

Myths that prevent Restorative Discipline

Myth #1: Punishment holds students accountable

“One of the most persistent myths in school discipline is that punishment is a way of “holding students accountable.” But punishment only works when the authority is watching and relies on external control. Restorative methods impose a consequence rather than a punishment and help to create empathy and active involvement. A consequence dramatically improves the chances that positive attitudes and behaviors will be internalized and the young people will behave well, not merely out of fear, but because they want to feel good about themselves and have a positive connection with others.” (Costello, et al. pg 77)

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Myth #2: If a student misbehaves, he/she deserves to be yelled at

If more than 50% of your interactions involve conflict, you are inadvertently contributing to the problem. Research shows that young people’s behavior can only improve once a safe and satisfying relationship is established with the educator. Moreover, childhood is a process of learning and making mistakes. Yelling clouds messages as students ruminate on the interaction and are overwhelmed by their emotions, rather than considering the event. It also has the effect of reducing the connection between adult and child. (Beaudoin, et al pg 41)

5 Essential Characteristics of Successful Restorative Practices

- ❖ RELATIONSHIPS: Developing caring connections and finding common ground
- ❖ RESPECT: Listening to others’ opinions and valuing them
- ❖ RESPONSIBILITY: Being accountable for actions taken
- ❖ RESTORATION: Repairing harm that has been caused
- ❖ REINTERGRATION: Ensuring all remain included and involved

References:

Wachtel, Joshua, Bob Costello, and Ted Wachtel. *The Restorative Practice Handbook for Teachers, Disciplinarians and Administrators*. Bethlehem, PA: International Institute on Restorative Practices, 2009

Beaudoin, Marie-Nathalie, and Maureen Taylor. *Responding to a culture of Bullying & Disrespect*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin 2009

Zehr, Howard *The Little Book of Restorative Justice Intercourse*, PA Good Books 2002

Quote

“I am continually humbled by human capacities for openness, heart-centered connecting, humility, compassion, understanding and love. I find that restorative justice in general and peacemaking circles in particular help us connect with our deepest and best selves and bring these dimensions of ourselves to some of the hardest challenges we face.”

Kay Pranis

Introduction

Restorative Justice (RJ) is an approach to conflict that focuses on repairing harm and creating a space for open communication, relationship building, healing and understanding. According to Community Justice for Youth Institute (2011), RJ provides a way for those impacted by conflict to be a part of finding the solutions that meet their needs and promote community safety and well-being

Restorative Justice (RJ) in schools-is a set of practices and values that holistically prevents and repairs harm, builds community and relationships resulting in a positive supportive school climate

Shifting the Lens

Traditional Lens

- What rules or laws were broken?
- Who broke them?
- What do they deserve?

Restorative Lens

- What harm was caused and to whom
- What are the needs and obligations that have arisen
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Pillars of Restorative Justice

Harms & needs, Obligations, and engagement

1. RJ focuses on harm. The goal of RJ is to provide an experience of healing for all concerned
2. Wrongs or harms result in Obligations. RJ emphasizes offender accountability and responsibility
3. RJ promotes engagement or participation. This suggests that the primary parties are given significant roles in the justice process. These stakeholders need to be given information about each other and to be involved in deciding what justice requires in this case.

“Restorative Justice requires, at minimum that we address victims’ harms and needs, hold offenders accountable to put right those harms, and involve victims, offenders, and communities in this process” Howard Zehr

Moving From

Doing something to

Doing something with