THE RESTORATIVE IMPLEMENTATION: PARADIGMS AND PRACTICES

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Changing the discipline practices of a school is a multi-year process requiring effort and buy-in from all members of the school community. Educators wishing to include restorative measures into their school climate efforts can look to implementation science for a framework of change. Restorative practices are similar to and have key differences from School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, but the framework for implementation can be used for both sets of practices. Implementing restorative measures requires adults to reflect upon their beliefs about discipline and students and upon their own values in education.

T he unintended outcomes of suspension and other exclusionary discipline policies are well documented. The US Department of Education and the US Department of Justice, no less, have recommended school districts change their discipline practices to keep students in schools, learning and off the streets and out

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of the criminal justice system. Two approaches, in particular, are sited as alternatives to suspension and expulsion: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Restorative Measures. Both are best implemented throughout the whole school, and both constitute a paradigm shift away from punishment to teaching and recognizing positive behavior expectations in the former, and building community and repairing harm in the latter (Joint Dear Colleague Letter, 2014).

The question at hand for schools looking to implement Restorative Measures is how to start? The basic answer is to look to implementation science, and follow the interconnected stages of exploration, installation, initial implementation and full implementation. Build a diverse team that has authority. Get buy in from the faculty and staff, the family members and the students. Collect data and analyze it. Make sure the leadership in the school supports the approach. Have meetings, train people. Coach. Train again. Re-allocate resources, adjust policy. Review data, disaggregate data, make decisions based on data. Report to the community and the school board. Engage in a continuous cycle of improvement. You know, run a school.

Implementation science developed in part to help ensure that a practice would be done to fidelity, and that students benefit from the practice. There is no short cut to Carnegie Hall: one has to practice, practice, practice. Since restorative approaches are relatively new to some educators, I would like to review a few items that are essential and perhaps very challenging. The restorative philosophy is a paradigm shift in the way adults and students work together. Implementation is a process, not an event. We do things best that we have learned deeply. Comparisons provide insight.

RESTORATIVE MEASURES

Prevention programs in schools are most effective when they provide a multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), are implemented school-wide, use data to inform and improve programming, and address student and adult behavior as well as the school climate environment. The public health approach to disease prevention of primary, secondary and tertiary interventions has been adapted to illustrate these levels in schools, and is a useful framework for everything from reading instruction to behavior. The triangle framework is enhanced when educators use it to consider the whole child—their emotional, academic, behavioral and cognitive needs.

Restorative measures (or practices, approaches, discipline) can be organized into tiered levels of support, focusing on fair practices that:

1. Affirm relationships as a means of building community in the classroom and school,
2. Teach the skills of relationship to develop internal strength and
3. Use the power of relational connections to provide direction for repairing or rebuilding relationships (see Figure 1).

At the tier one level, Restorative Measures teach social and emotional skills with an emphasis on building community—relationships between students and students and adults and students, practiced though class meeting or the circle process (Nelson, Lott & Glenn, 1993, Stutzman, Amstutz & Mullet, 2005). Behavior expectations are based in the values of the

Figure 1. *Responsive Regulation: A Whole School Model of Restorative Justice*
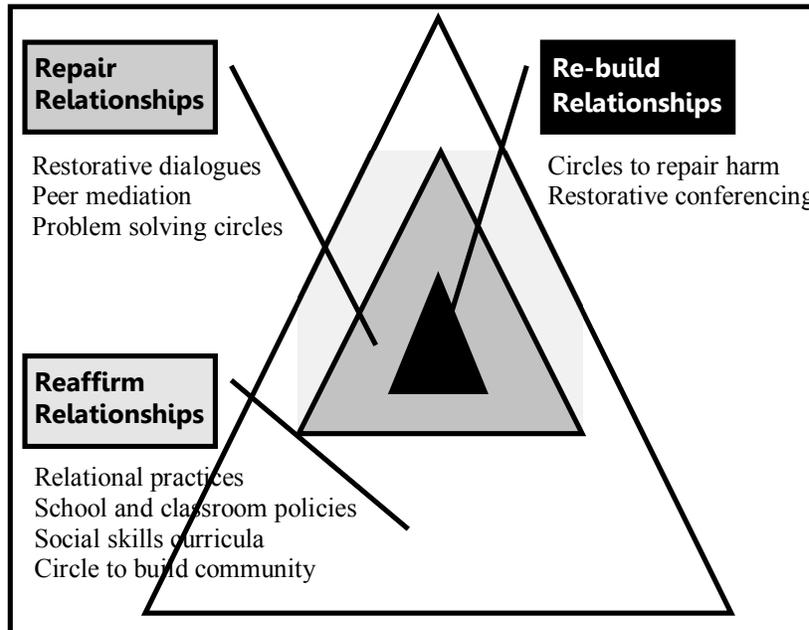
Source: Morrison, B. Restoring Safe School Communities, 2007.

group and are developed by students and adults together (Boyes -Watson & Pranis, 2010). All adults teach, model and re-enforce empathy, primarily through the use of affective statements (Costello, Wachtel & Wachtel, 2009).

Restorative Measures involve values, skills and processes, not just a set of intervention techniques. To set up a restorative school, the adults must discuss their values and whether they can align what they do in school to their own self-care, to work with students and each other, and to compassion for each other and for the students and families.

PARADIGM SHIFT

The philosophy that underpins restorative approaches constitutes a paradigm shift. Instead of thinking only about how to respond to the individual, Restorative Measures are about harnessing the power of relationship and community. Brenda Morrison defines Restorative Measures as practices that sustain "safe and just school communities grounded in the premise that human beings are relational and thrive in contexts of social engagement over control" (Morrison, 2007).

So what does that mean, really? Most school policy is organized around the control exerted by adults over the students using negative or positive re-enforcement. In some instances that control is exerted by police officers. It can be a challenge, therefore, for some adults to believe that students, if asked to help keep the classroom safe for all, will actually work for the greater good.

Ted Wachtel states this concept of social engagement in this way: "The underlying premise of restorative practices is that people are happier, more cooperative, more productive and more likely to make positive changes when those in positions of authority do things WITH them rather than TO them or FOR them" (Costello Wachtel & Wachtel, 2009).

It may make sense in some people's head to collaborate with students (to do WITH them) on creating a safe school environment, but that might be a challenge to their heart: some adults may not trust students. Other adults may be all for collaboration and relationships, as that feeds their heart, but they are concerned about very practical items, like, will the number of fights decrease? Will there indeed be less bullying? Will we be safe? How much time will this take? Will this increase academic achievement?

This tug between the head and the heart is perhaps the first challenge of implementation: getting buy-in from the school community. Adults, students and community members will need to grapple with issues such as punishment and consequences, taking the time we need, knowing that teaching takes time, youth development principles, fair process and resource allocation. Will we use restorative processes for all behavior problems, or just the simple ones? Will this work for every student and situation? Do we throw out the discipline manual? Will we use them for adult behavior? Is there a place for workplace restorative process for harm that happens between adults? Is it possible that some students did not choose to behave a certain way, but that they might not have the neural pathways for "good school behavior?" Can we accommodate trauma informed practices? Do we care at all about someone's story? Do we really want relationships—adult to adult, student to student, teacher to parent, school to community?

So, how does one convince people to try another way? One way is to engage staff in a learning and discussion process. Kay Pranis and Carolyn Boyce Watson have developed a set of circle outlines for staff in their book *Circle Forward* (Boyes-Watson and Pranis, 2015). The staff can learn the Circle process, the means by which a restorative school can build community and then discuss restorative principles. By holding discussions in Circle, they have a practical reason to experience the process. That way, the staff has some idea of what they are buying into when the school is asked to "go restorative." But in order to teach the information needed to discuss buy-in, someone needs to have "bought-in."

IMPLEMENTATION IS A PROCESS, NOT AN EVENT

The research on implementation is a comfort and a challenge. The comfort is that a school cannot be expected to fix everything in a week or a month or a year. The challenge is that it takes two to four years to get through exploration to installation. Lasting change does not come overnight. To be effective, an *entire* community must be involved in and committed to the implementation of Restorative Measures.

Implementation science identifies several stages that require attention to allow for holistic integration of practice into all systems within a school. This is a process which requires a multiyear commitment of time and resources. The four stages of implementation are not always done in order, but each needs to be done fully (see Table 1).

1. Exploration
2. Installation (Training and Preparation)
3. Initial Implementation
4. Full Implementation.

School staff may learn about the process of implementation by reviewing the materials on the Active Implementation Hub , an online learning website developed by the University of North Carolina. School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports is a working example of using the science of implementation. Several school districts are building such Restorative Measures frameworks, like San Francisco and Oakland. The Ministry of Education in New Zealand has built an excellent website with theoretical and practical linkages to their positive Behavior 4 Learning initiative, which has

Table 1. *Four Stages of Restorative Measures Implementation*

Focus	Stage	Description
Should we do it?	**Exploration**	• Decision of making a commitment to adopt and enact the process and procedures required to support implementation of restorative practices with fidelity.
Let's get ready to do it!	**Installation**	• Training staff and setting up infrastructure required to successfully implement restorative practices. • Involvement of students, staff and families. • Development of a core group/team to plan, implement and collect data.
Let's do it!	**Initial Implementation**	• Adoption of restorative practices into all systems within the school. • Staff are actively engaged in the practices. Students and families are knowledge of practices and active participants. • Clear evidence of restorative practices are visible. • Data collection is on-going.
Let's make it better!!	**Full Implementation**	• Data has been collected and reviewed with all stakeholders. • On-going professional development for all staff. • Benefits are present. • Adjustments are made as needed.

Source: Adapted from Los Angeles County Office of Education. For more information, go to http://region11s4.lacoe.edu/attachments/article/104/2C.%20PBIS%20Stages%20of%20Implementation.pdf. Also, Implementation of Best Practices, Minnesota Department of Education at http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/EdExc/BestPrac/ImpleEffecPrac/index.html.

11 frameworks, from Māori culture to Restorative Measures. (See the *Resources* section for website information on these initiatives.)

The exploration stage for Restorative Measures has taken many forms in Minnesota. In some instances, a lone advocate has caught the interest of teachers or administrators, and practices have been built off of the work of a few people. On the other end of the spectrum, a principal or superintendent has directed senior staff to implement Restorative Measures, however they can. Or the student support staff team has worked to influence either teachers or administrators to build community in the classroom or repair harm in the office. In other parts of the country, the community has worked with the district to build a restorative school.

But we know that advocates and administrators can leave—to another district, to another position within the district, to start an organic carrot farm. For that reason, as soon as the idea of using Restorative Measures is raised, it is helpful to put together a team to manage implementation, a team that is based upon the right functions, rather than good friends. The team then has enough people to carry on its work, regardless of promotions, position changes or life choices.

Just learning the components of implementation takes time, but it is time well spent, if we want an initiative to become part of the way things are done, as opposed to a program that ends. One is about sustainability, and the other is about the short run.

LEARNING RESTORATIVE MEASURES DEEPLY

To implement anything well, people need to know what it is and they need to know what it is *deeply*. This takes time.

Reading and studying the theory around Restorative Measures is essential, but equally important is experiencing the actual practice. I can explain a C major scale, but the essence is in the movement of my fingers over the keys. One restorative justice trainer provides opportunities for the teachers she trains to also volunteer at the restorative justice community program. They learn the essence of the process by participating weekly in a circle to repair harm. The process is the best teacher.

Restorative Measures are based in modern restorative justice theory, the psychology of affect, youth development principles and Indigenous People's wisdom (Morrison, 2007, Costello, Wachtel & Wachtel, 2009, Riestenberg, 2012, Pranis, 2005). I am guessing that all of our cultures had Restorative Measures, deep in the past. We all at one time could not afford to lose anyone from the fire circle, and so figured out how to repair harm for the good of the group. Some cultures still practice restorative ways. Deep learning includes finding the people in your community who know these practices and learning from them.
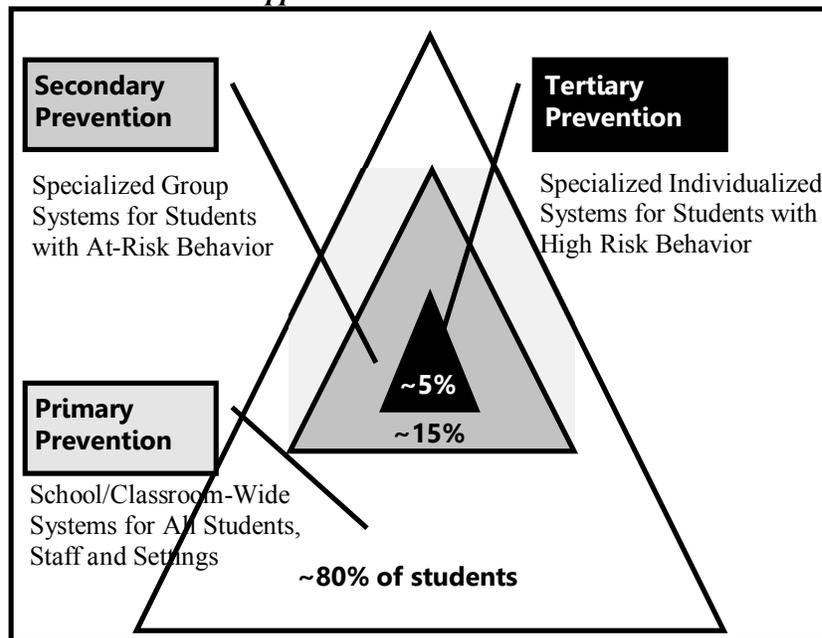
COMPARISONS PROVIDE INSIGHT

Because PBIS and Restorative Measures are being paired as ways of reducing disproportionality and improve school climate, it is useful to compare the practices, so that application can be done with fidelity to both. While PBIS seeks to establish a school-wide framework to teach and support student pro-social behaviors, Restorative Measures seeks to engage the group to encourage relationship building and to repair harm. The approaches are not mutually exclusive, as both draw upon the public health framework for prevention. Both provide approaches that fill in gaps in the puzzle of student need.

SCHOOL-WIDE-PBIS (SW-PBIS)

SW-PBIS provides a structure for targeting, implementing and sustaining evidence-based practices. Changes in the behavior of students comes from clearly articulating behavior expectations, aligning adult behavior so that all adults are looking for and recognizing positive, pro-social behavior, as well as changing the environment so that conditions for positive behavior are enhanced. Data helps to focus effort, making the coordination of related programs more effective.

It is based in behavioral theory and applied behavioral analysis (Sugai & Horner, 2002). At the primary level, adults work with students to identify the behaviors that everyone is expected to use, and the adults then teach the skills for those behaviors (see Figure 2). As David Osher and colleagues

Figure 2. *Continuum of School-Wide Instructional and Positive Behavior Support*

Secondary Prevention

Specialized Group Systems for Students with At-Risk Behavior

Tertiary Prevention

Specialized Individualized Systems for Students with High Risk Behavior

Primary Prevention

School/Classroom-Wide Systems for All Students, Staff and Settings

~5%

~15%

~80% of students

Source: SW-PBIS, 2009.

explain, "The goal is to establish a positive school and classroom climate in which expectations for students are predictable, directly taught, consistently acknowledged, and actively monitored" (Osher, Bear, Sprague, Doyle, 2010).

SIMILARITIES

SW-PBIS and restorative measures have shared core features and complement each other (see Table 2).

Table 2. *SW-PBIS and Restorative Measures Similarities*

Shared Core Features	**Complementary Features**
• Whole school approach • Attention to changing the behavior of adults • See and pay attention to each and every child • Change environment • Identify, teach and encourage positive behaviors • Build assets and protective factors	• Restorative Measures provide early and/or intense interventions to restore harm and repair relationships • The Circle process provides a way of delivering content, especially Social Emotional Learning, that strengthens relationships at the same time as helping adults see each child • The SW-PBIS framework provides data for team-based decision making • SW-PBIS reflects best practices in implementation science

DIFFERENCES

Restorative measures and SW-PBIS also differ on the following dimensions (see Table 3).

Table 3. *SW-PBIS and Restorative Measures Differences*

Dimension	SW-PBIS	Restorative Measures
Practices	• Behavioral	• Relational and structural problem-solving processes
Primary Focus	• Teaching • Acknowledging and rewarding pro-social behaviors	• Affirming relationships • Teaching empathy • Resolving conflict and harm and restoring or re-building relationships
Decision Making Process	• Team- and data-based, • Attention to fidelity of implementation	• Problem solving using affective questions • Small impromptu conferences and group or class circles to re-affirm common agreements and expectations
Responsiveness to culture	• Team makeup and behavioral expectations reflect the culture of the school	• The community building process of reaffirming relationships acknowledges and builds upon the cultures of the students in the classroom, as well as the culture of the school and majority culture

IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE

Implementation science, which is integrated throughout the SW-PBIS framework, underscores the importance of practicing the process to fidelity. Sometimes, to ensure fidelity, processes need to stand side by side. For instance, it would be odd to a Restorative Measures practitioner to reward a student for participating in circle or send them to the principal's office if they choose not to participate. The process is about authentic and reciprocal social engagement. During the circle, participants—students and teacher alike—are more or less equal. Likewise, once the circle is done and the desks are back in place, adults resume recognizing the behaviors they want to see, keeping their focus as much as possible on the positive.

Sometimes processes can be imbedded, like providing a social emotional learning lesson or bullying prevention lesson taught in circle. Sometimes one approach can inform another like using youth development principles in the process of developing school wide behavior expectations. By asking the students in each class to come up with their expectations, and having those expectations included in the process of making one set for the school building, all voices—students and adults—are heard.

Finally, no one approach can provide everything a school needs for a safe climate. We need to consider mental health services, social emotional learning and equity efforts through the tiered levels of support, in addition to PBIS and Restorative Measures. Maintaining effort is the challenge and the hope of a school.

CONCLUSION

Comparing Restorative Measures and SW-PBIS provides insight into both approaches as well as an example of implementation. Whatever practice we use, we must use it to fidelity. Implementation is a process, not an event. We must learn deeply the musical scales of our practices, in order to do them well. Restorative Measures are a paradigm shift away from punishment and external control to social engagement, repair of harm and community building with each other. We can integrate Restorative Measures with other initiatives, we can use them to inform other practices and they can be used side by side.

With both relationships and recognition, students with adults can build and strengthen self-control so that everyone can work, play and learn in a safe, predictable, respectful community. More importantly, though, I would say we need to use the core features of any practice—academic, social emotional, behavioral or restorative—as an art, heartfelt, knowing that what we do is based in our values and is valuable.

RESOURCES

Active Implementation HUB (http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/)
The AI Hub is developed and maintained by the State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center (SISEP) (http://sisep.fpg.unc.edu/) and the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN)(http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/) at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's FPG Child Development Institute.

Center for Justice and Peace Building at Eastern Mennonite University
(http://www.emu.edu/cjp/)

The Center for Justice & Peace building (CJP) is comprised of the Graduate Program in Conflict Transformation, and the Practice and Training Institute which houses the Summer Peace building Institute, Seminars for Trauma Awareness and Resilience (STAR) and other intensive training, program and partnership opportunities.

Center for Restorative Justice at Simon Frasier University, Vancouver, British Columbia
(http://www.sfu.ca/crj/)

The Centre for Restorative Justice is an initiative by the Simon Fraser University School of Criminology.

International Institute of Restorative Practices (IIRP)
(http://www.iirp.org/)

IIRP is a graduate school and resource center for restorative work in school and community.

Positive Behaviour for Learning
(pb4l.tki.org.nz)

The New Zealand Ministry of Education's Positive Behavior for Learning is a systemic approach to help schools "address problem behaviour, improve children's wellbeing and increase educational achievement." Ten initiatives are being used or are in development, including PB4L Restorative Practice.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports in Minnesota (http://www.pbismn.org/)

PBIS MN is the website for the broad constituency of Minnesota SW-PBIS implementers, trainers, coaches, practitioners, stakeholders, teachers, advocates, researchers, volunteers, administrators, regional project and MN PBIS leadership staff.

PBISApps (https://www.pbisapps.org/About-Us/Pages/default.aspx)

PBISApps is a not-for-profit group, developed and operated by Educational and Community Supports (ECS) faculty and staff, a research unit at the University of Oregon. It is the maker of the School-Wide Information System (SWIS) Suite, PBIS Assessment and PBIS Evaluation.

PBISWorld (http://www.pbisworld.com/)

PBIS world was developed by a school social worker to provide practical information regarding tier one, two and three interventions, and to provide further opportunities for school personnel to discuss strategies for implementing PBIS.

Restorative Practices SFUSD (http://www.healthiersf.org/RestorativePractices/)

The Restorative Practices website of the San Francisco Unified School District training materials, videos, brochures translated into several languages, the restorative questions in several languages, posters, a class curriculum to teach students about circle, policy language and a whole school implementation guide.

Restorative Practices International (https://www.rpiassn.org/)

Restorative Practices International (RPI) is a not-for-profit, independent, professional member association that supports the development of restorative practice in schools, prisons, workplaces, organizations, families and communities.

Technical Assistance Center for Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI) (http://www.challengingbehavior.org/)

The Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI) provides products and resources on research-based practices to improve the social -emotional outcomes for young children with, or at risk for, delays or disabilities.

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