

Foundations of Restorative Practices

Department of Family & Community
Engagement

2021

Contact: Julie Schaffer
Juliesc@spokaneschools.org

(509) 354-7242



Spokane Public Schools
excellence for everyone



Roadmap of this Session

- Brief History of Restorative *Justice*
- The What, Why, and How of Restorative Practices in Schools
- Resources to Dig Deeper



Restorative Justice

- Restorative Justice 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.

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?

The child who is not embraced by the village will burn it down to feel its warmth

-African Proverb

Restorative *Practices*

- Strategies and processes that proactively build healthy relationships and that respond to conflict through a relational lens.
- At SPS, the standard approach to student behavior is to utilize Restorative Practices.



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 needs for each of our students.



Spokane Public Schools
excellence for everyone

*Excerpt from
SPS webpage on
Restorative Practices*

An
opportunity
to learn and
grow...

If a child doesn't know how to read, we teach.

If a child doesn't know how to swim, we teach.

If a child doesn't know how to add or subtract, we teach.

If a child doesn't know how to drive, we teach.

If a child doesn't know how to behave, we....?



<https://youtu.be/nUIRkuOFtw0>



Restorative Practice Assumptions



1. The world is profoundly interconnected
2. All human beings have a deep desire to be in good relationship
3. All human beings have inherent dignity
4. All human beings have gifts and everyone is needed for what they bring
5. The people most affected by a conflict should drive the process for repair
6. Harmful behavior often comes from unmet needs; A response that *pushes away* generally increases harm and a response that *pulls in closer* helps reduce future harm.
7. People will make positive changes when those in authority do things *with* them, rather than *to* or *for* them.

Derived from and build on indigenous teachings and other wisdom traditions. Excerpted from Heart of Hope and Circle Forward by Carolyn Boyes-Watson and Kay Pranis, as well as Boston Public Schools.

Two Different Views of Misbehaviors -a paradigm shift-

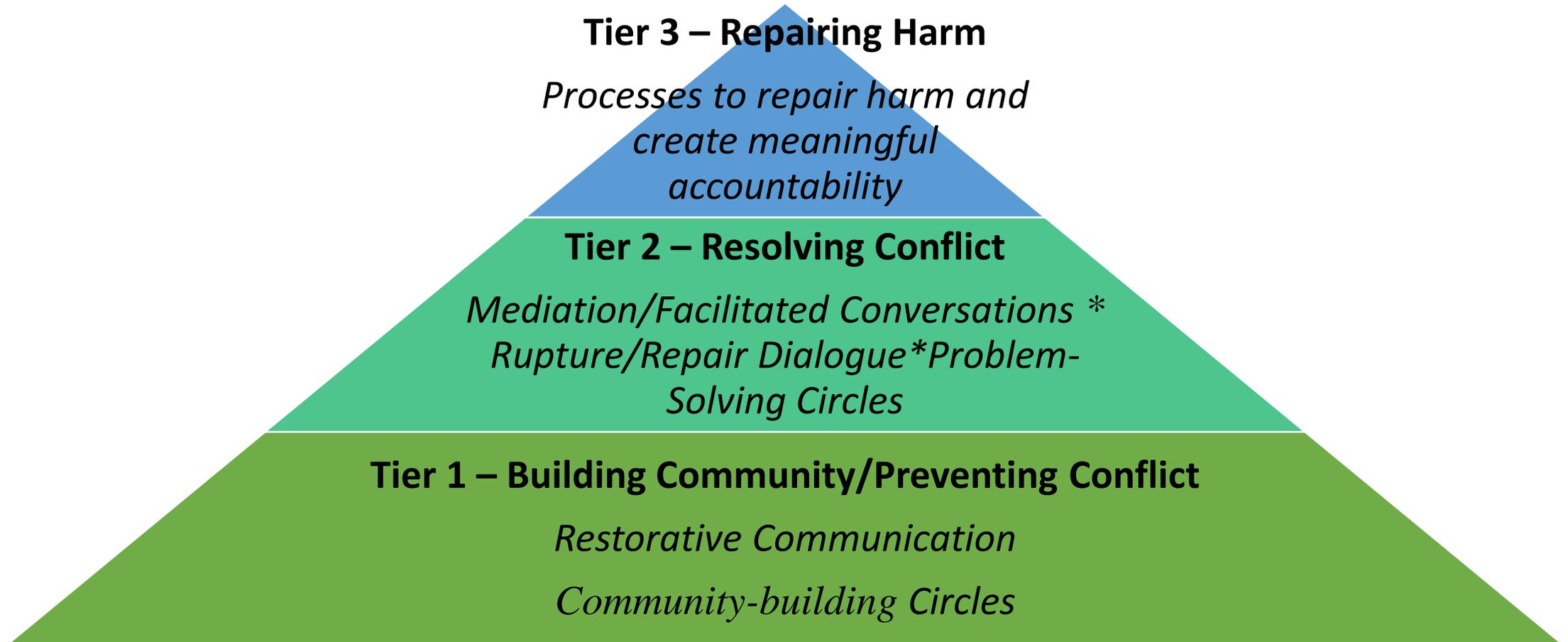
Punitive View

1. What rule was broken?
2. Who did it?
3. System assigns consequence or punishment

Restorative View

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

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Framework



Tier 1

Restorative Practices

Purpose: To create strong relationships and a sense of belonging for all

Community-Building Circles:

A regular practice where everyone has an equal opportunity to share. Circles follow a structure that include a facilitator, group agreements, a talking piece, and prompts. Circles are a great way for students to practice social emotional skills and to develop empathy.

Tier 1 Restorative Practices

Purpose: To create strong relationships and a sense of belonging for all

Restorative Communication:

Affective Statements: to demonstrate understanding and empathy

“I observeI feel I need.... my request....”

Restorative Questions: for clarification, reflection and problem solving

What happened? Thoughts, feelings, harm done?

What do you need? How do we fix the problem?

What's the plan? An agreement for the future

Making Affective Statements

Typical Response	Affective Statement
Sit down and be quiet	I see you walking around the room and talking while I am teaching. I feel upset because I really value (need) cooperation and respect. Could I ask you how that sounds to you?
I don't want to see you fighting with James	When I saw you put your hands on James, I was concerned because I really want everyone to feel safe in our classroom. Would you be willing to tell me what happened between you two?
I don't want to hear you arguing with him anymore. Just walk away.	When I hear major arguments, I feel sad that you are not resolving your conflict in a positive way. Would you be willing to talk it out in a calm manner after practice?

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?

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

Tier 2 Restorative Practices

Purpose: To resolve conflicts in a way that repairs harm and strengthens relationships

Facilitated Dialogue (sometimes called a Mediation): Can be an effective strategy when the people involved in the conflict each have roles and responsibilities in its resolution.

The facilitator must be neutral and the participants must be willing to listen with an open-mind, to share honestly, and to work together towards an agreement that repairs harm and resolves the conflict.

The facilitator uses clarifying questions to help participants identify needs and explore options for mutual gain.

Tier 2

Restorative Practices

Purpose: To resolve conflicts in a way that repairs harm and strengthens relationships

Rupture/Repair Dialogue: When an adult is in conflict with a student, it is the adult's responsibility to initiate repair. A repair conversation can occur after everyone is calm. The adult must have a restorative mindset and can follow restorative questions to guide the conversation (share perspectives, identify needs, and create an agreement).

Tier 2

Restorative Practices

Purpose: To resolve conflicts in a way that repairs harm and strengthens relationships

Problem-Solving Circles: (Responsive Circles) Can be used to process and respond to a conflict, oftentimes a violation of a class agreement or school expectation.

The circle follows a structure, including a facilitator, circle agreements, a talking piece, and prompts.

In a classroom, 80% of circles should be proactive and 20% should be responsive.

Tier 3

Restorative Practices

Purpose: To repair harm and create an opportunity for meaningful accountability

Process to Repair Harm:

When behavior causes harm in our schools, a restorative process empowers the people who were harmed by creating a safe space to share their experiences, ask questions, and identify what they need to feel whole again. For the person who caused harm, the process provides an opportunity to take accountability, understand the impact of their behavior, and create a plan to prevent future harm.

This process can occur in lieu of other discipline, alongside other discipline, or upon re-entry to school after exclusionary discipline.



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.

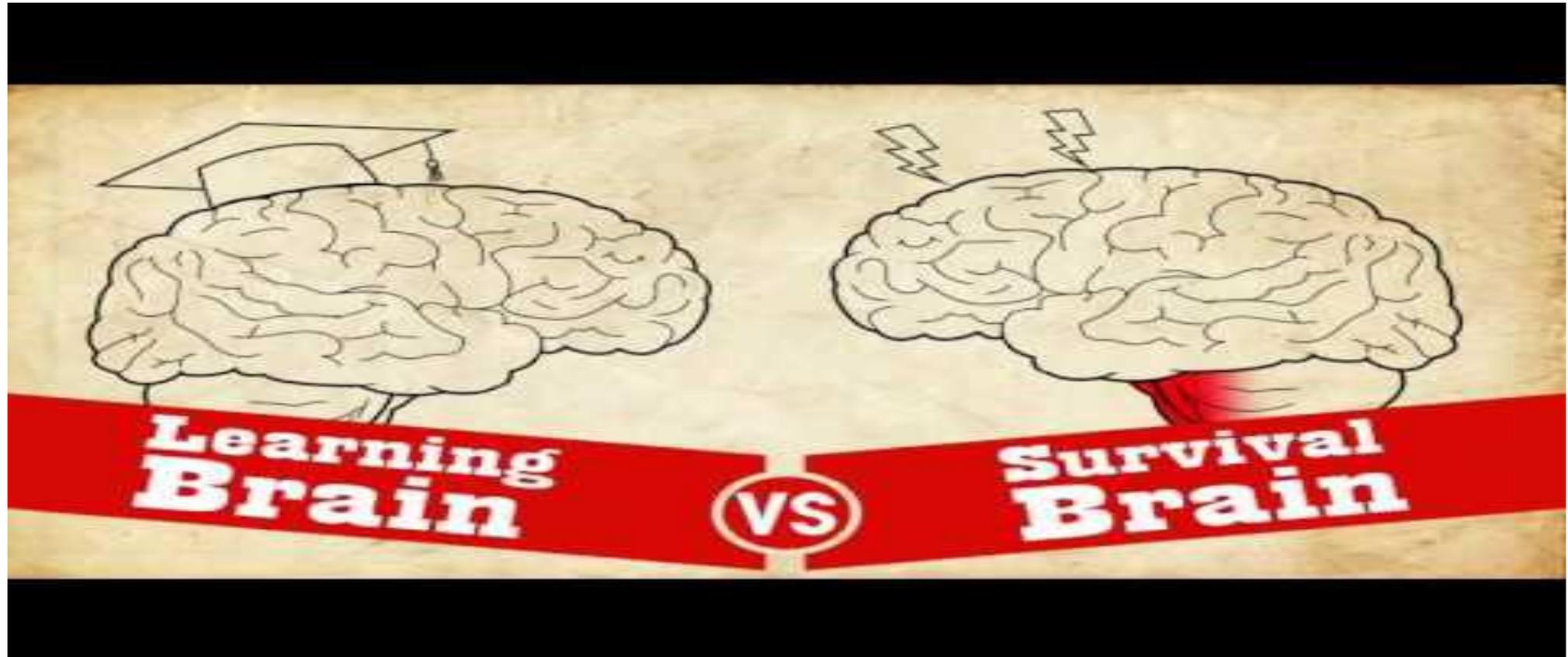
~Belinda Hopkins

Director, Transforming Conflict

We can't restore until we *Regulate* *The brain and conflict*

- Conflict situations can bring on strong emotions and feelings.
- Neuroscience tells us that the brain needs to be regulated in order to think and problem solve.
- Trauma or Adverse Childhood Experiences can affect students' ability to handle stress and the brain becomes dysregulated
- Students who experience trauma live in a chronic state of fear, they can become rude and disrespectful when asked restorative questions. Create a safe place and give them time to regulate.

<https://youtu.be/KoqaUANGvpA>



Approach others from a bottom-up perspective



“Children cannot develop healthy self regulatory skills unless they see adults consistently addressing their own emotions in healthy ways.”

- Dr. Becky Bailey (Conscious Discipline)



“Imagine you are walking in the woods and you see a small dog sitting by a tree. As you approach it, it suddenly lunges at you, teeth bared.

You are frightened and angry. But then you notice that one of its legs is caught in a trap.

Immediately your mood shifts from anger to concern: You see that the dog’s aggression is coming from a place of vulnerability and pain.

This applies to all of us. When we behave in hurtful ways, it is because we are caught in some kind of trap.

The more we look through the eyes of wisdom at ourselves and one another, the more we cultivate a compassionate heart.”
Tara Brach



Additional Resources

SPS Restorative Practices Webpage

Juliesc@spokaneschools.org, 354-7242