

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND SCHOOL SAFETY



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NATURE OF THE PROBLEM IN SCHOOLS

ZERO TOLERANCE DISCIPLINE



Zero tolerance policies enacted following the shooting in Columbine, CO do not result in safer schools or increased academic achievement, but rather increase risk for:

- decreased connectivity to school;
- increased participation in risky or illegal behavior;
- poor academic achievement;
- dropping out.

SCHOOL SUSPENSION/EXPULSION INCREASES:

- **Likelihood that students will be held back a grade, not graduate, and become involved in the justice system** (Fabelo et al, 2011).
- **Chances of subsequent suspension, expulsion and dropping out** (Osher, 2010; Balfanz and Boccanfuso, 2007; Skiba and Rausch, 2006).
- **Poor academic achievement and standardized test scores, even when controlling for factors such as race and socioeconomic status** (Davis et al, 1994; Mendez, et al., 2003; Skiba 2006).

BLACK STUDENTS ARE:



- **More likely to be suspended and expelled for minor infractions** (Advancement Project, 2005; Losen and Skiba, 2010).
- **Only 17% of public school enrollment but 34% of suspensions;** (Advancement Project, 2005; NAACP, 2005).
- **Three times more likely to be suspended than similarly situated white students.**
- **Four times more likely to end up in correctional facilities if they have learning disabilities** (Poe-Yamagata and Jones, 2000).

RESEARCH ON SCHOOL SAFETY INTERVENTIONS

- Metal detectors do not reduce the risk of violent behavior among students. (Hankin A, Hertz M, Simon T. 2011)
- Students exposed to ‘safe-school’ policies such as security guards and metal detectors reported feeling less safe in their schools. (Gastic, 2006)
- Metal detectors in a student’s school do not decrease students’ risk of theft or physical assault. (Shreck & Miller, 2003)
- Metal detectors, security cameras, or guards in schools is not proven effective in preventing school violence. (Garcia, 2003, Addington, 2009, Borum et al, 2010)

RESEARCH ON SCHOOL SAFETY INTERVENTIONS

- Evidence suggests that schools are arguably safer today than they were a decade ago. (Zhang et al, 2012)
- Increased security may cause students to feel worried about crime, and not reduce feelings of worry. (Schrek and Miller, 2003)
- Surveillance cameras provide students with a reasonable expectation of safety; if they are attacked in full view of a camera and no one comes to their aid, schools could be successfully sued. (Braggs, 2004)
- Surveillance cameras in schools may implicitly label students as untrustworthy (cameras magnify this impact since their sole purpose is to record misbehaviors and deter through intimidation). (Warnick, 2007)

5-POINT SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

1. Cost-effective, evidence-based school discipline policies focused on accountability, inclusion and engagement;
2. Mental health, trauma responsiveness and classroom management training and supports for teachers and administrator;
3. School Resource Officers serving as mentors, advisors and positive role models;
4. Best practice and fiscally viable school security systems;
5. Engagement, relationship and support among parents, teachers, community members and students.

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WHAT IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN SCHOOLS?



INTENTION OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS

1. Center the needs and experiences of those harmed;
2. Hold those who do harm accountable by building empathy and repairing harm;
3. Create a path forward through changing behavior and building relationships.

TWO DIFFERENT RESTORATIVE STRATEGIES



WHOLE SCHOOL AND INCIDENT DRIVEN APPROACHES



Schools may implement restorative justice as an individual incident-driven approach to specific offenses or as a holistic whole school approach to building climate and culture throughout the entire school.

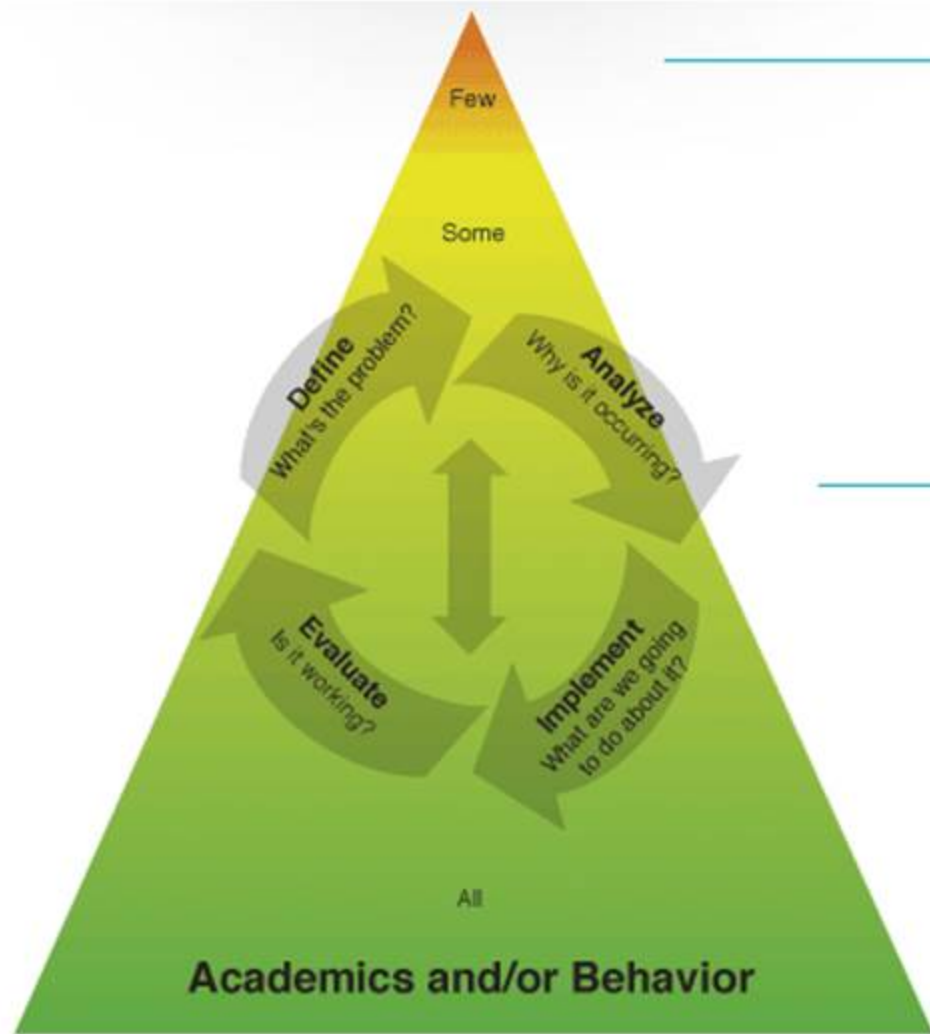
VALUES OF RESTORATIVE PROCESSES

- Mutual concern and respect
- Consensual decision-making and conflict resolution
- Appreciate of differences
- Voluntary direct participation
- Recognize interconnectedness
- Focus on interests
- Shared responsibility
- Personal accountability
- Holistic approach
- Flexibility
- Strengths based

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACHES

A whole-school approach uses RJ to build culture and climate based on restorative values of respect, trust, inclusion, tolerance, understanding and more. Building a restorative culture results in fewer incidents of harm overall.

MULTI-TIER SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT



Tier 3

Repairing the Restorative Environment: Formal restorative conferences, school accountability boards, peacemaking circles.

Tier 2

Maintaining the Restorative Environment: Informal individual and/or classroom conferences to identify and address harm; reaffirmation of norms and values.

Tier 1

Creating the Restorative Environment: Affective restorative statements; student-led guidelines; daily classroom check-in circles; classroom and school norming; restorative culture & climate setting activities.

INCIDENT DRIVEN APPROACHES

An incident-driven approach uses RJ to respond to specific events on a school campus - such as fighting, bullying, teacher disrespect, insubordination or other disciplinary violations.



The central focus of restorative justice for conflict is on healing for the person/community harmed, accountability for the person who has caused harm, and putting right the wrong caused by the harm.

3 DIFFERENT QUESTIONS

TRADITIONAL:

- X What law/rule was broken?
- X Who's fault is it? (who did it and who do we blame?)
- X What do they deserve? (How should we punish them?)

RESTORATIVE:

- ✓ Who has been hurt and what harm was done?
- ✓ What are their needs?
- ✓ Who's obligation is this? (What repair is needed and who is responsible?)

FOUNDATIONAL OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN RESPONSE TO CONFLICT

A non-adversarial, dialogue-based decisionmaking process where affected parties discuss the harm done.



An agreement for going forward based on the input of all stakeholders about what is necessary to repair the harm.

PRINCIPLES



RESEARCH ON RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN SCHOOLS

RESEARCH OUTCOMES

MINNESOTA, MN: Referrals, Suspensions decreased 48%-63% (Minnesota Department of Education, 2003, 2011)

DENVER, CO: Police Tickets decreased 68%;
Out of school suspensions down 34-40%;
Expulsions down 82% (Advancement Project, 2010; Gonzalez, 2012)

PHILADELPHIA, PA: Suspensions down 50%;
Violent/serious acts 40% - 52% (Lewis, 2009)

RESEARCH OUTCOMES

OAKLAND, CA: Cole Middle School

Suspensions down 87%; Expulsions = zero.

(Sumner et. al, 2010)

CHICAGO, IL: Suspension Days down 1000

days (Ashley and Burke, 2009)

BALTIMORE, MD: Suspension Days down

88% (Ashley and Burke, 2009)

RESEARCH OUTCOMES

LANSING, MI: Suspensions down 15% (Gonzalez, 2011)

ST. LOUIS, MO: Suspension severity down 27%
(Gonzalez, 2011)

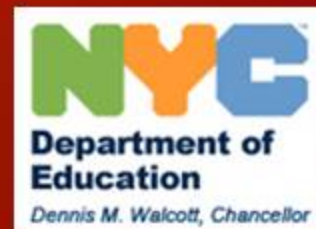
PORTLAND, OR: Suspension Days down 71 -
108 days (Gonzalez, 2011)

RECENT RESEARCH ON RJ AND RACIAL DISCIPLINE DISPARITY

- In Denver, the Black/White gap was reduced in absolute terms from a difference of nearly 12 points to just over 8 points (Gonzalez, 2015).
- Higher RP implementers issued fewer discipline referrals to Latino and African American students compared with lower RP implementers (Gregory et al, 2015).

SOME SCHOOL DISTRICTS ADOPTING RJ AS POLICY

- *Chicago Public Schools*
- *Denver Public Schools*
- *The Oakland Unified School District*
- *New York City Department of Education*



SOME SCHOOL DISTRICTS ADOPTING RJ AS POLICY



SFUSD SAN FRANCISCO
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- *San Francisco Unified School District*
- *Minnesota Department of Education*
- *Los Angeles Unified School District*
- *Orange County Public Schools (FL)*



ORANGE COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



DISCUSSION, QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS