A Restorative Approach to Repairing Harm and **Preventing Future** Harm (Tier 3)

Spokane Public Schools
Office of Family and Community
Engagement



# Learning Objectives

- Philosophy of Restorative Practices
- Why SPS uses Restorative Practices as its primary approach to conflict and behavior
- How RP fits within the MTSS framework and discipline policies
- ▶ The Repairing Harm Process



# What is Restorative Justice?

Restorative Justice brings people together to reconcile and build relationships when harm has been done. A major tenant of Restorative Justice is that harm affects everyone in the community- the "victim/s", "whoever does the harm" and the larger community. Therefore decisions about how to repair the harm must be determined by the people affected, as they are the only people who truly know how to make things right.

Restorative Justice aims to build understanding, explore how the wrongdoing has impacted those involved, and to develop agreements that increase trust, safety and understanding so that things are better in the future.



### Indigenous Roots

- Reflects ancient beliefs and practices of Indigenous peoples on many continents.
- Building community based on shared values and shared humanity.
- People in the community treat each other like relatives, where everyone belongs, and everyone matters.



# Two Different Views of Misbehaviors -a paradigm shift-

#### **Punitive View**

- What rule was broken?
- ► Who did it?
- System assigns consequence or punishment

#### Restorative View

- What relationships were broken? Who was harmed?
- Why did this happen? Whose needs were not met?
- The impacted parties control how harm is repaired and needs are met



At Spokane Public Schools, we strive to create a **safe** and **supportive** learning environment for all students and staff. We want all SPS families to feel **connected** to their schools and to feel **understood**, **heard**, and **respected**.

Conflicts are a part of daily life and making mistakes is a part of growing and learning. With this in mind, **SPS embraces a** restorative approach to conflict, meaning that we see conflicts and harmful behavior as an opportunity for students and staff to:

- Learn about themselves and each other
- Take accountability
- Develop empathy
- Repair harm and restore relationships
- •Identify supports that meet the individual for each of our students.

Excerpt from
SPS webpage on
Restorative Practices



MTSS Framework Tier 3 - Repairing Harm

Formal Conferences

Tier 2 - Responding to Conflict

Mediation \* Rupture Repair Dialogues

Tier 1 - Building Community/Preventing Conflict

Affective Statements \* Restorative Questions \* Proactive Circles



# Restorative Strategies will not be Effective and a Restorative Environment will not be Created unless:

1) Strong Relationships Exist

and

2) Participants are <u>Calm</u>

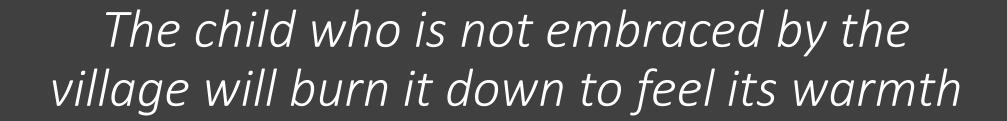
(thinking brain v. survival brain)

If we want young people to be accountable for their actions and to repair damage to relationships in the event of a conflict, then we need to develop relationships in the first place. There needs to be something there to repair. Belinda Hopkins (Dir. Transforming Conflict)



### Restorative Practice Assumptions

- Most people want to be in good connection (need for belonging)
- 2. Everyone is equally valued in the relationship
- 3. People most affected by a conflict should determine how to repair things
- 4. When (young) people do harm, instead of pushing them away, pull them closer
- 5. Relationships are more likely to thrive when doing with people, as opposed to doing to or doing for
- 6. Hurt People, Hurt People



-African Proverb

### Restorative Discipline Shifts

Telling	Listening
Knowing the Answers	Being Curious
Institution / Third Party Trying to Restore Balance	Those affected trying to restore balance
Focus on Wrongdoer	Focus on those harmed and those who caused harm
External Coercion	Internal Motivation



Think of a time when you were harmed....

What did you feel? What did you need to make things right?

Think of a time when you caused harm.....

What did you feel? What did you need to make things right?



# Harm in our Schools







## Step 1: Conversation with the person who caused harm

- "Informal Hearing" required by law
- Mindset: Calm, Curious, Non-Judgmental, Willing to Listen, Open-Minded
- Questions to Guide the Conversation:
  - ► What happened?
  - What were you thinking/feeling at the time?
  - Why did this happen?
  - ▶ Who was impacted?
  - What needs to be done to make things right? What are you willing to do?
  - ► How can you/we prevent this from happening again?



# Preparing for a Restorative Talk

- 1. Be calm
- 2. Be curious about the student's culture and perspective Open Mind
- 3. Suspend judgement Open Heart
- 4. Use active listening and supportive language
- 5. Offer time and personal space

### **Restorative Questions**

#### 1. What happened?

How were you feeling? What were you thinking? Who was hurt by what happened?

#### 2. What do you need?

How do you want things to change? How do we fix the problem together?

#### 3. What's the plan?

What needs to be done to make things right? What is our agreement for the future?

This is why the relationship is important!

**Empathy phase** 

### Step 2: Who was impacted?

Other students

You!
Administrators,
teachers, office
staff, custodial staff

Entire classes

Community members or parents

Their own caregivers

Siblings or relatives in the school



# Step 3: Conversations with people who were impacted

- Mindset: Calm, Curious, Non-Judgmental, Willing to Listen, Open-Minded
- **Conditions:** Safe, Private, Ample Time, Trusted Adult Facilitating, Support Person Available
- Questions to Guide the Conversation:
  - ▶ What happened?
  - How did this impact you?
  - What information do you need?
  - What do you want the person who caused harm to know?
  - ▶ What needs to happen to make this as right as possible?
  - What do you need to feel safe?
  - What questions do you have?

#### Step 4: Menu of Restorative Interventions

- Guidepost: The impacted people must determine which process guides the repair.
- Timing: In lieu of exclusionary discipline, during exclusionary period, upon re-entry
- Types of Restorative Interventions
  - Facilitated Repairing Harm Conference sharing of perspectives, impact, needs; may or may not result in agreement.
  - Facilitated Repairing Harm Circle Same purpose as above, but with multiple parties
  - Apology letters, Restitution Agreements, Community Service, Agreements to address root causes (treatment, counseling, etc)

### Goals of the Repair Process

- For the person who caused harm:
  - Understand the impact of their behavior (empathy)
  - Take accountability for their role (self-reflection)
  - Repair the harm (active role in the repair)
  - Reintegration into the community with supports to address root causes of behavior (prevent recurrence of the behavior)
- For the person who was harmed:
  - Share their story and the impact it had on them (empowerment)
  - Ask questions and get answers (need for information)
  - Express their needs for healing and have those needs met (restitution)
- For the community:
  - Sense of safety
  - Access to information

### Elements of the Repair Process

