than only rule-breaking.**
   - Schools establish policies to provide a safe place for learning. Real safety however comes from fostering and maintaining caring relationships.
   - Misbehavior is recognized as an offense against people and relationships, not just rule-breaking.
   - Policies need to address the root causes of discipline concerns rather than only the symptoms. The causes of misbehavior may be multiple and should be addressed by all members of the school community equally asserting high levels of expectation within a supportive environment.
   - The person/s harmed is the center of the primary relationship that needs to be addressed. Secondary relationships that may have been impacted might include other students, teachers, parents, the administration, and the surrounding community.

5. **Engages in collaborative problem solving.**
   - There is a shared responsibility and participation among all members of the school community to contribute to the sustainability of positive relationships by working together to identify potential problems and determine solutions.
   - Misbehavior can become a teachable moment and the community/relationships can be restored when all those impacted/harmed by an incident are involved in a collaborative process of determining unmet needs and solutions to make things as right as possible.
   - Recognizes all of us act to satisfy our human needs (ex. belonging, freedom, power, and fun). Behaviors are chosen to meet these underlying needs.

6. **Enhances accountability, responsibility and empowers change and growth for all members of the community.**
   - All members of the school community are responsible for contributing to the establishment and sustaining of a positive school culture by taking personal responsibility to follow through and hold one another accountable to the collective values and principles that define the community.
   - Conflict presents opportunity for change if the process includes careful listening, reflecting, shared problem-solving, and trust.
   - High accountability occurs when systems and structures are in place that allow for one to take responsibility for their actions by providing them the opportunity to learn and understand the impact of their actions, determine how to make things as right as possible, AND follow through with the plan.
   - Consequences as part of the restorative process should be evaluated based on whether they are reasonable, related to the offense, and respectful.
   - Some students choose to resist participation in a process that will allow for change and may need adults to support and guide them in decision-making concerning their accountability.

Source: Modified from Amstutz, L., & Mullet, J., (2005), pg 29-32.*The Little Book of Restorative Discipline*, pg 26-28

Paradigm Shift

"What's fundamental about restorative justice (practices) is a shift away from thinking about laws being broken, who broke the law, and how we punish the people who broke the laws. There's a shift to: there was harm caused, or there's disagreement or dispute, there's conflict, and how do we repair the harm, address the conflict, meet the needs, so that relationships and community can be repaired and restored. It's a different orientation. It is a shift."

Cheryl Graves- Community Justice for Youth Institute

Paradigm Shift: Retributive vs. Restorative

Three Different Questions

Traditional, Punitive Justice	Restorative Justice
What laws/rules have been broken?	Who has been hurt?
Who did it?	What are their needs?
What do they deserve?	Whose obligations are these?
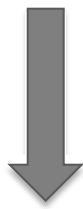
A Different Approach

Traditional Retributive Approach	Restorative Approach
School and rules violated	*People and relationships* violated
Justice focuses on *establishing guilt*	Justice identifies *needs and obligations*
Accountability = punishment	Accountability = understanding impact, repairing harm
Justice directed at person who caused harm, person who experienced harm ignored	Person who caused harm, person who experienced harm and school all have direct roles in justice process
Rules and intent outweigh whether outcome is positive/negative	Person who caused harm is responsible for harmful behavior, repairing harm and working toward positive outcomes
No opportunity for remorse or amends	Opportunity given for amends and expression of remorse

Traditional, Punitive Discipline

"Traditionally, discipline was thought of as an individual's ability to adhere to a set of school or classroom rules that were put in place to maintain good order, necessary for effective teaching and learning. Administrative responses to violations of school rules are traditionally regulated through external sanctioning systems which isolate the wrongdoer, appropriate blame, and hand down consequence in the form of punishment from a higher authority."

Restorative Discipline

"Central to the restorative process is the maintenance of individuals' dignity and self worth. These processes aim to harness the capacity to strengthen internal sanctioning systems through building a community of care around individuals while instilling high levels of accountability and responsibility. This involves building collective understanding about: what happened, how people were affected, determining appropriate responses to repair the harm done and ways to decrease the likelihood of further harmful behavior."

In Summary

"Traditionally, school order is maintained through establishing school rules and corresponding punishments for violation of the school rules by way of a hierarchical accountability structure;
Restorative processes maintain school order through building a web of relationships throughout the school community that supports individuals in making responsible decisions and holds individuals accountable for repairing harmful behavior."

Desmond Tutu on Restorative Justice

Retributive Justice in which an impersonal state hands down punishment with little consideration for victims and hardly any for perpetrators – is not the only form of justice. I contend that there is another kind of justice, *restorative justice*, which is characteristic of traditional African jurisprudence. Here the central concern is not retribution or punishment but, in the spirit of Ubuntu, the healing of breaches, redressing of imbalances, and restoration of broken relationships. This kind of justice seeks to rehabilitate both the victim and the perpetrator, who should be given the opportunity to be reintegrated into the community he or she has injured by his or her offence. This is a far more personal approach, which sees the offence as something that has happened to people and whose consequence is a rupture in relationships. Thus we should claim that justice, restorative justice, is being served when efforts are being made to work for healing, for forgiveness and for reconciliation

(Tutu 1999: 51).

The Social Discipline Window

HIGH

STRUCTURES • LIMITS • EXPECTATIONS

TO	WITH
Punitive confronting win/lose authoritarian stigmatising	RESTORATIVE problem-solving respectful collaborative responsive
NOT	**FOR**
Neglectful indifferent unsafe lazy has given up	Permissive protective rescuing undemanding excusing

LOW   SUPPORT • CARE • CONCERN   **HIGH**
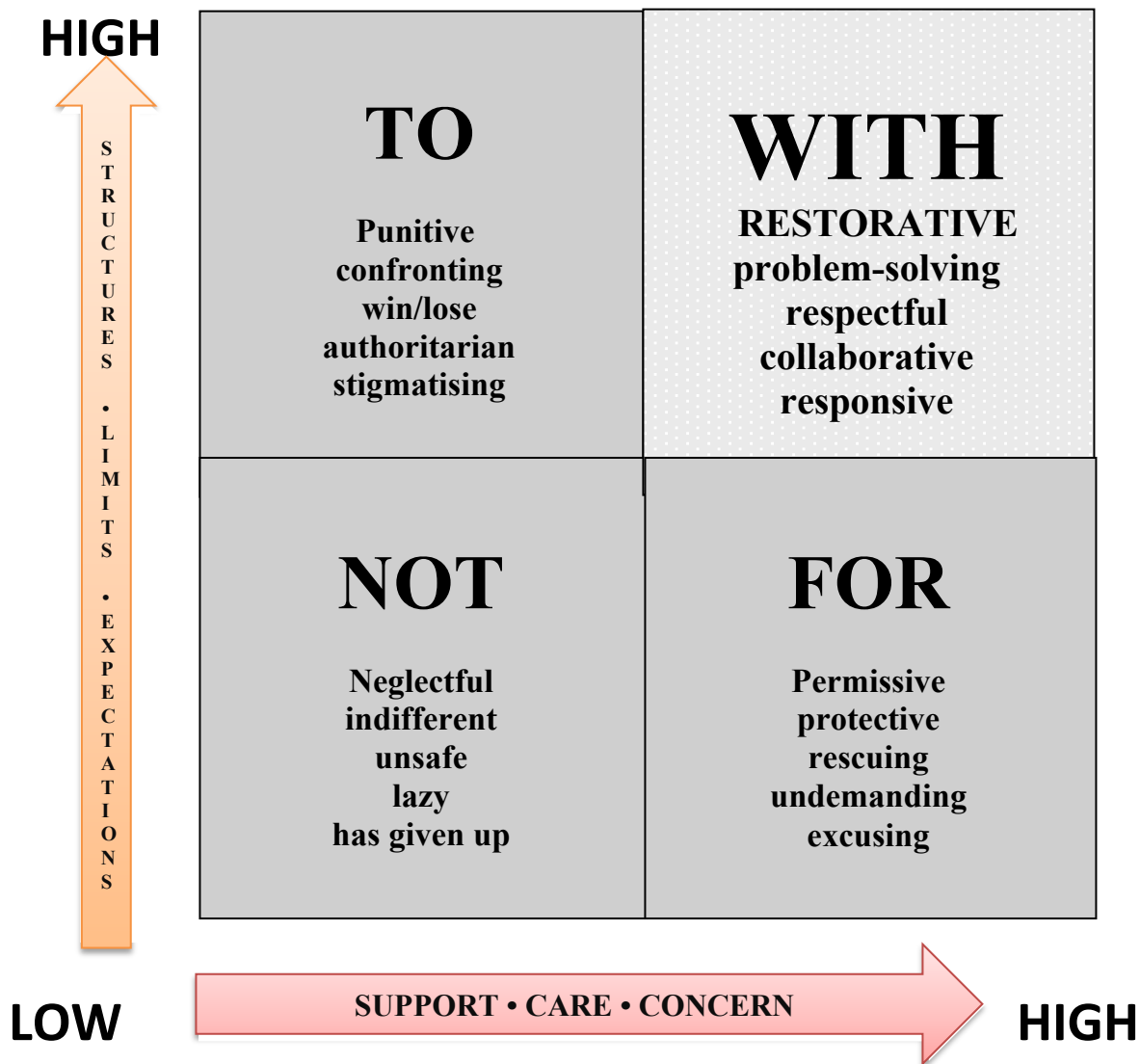
From Positive Behavior for Learning, Restorative Practice Kete, Published by the New Zealand Ministry of Education.www.education.govt.nz All text and images copyright © Crown 2014, the Social Discipline Window on pages 17 and 38 copyright © Daniel Glaser 1964. Adapted from Wachtel and McCold, 2003 (adapted from Glasser, 1964)

The underlying premise of Restorative Practices rests with the belief that people will make positive changes when those in positions of authority do things *with* them rather than *to* them or *for* them.

Wachtel & Costello (2009), The Restorative Practices Handbook, International Institute for Restorative Practices, pg 50

Organizational Change Window: Restorative Leadership

HIGH

pressure (mandate, requirement)

TO	WITH
Managed strategic change	Connecting personal & professional growth
Top-down imposed change	Self-managed project matrix
NOT	**FOR**
Cosmetic change (fadism)	Management consultants
Avoiding/resisting change	Best practice emulation

LOW — **support** (encouragement, nurture) → HIGH
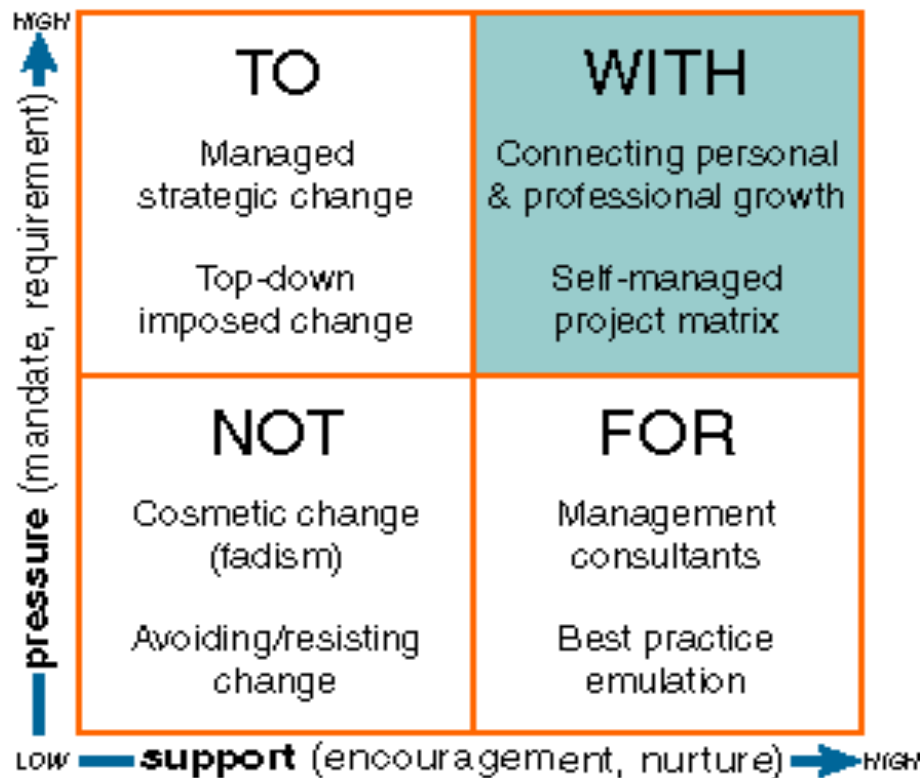
According to the Organizational Change Window, successful change requires a balance of high levels of pressure with high levels of support, encouraging and nurturing self-direction.

Change WITH people.

"The most effective way to bring about change in a school- or any organization- is to combine high levels of both pressure and support and engage staff in a participatory process. Real change will occur only when teachers and staff recognize that they will be held accountable for change and simultaneously are given the support and tools they need."   Wachtel & Costello (2009), The Restorative Practices Handbook, pg 85

Restorative Practices Language

Embracing Restorative Practices as a common, consistent language among the school staff community is a simple and effective approach to reinforce the core values of community, relationships, responsibility and accountability.

The words highlighted represent the key language of Restorative Practices.

We are a ***community.***
Recognizing that the strength and health of the community (among students, staff, and families) directly impacts school climate (sense of belonging and connectedness) and academic achievement. Every member of the community is important and contributes greatly. Each person's actions affect the health of the community in a positive or negative way.
Recommendation: *constantly refer to the student, staff, and family groups as a "community", and stress the importance of having a strong, healthy community.*

What is the ***relationship*** like?
Reinforcing the importance of positive relationships is essential to the development of a strong community. Positive relationships lay the foundation for cooperation, skill development and learning.
Recommendation: *constantly inquire about the strength of the "relationship/s" between/among students, staff, and families. Celebrate positive relationships, and when challenged, specifically ask, "what is the relationship like between…..(students, yourself and your students, a particular student and his/her classroom peers, staff members…etc)". Self reflect on your own relationships with school community members and ask others to reflect on their relationships.*

What happened?
Ask open-ended questions that allow for a genuine retelling of an experience.
Recommendation: *do not ask the "why" question. Instead, ask "what happened" when inquiring about specific actions or behaviors.*

Who was ***impacted*** (harmed) by what happened?
For both positive and negative actions, recognizing impact helps to teach that one's actions affect the greater community. It is equally important to reinforce positive impact, as it is to teach that negative behavior harms relationships and the health of the community.
Recommendation*: Consider age appropriate language to use in response to students and staff actions/behaviors, reinforcing the importance of positive relationships and community.*

What *needs* do those involved have?

When conflict or harm occurs, it is important to recognize that ALL parties involved have resulting needs. Often times the needs of those "harmed" and those who "harmed" have similar needs. Giving individuals an opportunity to voice their needs is an important step towards identifying what must happen to repair the relationships.

Recommendation: *Using age appropriate language, ask ALL individuals involved in an incident (including the teacher/family member) to share/reflect on what needs they have/had (both during the time of the incident as well as after the incident).*

What needs to happen to *repair the harm* (make things as right as possible)?

Reinforcing the importance of repairing harm (when one's actions have negatively impacted the community) is a critical component for the restoration of community/relationships when harm has occurred. Giving those involved in the incident an opportunity to identify what they are going to do to make things right teaches responsibility and holds one accountable for their actions.

Recommendation: *Allow for the people involved in an incident to share what they need to see happen in order to address and repair the harm caused by hurtful/negative behavior. Accountability stems from taking responsibility for one's actions and following-through with the identified plan after taking into consideration all that everyone needs to feel satisfied with the situation.*

Community
Creating a Sense of Belonging and Value in a Group

Components of Community formation:

Gibbsm J. (2001), *Discovering Gifts in Middle School: Tribes*, CA CenterSource Systems p. 74

1. **Capacity**: Communities are built upon recognizing the whole depth, the strengths, weaknesses, and the unique capacities of each member.

2. **Collective Effort:** Communities share responsibility to achieve goals for the common good, and to engage the diversity of individual talents and skills.

3. **Informality**: Interactions are based on consideration; care and affection take place spontaneously.

4. **Stories**: Reflection upon individual and community experiences provides knowledge about truth, relationships and further direction.

"To build a sense of community is to create a group that extends to others the respect one has for oneself, to come to know one another as individual, to respond and care about one another, to feel a sense of membership and accountability to the group."
Thomas Likona, author on moral development and education

Restorative Practices

Relationship Based Principles + Racial Equity Lens

Building/Sustaining Trusting Relationships

- Relational Skill Building
- Connection Activities
- Inclusive Decision Making
- Affective Communication
- Community Circles

Repairing Relationships & Restoring Community

- Restorative Dialogue
  (Informal or Scheduled)
- Small Group Repairing Harm Circles
- Classroom Responsive Circles
- Brief Restorative Interventions
  (Office-led)
- Formal Conferencing
- Re-entry Conferences

Building/Sustaining Trusting Relationships

Relationship Based Principles and Values (The RP LENS)

➕

Racial Equity Lens

Inclusive School-wide and Classroom Climate • Trusting Relationships • Story Telling • Reflective Practice • Implicit Bias and Stereotypes • Systems and Policy Review • Data Based Decision-Making

Inclusive Decision Making

Fair Process: Provides opportunities for those affected by decisions to be included in the decision-making process. This contributes to an inclusive culture where all voices are valued and accounted for.

Affective Communication

Genuine expression of feelings and emotions in relation to specific behaviors and actions, affective language provides a structure for reinforcing desired behaviors and challenging/ redirecting unwanted behaviors.

Relationship Skill Building

Practicing skills necessary for building a foundation of healthy, trusting inter-personal relationships will all members of the school community.

Community Circles

Intentionally creating a space that lifts barriers between people, circles open the possibility for connection, collaboration, problem solving and mutual understanding.

Proactive Circles can be used for various purposes:

o Relationship building
o Establishing values and behavior expectations
o Check-in and check-out
o Celebrations, recognition, achievements
o Relevant content instruction
o Class progress (climate and academics)

Connection Activities

A diverse range of activities that allow for interpersonal connection and breaking down or barriers to build trust, relationship, and community.

Berkowitz, K & Santa Rosa City Schools (2017)

Repairing Relationships and Restoring Community:
Restorative Discipline

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Relationship Based Principles / Values & Racial Equity Lens

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Restorative Dialogue

A common, consistent language among all members of the school community that reinforces the core values of building and sustaining trusting relationships, reinforcing high expectations, taking responsibility and opportunities for accountability.

Restorative Questions:
1. What happened and what were you thinking at the time?
2. What have you thought about since?
3. Who has been affected and how?
4. What about this is/has been hardest for you?
5. What needs to happen to make things as right as possible moving forward?

Affective Language

Restorative Dialogue: On the spot or scheduled meetings using the restorative questions to respond to minor conflict, wrongdoing, or unwanted behavior/s.

Classroom Responsive Circles
Utilizing the circle process to address topics, incidents or patterns of behaviors that may negatively impact the classroom-learning environment, relationships or school community.

Small Group Repairing Harm Circles
Bringing together a small group of individuals into a safe space for authentic dialogue related to an incident of harm or conflict. All participants have equal opportunity to speak and be heard with the intention to make things right.

Brief Restorative Interventions A referral-based problem-solving process, which engages all parties involved in an incident. Used where the harm is significant enough not to be resolved informally, but not so great that it requires a formal conference.

Formal Conferencing
A structured formal process involving all members of the community affected by a particular incident. Those who cause harm are held accountable for their actions, those harmed are given a voice in the process and agreements are made to address needs, repair harms and prevent future wrongdoing.
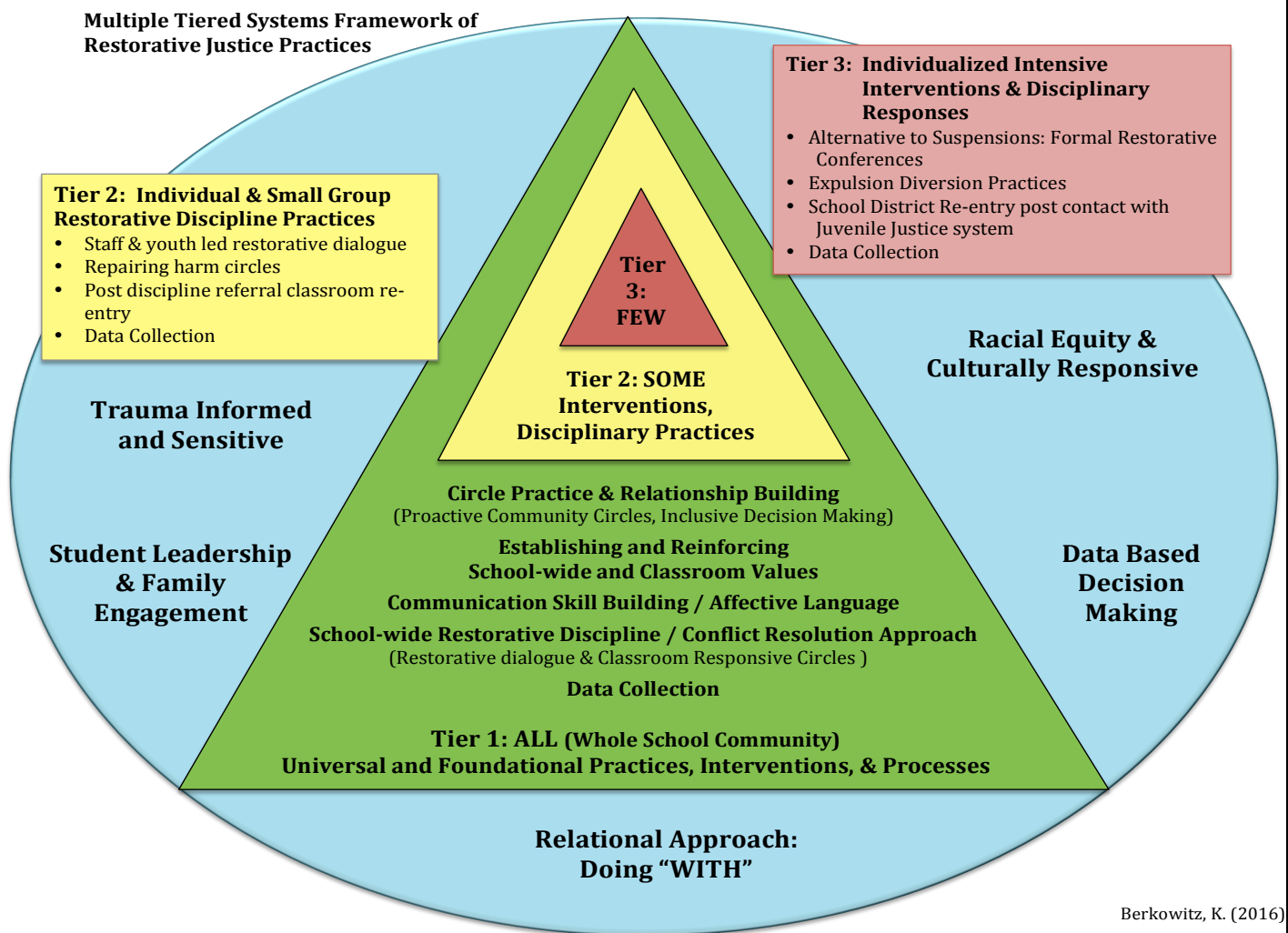
Re-entry Conferences
A formal process that reintegrates students back into the school and classroom after a counseling office referral or an out of school suspension to re-establish connection with the community.

Multi- Tiered System Framework

A Multiple Tiered Systems framework (MTSS) is a proactive, prevention-based approach that allows schools to highlight and reinforce the importance of establishing a positive environment for all members of the school community and more systematically deliver needed supports, interventions, and disciplinary responses to the students as needed. A MTSS model embeds an inclusive culture of reciprocal relationships and shared responsibility, and emphasizes the use of evidence-based practices to enhance the academic and behavioral performance of all students. This intentional effort to build strong community as well as the emphasis on early identification and intervention helps to reach students in a preventative rather than reactive mode. (Lynass, L, 2015).

The MTSS framework is typically presented as a triangle divided into three tiers of practice and intervention responses. Tier 1, lays the foundation of school-wide and classroom universal practices that are intended for all students (and adults in a whole school model).
While Tier 1 will meet the relational and behavioral needs of most students across the school, some students will require more targeted interventions and disciplinary responses at the Tier 2 and 3 levels. Therefore, an additional set of restorative practices is available for use at Tier 2 and 3 level and involves a more formal response to behavior infractions and harm through the use of small groups and individualized behavior support.

Multiple Tiered Systems Framework of Restorative Justice Practices

Tier 3: Individualized Intensive Interventions & Disciplinary Responses
- Alternative to Suspensions: Formal Restorative Conferences
- Expulsion Diversion Practices
- School District Re-entry post contact with Juvenile Justice system
- Data Collection

Tier 2: Individual & Small Group Restorative Discipline Practices
- Staff & youth led restorative dialogue
- Repairing harm circles
- Post discipline referral classroom re-entry
- Data Collection

Tier 3: FEW

Tier 2: SOME Interventions, Disciplinary Practices

Racial Equity & Culturally Responsive

Trauma Informed and Sensitive

Student Leadership & Family Engagement

Data Based Decision Making

Circle Practice & Relationship Building
(Proactive Community Circles, Inclusive Decision Making)
Establishing and Reinforcing School-wide and Classroom Values
Communication Skill Building / Affective Language
School-wide Restorative Discipline / Conflict Resolution Approach
(Restorative dialogue & Classroom Responsive Circles)
Data Collection

Tier 1: ALL (Whole School Community)
Universal and Foundational Practices, Interventions, & Processes

**Relational Approach:
Doing "WITH"**

Berkowitz, K. (2016)

School-wide MTSS model of Restorative Practices developed for the District-wide roll-out of Restorative Practices across Santa Rosa City Schools.

Building and Sustaining Trusting Relationships and Community:

Proactive Practices
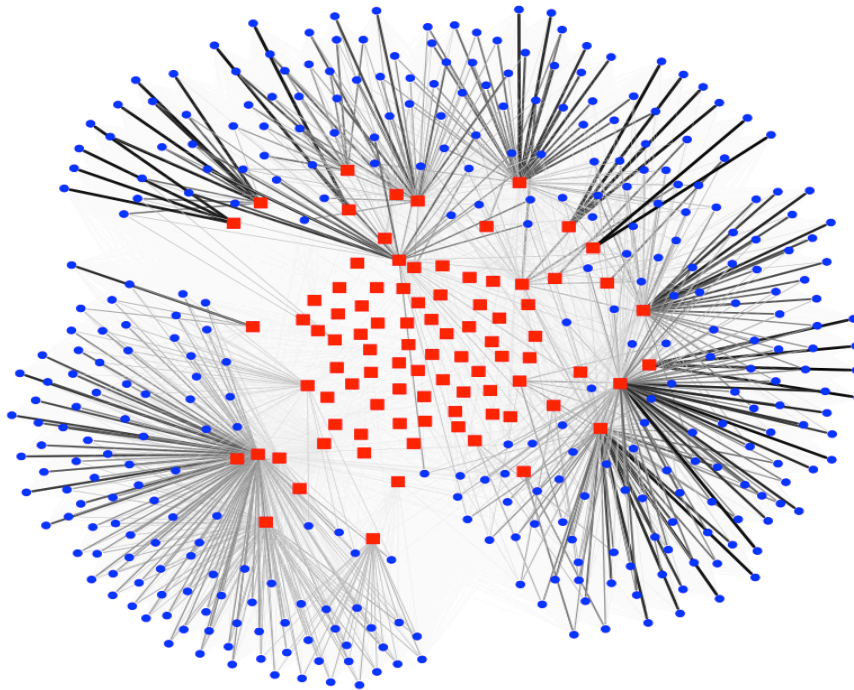
re·la·tion·ship
   rəˈlāSH(ə)n͵SHip/
   noun

1. A connection, association, or involvement.
2. Connection between persons by blood or marriage.
3. An emotional or other connection between people:

   The relationship between teachers and students

'A relationship is a connection between two people in which some sort of exchange takes place'.
(George Goetschius and Joan Tash, 1967) Dictionary.com

Relational Approach = Awareness + Intentions + Actions

Relational Awareness
- Recognition that humans are influenced by relationships.
- Recognizing that a positive teaching and learning experience is determined by the quality of one's relationship between the teacher, the students and their parents.
- An examination of relationships within the context of school and community.

+

Intentions
- Self-reflection on what guides one's action
- Does one desire to be in good relationship

+

Relational Actions:

1. **Interpersonal:** Develop and sustain strong connections to create a foundation for positive trusting relationships to thrive.

2. **Systems:** Protocols/routines to establish an environment and conditions for the building and sustaining positive trusting relationships.

Just Listen

by Rachel Naomi Remen, M.D.

I suspect that the most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention. And especially if it's given from the heart. When people are talking, there's no need to do anything but receive them. Just take them in. Listen to what they're saying. Care about it. Most times caring about it is even more important than understanding it. Most of us don't value ourselves or our love enough to know this. It has taken me a long time to believe in the power of simply saying, "I'm sorry," when someone is in pain. And meaning it.

One of my patients told me that when she tried to tell her story people often interrupted to tell her that they once had something just like that happen to them. Subtly her pain became a story about themselves. Eventually she stopped talking to most people. It was just too lonely. We connect through listening. When we interrupt what someone is saying to let them know that we understand, we move the focus of attention to ourselves. When we listen, they know we care. Many people with cancer talk about the relief of having someone just listen.

I have even learned to respond to someone crying by just listening. In the old days I used to reach for the tissues, until I realized that passing a person a tissue may be just another way to shut them down, to take them out of their experience of sadness and grief. Now I just listen. When they have cried all they need to cry, they find me there with them.

This simple thing has not been easy to learn. It certainly went against everything I had been taught since I was very young. I thought people listened only because they were too timid to speak or did not know the answer. A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words.

Listening Skills

1

Stop Talking *"If we were supposed to talk more than we listen, we would have two tongues and one ear."* Mark Twain.

Don't talk, listen. When somebody else is talking listen to what they are saying, do not interrupt, talk over them or finish their sentences for them. Stop, just listen. When the other person has finished talking you may need to clarify to ensure you have received their message accurately.

2

Prepare Yourself to Listen: **Relax.**

Focus on the speaker. Put other things out of mind. The human mind is easily distracted by other thoughts – what's for lunch, what time do I need to leave to catch my train, is it going to rain – try to put other thoughts out of mind and concentrate on the messages that are being communicated.

3

Put the Speaker at Ease: **Help the speaker to feel free to speak.**

Remember their needs and concerns. Nod or use other gestures or words to encourage them to continue. Maintain eye contact but don't stare – show you are listening and understanding what is being said.

4

Remove Distractions: **Focus on what is being said.**

Don't doodle, shuffle papers, look out the window, pick your fingernails or similar. Avoid unnecessary interruptions. These behaviors disrupt the listening process and send messages to the speaker that you are bored or distracted.

5

Empathize: **Try to understand the other person's point of view.**

Look at issues from their perspective. Let go of preconceived ideas. By having an open mind we can more fully empathize with the speaker. If the speaker says something that you disagree with then wait and construct an argument to counter what is said but keep an open mind to the views and opinions of others.

6

Be Patient: **A pause, even a long pause, does not necessarily mean that the speaker has finished.**

Be patient and let the speaker continue in their own time, sometimes it takes time to formulate what to say and how to say it. Never interrupt or finish a sentence for someone.

7

Avoid Personal Prejudice: **Try to be impartial.**

Don't become irritated and don't let the person's habits or mannerisms distract you from what the speaker is really saying. Everybody has a different way of speaking - some people are for example more nervous or shy than others, some make excessive arm movements, some people like to pace whilst talking - others like to sit still. Focus on what is being said and try to ignore styles of delivery.

8

Listen to the Tone: **Volume and tone both add to what someone is saying.**

A good speaker will use both volume and tone to their advantage to keep an audience attentive; everybody will use pitch, tone and volume of voice in certain situations – let these help you to understand the emphasis of what is being said.

9

Listen for Ideas – Not Just Words: **You need to get the whole picture, not just isolated bits and pieces.**

Maybe one of the most difficult aspects of listening is the ability to link together pieces of information to reveal the ideas of others. With proper concentration, letting go of distractions, and focus this becomes easier.

10

Wait and Watch for Non-Verbal Communication: **Gestures, facial expressions, and eye-movements can all be important.**

We don't just listen with our ears but also with our eyes – watch and pick up the additional information being transmitted via non-verbal communication.

Source: http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/listening-skills.html#ixzz4AaLyfSZn

Inclusive Decision-Making

Inclusive decision-making is about interacting WITH others and allowing them to the space to be heard and treated with dignity and respect. It provides opportunities for those affected by decisions to be included in the decision-making process. *This contributes to an inclusive culture where all voices are valued and accounted for, ultimately leading to greater cooperation and follow-through of the decisions that are made.*

Modified from: Wachtel & Costello (2009), The Restorative Practices Handbook, pg 87

Majority Rule	Fair Process	Consensus
• Decision is determined according to highest # of votes • Can main privacy, quicker process • May result in minority groups and opinions feeling left out.	• One clear decision-making body • Opportunity for input and discussion • 3 part engagement process and communication	• Enables all group members to be invested • Requires respectful dialogue & compromise • Decision is agreed upon by the collective

Inclusive Decision-Making: Consensus-Building

What is Consensus and Why Use it?

Collaborative Change Approach (CCA) Guiding community stakeholders in collective decision-making.

1. **What is consensus?** "Consensus is a group process where the input of everyone is carefully considered and an outcome is crafted that best meets the needs of the group. It is a process of synthesizing the wisdom of all the participants into the best decision possible at the time. The root of consensus is the word consent, which means to give permission to. When you consent to a decision, you are giving your permission to the group to go ahead with the decision. You may disagree with the decision, but based on listening to everyone else's input, all the individuals agree to let the decision go forward, because the decision is the best one the entire group can achieve at the current time. The heart of consensus is a cooperative intent, where the members are willing to work together to find the solution that meets the needs of the group. The cooperative nature of consensus is a different mindset from the competitive nature of majority voting. In a consensus process the members come together to find or create the best solutions by working together. Key attributes to successfully participate include humility, willingness to listen to others and see their perspectives, and willingness to share your own ideas but not insist they are the best ones." Rob Sandeline

2. **What Consensus is NOT**: Many people assume that consensus means unanimous agreement, but this is not the case. Participants may approve a decision with which they disagree because they recognize that it meets the needs of the group.

3. **Why Use Consensus?**
   a. Consensus-based decision-making uses the group's collective knowledge, wisdom, and experience resulting in more community-responsive, culturally-relevant initiatives.
   b. Consensus builds strong, trusting, and enduring relationships between group members that help sustain community action teams over time.

   Consensus encourages shared leadership and collective ownership of campaigns and deepens the group's commitment to its shared goals.

Consensus-Building Tools

Key tools to successfully guide a consensus-building process among a group of community stakeholders.

1. **What the group needs to know *before* beginning a consensus process:** Explain that facilitators of a consensus-building process must ensure that the group has clarity about:
    a) The ***purpose*** of the process, e.g. *To form a community action team to co-develop a violence prevention initiative.*
    b) The core ***values*** that underlie the process. These might be the mission and values of the organization, e.g. *If your agency has a value about promoting inclusion for all people, then the initiative developed by the action team will need to be aligned with this core principal.*
    c) The ***roles and expectations*** of facilitators and participants in the process. It is important for everyone to understand that the role of the facilitator is to *guide* (not *direct*) the process and the expectations for participants.
    d) The ***parameters and resources***, such as the timeline of the initiative, the budget available to the group to support the initiative, and any constraints in terms of pre-established commitments and factors.

Consensus Voting	
If you……	**Then…..**
Support the goal absolutely and feel enthusiastic about working on it	Thumb UP
Can live with the goal, don't necessarily love it, but can support others' enthusiasm for it	Thumb to the SIDE
Want to propose a change or abandon the idea altogether	Thumb DOWN

2. **Consensus Voting with Thumbs:** Review "Thumb Voting" as one tool used by facilitators of a consensus process.
    a. **Thumbs –up** "I enthusiastically support this proposal, exactly how it is, right now."
    b. **Thumbs-sideways** "I support this proposal. I don't love it, but I can live with it and I   am willing to approve it."
   c. **Thumbs-down** "I cannot live with this proposal. In order for me to approve it, something has to change."

    Consensus is reached when all participants have their thumbs "up" or "sideways." A "thumbs-down" means there is no consensus and the proposal must be modified or discarded. A few "thumbs-sideways" votes are fine and to be expected in a consensus vote. However, if many participants have "thumbs-sideways" this indicates a low level of enthusiasm and the group should be encouraged to continue to modify the proposal until there is stronger support for it. People who vote "thumbs-down" and "thumbs-sideways" should be encouraged to share their perspectives with the group to strengthen the proposal.

Inclusive Decision-Making: Fair Process

What Fair Process Achieves:
• Fair process builds trust and commitment which
• Produces voluntary co-operation, which
• Drives performance, which
• Leads individuals to go beyond the call of duty by sharing their knowledge and applying creativity.

Three core components of Fair Process:
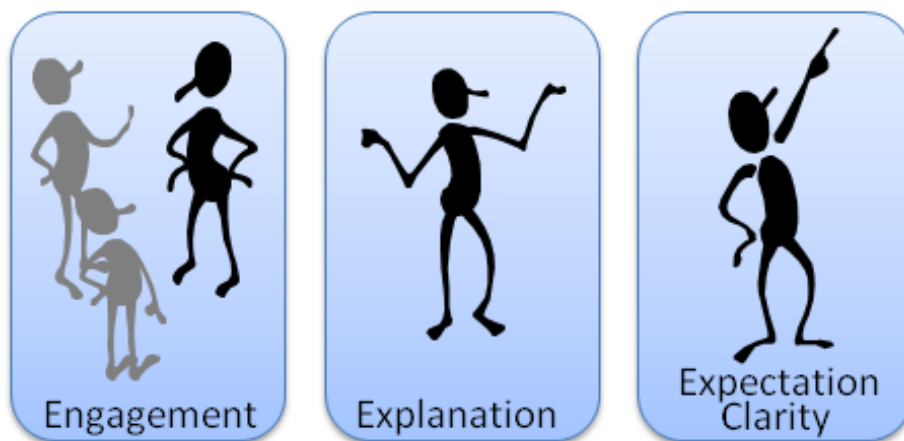
1 - **Engagement:** Involving individuals in decisions that affect them by asking for their input and allowing them to refute the merit of one another's ideas.

2 - **Explanation:** Everyone impacted by decisions needs to understand the reason final decisions are made as they are and how their feedback/input was considered in the decision-making process. This creates powerful feedback loop that enhances cooperation.

3 - **Expectation Clarity**: Once decisions are made, new expectations are clearly conveyed, so that everyone understands how to participate and engage with the change.

Kim & Mauborgne, 1997, Fair Process: Managing in the Knowledge Economy' for the Harvard Business Review

Affective Language

Description and Purpose:

Affective Statements:

- Are central to all restorative processes.
- Are personal expressions of feeling in response to specific positive or challenging behaviors of others.
- Provide feedback on the impact of intended or unintended harm resulting from negative behaviors.
- Provide information that can be used to restore a good feeling between people when harm has occurred between them.
- Are humanizing and allow for deep relationship building.
- Have a significant and cumulative impact in a school community.

Constructing an Affective Statement:

When responding to behavior (either to reinforce positive behaviors or re-direct negative behaviors with any member of the school community), the following three steps will assist in the construction of an affective statement.

- **Step 1** – Self-identify what you are feeling or how you are impacted

- **Step 2** – Identify the specific action or behavior that you are responding to (separate the doer from the deed)

- **Step 3** – Bring step 1 and 2 together in an authentic expression of:
    1. your feeling or how you are impacted, by the
    2. specific behaviors or actions you are reinforcing or redirecting.

- **Step 4** – Close with a request

    Ex. Phillip, I get very distracted when you continuously tap your pencil on the table. It makes it difficult for me to concentrate.

    ***Be mindful to always consider the needs of the students when addressing them. It is important to take responsibility for your own feelings and not impose your feelings on others. The purpose of affective statements is for people to learn how their specific behaviors impact those around them—it is not for the purpose of them having to carry the load of everyone's feelings—this is very important, especially for our students who have experienced severe or complex trauma in their lives.*

Honest Expression:

→ Observation
Feeling
Need
Request

When I... 👀 🤫 [Add your observation]

I feel...

Happy	Sad	Angry	Annoyed	Excited

Worried	Scared	Hurt	Embarrassed	Confused

Because I Need...

Survival:
Food
Shelter
Water
Rest
Safety
Health
Wellbeing
Security

Love & Belonging:
Friendship
Community
Family
Respect
Cooperation
Support
Acceptance
Understanding
Connection
Empathy

POWER:
RECOGNITION
SUCCESS
IMPORTANCE
ACHIEVEMENT
INFLUENCE
ORDER
GROWTH
EQUALITY
TRUST
SELF-WORTH

FUN:
Laughter
Learning
Change
Enjoyment
Play
Excitement
Inspiration
Celebration
Movement

FREEDOM:
Choice
Independence
Solitude
Individuality

Would you be willing to?

Based on the work of Marshall Rosenberg and the Center for Nonviolent Communication and the work of William Glasser. Created by www.joebrummer.com Restorative Approaches & Practices #RAP

Affective Language Practice:
Classroom Scenarios

Scenario: Over the past couple months you have observed that John's use of profane language as well as putdowns towards other students has significantly increased.

You notice an increase in inappropriate and hurtful language and a greater number of heated verbal altercations in general among the students in your class.

Below is an example of how affective statements can be used to both reinforce positive, and redirect challenging behaviors.

Affective
Language
(statements)

Positive statements to John:

1. *Ten minutes into class you notice that John has yet to say anything hurtful to another student, you say,* "John, I am appreciating the fact that you are speaking respectfully to the other students in class so far. Keep up the good work!"

2. "John, I was impressed to see that you did not verbally respond to Kyle when he yelled at you from across the room. Keep it up."

Positive statement to the entire class:

At the end of class one day you say, " I am feeling very proud of you all because I heard a lot of supportive, positive discussions in class today. I would like to see you all support one another like this again tomorrow."

Redirecting statements to John in private:

1. "John, I feel frustrated when you raise your voice and speak over me while I'm teaching the lesson. I need for all students be able to hear me teach so please wait till the break before you speak to your friends."

2. "When I hear you putting down other students in class, I feel concerned that the classroom becomes an unsafe place. I ask that you follow our guidelines of respectful speech so we can all feel comfortable here."

Redirecting statement to the entire class:

In the past 10 minutes you have heard 4 different students putdown one another, you say: "Everyone, can I please have your attention up front for a moment. In the past ten minutes I have heard four different people put down one another. I am noticing this happening more and more in our class and I am feeling very uncomfortable with it because I feel it creates a negative feeling and environment in the class. I would like to see an end to all the putdowns. "
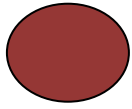
Circles
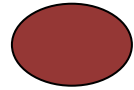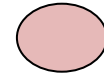
Intentionally creating a space that lifts barriers between people, circles open the possibility for connection, collaboration, and mutual understanding.
Derived from aboriginal and native traditions, circles are built on caring relationships, positive expectation messages, and opportunities for meaningful participation.

Circle processes are a valuable practice that serves numerous purposes in our school communities.

Why Circle?

- **Creates a place of belonging**
  - In circle everyone is equally important, everyone has an equal voice

- **Relevant and engaging**
  - Speaking from the heart
  - Sharing personal experiences and story telling
  - Peer support

- **Promotes social skill building**
  - Listening
  - Communication
  - Expression of feelings, thoughts, ideas
  - Problem solving

- **Creates connection and bonds**
  - Equalizes power
  - Shared effort & common purpose
  - Builds trust (there is vulnerability in sharing)

- **Allows for targeted inquiry**
  - Exploration of impact
  - Behavior ownership
  - Taking responsibility for actions

Participants gain valuable life skills that will not only positively contribute to improved interpersonal relationships and academic success, but will also prepare them for their future endeavors and relationships.
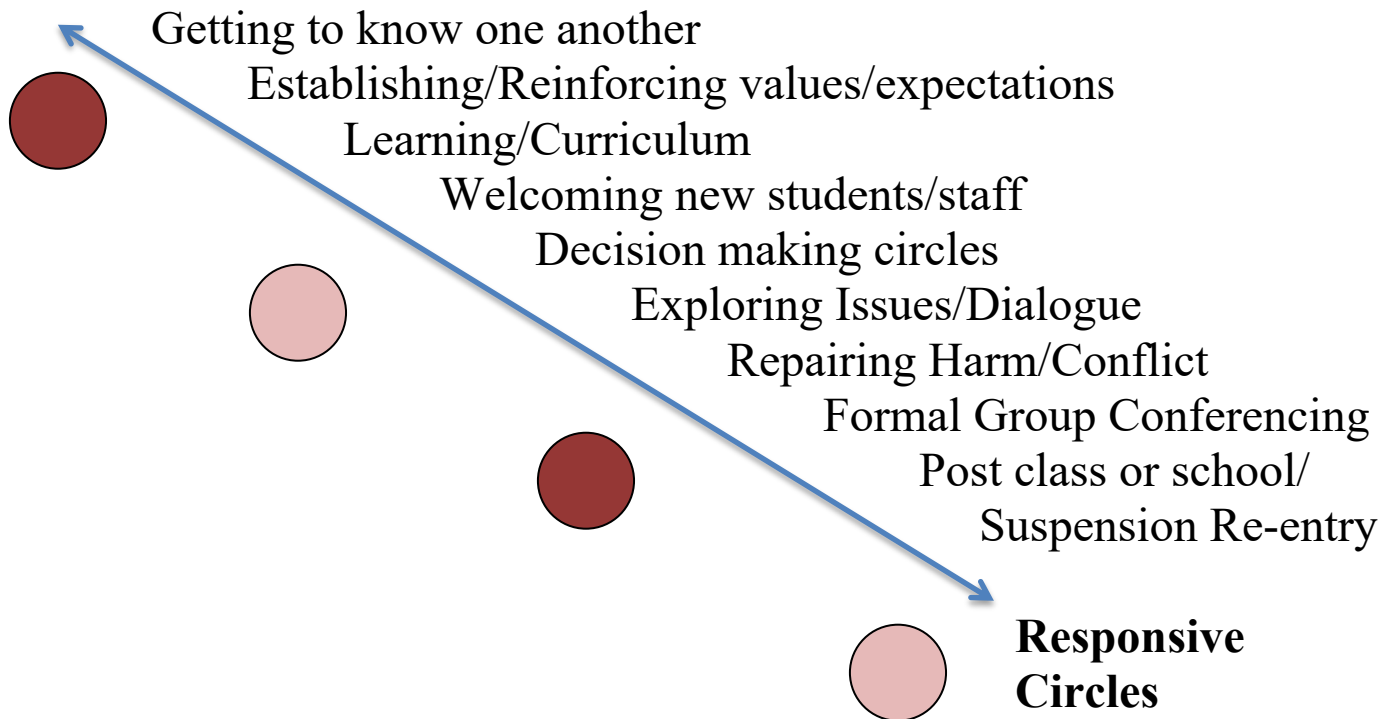
The circle process provides a way of bringing people together in which:
* Everyone is respected and gets a chance to talk without interruption
* Participants explain themselves by telling their stories
* Everyone is equal- no person is more important than anyone else
* Emotional aspects of individual experiences are welcome

Types of Circles

Pro-active (prevention based) Circles

Getting to know one another
Establishing/Reinforcing values/expectations
Learning/Curriculum
Welcoming new students/staff
Decision making circles
Exploring Issues/Dialogue
Repairing Harm/Conflict
Formal Group Conferencing
Post class or school/
Suspension Re-entry

Responsive Circles

Proactive: Building strong community in the classroom and school
Responsive: Problem solving/ addressing issues
Proactively Responsive: Addressing problems or anticipating problems proactively
Academic: Academic content (prep, new, reflection)

Proactive Circles can be used for:
- Relationship building
- Establishing and reinforcing values and behavior expectations
- Goal setting
- Celebrations, recognition, achievements
- Dialogue around topics of interest
- Relevant content instruction
- Class progress (behavior and academics)
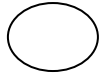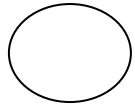
Circles
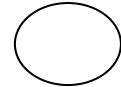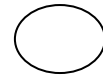
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- Everyone is respected and gets a chance to talk without interruption
- Participants explain themselves by telling their stories
- Everyone is equal- no person is more important than anyone else
- Emotional aspects of individual experiences are welcome

Values and Principles of the Circle and Community
Circles are a special process that needs to be presented as such. It's extremely important to set the tone and expectation of the circle to reflect the core values upon which it is based each and every time a circle forms. These values are what distinguish circle time from all other time. If used consistently, the values that govern the success of the circle, and foster the relationship building and skill development will eventually spread out of the circle into the greater community.

Typical Circle Structure:
1. Chairs are placed in a physical circle, enough chairs for all participating members with no additional furniture blocking any participants
2. The facilitator is called the "keeper", and leads the meeting (may possibly be lead by a student)
3. The keeper makes introductory comments, often including a discussion of the values that guide the success of the process, and may place the written values/positive agreements on the floor in the middle of the circle for all participants to see.
4. The keeper poses a question or topic (of which depends on the purpose of the circle)
5. A talking piece is introduced and passed, usually clockwise around the circle
6. The only person authorized to speak is the person holding the talking piece (one person at a time), participants may choose not to speak if they wish
7. When a person is finished speaking, they pass the talking piece onwards to the next person
8. The process of passing the talking piece around the circle may continue for a number of rounds. Since only one person speaks at a time, it's important to offer participant's a chance to reflect on what the others are saying in the circle.

<u>**Circle Elements:**</u> Regardless of the type and purpose of circle you are facilitating the format and stages of the circle remain consistent.

1. **Introducing the Purpose of Circle**
2. **Circle Opening**
3. **Introduce Guidelines / Determine Group Values / Introduce of Talking Piece**
4. **Check-In / Connection Round**
5. **Main Activity: Content Discussion Rounds**
   - **Making Agreements** *(* if a responsive circle)*
6. **Check out / Reflection**
7. **Closing**

1. <u>Circle Introduction:</u> Prior to moving into the circle, it is important to introduce the purpose of the circle to the participants so they know what to expect and understand the reason they will be spending time together in circle.

<u>Example of an introduction for a staff values setting circle:</u> *We are going to spend the next 40 min working together to establish (or reinforce) a foundation for a strong staff climate grounded in values and commitments. We will each have the opportunity to contribute a value of importance as well as create commitments to sustain a positive working environment for ourselves and our community. This will be something that we can continue to draw from throughout the year and use as a guide and reminder of how we want to be with one another.*

2. <u>Opening</u>

Purpose: The circle opening helps participants to know that they have now entered into circle space. It marks a distinction between being in circle and all other times of the day. The opening also helps to ground everyone, set a positive tone for participants to transition into the circle process.

<u>Examples of an opening:</u> poems, quotes, guided meditation or breathing exercise

3a. <u>Guidelines, Agreements and Values</u>

Circle Guidelines: To allow circle participants to identify values and agree upon shared guidelines for the circle. It's absolutely essential to convey the importance of, and hold participants accountable to the guidelines as they directly impact the success of the circle by clearly establishing the way of being in the circle. If the circle participants do not agree to honoring the circle guidelines it is not recommended to move forward with the circle.

Core Circle Guidelines:

- **Respect the talking piece:** everyone listens, everyone has a turn
- **Speak from the heart:** your truth, your perspectives, your experiences
- **Listen from the heart:** let go of stories that make it hard to hear each other
- **Trust that you will know what to say, no need to rehearse**
- **Say just enough:** without feeling rushed, be concise and considerate of the time of others.

Agreements: After reviewing the core circle guidelines, it is important to open it up to the circle participants to introduce any additional agreements they feel will assist them in establishing a safe and comfortable environment. Be sure to get consensus on the agreements if any are introduced.

Common additional agreements are:

- Right to pass
- What is said in the circle, stays in the circle (confidentiality)

When working with youth, remember that you are a mandated reporter, therefore its important to communicate the parameters around confidentiality prior to the start of the circle rounds.

Values and Commitments: Circle participants identify upon personal and shared group values of importance to them that they feel will contribute to the building of a safe circle environment. Note: The traditional way is to ask people to bring their "best selves" to the discussion. Values are a reminder for how to 'be' in circle. Respect, honesty, trustworthiness, courage, are examples of such values.
Suggested language: *Before any circle begins it's critical to review the circle guidelines to express the importance of the circle being a safe space to share. The circle is a container that can hold as much or as little as people feel comfortable sharing. The guidelines and our shared values will help to ensure a safe space for connection and learning.*

3b. Introduction of the Talking Piece and Center Piece
Purpose: The talking piece helps to create an equitable environment for sharing. Everyone gets a chance to speak or have the right to pass. For those that do not have the talking piece, it is an opportunity to actively listen to the speaker.
Sometimes the talking piece may be suspended to encourage spontaneous sharing or brainstorming.
Example of a talking piece: Sacred or meaningful objects that community members can relate to or something that has meaning to someone or is relevant to the topic to be discussed. (Stuffed animal, rock, stone, etc.)
Suggested language: *The person holding the talking piece is the only one who may speak. Everyone else in the circle is actively listening and trying not to spend time thinking about what they are going to say.*
The talking piece usually moves in a circular format (clockwise or counter clockwise). Every person has the opportunity to speak and the right to pass if they choose. Even though someone may pass, they must still be present and participate.

4. Check-In/ Connection Round
Purpose: The connection and check-in round helps to break the ice for participants and allows them to ease into the main content rounds. This gives participants an opportunity to connect with one another prior to moving into the deeper content rounds.
A check-in round invites participants to talk about how they are feeling on physical, mental or emotional level in that moment.
Example check-in questions: Name one word describing how you are feeling? If you could be a weather pattern, what pattern would describe how you are feeling right now (today)?

5. Main Activity: Content Discussion Rounds
Purpose: The main content circle rounds are designed to reflect the purpose and intention of the circle. The prompts take the participants on a journey of exploration, sharing, and reflection on a particular topic. The purpose of the circle may range from community building to addressing issues that impact the community.
A good prompting question for a circle will allow people to speak from a personal perspective about something that relates to the group. After asking a question that allows people to tell a story, you may ask a question that encourages people to speak about the issue or reason they were brought into the circle today (community building, celebration, general check in, current event etc.)

6. <u>Check out / Reflection</u>

Purpose: This round gives participants an opportunity to reflect on their experience in the circle and share how they are feeling in that moment, or what they are taking with them as a result of the circle. This is also a good time to ask participants to reflect on how well they honored the circle guidelines, agreements and community values reinforcing the importance of them. It is also recommended to ask them if there are any areas in need of improvement for next time.

<u>Suggested check out language</u>: *Share one word about how you are feeling at the end of our circle, what you most appreciated about the process, or one thing you will be taking with you after our circle today.*

7. <u>Closing</u>

Purpose: To close the circle with intention and ease participants out of being in circle space. Like the opening symbolized the entering into the circle, the closing communicates that the circle has now come to an end.

Examples of a closing: poems, quotes, do a guided meditation or breathing exercise, etc..

You may suggest that everyone stand shoulder to shoulder and take three deep breathes together. You may also read a short poem or quote and with an expression of gratitude to all present for their participation.

Repairing Harm & Restoring Community

Restorative Behavior Response

Building a solid foundation of proactive, prevention-based practices support the development of a school culture that will meet the social-emotional and behavioral needs of the majority of the members of the school community. It is to be expected though that some students may require additional behavior supports and behavior intervention at times. Therefore, it's critical to have a clear and consistent system in place to effectively respond to harm, conflict, and behavioral challenges as they occur both inside and outside the classroom.

> **PROACTIVE PRACTICES & PREVENTION IS THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE AGAINST BEHAVIOR CHALLENGES**.

Restorative Justice Lens:
Restorative schools view behavior infractions through the lens of restorative justice philosophy. One that brings all parties affected by an incident together in an inclusive process to discover the root cause/s of challenging behavior and explore resulting impact/harms with the intention of healing, repairing relationships and restoring the community.

This approach understands behavior infractions as an offense against individuals and the greater community, and places greater emphasis on the harm/s caused and reparation of relationships/community above the need for assigning blame and dispensing punishment.
Regardless of the severity of a particular behavior infraction, students are still treated with respect and dignity.

1. **Primary recognition**: Effective behavior practices and responses are deeply interconnected to the classroom and school-wide values and expectations, and other proactive practices aimed towards building strong relationships and positive school culture. Having a solid foundation of shared values and behavioral expectations establishes a sense of obligation and accountability to one another as equally participating and valuable members of the school community.

2. De-escalation of all individuals involved in an incident is of primary concern.

3. Application of the underlying premise of a restorative approach: People are happier, more cooperative, more productive and more likely to make positive changes when those in positions of authority do things **with** them rather than **to** them or **for** them.

4. According to the need and severity of the harm, the appropriate response is selected along a continuum of informal to formal restorative justice processes and practices.

5. Misbehavior is recognized as an expression of an underlying need and/or offense against people and relationships, not just rule-breaking.

6. The causes of misbehavior may be multiple and need to be addressed by all members of the school community equally asserting high levels of behavior expectations and support.

7. Disciplinary decision-making involves an exploration and understanding of the level of complexity of the harm by:
   a) Providing equal opportunities for student, family, and school staff voice.
   b) Bringing all individuals affected by an incident together for greater understanding of:
      - Motivation and root cause/s of behavior/s
      - Personal experiences prior to, during, and after the incident

- Responsibility taking
- Resulting impact, and
- Exploration of needs (of primary and equal concern are the needs of those who have been harmed as well as the person who caused the harm).

8. All those affected by a particular incident collectively identify and determine logical consequences that address individual needs and aim make things as right as possible moving forward to repair relationships, restore the social culture.

A restorative discipline approach places greater emphasis on the harm/s caused and reparation of relationships/community above the need for assigning blame and dispensing punishment. **Moving away from a punitive approach does not mean that there are no consequences for harmful behavior/s.**

Natural, Logical and Punitive Consequences:

It is critical that all behavior infractions are taken seriously and are tended to, especially when the behaviors significantly impact or harm other members of the school community. A restorative approach to discipline draws attention to the **natural consequences** (unplanned results) of an action, (harms/impact), and are accompanied by **logical consequences** that do not naturally occur as a result of the behavior, but are intentionally planned to ensure responsibility taking and accountability.
Logical consequences teach listening, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills, and need to be related to the incident, respectful, and reasonable (Nelson, 1985).

Punitive Consequences are defined as something that is imposed on someone, generally with the intention of creating a sense of suffering through a loss of something desirable. Punishment allows for the person to remain a passive recipient without taking responsibility for their actions while logical consequences require students to become active participants by recognizing the harm/impact their behavior resulted in and taking responsibility to make things as right as possible.

When facilitated with integrity, participating in a restorative dialogue meeting, or a repairing harm circle/conference may be a highly challenging experience for the responsible individual/s. It is not challenging because the student is being lectured or told what they did was wrong but rather because they are included in a process of accountability for their actions, sitting in circle with those they potentially harmed, as well as in many cases their own family members who they are closest to and respect the most.

Voluntary Participation and Pre-Meeting/ Conferencing:

In most cases, the success of restorative dialogue meetings and circles largely depends on whether the student who caused harm accepts responsibility. Therefore, it is important to assess whether the student is taking responsibility for their behavior prior to bringing individuals together for a restorative process by pre-conferencing with all individuals ahead of time.
While restorative schools work towards implementing restorative processes as the foundational approach for responding to harmful behaviors, it is crucial to note that they need to be voluntary in nature for all participants.

Restorative Dialogue
Using the Restorative Questions

A common, consistent language among all members of the school community that reinforces the core values of building and sustaining trusting relationships, reinforcing high expectations, taking responsibility and opportunities for accountability.

Restorative conversations follow a set of questions that explores:
- o The quality of **relationships**.
- o Those *impacted* or *affected* by conflict or wrongdoing.
- o Potential resulting *harms*.
- o The *needs* of those involved.
- o Problem solving solutions to *repair the harm, restore the community, and prevent future harm*.

Restorative Questions:
1. What happened and what were you thinking at the time?
2. What have you thought about since?
3. Who has been affected and how?
4. What about this is/has been hardest for you?
5. What needs to happen to make things as right as possible moving forward?

These questions lay the foundation for and act as the building blocks for all forms of restorative processes that seek to discover the root cause/s of challenging behavior, determine impact, repair harm, and ultimately restore damaged relationships.

Restorative questions:
- Are non-blaming and open-ended
- Allow for storytelling and attentive listening
- Separate people's behavior from their intrinsic worth as a person
- Allow for all people involved to identify their thoughts and feelings associated with particular actions
- Provide a forum for meaningful expression of emotions (affective language)
- Focus on impact and how others (people and community) were affected by the action/s
- Are an inclusive and collaborative approach to problem solving, emphasizing finding solutions rather than assigning blame
- Holds people accountable
- Requires people to take responsibility for their actions

- Attends to the needs of those harmed
- Resolves underlying issues that act as the root cause of challenging behavior.

Conflict is natural and likely to occur when people with diverse opinions and experiences unite. Restorative practices views conflict as an opportunity to foster meaningful learning experiences and strengthen relationships.

Application of Restorative Questions:

With slight modification, the restorative questions can be used in a wide variety of situations and settings, ranging from brief impromptu hallway interventions to classroom management strategies to formal conferences.

Number of Participants: As little as two, or as many as an entire class are able to participate in restorative interventions.

Using the restorative questions can be an effective approach to resolving conflict/problem behavior in the following example situations.

Inside the classroom		Outside the classroom	
Patterns of disruptive student behavior	Tardies/chronic absenteeism	Hallway skirmish	School yard fight
Bullying	Interpersonal conflict	Office referral intervention	Student conflict
Student-teacher conflict	Theft	Substance use	Staff conflict

Restorative Question Reflection

Name:
Date:

1. **What happened?** _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. **What were you thinking at the time?** _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. **What have you thought about since?** _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. **Who has been affected by what happened and how?** _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

5. **What about this has been hardest for you?** _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. **What needs to happen to make things as right as possible?** _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

Elementary School Restorative Question Reflection

Name: _____

Date: _____

What happened? _____

_____

_____

_____

I feel _____

_____

_____

Who was hurt? _____

_____

_____

How? _____

_____

_____

What is the hardest part for you?_____

_____

_____

What needs to happen now to make things right? _____

_____

_____

Additional Resources

For additional information on RP training and implementation support visit Center for Relational Practices: RelationalPractices.com & San Francisco Unified School District Restorative Practices Website for additional information videos and resource materials, at: www.healthiersf.org/restorativepractices/

Restorative Practice in Schools: Resource List

Restorative Practice in Schools
Building and Restoring Respectful Relationships in Schools: A Guide to Restorative Practice (2009) Richard Hendry. Routledge, London ISBN-10: 0415544270.

Restorative Solutions: Making it Work (2008) Colin Newton and Helen Mahaffey. Inclusive Solutions UK Limited ISBN-10: 0954635140.

Restorative Practices in Classrooms: Rethinking Behaviour Management (2004) Margaret Thorsborne & David Vinegrad. Incentive Publishing, Milton Keynes. ISBN: 1904407056.

Just Schools: A Whole School Approach To Restorative Justice (2004) Belinda Hopkins. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. ISBN: 1843101327.

*The Little Book of Restorative Justice (*2002) Howard Zehr. Good Books. Intercourse PA. ISBN: 1561483761
"*The Restorative Classroom: Using Restorative Approaches to Foster Effective Learning*" (2011) Belinda Hopkins, Optimus Education, ISBN-10: 1906517290 ISBN-13: 978-1906517298.

Online Resources
Minnesota Department of Education, http://education.state.mn.us. Click on "Safe and Healthy Learners.

Discipline that Restores http://disciplinethatrestores.org/ is an activity of the Fresno Pacific University

Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies (*http://peace.fresno.edu/rjp/*) that explores restorative discipline in schools.

Center for Justice and Peacebuilding *www.emu.edu/cjp/* was established in 1994 at Eastern Mennonite University, and supports the personal and professional development of individuals as peace builders and strengthens the peace building capacities of the institutions they serve.

The Centre for Restorative Justice at Simon Fraser University, http://www.sfu.ca/cfrj/, has made significant contributions to the paradigm of restorative justice over the last decade.
Barron County (WI) Restorative Justice Programs, Inc. http://www.bcrjp.org/school_init.html, Click on 'Practices in School Communities."

Books
Circle in the Square: Building Community and Repairing Harm in Schools, Nancy Riestenberg, Living Justice Press, 2012; www.livingjusticepress.org.

Discipline that Restores, Ron & Roxanne Claassen, BookSurge Publishing, South Carolina, 2008; (http://disciplinethatrestores.org/) comes with a Book Study Guide. Contact Ron Claassen, Fresno Pacific University, Director, Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies, 559-453-3420, rlclaass@fresno.edu, www.peace.fresno.edu/.

Heart of Hope: a guide for using peacemaking circle to develop emotional literacy, promote healing & build healthy relationships Carolyn Boyes-Watson & Kay Pranis, Center for Restorative Justice, Suffolk University, 2010, http://www.suffolk.edu/college/1496.html.

International Institute on Restorative Practices (IIRP), *http://www.restorativepractices.org/* titles include: *Restorative Circles in Schools, The Restorative Practices Handbook, Beyond Zero Tolerance, Safer, Saner Schools* and *The Transformation of West Philadelphia High School.*

Just Schools: A whole school approach to restorative justice, Belinda Hopkins, Jessica Kingsley, Publishers, 2004, http://www.transformingconflict.org/resources.html.

Little Books of Restorative Justice and Peacemaking Series, Kay Pranis, Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, Judy H. Mullet, Howard Zehr and others Good Books, Intercourse, PA www.goodbks.com

Peacemaking Circles, From Crime to Community, Pranis, Stewart and Wedge, and *Peacemaking Circles and Urban Youth*, Watson, Living Justice Press, 2003; www.livingjusticepress.org

Re-engaging Disconnected Youth: transformative learning through restorative and social justice education, Amy Vatne Bintliff, Peter Lang Publishing; 2011. http://amyvatnebintliff.com/Amy_Vatne_Bintliff/Home.html

Restorative Justice Pocketbook: how to resolve disciplinary matters by enabling those involved to repair the harm done to people and relationships, by Thorsborne and Vinegrad www.teacherspocketbook.co.uk .

Restorative Practices in Schools: rethinking behavior management, and *Restorative Practices and Bullying: rethinking behavior management,* Thorsborne and Vinegrad, http://www.thorsborne.com.au/ click on "Resources, Training manuals."

Restoring Safe School Communities: a whole school response to bullying violence and alienation, Brenda Morrison, Federation Press, 2007, www.federationpress.com.au.

Taking Restorative Justice to Schools; A Doorway to Discipline, Jeanette Holtham (2010). http://www.amazon.com/Restorative-Justice-Schools-Doorway-Discipline/dp/0982270615 Youth Transformation Center *www.YouthTransformationCenter.org* 9979 Blackbird Circle, Highlands Ranch, CO 80130.

Touching Spirit Bear, (fiction) Ben Mikaelsen, 2002, http://www.benmikaelsen.com/index.html

Resource Training Content Packet prepared by:
Center for Relational Practices: RelationalPractices.com
Founder, Kerri Berkowitz: kerri@relationalpractices.com