

Building a Restorative Practice Curriculum in Middle and High Schools in the U.S.

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Why do we need to have a Restorative Practice curriculum?

❖ **Gaining funding for the delivery of a restorative practice program is sometimes dependent upon producing a curriculum to show a funder exactly what we will be doing in schools.**

❖ This presentation is another effort at producing a curriculum for middle and high schools based upon the following resources:

❖ Restorative Practices Development Team. (2003). Restorative Practices for Schools. School of Education. The University of Waikato, Hamilton New Zealand.

❖ Winslade, J., & Monk, G. (2008). Practicing Narrative Mediation. Loosening the Grip of Conflict. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.

❖ Claassen, R., & Claassen, R. (2008). Discipline that Restores: Book Study Guide. Center for Peace Making & Conflict Studies. Fresno.

❖ Claassen, R., & Claassen, R. (2008). Discipline that Restores. Strategies to Create Respect, Cooperation, And Responsibility in the Classroom. South Carolina: BookSurge Publishing

❖ Hendry, R. (2009). Building and Restoring Respectful Relationships in Schools. A Guide to Restorative Practice. London: Routledge.

❖ Hopkins, B. (2004). Just Schools. A Whole School Approach to Restorative Justice. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

❖ Costello, B., Wachtel, J., & Wachtel, T. (2010). Restorative Circles in Schools. Building Community and Enhancing Learning. Bethlehem, PA: International Institute for Restorative Practices.

❖ Costello, B., Wachtel, J., & Wachtel, T. (2009). The Restorative Practices Handbook. Bethlehem, PA: International Institute for Restorative Practices.

What is a curriculum exactly?

- A stated underlying philosophy
- Assumptions
- Goals
- Objectives
- Strategies
- Instructional materials
- Time frame
- Accountability

Restorative Practice Philosophy

- ❖ Restorative practice is guided by an ethic of care and justice.
- ❖ Restorative practice is an approach to build community, promote a culture of care, foster a sense of belonging, and invite responsibility and provide accountability, reparation, reconciliation and reintegration where harm has occurred.

Other Philosophical Issues

- ❖ A central premise of *Restorative Practice* is that people are happier, more cooperative, productive, more likely to make positive changes in their behavior and improve academic learning when those in positions of authority do things *with* them, rather than *to* them or *for* them (IIRP).
- ❖ A punitive and authoritarian stance or a permissive and paternalistic stance is not as effective as a restorative and participatory one. Restorative practice builds social capital and achieves social discipline through participatory learning and decision-making (IIRP).
- ❖ Restorative practice seeks to transform the relational culture of schools, by engaging the school community in group decision-making, cooperative learning, community involvement, and by paying attention to the stories of resilience in the face of challenges.
- ❖ Academic success is dependent upon fostering the social and emotional wellbeing of the school community and when this wellbeing is threatened, efforts must be made to address these threats and restore the relational climate and make things right again.

Restorative Practice Assumptions

- ❖ Based upon mutual respect and appreciation
- ❖ Belief in people's ability to resolve their own problems
- ❖ Acceptance of diversity
- ❖ An inclusive approach to problem solving so that feelings, needs and views of everyone in the community are taken into account
- ❖ There is a congruence of beliefs and actions - walking the talk

Goals of Restorative Practice in the Schools

- ❖ The goals are to:
 - ❖ Make the schools and the community safer.
 - ❖ Raise morale and build connection, promote respect among the school community and foster a sense of belonging for students and staff in the school.
 - ❖ Raise attendance, reduce behavioral referrals, and dramatically diminish suspensions and expulsions.
 - ❖ Eliminate bullying and all kinds of violence in the school.
 - ❖ Reduce staff turnover and burnout.
 - ❖ Raise academic performance.

Restorative Practice Curriculum Domains

*Adaption of Lesley Oliver's
Model on a Relational
Foundation of School Culture,
November 2006*

Restorative Conferences *Formal Conferencing*

Family-Group Conferences
Victim-Offender
Conferences
Adult Mediation
The Challenge
8 hour workshop

Restorative Interviewing *Responding circles*

Having Difficult Conversations
Problem-Solving Circles
Restorative Debriefing after Critical Incidents
Narrative Mediation

Implementing School-wide Programs addressing the Social-emotional Climate

Conflict Resolution
School-wide Peer Mediator Mentor Teams
Buddying/Mentoring
Preferred Identity Development & Resiliency Discovery
Bully Proof Program
Teen Dating Violence

Capacity-Building for Restorative Development *Affective statements, Affective Questions Impromptu Conferences & Circles*

Workshops for: Active Non-Judgmental Listening, Understanding Anger
Cultural Responsiveness, Emotional literacy and Intelligence, Empathy & Rapport
Challenging Oppression & Prejudice, Social Awareness and
Social-Emotional Skill, Tomkin's Shame and Pride
Being a Listening School
Community-Building Circles for Staff, Students, School Council
8 hour workshop

Achieving Systemic and Social Policy Change as a Restorative School and Community

Whole Community & Whole School Engagement
Establishing a Restorative Relational Foundation and Developing a Clear Vision
Whole School Development of Relationship Management Policy Social Discipline Window
8 hour workshop

Restorative Practice Curriculum Domain Objectives

- ❖ Achieving Systemic and Social Policy Change as a Restorative School and Community
- ❖ Capacity-Building for Restorative Development
- ❖ Implementing School-wide Programs
- ❖ Restorative Interviewing
- ❖ Restorative Conferences

- ❖ **Goals: Achieving Systemic and Social Policy Change as a Restorative School and Community** - To create an environment where the school values of belongingness, connectedness and a respectful code of conduct are shared among all members of the community.

- ❖ **Objectives:**

Introducing Restorative Practice to the School and the Community

- ❖ Participants agree to model in the training year:

- Acquire approaches to discipline that restores the strained relationships rather than restoring a punitive authority.
- Be exposed to school strategies that celebrate on appreciation, alternative possibilities and hope that encourage independent, deficit and failure.
- Strive to shows excellence in demonstrating respect and honoring the dignity of the person.
- Celebrates diversity of the school members and apply strategies where every voice is heard in the school rather than just the loudest or the weightiest.
- Appreciate the importance of showing hospitality to parents, families and visitors to the school.

- ❖ **Strategies:**

- Use Belinda Hopkin's (2004) Strategies for culture change in the school.
- The school community have ideas about what they need from one another to get their needs met.

- ❖ **Exercise:**

- ❖ 1. What do you need from others to work at your best. Make a list.

- ❖ 2. Then select the 3 most important things I need without which I could not function effectively. Use color dots to show choices.

- ❖ 3. Use the circle for disclosing needs:

- ❖ I don't feel respected when...

- ❖ I do feel respected when...

- ❖ This sharing provides information about practical measures that can be taken to identify values creates a template for a set of guidelines for behavior

- ❖ and provides a basis for rule making.

- ❖ Need to identify what you are here for and what kind of school you want. A question to ask: What do you want young people to leave this school with in terms of skills, values and attitudes?

❖ **Introducing Restorative Practice to the School and the Community**

- Creating a template for change Belinda Hopkins (2004):
- ❖ What happens in the classroom or faculty lounge on a really bad day? Work in pairs. Each individual draws a iceberg diagram. Iceberg and water line. Above the waterline list what you would see on a really bad day ... the surface traits are listed above water. Share results with your partner. Now ask what do you see in the school or what you would like to see happen on a really good day?
- Facilitator asks the question about what is going on below the surface that causes these behaviors to be taking place. Again individuals complete the exercise in pairs. Facilitator writes underneath the iceberg - Lack of connectedness, lack of communication, lack of confidence and belief that things could be otherwise, lack of an appreciation of self and others, lack of cooperation and respect. Now go to the good day iceberg. What would you name is going on here? Elicited from the group - good quality communication, cooperation, self and other appreciation, creation of opportunities, people can have a say in what they want to achieve and have flexibility to pursue there plans and dreams, create opportunities for people to take responsibility for their actions, share the responsibility for deciding how to resolve problems and repair harm.
- Identify all of the people in the school community - from superintendent to janitor, and cafeteria staff, gardener. Put on one of the constituents hats and see the world as they might see it. Mix up the people into different groups and invite them to talk then talk to one another about as many negative elements about how their role would be negatively affected they may see in the many different aspects about restorative practice. These comments are recorded on a chart.
- Then the facilitator waves a metaphorical wand over the entire group and they have had a change of heart. They are asked to see how their characters might benefit from this new initiative. These viewpoints are listed on a chart. Usually this list of issues identified by the participants addresses the negative comments . The mood changes and there can be an air of excitement about what is possible. This exercise has the potential to create a foundation upon which the program is constructed.
- The workshop ends with an answer to the question in the circle round, “Name one thought or new idea that I will take away with me today.”

Introducing Restorative Practice to the School and the Community

❖ Further Activities

- Explore the school communities current views about the way to address problematic behavior and discipline issues in the school.
- Following Hopkin's exercises complete the following:
 - ❖ 1. What are the kinds of serious behaviors you are addressing in the school?
 - ❖ 2. What meanings are there attached to these behaviors? Often misbehavior is a sign of what Marshall Rosenberg describes as a "tragic expression of an unmet need?"(Rosenberg, 1999).
 - ❖ 3. What are my current responses or the schools responses to these difficult behaviors?
 - ❖ 4. What are the ideal outcomes that I am hoping for based upon my response?
 - ❖ Have the answers to these questions written up on separate sheets - Compare questions 2 and 3. Notice the linkages. This can be done in pairs.
 - ❖ Compare the links between questions 3 and 4. What do you notice?
 - ❖ 5. Now answer this question: What are the underlying beliefs or assumptions behind our current responses to misbehavior?
 - ❖ Use the assessment checklist on page 157. Belinda Hopkins (2004).
 - ❖ The school has to work out the extent to which it is capable of being restorative.
- **Voluntariness:** Strategies have to be worked out for the following scenarios: What strategies can be worked out when the person who has done the harming is unwilling to meet with those they have harmed and affected? What strategies can be used when the person who has been harmed does not wish to meet with the person who has harmed them? What strategies should be used when everyone wishes to meet but there is no time to arrange the meeting? Are there any behaviors that do not merit a restorative response? What happens when the school is using a two-pronged approach when those who agree to use a restorative approach and those that do not use a punitive approach?
- ❖ **Time frame:** One Day training (6 hours) or Two half-days (3 hours per session)
- ❖ **Instructional materials:** Copies of the assessment checklist Hopkins (2004). P. 157, 120 sheets of blank paper
- ❖ **Accountability:** After 3 months completion of training, Eighty percent of classroom environments use restorative approaches to discipline rather than resorting to a punitive authority. Eighty percent of classrooms show excellence in demonstrating respect and honoring the dignity of the person and showing hospitality to parents, families and visitors to the school.

- Conduct playful circle rounds to engender trust and connection with class members.
- Apply circle discussions to address classroom routines and classroom guidelines.

Facilitating Circles

- Use circles to address academic content and to build on personal issues arising in the classroom.
- Address specific problem issues arising within the class context.

❖ Strategies:

- Teach guiding principles for circles: Should be fun, Build trust and a Sense of belonging.
- Explain that circles are the heart of the restorative process for everyone to be involved and have an equal opportunity to speak.
- Explain emphasis on how one does something rather than what one does.
- Facilitators job is to ensure that the circle runs smoothly and that the guidelines are respected.
- Everyone waits their turn and does not cut in whilst someone is speaking or before their turn
- Chairs same height, airy room, everybody invited to take responsibility for the running of the circle.
- If somebody cannot respect the rules call a stop to the group and express the impact the person is having on the facilitator can offer an alternative to the person if it is proving challenging for them.
- Everyone has a right to pass
- Facilitator works at saying as little as possible.
- Process built on mutual respect & have a right to feel whatever they feel.
- Everyone has a right to a different point of view.

What is a Restorative School?

- ❖ A restorative school...
- ❖ replaces judgment, deficit and failure with appreciation, alternative possibilities, and hope.
- ❖ addresses discipline by restoring the strained relationships rather than restoring a punitive authority
- ❖ promotes respect for the whole school community - teachers, students and their families
- ❖ listens to every voice rather than just the loudest or the weightest
- ❖ shows excellence in demonstrating respect and honoring the dignity of the person
- ❖ extends hospitality to parents, families and visitors
- ❖ celebrates diversity of the school members
- ❖ shows it has a visible community of care
- ❖ promotes high school achievement
- ❖ remembers what it has been created for

Other Assumptions

- ❖ Schools are places where people should care about each other, experience good relationships, mutual respect and a sense of belonging.
- ❖ Successful teaching and learning are dependent upon good relationships and mutual respect.
- ❖ People have or can acquire the necessary capacities, strengths and wisdom to take charge of and transform their own lives.
- ❖ We can expect that different people will see the world differently and thus experience different realities.
- ❖ Practitioners can greatly assist a restorative process if they believe in a young person's ability to show resilience and improve the situation for themselves.
- ❖ People who have been victimized benefit from to express their thoughts and feelings and overall impact about what has happened to them.
- ❖ People who have been victimized benefit from being able to express what needs to happen to make things right and receive an apology.
- ❖ People who have harmed others benefit from acknowledging their responsibility in doing harm and fully facing up to hearing and acknowledging the harm caused to their victims.
- ❖ When people have hurt others, they benefit from an opportunity to show themselves in a better light by answering questions, apologizing, and doing things to make amends.
- ❖ Victims and offenders benefit from being involved in making decisions about the event and making progress.

More Assumptions

- ❖ Traditional punitive measures are best set aside if there are alternative means to address the problem situation.
- ❖ The ability of the family should be harnessed wherever possible to be involved in addressing the offending.
- ❖ Measures taken to respond to harmful events should ultimately lead to the strengthening of young persons and their family group.
- ❖ Young people and the community benefit when young people are kept connected with the community as long as public safety is not threatened.
- ❖ Due regard should be given to those who have been harmed and ensure their interests are addressed.
- ❖ Any sanctions imposed upon young people to help shape development should take the least restrictive form.