INTRODUCTION TO RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

LEVEL 1

Restorative Language and Affective Statements Proactive Circles	◆	Affective Questions	◆	Small Impromptu Circles Restorative Chats	◆	**LEVEL 2** Responsive Circles Peer Mediation	◆	Formal Conference
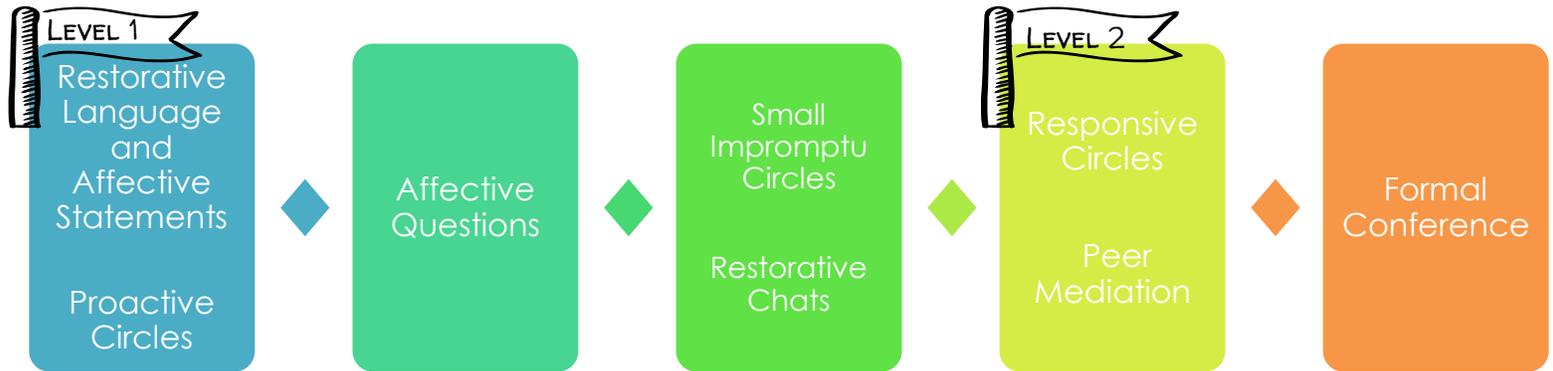
CONTINUUM OF RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

WHY RESTORATIVE PRACTICES?

- ✗ Blame, shame, punishment, and exclusion are not working for our youth, our teachers or our communities.
- ✗ Pushing youth out of our spaces and communities is the opposite of what they need.
- ✗ Misbehavior is an opportunity to learn needed skills that we aren't seizing enough!
- ✗ Restorative practices are effective at addressing the disproportionality of discipline on students of color.
- ✗ Restorative practices give us new tools replace outdated and ineffective methods of punishment and suspension.

CHECKLIST TO EVALUATE IF YOUR APPROACH IS RESTORATIVE...

- ✓ Kindness matters: When it doubt, use the golden rule. Build those relationships so they can withstand conflict!
- ✓ Open questions: always ask open questions that require an answer rather than a question where you only need to answer with a yes or no.
- ✓ Fair: - Ask both parties the same questions giving every one the opportunity to speak. i.e. what happened? What happened next? What could you have done differently?
- ✓ Respectful: restorative language is respectful to all parties.
- ✓ Non-judgmental questions: remember not to prejudge the outcome of any conversation before they happen.
- ✓ Inquiring: never assume you know what has happened

                                        -Modified from Restorative Justice Schools 4 UK

Restorative Practices 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.

1. Acknowledges that relationships are central to building community.

- Restorative practices seek to strengthen relationships and build community by creating a caring school climate.
- Every student, teacher, administrator, staff member, and parent/guardian is a valued member of the school community.
- Students should be involved in a process of naming the values and principles to live by within their school community.

2. Builds systems that address misbehavior and harm in a way that strengthens relationships.

- Schools establish policies to provide a safe place for learning. Real safety however comes from fostering and maintaining caring relationships.
- Policies should reflect the values and principles agreed to by the school community.
- Policies need to address the root causes of discipline problems rather than only the symptoms. The causes of misbehavior may be multiple and each should be addressed.

3. Focuses on the harm done rather than only on rule-breaking.

- Misbehavior is an offense against people and relationships, not just rule-breaking.
- The solution to the offense needs to involve all of those harmed by the misbehavior.
- The person 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.
- Much misbehavior arises out of attempts to address a perceived injustice. Those who are victimized also feel they have been treated unjustly. Discipline processes must leave room for addressing these perceptions.

4. Gives voice to the person harmed.

- The immediate safety concerns of the person harmed are primary.
- Those harmed must be given an opportunity to have a voice in the resolution of the harm.

5. Engages in collaborative problem solving.

- All of us act to satisfy our human needs (for belonging, freedom, power, and fun). Students choose behaviors to meet these underlying needs.
- Family, students, & communities help identify problems and solutions that meet needs.
- Misbehavior can become a teachable moment if everyone is involved.

6. Empowers change and growth.

- In order for students to change and grow, we must help them identify their needs and assist them in finding alternative, life giving ways of meeting those needs.
- Interpersonal conflict is a part of living in relationship with others.
- Conflict presents opportunity for change if the process includes listening, reflecting, share problem-solving, trust, and accountability which support commitments to relationship building.

7. Enhances Responsibility.

- Real responsibility requires one to understand the impact of her or his actions on others, along with an attempt to acknowledge and put things right when that impact is negative.
- Consequences should be evaluated based on whether they are reasonable, related to the offense, restorative, and respectful.
- Students should continually be invited to become responsible and cooperative.
- 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.

Modified from San Francisco Unified School District Restorative Practices Whole-School Implementation Guide

Traditional Approach	Restorative Approach
Focus is in the past	Focus in past, present & future
Preoccupation with blame	Emphasis on resulting harm and learning from the wrongdoing
Deterrence and learning linked to punishment	Deterrence linked to relationships and personal accountability. Learning comes from understanding.
One size fits all approach	Outcome and consequences determined by circumstances
Rules and intent outweigh whether outcome is positive or negative	Focus is on repairing harm and working toward positive outcome.
Justice is directed at the offender. The victim is ignored.	Offender, victim, and community all have direct roles in the process.
Youth often focus on how "unfair" it feels	Youth are more likely to take ownership because it feels more just
Creates division	Brings people together
Misbehavior defined as breaking school rules or letting the school down.	Misbehavior defined as harm (emotional/mental/physical) done to one person/group by another.
Focus is on what happened and establishing blame or guilt.	Focus on problem-solving by expressing feelings and needs and exploring how to address problems in the future.
Adversarial relationship and process. Includes an authority figure with the power to decide on penalty, in conflict with wrongdoer.	Dialogue and negotiation, with everyone involved in the communication and cooperation with each other.
Imposition of pain or unpleasantness to punish and deter/prevent.	Restitution as a means of restoring both parties, the goal being reconciliation and acknowledging responsibility for choices
Attention to rules and adherence to due process.	Attention to relationships and achievement of a mutually desired outcome.
Conflict/wrongdoing represented as impersonal and abstract; individual versus school.	Conflict/wrongdoing recognized as interpersonal conflict with opportunity for learning
One social injury compounded by another.	Focus on repair of social injury/damage.
School community as spectators, represented by a member of staff dealing with the situation; those directly affected uninvolved and powerless.	School community involved in facilitating restoration; those affected taken into consideration; empowerment.
Accountability defined in terms of receiving punishment	Accountability defined as understanding impact of actions, taking responsibility of choices, and suggesting ways to repair harm.

How Restorative Am I?

Take a moment to reflect on how, in your role, you deal with youth(or colleagues) when an incident or issue has arisen.

Answer the questions below, shading the boxes according to this scale:

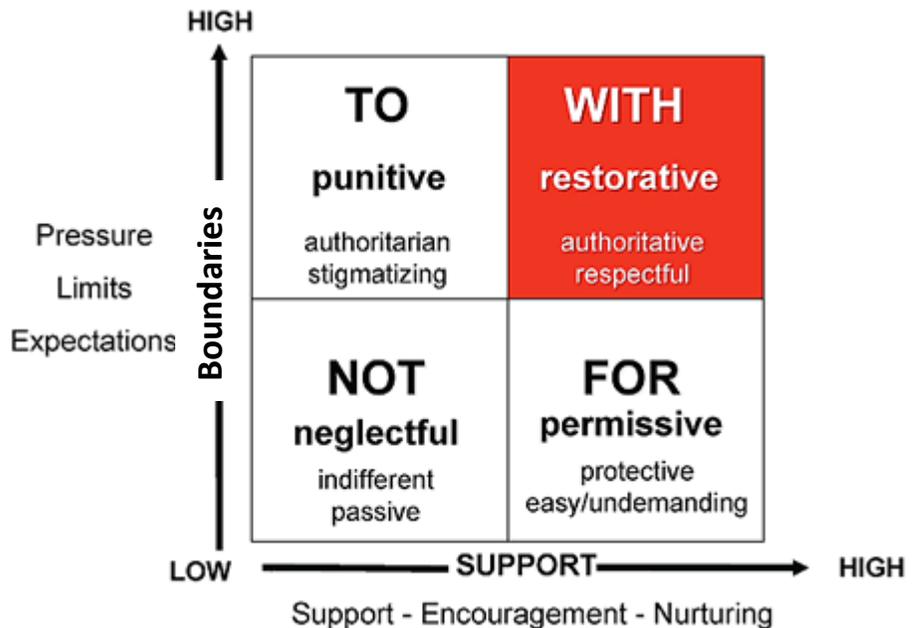☐ ☐ ☐ = no   X ☐ ☐ = not often   X X ☐ = usually   X X X= always

1. Do I remain calm during the conversation? ☐ ☐ ☐

2. Do I really listen, without interrupting? ☐ ☐ ☐

3. Does the youth/other understand why they are having this conversation? ☐ ☐ ☐

4. Would the youth/other feel I am a good listener? ☐ ☐ ☐

5. Do we explore how the school values apply to the issue? ☐ ☐ ☐

6. Does the other understand the harm they've caused, who has been affected, and how? ☐ ☐ ☐

7. Do I talk about how the incident affects me? ☐ ☐ ☐

8. Do I take responsibility for any part I might have played when things went wrong, acknowledge it, and apologize? ☐ ☐ ☐

9. If the student apologizes to me, do I accept the apology respectfully? ☐ ☐ ☐

10. Do I collaborate with the youth to formulate a plan? ☐ ☐ ☐

11. Have I, at any stage, asked someone I trust to observe my practice and give me honest feedback? ☐ ☐ ☐

12. Do I try to handle most issues or incidents myself? ☐ ☐ ☐

13. Do I seek support when issues get tricky for me? ☐ ☐ ☐

14. Do I follow the school/org's systems when looking for more support? ☐ ☐ ☐

15. Is the relationship with the youth repaired? ☐ ☐ ☐

Look through your results and use them to identify where you could further strengthen your communication skills and restorative approach.
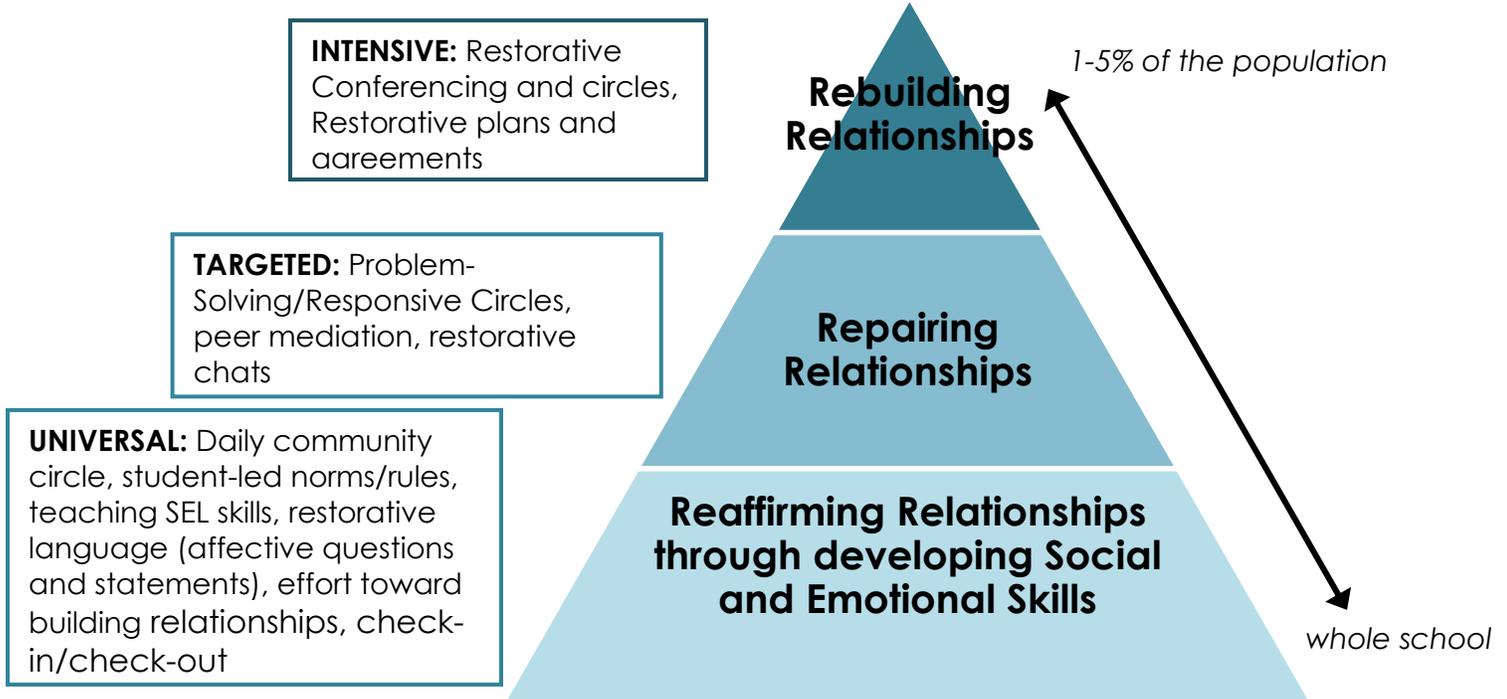
Adapted from 'How restorative am I?' © Margaret Thorsborne and Associates, 2009

"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."
(The Restorative Practice Handbook, Costello and Wachtel)

Support - Encouragement - Nurturing

What might a Restorative Setting or School look like?

INTENSIVE: Restorative Conferencing and circles, Restorative plans and agreements

TARGETED: Problem-Solving/Responsive Circles, peer mediation, restorative chats

UNIVERSAL: Daily community circle, student-led norms/rules, teaching SEL skills, restorative language (affective questions and statements), effort toward building relationships, check-in/check-out

Rebuilding Relationships

1-5% of the population

Repairing Relationships

Reaffirming Relationships through developing Social and Emotional Skills

whole school

modified from source, iirp

Proactive Strategies

Why Circles?

"Storytelling is fundamental for healthy social relationships. To feel connected and respected we need to tell our own stories and have others listen. For others to feel respected and connected to us, they need to tell their stories and have us listen. Having others listen to your story is a function of power in our culture. The more power you have, the more people will listen respectfully to your story. Consequently, listening to someone's story is a way of empowering them, of validating their intrinsic worth as a human being." -Kay Pranis

Circles, by their very structure, convey certain important ideas and values without the need for discussion.
-Equality (everyone has equal seating)
-Safety and trust (no one is hidden)
-Responsibility (everyone has a role in the outcome)
-Facilitation (circle reminds the leader to facilitate rather than lecture)
-Ownership (participants know that the circle is theirs)
=Connections (built when students are heard)

80% OF RESTORATIVE PRACTICES SHOULD BE PREVENTATIVE!!

"THE CIRCLE REPRESENTS A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS AND AUTHORITY FIGURES. IT CREATES A COOPERATIVE ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH STUDENTS TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR ACTIONS. STUDENTS RESPOND BECAUSE THEY FEEL RESPECTED AND REALIZE THAT WHAT THEY SAY MATTERS."

TYPES OF PROACTIVE CIRCLES   (80% of circles should be proactive.)

Check-in (how are you feeling today, highlight or low point of weekend, what are you looking forward to this week? Etc

Check-out (what was your favorite thing about today, what are you looking forward to, give a compliment to someone for something good they did this week)

Integrating Circles with Course Content (introducing new subjects, what do we already know about this subject, processing challenges/emotions together, review for a test,)

Proactive Behavior Discussions (before a field trip, assembly, or potentially challenging situation. (What are your expectations for your own behavior? What's been happening in school that we need to discuss? What can you do if you want to act out in a certain way? What do I need to know about you to be a successful teacher? Any Social Emotional Learning topics that need to be addressed)

Games- to give students a brain break, to break the ice, to get to know each other, to cover course material

General Proactive Circles- when a new student moves in, when someone leaves the school, when there is a significant change

Tips: Let the group establish their own norms. If speaking out of turn may be an issue, use a speaking piece.

Insist on a real circle so all can be seen.

Restorative Language

Utilizing the language of Restorative Practices consistently among the school staff and the parent/family community is a simple and effective approach to reinforcing the core values of relationships, responsibility, accountability and community. 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 and academic achievement. Every member of the community is important and contributes greatly. Each person's actions affect the health of the community.

Recommendation: constantly refer to the student, staff, and family groups as a "community", and stress the importance of having a strong, healthy community. Seize opportunities (good and bad) to bring the classroom community together (check-ins, community circle, teambuilding activities, etc).

✘ *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. Check your own behavior when it is not conducive to building a healthy relationship.

When problems occur, we go further down the continuum to:

AFFECTIVE STATEMENTS

This is a way of explaining how someone's choices affect you. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate that you care about students and humanize yourself. It brings you closer to the person rather than further away. They build relationships, connect people, and help prevent things from escalating. This is a great opportunity to truly exercise your influence to help students.

The starting point for all restorative processes involving active non-judgmental listening and expression of feelings and impact broadly called restorative language. Affective statements are a useful vehicle for this. Affective statements bring you closer and communicate how you feel and why.

-These can and should be private whenever possible
-Stay calm, don't blame and separate the deed from the do-er
-In serious instances, this is not intended to be the solution but to bring the parties closer to connect and come up with next steps. This is like inviting someone in to the ER, not treating the illness in the specialists' office.
Everyday ways we interact allow for restorative language:
- Kindness matters. When it doubt, use the golden rule. Build those relationships so they can withstand conflict!
- Fairness: Offer all participants equal time and attention.
- Respectful: restorative language is respectful to all parties.
- Non-judgmental attitude: remember not to prejudge the outcome of any conversation before they happen.
- Inquiring: never assume you know what has happened

Examples of affective statements:

TYPICAL RESPONSE	AFFECTIVE STATEMENT
Be quiet.	I'm feeling irritated that you were talking when I was leading the training. I worked hard on this and think you will really like it when you learn more about it. Will you raise your hand when you want to talk?
Stop teasing him!	It made me uneasy to hear you teasing him. Respect is an important thing to me and to our community. Can you tell me what is going on with you two?
Don't touch her.	I feel really uncomfortable when I see you touching Clare in the hall. I value all students feeling safe and secure. Would you be willing to talk about what is going on between you two?
Good job.	I am so proud of this class for working together so well. You all are showing me that you care about collaboration as much as I do!

Youth can/will learn these too. Here are some sentence starters to encourage the use of affective statements:

I am so proud to see/hear…
I am so appreciative of you/your…
I am so thankful that/for……
I am so pleased to see/hear/by……
I am so touched that you…
I am concerned about……
I am feeling irritated by……
I am so sorry that……
I am having a hard time understanding…
I feel sad because I heard……..
I am feeling distracted by…..

I am so excited to see/hear…
I am so grateful that/for……
I am delighted to learn/see/hear …
I am so impressed by…
I am worried about/by/to see/to hear that….
I am feeling frustrated about/by that…
I am angry about…..
I am upset that …
I am uncomfortable when I see/hear…..
I am uneasy about ……

As problems become increasingly complicated, it becomes time to ask some questions.

Affective Questions

Asking these questions puts the thinking, work, and learning back on the group. It allows problems to become times to learn these necessary social emotional lessons. These questions help us understand what is motivating behavior, what is really going on in a student's life, and how to get them thinking critically about how to solve the problem at hand.

To respond to challenging behavior:
- "What happened?"
- "What were you thinking about at the time?"
- "What have you thought about since the incident?"
- "Who do you think has been affected by your actions?"
- "How have they been affected?"
- "What do you think you need to do to make things right?"

Questions to help those harmed by other's actions:
- "What did you think when you realized what happened?"
- "How do you feel about what happened?"
- "What impact has this incident had on you and others?"
- "What has been the hardest thing for you?"
- "What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

Restorative Chat

Use the postcard script to help two students restore issues that aren't extremely serious (although they do feel serious to the people involved.)

Formal Restorative Conferences

These are for the most serious offenses. The main difference is the amount of planning. The conference facilitator must meet with all parties in advance of the conference to explain the structure of the meeting and to ensure that the offender has taken full responsibility for his or her offense and will not re-victimize the people he or she has already hurt. They answer questions, anticipate special needs, and arrange a place to hold the conference. Also, it is encouraged to share a snack and "break bread" together afterward. The facilitator may be a neutral party (including volunteers trained in restorative conferencing). This is the main focus of our Level 2 workshops.

Resources:

4 Key elements of Successful Implementation
1. Principal Vision & Commitment
2. Staff Buy-In
3. Professional Development
4. Full-Time RP Coordinator

Full report: http://localprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Restorative-Practices-Insights-From-3-Denver-Schools.pdf

*** https://blog.cps.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CPS_RP_Booklet.pdf
http://www.healthiersf.org/RestorativePractices/Resources/
http://rjposters.com/about-rjposters/
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http://schottfoundation.org/restorative-practices
http://www.restorativejustice4schools.co.uk (click on implimentation pack)
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