

**Restorative Practices:
Transforming School Climates
From the Inside-Out**

Rick Phillips, Executive Director
www.community-matters.org


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Community Matters Mission

“To wake up the courage of students and adults to create schools that are safe, welcoming and inclusive.”




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The Pillars of School Safety

Security



Outside-In Approach

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The "Outside-In" Approach

- Security-Focused
- Adult-Driven
- Punitive Policies
- Control-Oriented



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The Impact of Zero Tolerance

- 40% increase of secondary students suspended per year (1972-73 to 2009-10)
- No evidence that suspensions & expulsions reduced classroom disruptions
- Out of school suspensions:
 - Can severely disrupt a student's academic progress with lasting negative consequences
 - Are associated with subsequent involvement in the juvenile justice system

Summarized from "A Generation Later: "What We Learned About Zero Tolerance Schools" (The Institute for Justice), December 2013.


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Living in a Disconnected World

"We are living in an unprecedented social experiment. We have systematically changed the patterns and connections that have characterized human life as long as there has been human life."



Wachtel, *Dreaming of a New Reality*

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The Pillars of School Safety


Security **Climate**



Outside-In Approach **Inside-Out Approach**

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The “Inside-Out” Approach





Relationship-Focused
Student-Centered
Formative / Restorative
Focused on Changing Social Norms

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Guiding Principles, Laws, Regulations, and Funding

- Dear Colleague Letter (US DOE)
- Guiding Principles (US DOE)
- Bullying Laws
- Cyber-bullying Laws
- Climate/Safety Initiatives
- NITT (President’s Initiative)



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What is “Climate”?

- It’s our inner-barometer of safety & belonging
- It’s based on our ‘gut’ feeling
- Everyone can feel it
- It influences how we behave and whether or not we choose to engage



And we can consciously influence it...

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Positive School Climate Characteristics

- Strong relationships among and between students and staff
- Discipline using formative / restorative consequences
- Engagement, recognition and leadership opportunities for students in a wide variety of activities



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Positive School Climate Impact

- Increases student retention & academic achievement
 - Renews focus on teaching & learning

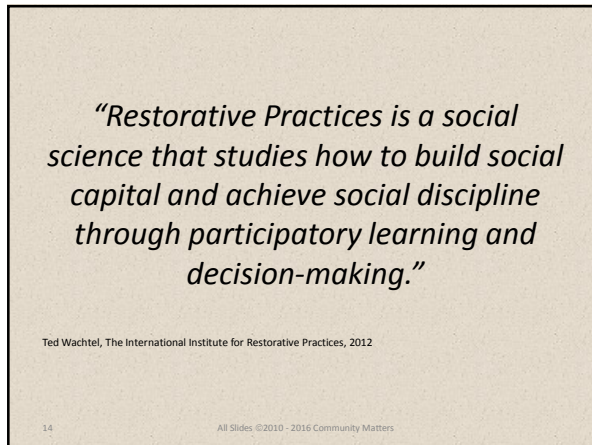


- Decreases bullying & other antisocial behaviors
 - Engenders trust & sense of safety

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The Restorative Practices Approach

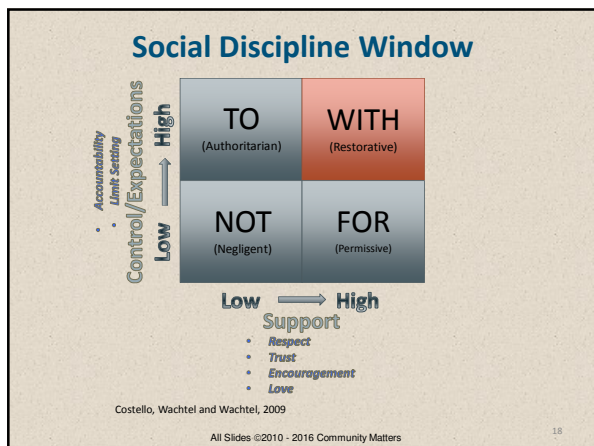
- 1. Proactive**
 - Strengthen Relationships
 - Build Trust
 - Develop Community
- 2. Responsive**
 - Manage Conflict and Misbehavior
 - Meet Needs/Repair Harm
 - Restore Relationships

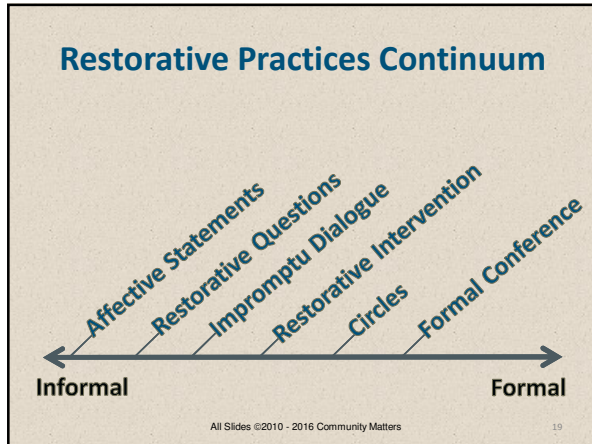
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Paradigm Shift

From Punitive	To Restorative
Rule Broken	Who has been harmed and how?
Establish guilt or innocence	What needs and obligations have been created?
Suppress misbehavior and conflict	Recognize misbehavior and conflict as a natural learning opportunity
Authority driven disciplinary actions	Those impacted determine resolution collectively in Circle
Accountability = Punishment	Deeper Accountability = Understand the impacts Take responsibility Make amends
Using fear of punishment and exclusion to motivate positive behavior	Positive behavior results from the opportunity to make amends and honorably reintegrate

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Moving From Punitive to Relational: The Challenge

- “staff...may share different views on the role of an educator and the purpose of discipline.”
- “Without understanding the enormity of the task a few good people in each school will be working very hard to make a difference, with limited impact.”

(Source: Overcoming Resistance to Whole School Uptake of Restorative Practices, Blood and Thorsborne, 2006)

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Why Change Initiatives Fail

Research indicates, “that 70% of change initiatives fail because of 3 critical reasons:

1. People leading the change process announce the change and consider that is sufficient for having implemented
2. Peoples concerns are not surfaced or heard
3. Those expected to change are not actively involved in the change process.”

(Source: Zigarmiet al: Blanchard, 2006) and (Blood and Thorsborne, 2006)

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5 Key Strategies for Successful Implementation of Restorative Practices:

Identify 5 key strategies for successful implementation of Restorative Practices:

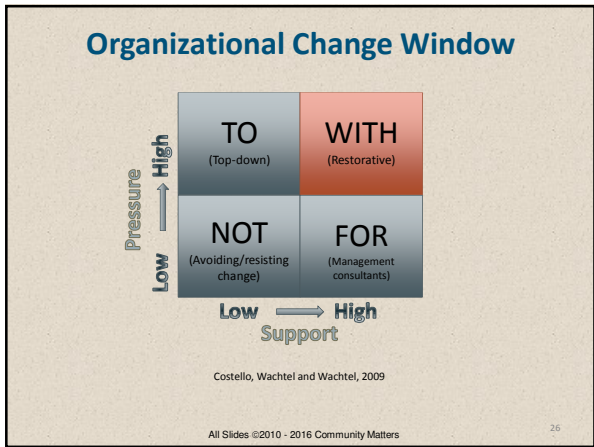
1. Restorative Leadership
2. Creating a Learning Organization
3. Staff Engagement/Overcoming Resistance
4. Using Systems Thinking
5. Strategic, Incremental Implementation

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1. Restorative Leadership

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Fair Process

"...individuals are most likely to trust and cooperate freely with systems—whether they themselves win or lose by those systems—when fair process is observed."

- **Engagement**—involve individuals in decisions that affect them. Listen to their views and genuinely take their opinions into account.
- **Explanation**—explain the reasoning behind a decision to everyone who is affected by it
- **Expectation Clarity**—make sure that everyone clearly understands a decision and what is expected of them

(Source: Kim & Mauborgne, 1997)

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2. Creating a Learning Organization

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Learning Organizations

"A learning organization is a group of people working together collectively to enhance their capacities to create results they really care about."
(Peter Senge, 1990)

- Recognize the importance of team learning
- Focus on continuous self-improvement
- Reflect a shared vision
- Understand the impact of belief systems on the organization
- Use a systems approach

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**3. Staff Engagement/
Overcoming Resistance**

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Staff Engagement and Buy-In

- Take the long view
- Prioritize Relationships and Community Building
- Use Fair Process
- Know Your People

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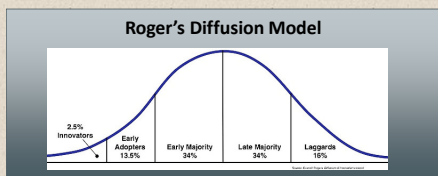
(Source: Kim & Mauborgne, 1997)

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Know Your People

- People adapt to change at different rates and in different ways
- Different kinds of resistance:
 - emotional
 - need information and proof
 - fundamental disagreement
- Remember 10-20% buy-in is tipping point!



Source: Everett Rogers Diffusion Model

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4. Using Systems Thinking

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Questions For Consideration

1. What is the current need and how can Restorative Practices address it?
2. How receptive is the culture to a relational approach?
3. How can RP inform programs already in place? What are the interrelationships?
4. How can these programs support the implementation of RP?
5. Is a realignment of policies and procedures necessary?

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5. Strategic, Incremental Implementation

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Start-Up Planning

1. Identify advocates and resisters
2. Identify and engage leadership
3. Establish baseline data
4. Create 3 year roll-out plan including strategies for:
 - Gaining buy-in
 - Training
 - Experimentation
 - Ongoing learning
 - Monitoring progress and gathering feedback
 - Updating policies and procedures
 - Reporting out progress

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Possible Roll-out Strategy

1. Provide initial introduction to staff, families and community partners and elicit feedback
2. Provide groups with feedback results & suggestions for next steps
3. Begin staff circles
4. Provide strategic professional development
5. Whole school presentation of RP to students
6. Begin experimentation with community building circles, affective statements and restorative dialogue
7. Begin formal conferencing
8. Create or adapt PLC's/PLG's for ongoing learning
9. Maintain ongoing leadership meetings
10. Maintain ongoing monitoring of progress and feedback loop
11. Revisit and update discipline policies
12. Report progress to stakeholders and celebrate success!

There is no "blueprint", every school is different

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