

Restorative Practice

Restorative practice is a set of principles and strategies for promoting healthy relationships and building school staff's capacity to respond to problem behaviour.



Key understandings

- Restorative practice builds a sense of belonging, safety and social responsibility within the learning environment.
- Restorative practice includes universal strategies for the whole school, targeted strategies for resolving conflict, and more intensive interventions for students who have been involved in serious incidents.
- Through the use of restorative practice, all members of the school community:
 - develop positive relationships
 - have an opportunity to be heard
 - recognize their role in maintaining a positive learning environment
 - understand the greater impact of their actions
 - learn to take responsibility
 - restore and repair relationships that have been damaged.

Research

Improving School Climate: Evidence from Schools Implementing Restorative Practices (2014)

<http://www.iirp.edu/pdf/ImprovingSchoolClimate.pdf>

This report by the International Institute for Restorative Practices is a summary of evidence from schools implementing restorative practices to improve school climate.

“

No significant learning can occur without a significant relationship.

Dr. James Comer

”

Questions for discussion

- Consider the statement from the video that “people of all ages are happier and more cooperative and more likely to make positive changes when those in authority do things *with* them, rather than *to* them.” Share an example from your experience where this was true. What are some of the implications of this statement?
- Why is it important that all members of the school community have an opportunity to be heard? How can a school create authentic opportunities to make this happen?
- What school-wide approaches are currently being implemented that could be leveraged to support restorative practice?
- What would be evidence that students are taking responsibility for maintaining a positive learning environment? What would this look like?

Taking the Pulse

at the school and authority level...

Assessing system readiness

- How is data being used to help inform planning for improving learning environments and reducing problem behaviour at the classroom, school and jurisdictional level?
- What expertise and resources are available at the school and jurisdictional level to support implementation of restorative practice?
- How is your school authority supporting professional development related to restorative practice?

(Adapted from *A Guide to Support Implementation: Essential Conditions*, www.essentialconditions.ca)

For more information

- Costello, B., Wachtel, J., & Wachtel, T. (2009). *The Restorative Practices Handbook for Teachers, Disciplinarians, and Administrators*. Bethlehem, PA: International Institute for Restorative Practices.
- Thosbourne, M., & Blood, P. (2013). *Implementing Restorative Practices in Schools*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

“

Restorative practices ... involve changing relationships by engaging people: doing things WITH them, rather than TO them or FOR them—providing both high control and high support at the same time.

Ted Wachtel

”

Alberta Examples

Six Principles of Restorative Practices

1. Importance of relationship
2. Focus on harm done, rather than rule/law broken
3. Encourage responsibility and accountability
4. Involve and engage everyone
5. Collaborative problem solving
6. Give voice to all

(from: [Engage: Creating respectful cultures through restorative practices](#))

Safe and Caring

The Society for Safe and Caring Schools & Communities developed a webinar (November 2013) called *Building a Restorative Culture* (<http://resources.safeandcaring.ca/resource-students/>).

This webinar explores the following questions:

- What is it we want children and youth to learn through our discipline practices?
- How do we encourage the young people in our lives to do the right thing because it is the right thing to do?
- How do we teach children and youth to take responsibility and be accountable for their actions and their words?

[web location]