

# **Restorative Practices Implementation, Trainers and Training**

## ***An Administrator's Checklist***

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**Minnesota** Department of  
**Education**  
**School Safety Technical  
Assistance Center**

# Restorative Practices Implementation, Trainers and Training

## *An Administrator's Checklist*

This checklist is designed for school administrators interested in school-wide implementation of Restorative Practices (RP) and provides guidelines for working with RP trainers.



Creating a sustainable, school-wide, best practices Restorative Practices program for your school will take sustained and intentional effort to assess, create a plan and implement the different aspects of RP with fidelity.



There is no single path to implementing RP, but this checklist will help you form your idea of an ideal destination and help you chart a course for getting there. Not all checklist items will apply to every school and many schools may need to consider additional issues not covered here. As a school administrator, you can use the knowledge, practices and approaches in this document as a guide for your work. You can use the checklist to evaluate RP training needs and to design a



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training and professional development process for school personnel.

The first section of this guide focuses on the destination. It reminds you of your goal and how to assess whether you're making progress toward reaching the goal. The second section will help guide the way.

It will help you answer questions such as such as. "What do we do once we've decided to become an RP school?" and, "What should we use to be trained?"

## The Destination: Key Indicators for Restorative Practices in Schools\*

- School expectations and values incorporate a restorative approach and are made explicit across the school as well as in the school's policies.
- A clear system of RP is implemented and applied consistently across the school.
- There are clear links between implementation of RP and desired outcomes regarding student engagement and achievement.
- All adults in the school have a clear understanding of RP principles and processes and the relevance of RP to the learning community.
- All adults recognize that RP involves values, skills and processes and that RP is not just a set of intervention techniques.
- There is positive modeling, direction and commitment of RP by school management. (Hendry, 2009)
- RP is used to build community and resolve conflict between staff members as well as between students and between students and staff. (Hendry, 2009)
- School staff members recognize the effectiveness of RP in their school and actively work on developing their skills and understanding.
- Professional staff development is targeted to individual, department and school needs; resources and time are invested regularly to support RP.
- Staff members show a high level of competency and skill, actively seeking feedback to improve their confidence and practice.
- Restorative practices are regularly assessed for quality and evaluated for effectiveness.
- The wider school community has been introduced to RP and they are regularly informed of RP initiatives and developments.
- There is a well-developed, consistent RP orientation and training process for staff, students and families.
- Students are actively involved in the restorative approach and understand their role in it.

*\*All indicators are adapted from Corrigan, 2014 except those otherwise noted.*

# The Path: Creating a Sustainable Restorative Practices Program

## Considerations for School-Wide Implementation

- ❑ Adoption of RP is jointly agreed to by the relevant stakeholders (school board, administration, staff and community members).
- ❑ The decision to adopt RP is designed to improve student learning and success.
- ❑ Implementation of RP includes a clear process for incorporating information from needs assessments (i.e., data-driven decision-making).

## Guidance for Working with a RP Trainer

Trainers have ample experience facilitating all practices for building community, repairing harm and teaching.

- ❑ The level of trainer experience is assessed by asking them:
  - How much training have you had?
  - What have your experiences with RP been?
  - What practices do you have experience in?
  - Who trained you?

Also ask them to share specific stories from their experiences with you.

The trainer's experience may include:

- Circle to build community and to teach.
- Circle to repair harm.
- Restorative group conferencing.
- Family group decision-making.
- Community panels.
- Victim-offender dialogues.
- Facilitating conferences for crimes involving severe violence.
- Whole-school restorative practices.
- Restorative Practices and special needs.
- Restorative workplace practices.
- In addition, other practices that provide a trainer with a broad understanding of face-to-face transformative communication such as mediation, collaborative problem-solving and Appreciative Inquiry and an understanding of Active Implementation is also useful.

## Guidance on Training and Support

- ❑ All staff receives an initial two hours of training and a total of four hours of training aimed at increased understanding of the philosophy, principles and values of RP as applied to the specific school context.
- ❑ Any staff planning to be a circle keeper receives four days or 24 hours of training. The training time can be spread throughout a school year and is a combination of direct training and time in circle. For example, staff could do four, one-day training sessions throughout the year. Or staff could do a one- to two-day training, plus a combination of experiencing Circle during staff meeting, using Circle in class with the help of a coach and being in a professional learning community about Circles with other staff and a coach along with additional trainings.
- ❑ Any staff planning to use conferences or Circles to repair harm receives three to four days of training beyond the initial 24 hours of Circle training. People who repair harm should be cross-trained: knowing how to facilitate both circles and conferences for repairing harm will improve their skills.
- ❑ Training for speaking restoratively in school is eight-hour training.
- ❑ New RP practitioners have a coach or an experienced partner with whom they can consult with regularly. Check-ins with the coach should be monthly for the first year and quarterly for the second through fifth year.
- ❑ Professional development for school staff includes creation of a RP-specific individual growth and development plan in the three-year professional review cycle.
- ❑ By the end of the initial implementation process, a school staff member has been identified to become a lead RP coach or aspiring RP coach and is being mentored by the current RP trainer with the goal of becoming the lead coach who would be housed within the school.



## Restorative Practices Values and Principles: Key Knowledge and Practices

- ❑ All staff members are trained on RP philosophy, values and principles.
- ❑ Through training, staff members experience what RP is and what RP looks like in schools.
- ❑ Through training, staff members understand that RP is experiential, and that they will increase their skills for using RP in schools through practice, coaching and ongoing learning.
- ❑ Through training and early experiences, staff members begin building skills for ensuring people of all ages, abilities, communities and life experiences feel welcome and supported when participating in RP.

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## Building Community: Key Knowledge and Practices

- ❑ Teaching and support staff are training in conducting community building Circles.
- ❑ All staff members who work directly with students (including bus drivers, lunch/recess monitors) receive training on talking restoratively in schools.
- ❑ Assessment of student skills are adapted to include levels of active listening, appropriate contributions, creating opportunities for others and the abilities to recognize different points of view, to negotiate and share ideas, to connect with others and to participate. These skills can be assessed in surveys or through classroom observations (Gray & Drewery, 2011).

*Professional development for school staff includes creation of a Restorative Practices-specific individual growth and development plan.*

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## Repairing Harm: Key Knowledge and Practices

- ❑ Most staff members who work directly with students (including bus drivers, lunch/recess monitors) receive training on restorative chats/ impromptu conferencing.
- ❑ Staff members who will respond to serious incidents receive training on both Circles and conferences to repair harm.
- ❑ Staff members who will serve as mediators for resolving conflict receive 30 hours of mediation training done by experienced mediation trainers.
- ❑ Evaluation of RP includes tracking the number of disciplinary referrals as well as requests for and counts of restorative chats and Circles or conferences to repair harm.

*All staff members who work directly with students (bus drivers, lunch/recess monitors) receive training on talking restoratively in schools.*

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## References

Corrigan, M. (2014). "Positive Behavior for Learning Restorative Practice," Kete. [www.education.govt.nz](http://www.education.govt.nz): New Zealand Ministry of Education.

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