

JCPS CODE OF CONDUCT: *RESTORATIVE PRACTICES*

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When Restorative Justice in Schools Works



The Atlantic article excerpts...

To be sure, restorative justice isn't an easy fix. It took time to convince Pittsfield's broader community that the investment of resources would be worthwhile. There were multiple meetings with students and staff over the course of several years, as well as community forums to help parents prepare for the change.

***“People were afraid this was going to be a ‘hippy-dippy-granola, nobody’s-going-to-get-into-trouble’ concept,”** said Wellington. “This wouldn’t have been successful if we didn’t start slowly and make sure everyone was really on board.”*

The Atlantic article excerpts...

“Students are learning what conflict resolution really means, as well as critical social-emotional skills,” Robinson-Mock said. “They’re developing empathy for their peers, and building trust and understanding. Those are essential skills that everybody needs.”

*That being said, “**you can’t crash-course your way through restorative justice,**” Robinson-Mock added. “One PowerPoint training won’t produce a transformation in school culture. It really has to be something that everyone inside of the school building is a part of, and really buys into and supports.”*

Restorative practices

- An emerging field of study that offers a common thread to tie together theory, research and practice in seemingly disparate fields, such as:
 - education,
 - counseling,
 - criminal justice,
 - social work
 - organizational management.

Howard Zehr's Fundamental Premise Statement

The fundamental premise of restorative practices is that people are happier, more cooperative and 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.

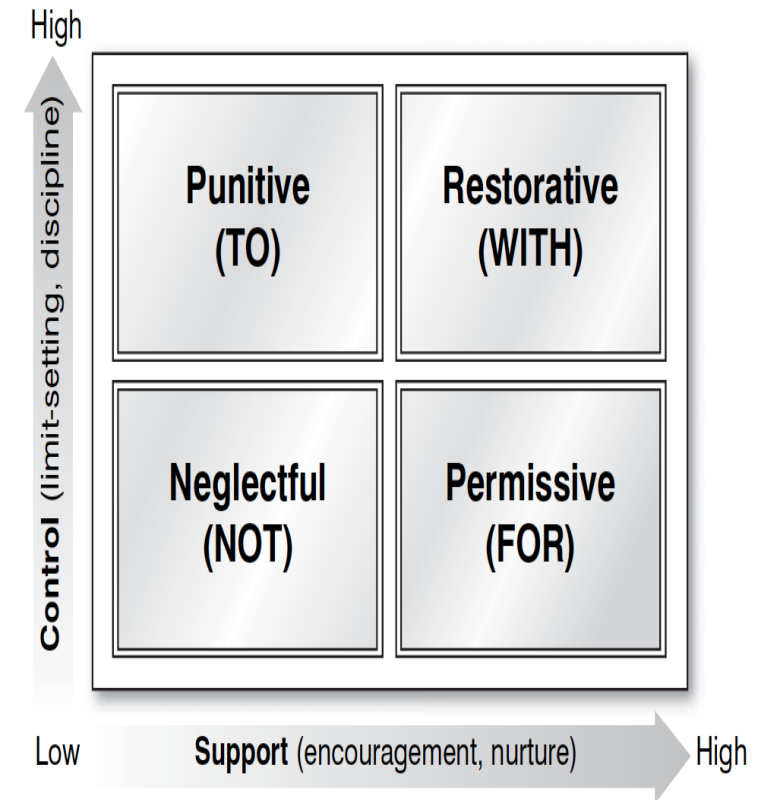
RP Defined - IIRP

- *Restorative practices* is a social science that studies how to build social capital and achieve social discipline through participatory learning and decision-making.
 - The use of restorative practices helps to:
 - reduce crime, violence and bullying
 - improve human behavior
 - strengthen civil society
 - provide effective leadership
 - restore relationships
 - repair harm

Restorative Discipline

- Things done **WITH** students.
 - Bring together those involved.
- High control and high support.
- Signal the behavior as unacceptable but engage both parties in constructive problem solving.

A Social Discipline Window



Social Discipline Window (Watchel, 1999) Used with permission

Restorative Practices Principles

- Acknowledges that relationships are central to community building.
- Focuses on the harm done rather than only rule breaking.
- Creates systems that address misbehavior and harm in a way that strengthens relationships.
- Gives voice to the person harmed.
- Engages in collaborative problem solving.
- Empowers change and growth.
- Enhances responsibility.

Restorative v. punitive



John C McDonald
@jmtheacademy



@teachergoals Punishment is designed to meet the emotional needs of the punisher. Corrective action meets the learning needs of the student

RP: WHAT HAVE WE DONE SINCE
2014?

No written law has ever been more binding than an unwritten custom supported by popular opinion.

~Carrie Chapman Catt

Restorative Practices in JCPS

- *In June 2014, the Board approved the newly revised 2014-2015 JCPS Code of Conduct, which included updating the language regarding Restorative Practices (RP) and including age appropriate RP strategy options for school discipline responses.*
 - Since then, over 500 JCPS stakeholders have been trained on the basics of implementing RP.
 - The participants included: principals, assistant principals, counselors, youth service center coordinators, PBIS leads, SRT coaches, teachers, classified staff, community members, and School Resource Officers.

Some Lessons Learned since the last Code changes:

- RP is still misunderstood.
- RP results are often expected to be “seen” quickly.
- RP is assumed to be primarily a reactive strategy.
 - *Costello and colleagues (2010) state that 80% of RP in a school should be proactive.*
 - Proactive Circles:
 - Gives students opportunity to get to know each other and establish positive connections, including agreements about how they ought to treat each other.
 - Reactive/Responsive Circles:
 - Use specific high-quality questions to explore challenging circumstances and move toward making things right.
- RP is seen as “therapy” from some stakeholders. It is not.

Restorative Practices and PBIS Alignment

- Three RP/PBIS trainings were held and included approximately 75 JCPS stakeholders.
 - March 2015: work session on “PBIS & RP Alignment”
 - April 2015: a day-long professional development training on “RP for PBIS Schools”
 - November 2015: a more detailed “RP for PBIS” presentation was held on the topic “Implementing Restorative Circles”.

Response to Intervention (RtI) Framework

Restorative Justice

Circles of support and accountability for re-entry and re-integration following incarceration or expulsion

Alternatives to suspension that support conflict resolution, peer mediation, family and community conferencing

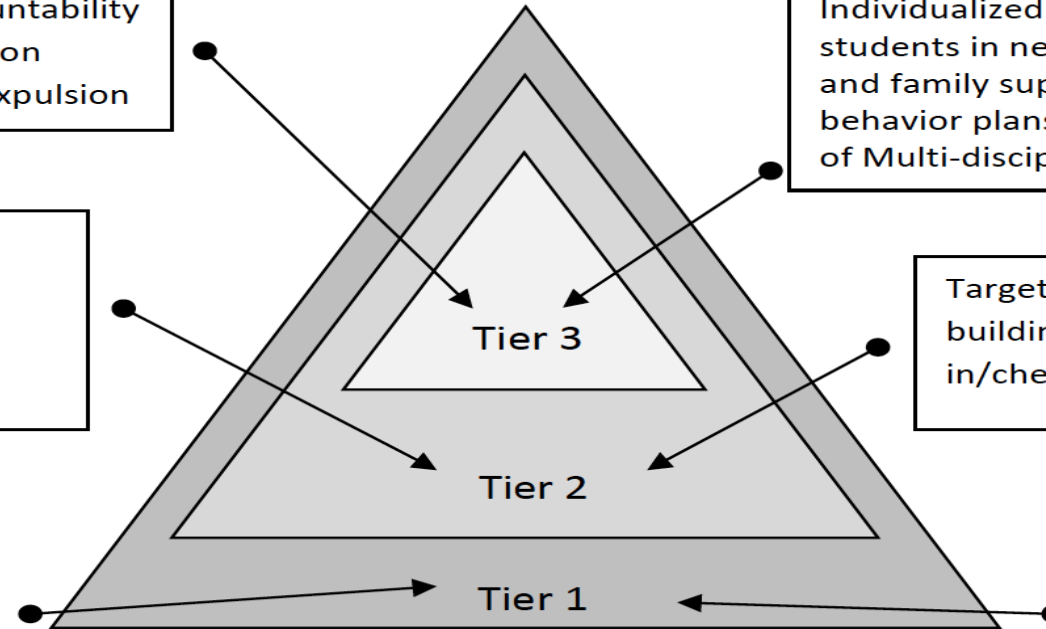
Practices (circles) that build relational trust and shared values. Restorative conversations that enable shared problem solving.

PBIS

Individualized services for students in need of one on one and family support. Positive behavior plans, ongoing support of Multi-disciplinary Team

Targeted supports and skill-building groups, Check-in/check-out (CICO) mentoring

Equitable school-wide norms & expectations for all school settings that are taught and positively reinforced



Some lessons learned from RP/PBIS Alignment

- PBIS schools are a great place to implement RP activities:
 - The foundation for RP strategies is a positive school climate.
- General feedback from attendees:
 - They want more in depth “how to” training.
 - This is best accomplished at the school level. Schools need to determine:
 - What model do you need at your school?
 - What outcomes do you want to achieve?

Restorative Practices & Alternative Schools

- In September 2014, the development of a RP PILOT program for alternative schools began.
 - The curriculum consists of 6-8 weeks of restorative circles that cover many topics, including: understanding harm and forgiveness, developing restorative values, dealing with conflict and anger, witnessing violence, etc.
 - An UofL IRB approved pilot began in February 2015 at Buechel Metropolitan High School.
 - The new Minor Daniels Academy began using Restorative Circles in November 2015.
 - The school is in Phase 2 of their RP Implementation Plan.
 - All MDA staff were trained on RP in July.
 - A follow-up one hour training was conducted in a September 2015 faculty meeting
 - All counselors and support staff have completed RP training and began observing RP circles in November 2015.
 - They are scheduled to begin their own circles in January 2015.

Some Lessons Learned for RP Circles Pilot

- Age appropriateness is key.
 - *i.e. Popcorn circles worked wonderfully for high school...but were not as effective in middle school.*
- Building a strong implementation team is necessary.
 - *However, providing a “basic RP training” for the whole school is critical.*
 - *Develop ways to applaud commitment to the school cultural shift.*
- Developing an implementation/accountability plan is helpful.
- Disruptive participants can be (and should be) asked to leave a circle.
- Evaluation can not just be quantitative in nature.

TAKE AWAYS & NEXT STEPS

RP Messaging Takeaways

- RP is a philosophy focusing on repairing harm, restoring relationships and ensuring accountability.
- RP “separates the deed from the doer”.
- RP models / processes address harms, needs, and causes.
- RP strategies range from informal to formal and proactive to reactive.
- RP can supplement or substitute traditional discipline strategies.
 - RP is implemented based on the goals and preferred outcomes for the school.
 - JCPS policy does **not** allow for RP to *substitute* traditional correctional strategies for law violation behaviors.
- RP aligns with all three tiers of PBIS. It is best for schools to start with proactive RP strategies in Tier 1.
- RP takes 3-5 years in order to see a dramatic change in discipline numbers.

Next steps

- Utilize the lessons learned to modify the RP Policy for implementation in JCPS.
- Continue to emphasize and educate JCPS stakeholders on when the Code allows for Restorative Practices. Discuss the inclusion of explicit statements about when and how it can be used.
 - *i.e. RP is NEVER a REPLACEMENT strategy where suspension, alt school placement or arrest is mandatory. In those cases the current code states RP is SUPPLEMENTARY.*
- Develop a district-wide implementation “guide”.
- Hire the RP Director.

THANK YOU!