



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR
RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Building Social Capital: Restorative Practices in UK School Communities

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Presentation to:

The Next Step: 'Developing Restorative Communities'
8th International Conference on Conferencing, Circles and other
Restorative Practices

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, USA. 18th to 20th October 2006



CONTEXT

- **What is teaching about today?**
- **What has changed in teaching over the last decade or so?**
- **Why are the services that educationalists provide very important to the public?**
- **What are the challenges of working in education?**
- **What do the challenging young people have most in common?**
- **What is going to make a difference in the lives of today's young people?**



REFLECTION

‘it helps now and then to step back and take the long view’

‘we can’t do everything and there is a sense of liberation in that’

‘we can do something and we need to do that well’

‘we plant the seed that one day will grow, we may never see the end result’

‘we provide the yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.’

**- Archbishop Oscar Romero,
Catholic priest murdered for his stand against injustice in Latin America.**



Deborah Stipek

“An era of high-stakes testing and accountability may be producing classroom conditions that undermine student learning. When teachers must focus their energies on preparing students for the test, they have less time to get to know students personally or make them feel valued, respected, and supported.”

Deborah Stipek, Educational Leadership, Sept 2006



AIM OF RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

The aim of restorative practices is to develop community and to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and building relationships.



BASIC TENETS OF RESTORATIVE PRACTICES:

“Harm and Relationships”





Restorative Practices –

allow the act (unacceptable behaviour) to be rejected, whilst acknowledging the intrinsic worth of the person and their potential contribution to society

**Rejects the ‘ACT not the ACTOR’
Separates the ‘DEED from the DOER’**

Braithwaite 1989

EXPLICIT PRACTICE

“It is important that students/ young people and their parents understand where ‘educationalists are coming from’, ‘what they are all about’? In other words, the rationale for practice; what is done formally or informally?”





EXPLICIT PRACTICE

“Many people struggle to explain the rationale behind their practice and most of us would struggle to give a clear, succinct statement.”

“In terms of building relationships, there are distinct advantages in ensuring that all practices are explicit?”

GROUP DISCUSSION

**How can educationalists
make their practice more
explicit ?**





RESEARCH

Stipek reviews research showing that strong teacher-student relationships are crucial to student academic achievement at all grade levels. Students need to know that teachers care. The research shows that caring teachers hold students to high expectations but also give them the support they need to reach those expectations.

Deborah Stipek



IIRP EXPLICIT FRAMEWORK

For Restorative Practice to be explicit, it must actively integrate:

- **The Social Discipline Window – working in the WITH box (High on both Control & Support)**
- **Fair Process – Engagement, Explanation and Expectation Clarity**
- **Restorative (Relational) Questions - & Language**
- **Free expression of all Emotions - Tomkins Blueprint**



Department for Education and Skills

Primary
National Strategy


Guidance →
Curriculum and Standards

**Excellence and Enjoyment:
social and emotional aspects
of learning**

Guidance

Headteachers, teachers
and practitioners in
primary schools, special
middle schools, special
schools and Foundation
Stage settings

Status: Recommended
Date of issue: 05-2005
Ref: DfES 1378-2005 G



department for
education and skills
creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence

SureStart


Excellence and Enjoyment

Every Child Matters

Higher Standards, Better Schools for All

HM Government

**Higher Standards,
Better Schools For All**
More choice for parents and pupils



department for
education and skills
creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence



HOW DO WE DO IT ?

Key Stages

Training

**Workbooks
and DVDs**

**Support and
Direct
Services**

Flexibility



A Restorative Story



Mary Finds Some Money

Adult Guidance



www.irp.org/uk

Building Relationships and Dealing with Conflict



Guidance Booklet

To be used in conjunction with
Student Workbooks for
Young People
Ages 11-18

Read the text under the next three over

One rock hit a car,
shattering the
windscreen.



Nobody was hurt, but
the passengers were
very upset.

The three
students got
frightened and
ran away.





THE EVIDENCE

Bessels Leigh School Oxfordshire, UK

**Non-maintained
residential school
for boys, 11 to 16, who
have social,
emotional and
behavioural
difficulties.**





BEHAVIOUR

Pre 2000

Traditionally.....

- the pupils were at the milder end of the behavioural spectrum
- many were rather introvert
- a number of school phobics
- academically able and far more focused
- stable and strong staff group.



BEHAVIOUR

Post 2000

- type and degree of behaviour more problematic
- emotional issues far more significant
- pupils are often older when referred (inclusion, local government finances etc.)
- high level of aggression and violence evident prior to placement.



IMPLICATIONS

- pupils more ready to challenge the staff
 - verbally
 - physically
- fewer staff able to cope with the challenging behaviour
- increased levels of stress for staff
- increased staff turnover rates
- huge increase in the amount of damage
- adverse effect on the quality of teaching and learning.

Training of Teaching and Care Staff 2004 – 2005 ...



ACHIEVEMENTS

- 80% reduction of problems at 11pm (onwards) in the residential units
- Significant reduction in the levels of damage
- Improved attendance at lessons
- Circle meetings at the end of the school day
 - 100% attendance
 - Teaching staff staying at school to attend



ACHIEVEMENTS

- Pupils via Circle Meetings and the School Council are creating their own 'norms'
- Most pupils participate in facilitating the circle meetings
- Staff Views
 - January 2006 changed the school timetable to facilitate the introduction of 'daily check-in' sessions.
 - The meetings have brought different departments of the establishment together
 - The staff circle meetings are proving both popular and effective, particularly in terms of reducing staff friction



ACHIEVEMENTS

Recorded Behavioural Incidents	Negative Incidents	Negative Incidents with Physical	Damage
September 2004	219	12	17
July 2005	362	33	10
September 2005	164	9	3



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