

Restorative Justice

School Referrals

Your Assigned Restorative Justice Region Lead Practitioner:

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For the most efficient response, another practitioner may respond if your assigned staff is engaged at another school.

How to Refer

- ⇒ Fill out the Restorative Justice Circle & Conference Referral form. [Click Here](#)
- ⇒ Email the form to your designated RJ Region Lead Practitioner.
- ⇒ Your RJ Region Lead Practitioner will contact you to get detailed information regarding the incident & the student(s) involved.
- ⇒ He/She will meet with the students referred to determine the best course of action.
- ⇒ He/She will also meet with those affected by an incident or conflict.

Restorative Interventions may include:

- ⇒ **Restorative Justice Circle**
A Restorative Justice Circle may be used for minor conflict situations, escalating conflict, and when more serious harm has occurred such as violations of the SR&R (see criteria for referral).
- ⇒ **Preventative Circle**
A Preventative Circle may be used for Community/Relationship building, as well as minor and escalating conflict.

Follow-up

- ⇒ Upon completion of the Restorative Justice process, all participants, as well as the referral source, will receive a copy of the written Circle Agreement, if generated. In addition, the referral source will receive a copy of the Consent to Participate/Confidentiality Agreement.
- ⇒ If it is determined that Restorative Justice is not an appropriate intervention, the Restorative Justice Practitioner will send a report to the referral source and may suggest a referral to the clinical team or other resource.

Through the **Restorative Justice Process**, all participants meet in a confidential facilitated circle process to:

- ⇒ Discuss the incident.
- ⇒ Understand who has been affected and how.
- ⇒ Create a plan for making things right and moving forward in a positive way.

Criteria for Referral to a Restorative Justice Process

This information is intended to guide administrators in making decisions about appropriate referrals to a Restorative Justice (RJ) process. Once a referral is made, it is the responsibility of the Restorative Justice Specialist team to make the final assessment of case suitability.

Participating in a Restorative Justice process is voluntary for all parties.

The offending student(s) must admit involvement in the incident.

There are differing degrees of responsibility in an incident of wrongdoing; however, the student(s) must admit to being involved in the incident.

There should be clear evidence to support that wrongdoing has occurred.

- The process is not meant to be used as an investigative method for determining guilt.
- If the offending student(s) and those harmed by the wrongdoing agree that there has been a violation and harm has been done, but they can't determine or won't acknowledge who is responsible for what, a conference can help sort out specific acts and responsibility for those actions – but the offending student(s) referred for the process must admit to being involved in the wrongdoing.

Everyone should be considered for a referral to a Restorative Justice process regardless of social circumstances or disadvantage of any nature.

- Negative attitude, lack of remorse, adverse family situations, special needs, or social issues should not deny any student the opportunity to participate in an RJ process. However, this process maintains a clear focus on the event or episode of wrongdoing and is not intended to provide solutions to complex social or behavioral issues.
- Students who receive services from a school social worker, school psychologist, or medical professional always have the option to include that person or persons with them in the RJ process as supporters.

Prior offenses should not preclude a student from being referred to a Restorative Justice process.

Often the student(s) have not understood the impact of his or her actions. He or she can benefit from the process even if a prior history of wrongdoing is evident.

All incidents of wrongdoing and violations of the FCPS Student Rights and Responsibilities document can be referred to a Restorative Justice process, and in addition, if necessary, to other consequences where mandated.

In a restorative justice process everyone adversely affected by the wrongdoing is a harmed person. This includes the student's family as well as the students themselves.

Referrals can be made at all stages of the disciplinary process and for almost every incident of wrongdoing, regardless of the seriousness of the offense.

- Referral can be made as a diversion from the traditional disciplinary process for appropriate situations.
- Restorative justice can be utilized in combination with other discipline actions such as: one day suspension and referral to RJ, as opposed to 3-10 day suspension. This option works well for fighting and verbal altercations when both students admit involvement.
- A restorative justice process can be initiated for re-entry back into the classroom or school after a disciplinary action has been completed.
- A referral to a restorative justice process should not be used as an additional punishment or sanction for the offending student.