


Restorative Programs in Schools

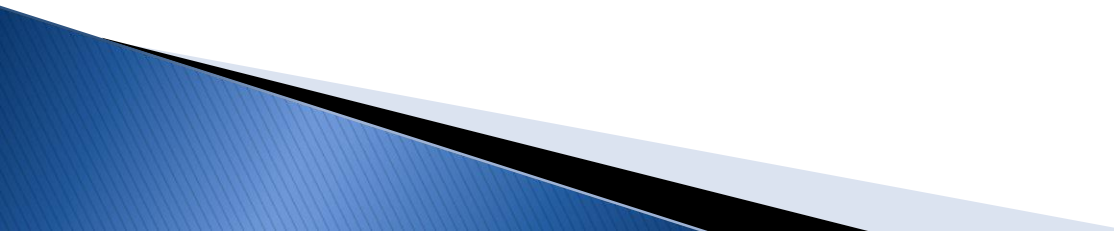
From a provider and school perspective

CDRCP Overall

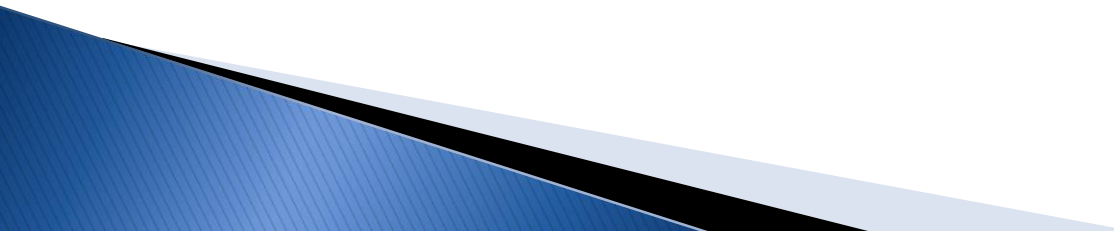
- ▶ 21 Centers; all 62 Counties covered
 - ▶ Office of Court Administration Funded
 - Grants/Contracts as services diversified
 - ▶ Grants for all Counties
 - Network and Infrastructure of Resources for all
 - ▶ Community Needs Assessment
 - ▶ Juvenile Justice Focus Developing

 - ▶ Mission and Purpose:
 - Help clients find alternative strategies that empower those who can to find solutions for themselves
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Partners

- ▶ Probation
 - ▶ Department of Social Services
 - ▶ School Districts
 - ▶ Family Court
 - ▶ Attorneys for the Child
 - ▶ Attorneys
 - ▶ Law Enforcement
 - ▶ Social Service Organizations
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Types of Youth Based Programs

- ▶ Restorative Practices
 - Alternative Sentencing – avoids labels
 - Alternative Discipline in Schools – returns to school
 - As young as elementary school
 - ▶ Peer Mediation
 - Middle and High School Programs
 - ▶ School-based Education for Students and Teachers/Admins
 - ▶ Special Education Mediation
 - ▶ Community Mediation – mediated by non-peer mediator
 - Guardians of students in conflict
 - School/Guardian/Student mediations
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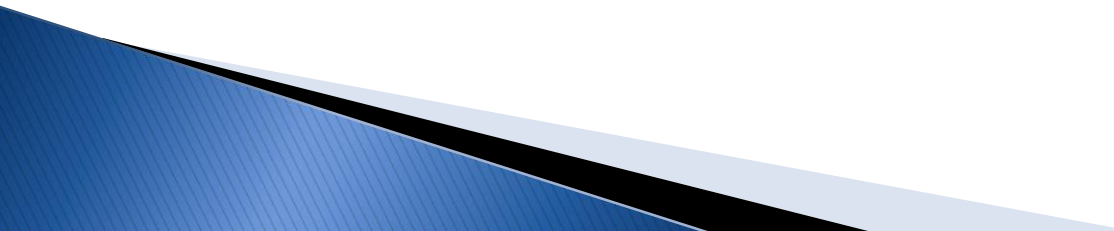
Discussing Implementation Site

- ▶ **Burnt Hills–Ballston Lake High School**
 - Grades 9–12
 - ~1150 students
 - Average Daily Attendance between 93–95%
 - Significant discipline handled by two assistant principals
 - Significant interventions already in place:
 - Pupil Assistance Team
 - Both At-Risk Boys & At-Risk Girls mentoring clubs
 - Freshmen Transition Club
 - Mandatory Assistance Period (MAP)
 - Graduation Program for Seniors (GPS)
 - Strong working relationship with Saratoga County Probation

Common Disciplinary Issues – Schools

- ▶ The Biggies: Violence, Alcohol/Drugs, & Theft
- ▶ Student-to-Student
 - General Conflict: rumors; gossip; dating issues
 - Harassment/bullying: targeting for mistreatment
- ▶ Student/Staff Disputes
 - Classroom Disruptions/Classroom Climate
 - Insubordination
- ▶ Attendance (Truancy – full day/class)
- ▶ How to handle Return from OSS (reentry)

What is Restorative Justice?

- ▶ Restorative Justice is an approach to misbehavior that encourages ownership of harm caused by an individual and the creation of actionable steps to repair that harm IN ADDITION to traditional consequences.
 - ▶ Three Quick Explanations:
 - How we approach misbehavior in the home
 - What really happens when a student skips a class
 - What really happens when a student comes back from external suspension
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Comparison

| Traditional Approach | Restorative Approach |
|--|---|
| School rules are broken. | People and relationships are harmed. |
| Justice focuses on establishing guilt. | Justice identifies needs and responsibility. |
| Accountability = punishment | Accountability = understanding impact and repairing harm |
| Justice directed at the offender; the victim is ignored. | Offender, victim, and school all have direct roles in the justice process. |
| Rules and intent outweigh whether outcome is positive or negative. | Offender is responsible for harmful behavior, repairing harm and working towards positive outcomes. |
| Limited opportunity for expressing remorse or making amends. | Opportunity given to make amends and express remorse. |


Principles behind Restorative Practices

- ▶ Giving a voice and elevated role to those hurt and affected by wrongdoing
- ▶ Recognition that wrongdoing creates harm and obligations
- ▶ Giving those who caused harm an opportunity to choose to repair the harm and make things right
- ▶ Restorative Programs ask:
 - Who was affected? In what way?
 - What are the harms?
 - What needs to be done to make things right?
- ▶ A range of opportunities for dialogue, negotiation, and problem solving whenever possible

(Mark Umbreit, U. of Minnesota)

<http://www.nij.gov/topics/courts/restorative-justice/pages/definitions1.aspx>

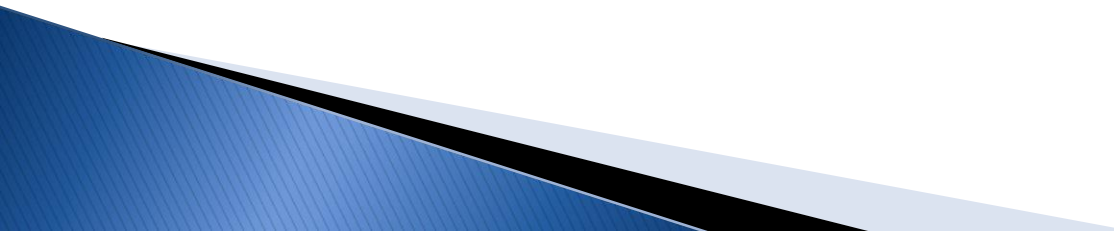
Impacts = Schools

- ▶ Keeps students in school (reduces suspensions)
 - Focus group results: external suspension = holiday
 - ▶ Allows schools/teachers to return to teaching
 - Reduces teachers/admin time on discipline
 - ▶ Durable agreements/plans
 - Resolution rates are in the high 80% or 90%
 - ▶ Schools can triage cases to be handled in appropriate forums
 - ▶ School climate becomes everyone's responsibility: students empowered to help make the change that they need
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Implementing Restorative Justice

- ▶ There is no one size fits all. However, the principles can be used to tailor a program to any school climate.
- ▶ Methodology can vary – the Burnt Hills Approach:
 - Have trained administrator/staff member who can serve as lead
 - Select staff that have excellent interpersonal skills
 - Determine training approach – often based on budget
 - Create structure and procedure for conducting RJ
 - Review process and determine additional need for training

The Burnt Hills HS Approach to Implementing Restorative Justice

- ▶ The trained administrator/staff member:
 - Burnt Hills had the benefit of having an assistant principal who trained in RJ and worked on implementation at Queensbury UFSD, where RJ was selected as the K-12 Disciplinary approach.
 - Having a trained lead can be ideal as it allows a low investment cost and allows determination as to if and when implementation is right for a building/district
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The Burnt Hills HS Approach to Implementing Restorative Justice

- ▶ Select staff with excellent interpersonal skills to start a program:
 - Your staff are who will help sell the program to your building, district administration, the BOE, and the community, having respected, compassionate. Having ones who are invested staff is a must.
 - RJ, depending on how it is used, can be time consuming. Do not look for staff who have already been spread thin unless you can free them up to be involved in how you plan to build your program.
 - Confidentiality is a must.
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The Burnt Hills HS Approach to Implementing Restorative Justice

Project on Restorative Justice

Training in Restorative Practices for K-12 Schools

March 21-22, 2016

Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY

Registration fee: \$350.00

(Includes lunches and *The Little Book of Restorative Discipline for Schools*)

In this training, you will gain a thorough understanding of restorative justice principles and practices, strong facilitation skills, practical information about program implementation, and the satisfaction of having participated in a powerful intellectual, emotional, and spiritually-uplifting training experience.



Open to school administrators, faculty, students, and other staff interested in implementing restorative practices in their schools.



- ▶ Determine Training Approach:
 - Option #1 (Preferred): Bring trainer to your school
 - Often the most expensive, costs can be split and partially reimbursed if a school partners with at least one other district and goes through BOCES.
 - Option #2: Have turnkey staff attend a training.
 - Option #3: Embedded Staff Day
 - Based on limited budget, this was Burnt Hill HS's approach.

The Burnt Hills HS Approach to Implementing Restorative Justice

- ▶ Create structure and procedure for conducting RJ
 - Building Admin submit RJ Referral Form (Google Doc)
 - Restorative Justice Council (RJC) reviews submitted cases and evaluates appropriateness
 - Assign RJC Co-Facilitators (based on schedules of all involved)
 - Set timeline for RJ Circle
 - Set a circle (date/participants)
 - Prep participants with questions
 - Hold Circle
 - Develop agreement
 - Sign agreement/assign case manager/review schedule
 - Submit agreement to RJC for review/make recommendations for administrators. This may lead to reduced sentences.
 - Follow up/close out or refer back

Restorative Questions I

To respond to challenging behavior

What happened?

What were you thinking at the time?

What have you thought about since?

Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?

What do you think you need to do to make things right?

Restorative Questions II

To help those harmed by others actions

What did you think when you realized what happened?

What impact has this incident had on you? What impact has it had on others?

What has been the hardest thing for you?

What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

Script for Restorative Justice Circle

Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake HS - Restorative Justice Council

Introduction

| | |
|---|--|
| Welcome | <p>To everybody: Welcome everybody. Before the formal part of the conference begins, please silence your cell phones. The conference will likely last approximately one to two hours. I would like us to introduce ourselves and indicate briefly <u>our</u> reasons for being here. I am {insert co-facilitators name} and I will be co-facilitating today's conference.</p> <p>Let's go around the circle. Please tell us your name in your connection to this conference today</p> |
| Round of Introductions (name/role) | <p>Thank you for attending. At today's conference, will be focusing on {the incident} that happened on {insert date}. We will focus on what {insert first name of person responsible} did and its impact on others. Once we have learned more about what happened, you will identify what harm was caused and how it might be repaired. We will focus on what can be done to reassure us the behavior will not be repeated.</p> |
| Agreement to be approved by administration | <p>This conference is voluntary. We do not have to reach an agreement today, and if we do not, the case will be referred back to the higher administration and handled in a different way. I'm hopeful that will reach an agreement and if so, we will submit it to the Restorative Justice Council for approval. It is possible, but rare, that they will want to make changes to this agreement. Does everybody understand this?</p> |
| Ground rules | <p>One goal of this conference is to create an environment in which everybody can speak freely and fully about how they feel about what happened. As facilitators, our job is to ensure that everyone here has a voice. Sometimes will have an open dialogue in which everyone can participate as they wish; at other times we will go around the circle inviting each person to offer their perspective. When we do, a person can always pass if they do not have anything they want to say at that time. Another job of the facilitators is to create an environment of trust, so we can work and speak honestly about this incident. Essentially, what we say here, what we see here, let it stay here when we leave here. To enable this, we all will everyone agree that what is said in the circle will stay in the circle that we will not talk about what people have said here to others?</p> |
| Background of person responsible | <p>To person responsible: We would like to begin by getting to know you. What classes are you taking this semester? How are you involved on campus? Clubs? Activities? What do you hope will come from this discussion today?</p> |

Circle/Conference Agreement Form

(To be filled out during each circle/conference as agreement is reached)

1. Background Information

Date: 1/29/16

Participants (name, grade): XXXXX XXXXX, Junior

2. Incident or Concern:

As per his stipulation agreement, XXXXX admitted to multiple acts of selling, purchasing and/or arranging exchanges of money, marijuana, and prescription drugs during regular school hours, on school grounds and at school related events, all of which occurred on November 3, 2016.

Identified Harms:

1. **Mrs. XXXXX:** Mrs. XXXXX had to take more time off of work, go into work earlier, leave early, and race him to and from school for STEP. She additionally had to deal with knowing that her younger son XXXXX was put in harm's way by XXXXX's actions. She said she felt resentful, hurt, sad, and scared by what transpired.
2. **XXXXX XXXXX:** XXXXX's actions changed his perceptions of his older brother and what acceptable behavior was, as well as putting him in contact with known drug dealers, as well as endangering him when he was picked up by one who was under the influence and driving around.
3. **Self:** His reputation in the school has been damaged by this as well as having to deal
4. **School Staff** (Mrs. Austin, Mrs. Kelliher, Mr. Dillabaugh, Mrs. Summersell, Mrs. McCabe): Extra work and time invested in XXXXX as they had to bring copies down, rearrange assignments, and essentially develop an alternate class for him for three months, as well as keep on top of what was due and when new work was needed.
5. **BH-BL District:** The district's reputation was harmed by the knowledge of the incident, which circulated among staff and students, even if not all of them knew the names of the main players in the larger event were involved in it.

3. Agreement Details

How the harm will be repaired:

3. Agreement Details

How the harm will be repaired:

1. **Mrs. XXXXX:** XXXXX agreed to do chores, to watch his brother so his mom could have nights off to make up for all the time she invested in him due to his choices and behavior.
2. **XXXXX XXXXX:** XXXXX will work to re-establish a connection with his younger brother, as well as re-establishing himself as a positive role model with XXXXX. This includes having regular, real conversations with him. XXXXX noted that he will have to be direct (man to man) and patient with his little brother because there is significant repairing that needs to happen in their relationship.
3. **Self:** XXXXX wants to come in changed and be the best version of himself. He proposed doing additional community service would be a good way to re-establish his reputation in the building and also help him feel more positive about himself. He also wants to respect himself enough to not get into the activities that led him into this situation to begin with.
4. **School Staff** (Mrs. AXXXXX, Mrs. KXXXXX, Mr. DXXXXX, Mrs. SXXXXX, Mrs. MXXXXX): XXXXX wants to speak with each one of his teachers and express his deep appreciation for the time and energy that they put in to make sure he made it to the other side of his suspension without failing classes.
5. **BH-BL District:** XXXXX would like to join the Unified Basketball Team again as it was a positive way for him to contribute to the school and to the lives of students who face disabilities.

How the harm will be avoided in the future:

XXXXX will follow the stipulations put forth in his agreement, which limit his unstructured time and his access to electronics for communication purposes, but he has also agreed to bring his best self and to avoid relationships that have been a negative influence in his past.

How the person who did the harm will give back to the community:

XXXXX will engage in community service and if he has no further incidents, will be allowed to participate in Unified Basketball. He also is looking to some community service opportunities available at the high school. As Mr. Brunson, Mr. Mody or Mr. Harrington come across those opportunities, XXXXX will be made aware of them.

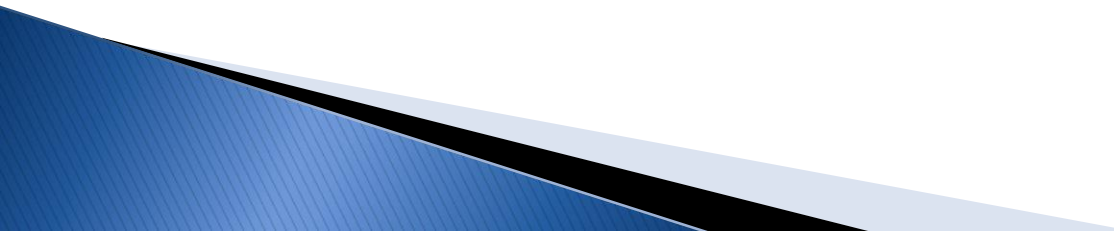
4. Monitoring Plan (Tasks [include final check-in as last task] By Who? By When?)

☐ Mrs. XXXXX:

☐ Do regular chores

☐ Watch his brother XXXXX to give his mom multiple nights off

Impacts – Youth

- ▶ Students in awe of peers hosting conversations
 - ▶ Empowered to find solutions for themselves
 - ▶ Students redefining their place in the school
 - ▶ Students feel understood and connect with teachers in new ways
 - ▶ Teens having conversations with their parents in new ways
 - ▶ Community members redefined view of youth
 - ▶ Youth understand how their choices impact themselves and others
 - ▶ Students having skills that carry beyond school
 - ▶ Students find their voice in constructive ways
 - ▶ Gives hope back to those who have felt lost
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Impacts – Continued

- ▶ Reduced stress and fear for all
 - Students fearing peers/avoiding classes
 - Teachers dreading certain classes
- ▶ Overall attention raised to volume and types of issues of concern
- ▶ Time given to issues that need attention
- ▶ Increase or improvement in empathy, understanding of personal emotions, needs, and values
- ▶ It's contagious = spreads to others

Youth Comments

- ▶ “I’m proud to show the community a different side of our school.”
- ▶ “Being a part of this program has changed my life.”
- ▶ “I heard from my teacher what I contribute to this school.”
- ▶ “They finally understood me.”
- ▶ “I wanted to give others what was given to me.” (peer mediator)
- ▶ “I can now go to class with that person and not be so distracted.”

Youth Comments cont.

- ▶ “I am able now to convince my friends that talking about how you feel rather than violence or fighting is gonna change their life, and they are starting to see it.”
 - ▶ “Now administrators feel that everything doesn’t have to result in suspension; conversations do work, and words do matter and it is important to hear these kids talk because a lot of times they don’t even want to fight. They just have something to say and no one hears it.”
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Questions?