INTRODUCTION TO RESTORATIVE PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS
AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO STUDENT DISCIPLINE

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SAFE AND HEALTHY SCHOOL SUMMIT
HOLYOKE, MA
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Restorative Practices Trainers
A STORY

Image from Wikimedia Commons
A DEFINITION

Aim of **restorative practices** in **school** community:
To develop community and to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and restoring relationships.

International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP)
KEY CONCEPTS

- Community Building
- Harm and Impact
- Support and Accountability
- Trauma-Sensitive
- Engagement and Empowerment
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Community Building

- Harm and Impact
- Support and Accountability
- Trauma-Sensitive
- Engagement and Empowerment
COMMUNITY BUILDING

- 80% building community ("proactive")
- 20% responding to harm ("responsive")
COMMUNITY BUILDING

- Creates safety and trust over time
- Encourages people to value community and role within community
- Prevents harms
- Encourages, supports people to naturally take responsibility for their actions
COMMUNITY BUILDING

- Responsive Classroom
- Collaborative Problem Solving
- Developmental Design
- Advisory
- Active listening
COMMUNITY BUILDING

- Community building at its best
- High level of safety, trust, time
- Teacher participation
- Student-led
- Routine
KEY CONCEPTS

- Community Building

Harm and Impact

- Support and Accountability
- Trauma-Sensitive
- Engagement and Empowerment
HARM AND IMPACT

- Focus on feelings and needs
- Repairing harm of all parties
HARM AND IMPACT

- Think of a time when you were harmed by someone.
  - How did you feel?
  - What were you needing?
- Turn to a neighbor and share your story, then share the feelings and needs. Both people share.
FEELINGS

- Confused
- Angry
- Dismayed
- Hurt
- Scared
- Embarrassed
- Upset
- Deflated
- Annoyed
- Flustered
- Disheartened
- Outraged
- Shocked
- Ashamed
- Stressed
NEEDS

- Validation
- Safety
- Understanding
- Time
- Support
- Fairness
- Honesty
- Space
- Empathy
- Recognition
- Trust
- Communication
- Clarity
- Respect
- Authenticity
Think of a time you harmed someone else.

- How did you feel?
- What were you needing?

- Turn to a neighbor and share your story, then share the feelings and needs. Both people share.
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“Hurt people hurt people”
IN PRACTICE
KEY CONCEPTS

- Community Building
- Harm and Impact

Support and Accountability

- Trauma-Sensitive
- Engagement and Empowerment
“Many folks were skeptical about the efficacy of a restorative approach and may have been nervous about getting cornered into singing Kumbaya.”

Dan DeWalt
Leland and Gray Union Middle and High School
Townshend, VT
RP is HIGH on support, HIGH on accountability
Support & Accountability Window

Adapted from IIRP’s “Social Discipline Window”
Think of a teacher that you had who held you to a high standard and supported you. In one or two sentences, how did it affect you?

Circle process:
- One person speaks at a time; everyone else listens
- You can pass if you want
- Go clockwise
- Facilitator asks question; does not respond after each share
KEY CONCEPTS

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“Amygdala Hijack: emotional responses from people which are immediate and overwhelming, and out of measure with the actual stimulus because it has triggered a much more significant emotional threat.”

*Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman
ACE STUDY

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Mechanisms by which Adverse Childhood Experiences Influence Health and Well-being Throughout the Lifespan

Conception

Death

Early Death

Disease, Disability, and Social Problems

Adoption of Health-risk Behaviors

Social, Emotional, and Cognitive Impairment

Disrupted Neurodevelopment

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Centers for Disease Control
SPACE IN TURNERS FALLS HIGH SCHOOL
KEY CONCEPTS

- Community Building
- Harm and Impact
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- Trauma-Sensitive

Engagement and Empowerment
ENGAGEMENT & EMPOWERMENT

- Shifts power
- Authority figures become facilitators
- All constituents become change agents rather than passive recipients
ENGAGEMENT & EMPOWERMENT

- Person Who Harmed
- Person(s) Harmed
- Community
Engagement & Empowerment

- Circles also used to respond to harm
- Questions focus on what happened, how did you feel, what did you notice, what needs to happen
- Circle includes person who did the harm, person(s) who were harmed, and community
- Everyone’s voice is heard
Think of a time when a young person was able to…

- Resolve a conflict on their own or
- Offer options in a conflict they were or were not a part of that opened the door to resolutions

What did it take for that to happen???
MISCONCEPTIONS AND MYTHS

- The goal is an apology
- Apology is a possible outcome, not goal
- Shaming students
- Shame is often experienced, not goal
- Where is the punishment?
- Consequences and accountability
ESTABLISHED

- Brattleboro Union High School, Brattleboro, VT
- Sizer School, Fitchburg, MA
- Leland and Gray Union Middle and High School, Townshend, VT
- Gill-Montague Regional School District, MA
GETTING STARTED

- Mohawk Trail Regional High School and Middle School, Shelburne Falls, MA
- JFK Middle School, Northampton, MA
WHAT NEXT?

- Training
- Practice
- Connect with other schools
- Just Schools Project
  - Visit www.justschoolsproject.org or contact mel@justschoolsproject.org for training or a copy of this presentation
- International Institute of Restorative Practices: www.iirp.edu