

Restorative Justice in Schools: Outcomes and Indicators

There is a significant and growing body of promising evidence emerging with profound and desirable outcomes. This document intends to highlight reporting on outcomes associated with implementing restorative approaches in schools. Please seek, read, and cite the original source.

School Climate, Culture, and Academics

- A pilot study of a restorative conferencing program in Minnesota report increased school connectedness and improved problem solving among students (McMorris et. al. 2013)
- In Oakland, 70% of staff reported that RJ improved overall school climate during the first year of implementation (Jain, et. al., 2014).
- Oakland students said that the use of restorative justice circles enhanced ability to understand peers, manage emotions, develop greater empathy, resolve conflict with parents, improve home environment, and maintain positive relationships with peers (Jain, et. al., 2014).
- Oakland Middle Schools that implemented RJ had a 24% reduction in chronic absence (OUSD, 2015b); High Schools that implemented RJ experienced a 56% decline in high school dropout rates in comparison to 17% for non-RJ high schools (Jain, et. al., 2014).
- Denver Public Schools report that students who participated in an RJ program experienced a 50% reduction in absenteeism and a decrease in tardiness of about 64 % (Baker, 2009).
- Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) levels in grade 9 doubled in RJ high schools from an average of 14% to 33% (Jain, et. al., 2014).
- Cole Middle School's California State Test (CST) scores went up by 74 points from school year 2007/08 to 2008/09 (Kidde & Alfred, 2011).
- In Ed White Middle School (TX), the number of students who passed the standardized reading and math components increased substantially (Armour, 2014).
- RJ High Schools within OUSD had a 59.9% increase in 4 year graduation rates (OUSD, 2015a)

Discipline Policies and Practices

- Two Minneapolis Public Schools significantly reduced behavioral referrals and suspensions using circle in the classroom and circle to repair harm in the office, by 45% to 63% (Minnesota DOE, 2003, 2011)
- When Family Group Conferences were used as a restorative intervention strategy for responding to serious behavioral incidents (recommendations for expulsion or administrative transfer) in Minneapolis Public Schools, 97% of parents said they would recommend the program to a friend and high levels of satisfaction were reported by both students and parents/guardians (McMorris et. al., 2013).
- Restorative justice has shown to narrow the racial discipline gap (Jain, et. al., 2014; Gregory, et. al., 2014).
- In Denver, CO, district level impact has been noted in cumulative reductions in out-of-school suspensions of over 40% compared with baseline..." (Advancement Project, 2010).
- At Cole Middle School in Oakland, CA suspensions declined dramatically by 87% and expulsions declined to zero during the implementation of whole school restorative justice (Sumner et. al, 2010).
- In Palm Beach County, FL, two schools saw 130-300 day reductions in suspension days (Schiff, 2012).
- In San Antonio, TX, Ed White Middle School implemented RJ in 2012; In-school suspensions for conduct violations dropped by 65% - 47% in 2013/14. Out of school suspensions dropped 57% - 35% (Armour, 2014).

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