

Restorative Justice

“Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public...” Cornell West

INTRO

Restorative Justice (RJ) is about relationships, not rules. RJ practices provide students, teachers, administrators and their communities of support with the tools to both prevent and respond to harms. Justice resonates with youth often caught in the web of punitive discipline. RJ is an expansive and holistic philosophy, actualized by practices that can accommodate social and emotional learning, cultural responsiveness including implicit biases, and trauma informed practices. It represents a paradigm shift from punishment to understanding and compassion.

The writing and research in this area is evolving, stay tuned, more to come. . . think SEL Guide, Dalai Lama and a curriculum for teaching secular ethics, and a long-awaited report on emerging and promising RJ practices!

WHAT THE EXPERTS ARE SAYING: Videos, Websites, Reports, Resources

Read below for some of the most recommended websites and established organizations in the field of restorative justice!

VIDEO: *Mindful Youth Leadership Transforming School Culture.* At El Cerrito High School a group of youth leaders trained in dynamic mindfulness and restorative practices are transforming the school's culture, reducing suspensions. . . one . . . breath . . . at . . . a . . . time.

VIDEO: *Restorative Justice in Oakland Schools: Tier One Community Building Circles.* Watch students at MetWest High School, an Oakland public school in Oakland, Calif., facilitate a community-building circle in their classroom.

VIDEO: *Restorative Welcome and Reentry Circle* in Oakland Unified School District. See the difference a school can make when they welcome the re-entry of a student after juvenile offending. Also read an overview of district's 3-tiered program.

WestEd [Restorative Justice: An Alternative to Traditional Punishment](#)

In need of a quick overview with links to additional resources at WestEd, a trusted source in education. Linked resources include: 1) Summary Findings from Interviews with Experts, 2) Practitioners' Perspectives, and 3) A Research Review.

[WestEd - Justice & Prevention Research Center](#)

Researchers from the WestEd's Justice & Prevention Research Center provide comprehensive pictures of restorative justice in elementary and secondary schools nationwide. Reports from this project include:

1. [What Further Research is Needed on Restorative Justice in Schools?](#)
2. [Restorative Justice in U.S. Schools: Summary Findings from Interviews with Experts](#)
3. [Restorative Justice in U.S. Schools: Practitioners' Perspectives](#)
4. [Restorative Justice in U.S. Schools: A Research Review](#)

Schott Foundation. *Restorative Practices: A Guide for Educators* ([Toolkit & Resources](#))

Everything you need (concrete models, frameworks, and action steps for school-wide implementation) to seamlessly integrate restorative practices into the classroom, curriculum and culture of your school. (Don't miss the accompanying infographic, "A Tale of Two Schools," which is a great visual for explaining how restorative practices can make a critical difference in a student's day.)

[Restorative Schools Vision Project](#) (Resources) includes their new report titled "[Restorative Justice in Schools: Building Practitioner Consensus for Better Student Health](#)"

Based on statewide stakeholder identification of Restorative Justice core concepts and supportive practices, this report addresses issues around transforming school discipline to end the school to prison pipeline. Areas highlighted include: equity and cultural inclusiveness, circle practice, trauma informed schools, narrative processes, youth voice, mindfulness and implementation strategies and training. Educators will find useful data analysis and resources.

Cohen, R. "[The Transformative Nature of Restorative Narrative Justice in Schools](#)" One of the many resources found on the [Restorative Schools Vision Project](#), this comprehensive overview gives you a tour of Restorative Justice through the lens of a narrative approach that separates the person from the problem, asks what is going on and asks what is *right* with the person, *not what is wrong*.

Kecskemeti, M. "[A Discursive Approach to Restorative Practice: Improving the Learning Environment Through Professional Learning](#)" (Nov. 2015)

This article introduces an innovative approach to restorative practice and the model of professional learning that was used to teach it to teachers in three New Zealand schools. Examples of specific conversational and reflection skills recommended for relationship management in the classroom are provided along with a possible process of facilitating teacher practice development and change. The potential positive relational outcomes of applying a discursive stance in interactions are also highlighted.

WHAT THE EXPERTS READ and WRITE: Highly Recommended Books & Articles

If you don't have time to research the latest and greatest reads, check out this list. Vetted by experts in the field, you can be sure that each one is relevant and worth your time!

Stutzman, L. & J. H. Mullet *The Little Book of Restorative Discipline for Schools, Teaching Responsibility: Creating Caring Climates*. Good Books. 2005.

Great concise book for teachers & administrators that defines and explains Restorative Justice (RJ) & Restorative Discipline (RD) describing the values and principles of both. The authors describe whole-school approaches, reintegration following suspensions, class meetings, key elements of circle practice, conferencing, truancy mediation and bullying.

Riestenberg, N. *Circle in the Square*. Living Justice Press. 2012

Nancy Riestenberg is one of the most articulate advocates of RJ. She provides educators with a wealth of knowledge about why and how zero tolerance policies are counterproductive; circle tools that advocates attending to the needs of those harmed can use; and discusses the importance of separating the student from his or her behavior. Learn about the basic elements and components of the Circle Process as well as types of circles such as those designed to build understanding and trust, teaching circles, discussing challenging topics among others.

Boyes-Watson, C. & K. Prinis *Circle Forward*

The most comprehensive text on circles published to date! Includes how to use circles to build a positive school climate, teaching and learning circles, building connecting and community through circles, implementing social and emotional learning through circles, dealing with difficult conversations including bullying, violence, grief, race, white privilege, gender issues, bystanders and many others.

Claassen, R. & Roxanne. *Discipline that Restores*. BookSurge. 2008

This well researched practical book provides teachers with the tools to help foster a more caring school climate, and when mistakes are inevitably made, to move students or teachers to take responsibilities for those mistakes. The author educators clearly illustrate how to develop Respect Agreements using classroom circles that are then synthesized into meaningful agreements that can be posted in classrooms and throughout the school. The agreements define the expectations of how students and her or his teacher

can respectfully interact, how students interact with each other, and how students interact with their school environment.

Winslade, J. & M. Williams *Safe and Peaceful Schools, Addressing Conflict and Eliminating Violence*, Corwin. 2012.

These educator practitioners combine their knowledge and experience with restorative justice practices and narrative practices to provide step-by-step instruction for implementing a narrative based approach to traditional discipline practices in schools. By separating the person from the problem, the reader is provided with questions to ask to achieve this goal that includes vignettes, dialogues, sample activities and charts that are designed to clearly implement this transformative practice.

Kecskemeti, M. & J. Winslade *Better Classroom Relationships*. NX CER. 2016.

Recognizing that developing relationships are the cornerstone of Restorative Justice processes, this 2016 book is relationship centered. "In a relationship centered classroom, the teacher and the students are equally important. The relationship practices [the authors] describe are underpinned by: The importance of being recognized and validated as a person [and] The importance of challenging ideas that exclude, oppress and disadvantage some people.

The authors argue that in order to respond to the diversity of today's classrooms and constantly shifting relationship dynamics, teachers need to be able to deal with uncertainty and they need to have a clear understanding of power dynamics. The authors show how change can be achieved when teachers challenge discourses: those hidden assumptions that influence the outcome of interactions." (quoted from the book cover)

WHAT *Restorative Justice* STANDARDS & EXPECTATIONS DO I ALIGN TO?

Administrators (Educational Leaders)

Program Standard 4: Equity, Diversity and Access ensures, "the program provides opportunities for candidates to learn how to identify, analyze and minimize personal bias, how policies and historical practices create and maintain institutional bias, and how leaders can address and monitor institutional-level inequity." It also ensures, "the program prepares candidates to improve schooling for all students with an emphasis on vulnerable and historically underserved students by examining teaching, learning, student engagement, student discipline, school culture, family involvement, and other programmatic supports in the school for the purposes of providing effective instruction and equitable access for all students."

[California Administrator Content Expectations \(CACE\)](#)

CACE B. INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

B-27. Understand how to develop and implement positive and equitable behavior management systems that promote and support a collaborative, positive culture of learning.

CACE C. MANAGEMENT AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

C-3. Culturally responsive, research-based, student centered classroom management and school-wide positive discipline intervention and prevention strategies that address the social and mental health needs of the child with the goal of keeping all students in school and on course toward graduation

[California Administrator Performance Expectations \(CAPE\)](#)

CAPE 1: DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION OF A SHARED VISION -- Education leaders facilitate the development and implementation of a shared vision of learning and growth of all students.

1A: Developing a Student-Centered Vision of Teaching and Learning: New administrators develop a collective vision that uses multiple measures of data and focuses on equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes for all students. During preliminary preparation, aspiring administrators learn how to:

5. Explain how school plans, programs, and activities support the school's vision to advance the academic, linguistic, cultural, aesthetic, social-emotional, behavioral, and physical development of each student.

CAPE 2: INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP -- Education leaders shape a collaborative culture of teaching and learning informed by professional standards and focused on student and professional growth.

2B: Promoting Effective Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment: New administrators understand the role of instructional leader and use the state-adopted standards and frameworks to guide, support, and monitor teaching and learning. During preliminary preparation, aspiring administrators learn how to:

4. Recognize discriminatory practices, signs of trauma, manifestations of mental illness, and promote culturally responsive, positive and restorative strategies to address diverse student and school needs.

CAPE 3: MANAGEMENT AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT -- Education leaders manage the organization to cultivate a safe and productive learning and working environment.

3B: Managing Organizational Systems and Human Resources: New administrators recognize personal and institutional biases and inequities within the education system and the school site that can negatively impact staff and student safety and performance and address these biases. During preliminary preparation, aspiring administrators learn how to:

3. Use principles of positive behavior interventions, conflict resolution, and restorative justice and explain to staff and community members how these approaches support academic achievement, safety, and well being for all students.

[California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders \(CPSEL\)](#)

CPSEL 1A: Student-Centered Vision: Leaders shape a collective vision that uses multiple measures of data and focuses on equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes for all students.

1A-1 Advance support for the academic, linguistic, cultural, social-emotional, behavioral, and physical development of each learner.

CPSEL 3C: Climate: Leaders facilitate safe, fair, and respectful environments that meet the intellectual, linguistic, cultural, social-emotional, and physical needs of each learner.

3C-2 Implement a positive and equitable student responsibility and behavior system with teaching, intervention and prevention strategies and protocols that are clear, fair, incremental, restorative, culturally responsive, and celebrate student and school achievement.

3C-3 Consistently monitor, review and respond to attendance, disciplinary, and other relevant data to improve school climate and student engagement and ensure that management practices are free from bias and equitably applied to all students.

CPSEL 5A: Reflective Practice: Leaders act upon a personal code of ethics that requires continuous reflection and learning.

5A-1 Examine personal assumptions, values, and beliefs to address students' various academic, linguistic, cultural, social-emotional, physical, and economic assets and needs and promote equitable practices and access appropriate resources.

Teachers

Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs)

TPE 2: Creating and Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning

Elements: Beginning teachers:

1. Promote students' social-emotional growth, development, and individual responsibility using positive interventions and supports, restorative justice, and conflict resolution practices to foster a caring community where each student is treated fairly and respectfully by adults and peers.

Narrative

Beginning teachers create healthy learning environments by promoting positive relationships and behaviors, welcoming all students, using routines and procedures that maximize student engagement, supporting conflict resolution, and fostering students' independent and collaborative learning. Beginning teachers use a variety of strategies and approaches to create and maintain a supportive learning environment for all students. They use principles of positive behavior intervention and support processes, restorative justice and conflict resolution practices, and they implement these practices as appropriate to the developmental levels of students to provide a safe and caring classroom climate.

A CALL TO ACTION: Be more than a great teacher
Be a champion for education!

Do you want to change the lives of even more students? Not just those in your course, classroom or school, you are more powerful than that! We're talking about improving educator credentialing processes so that those who follow in your footsteps will be equally equipped to join you in serving the next generation of students.

It's simple,

1. Encourage schools of education to adopt and incorporate signature practice themes found on this website throughout their credentialing programs;
2. Recommend other educators, coaches and mentors to visit and use this website, it's here to support faculty at schools of education, teachers, administrators and educational leaders like yourself.
3. If you have other exceptional resources that you would like to recommend, please let us know by contacting bstrong@childrennow.org.