



Weaving the Thread of Service Providers: Collaboration in Multi-disciplinary Settings Through Restorative Practices

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“Restorative Practices are changing the culture of our schools and increasingly, of the community itself. Training and technical support from the Youth Restoration Project has given us a much broader tool set for handling everything from classroom management to building the capacity of our families. However difficult the circles are themselves, our community members increasingly trust that they’ll be heard and get a positive outcome. In partnership with Family Service of RI, we now have professional Restorative Specialists, in school every day, bringing their trauma-informed care to our students in everyday interactions, from the trivial to the troubled. Shifting our culture from a punitive mindset has been far from easy, but very rewarding.”

***- Dr. Frances Gallo, Superintendent of
Central Falls School District***



Who we are

- Family Service of Rhode Island (FSRI) is a non-profit social service agency serving the State of Rhode Island.
- We serve people across the lifespan from birth to the elderly.
- Services range from behavioral health to basic needs support and case management and school based programs
- Partner statewide with other agencies- non-profits, for-profits, schools and government



Our mission

To build social service partnerships that respond creatively to the unmet needs of individuals, families and the community so that people are able to live independently, advocate for themselves and better their own lives.



Restorative in Schools

- Started with wrap around services through the state's System of Care
- Youth Restoration Project asked for FSRI support due to high level needs for students
- FSRI contracts with school districts throughout the state to provide a full continuum of Restorative Services

“The collaboration between district and restorative staff assists in helping students accept the impact of their actions without being aggressive or oppositional. While the initial time investment may be substantial, Restorative Practices can ultimately save time by preventing or diffusing problems early.”

- *Geno Desrosiers, Restorative Coach,
Westerly High School*



Where we are

Central Falls- an urban school district with an impoverished population.

Westerly- a suburban school district with lower poverty levels

Fogarty Elementary in lower South Providence- an urban school district with an impoverished population.

Family Service of RI (FSRI)

- Private non-profit
- Non-unionized
- Funding through third party billing, grants and contracts
- Services across the lifespan
- Includes strength-based family involvement
- Goal to reach self-sufficiency and potential

Schools

- Public
- Unionized
- Funding through State and local taxes, federal funds, and grants
- Services Pre-K through grade 12
- Work to get parents active in their child's school experience
- Goal to reach self-sufficiency and potential educationally

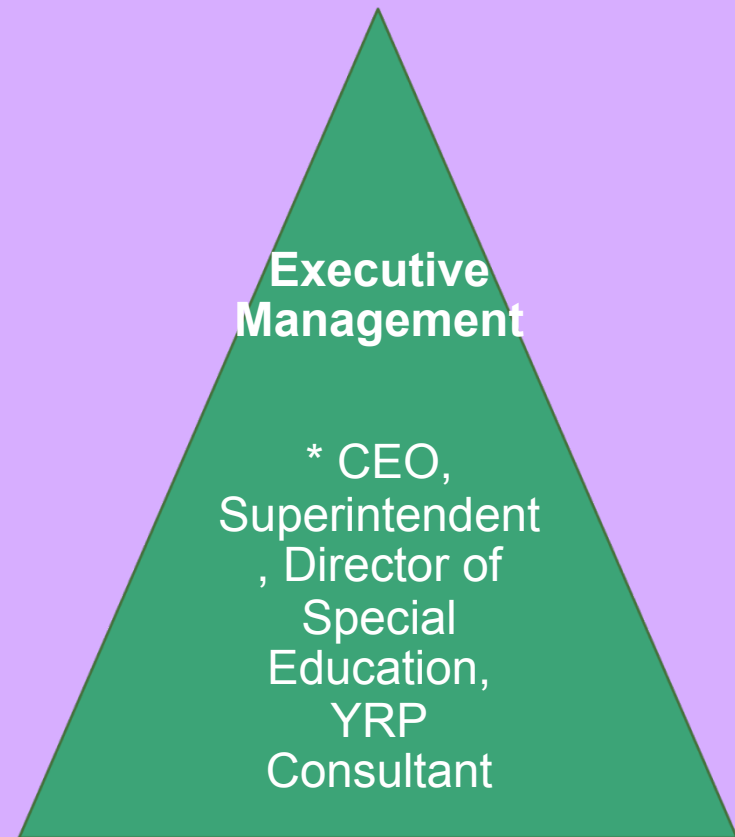
“ I’ve witnessed the impact of Restorative Practices and our partnership with the schools. When the Restorative team lost a staff member unexpectedly, I was asked to assist in supporting the team. Watching the community coming together, especially the students, who organized the candlelight vigil, was the biggest evidence that what we are doing works.”

*- Mary Benjamin, LICSW, Clinical Administrator
at Family Service of RI*



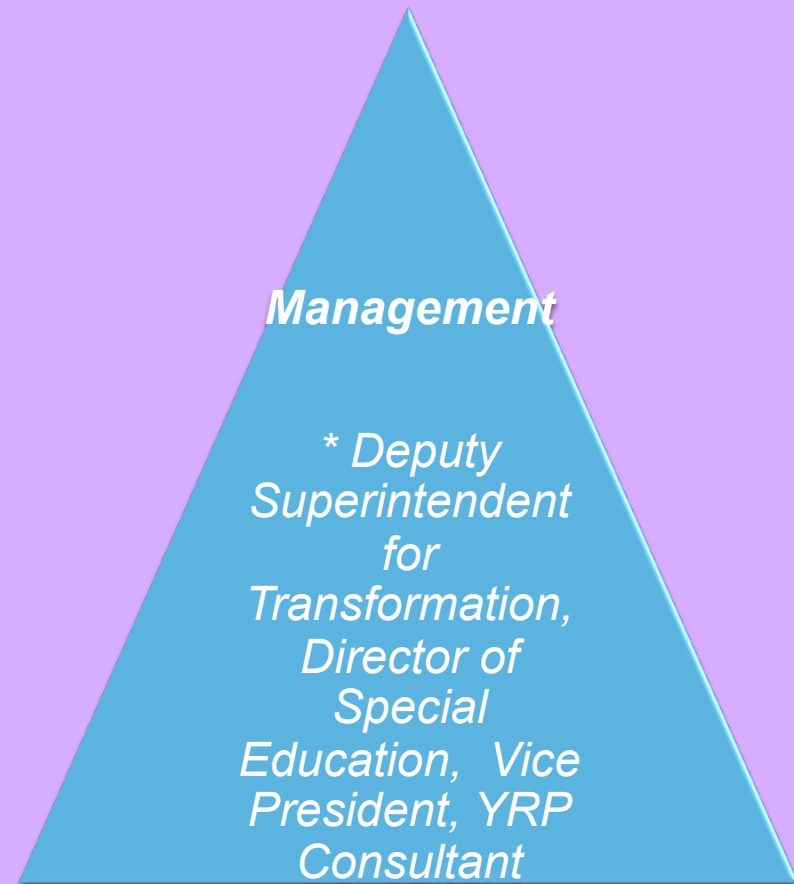
Executive Level

- Chief Executive Officer of FSRI, Superintendent of Central Falls along with Director of Special Education, Director of Youth Restoration Project (YRP)- a consultant, circle monthly
- Formal Administrative circle of what is working and not working
- Support and mandates for the partnership
- Conduct conferences/ mediations as needed



Management Level

- FSRI Vice President, YRP Consultant, School Administration, circle monthly, and ad hoc meetings throughout the month, when needed
- Formal administrative circle reviewing what's working and not working, problem solving and conflict resolution, training and personnel issues
- Reviews policy and procedures, data collection, communication between all partners
- Discusses budgetary and funding streams
- Sometimes includes other partner agencies



Front Line Administrators

- FSRI Clinical Administrator, Deans of Students, Principals, Assistant Principals, other school staff meet monthly formally, but often ad hoc circles throughout the month
- Administrative Circles both formal and less formal (standing circles) to review Hi/Low
- Review high risk students, safety concerns, incident reports, staffing and policies and procedures, data collection and areas of success and growth
- Conduct conferences and mediations as needed
- Often includes other partner agencies

**Front line
Administrators**

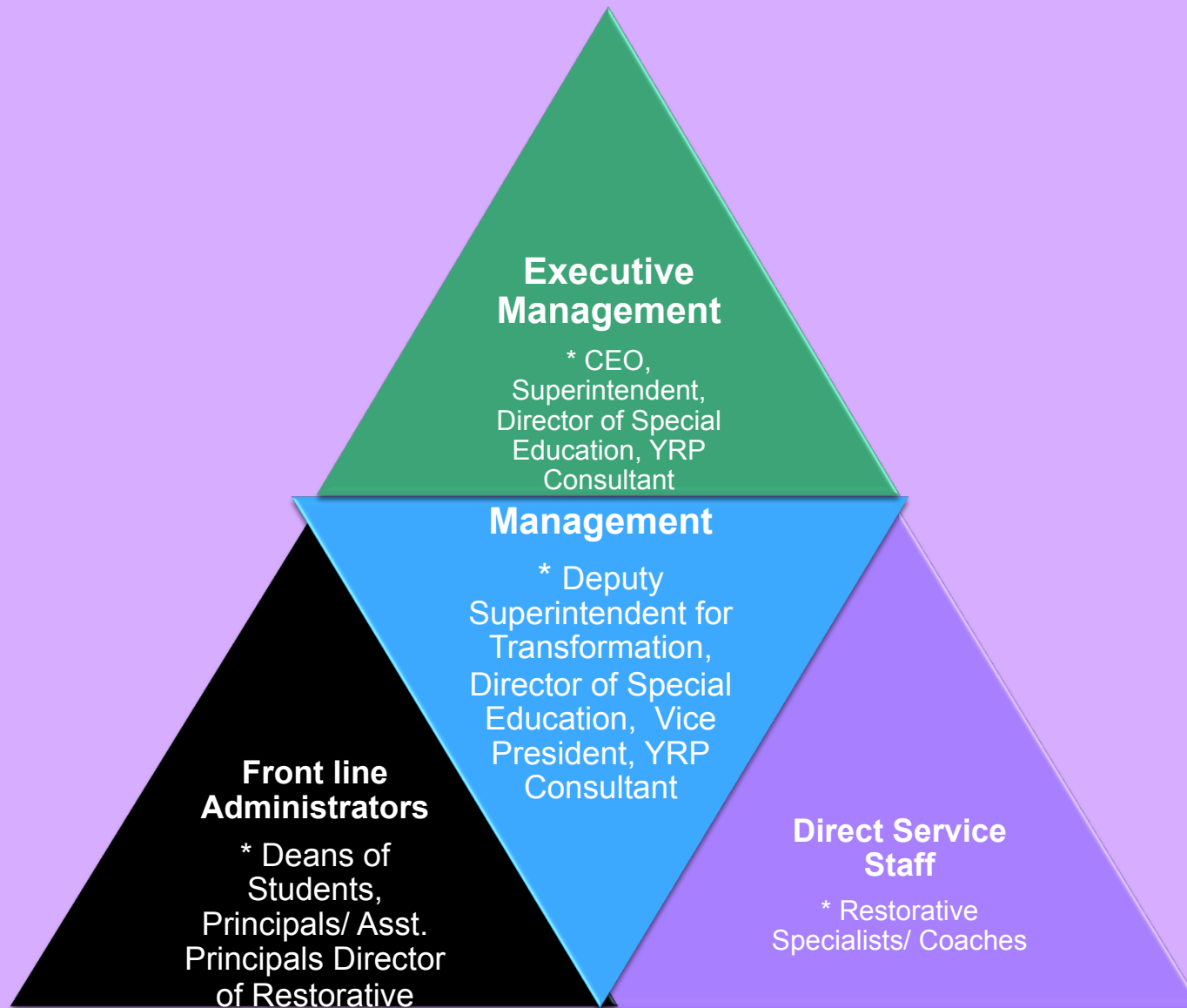
* Deans of
Students,
Principals/ Asst.
Principals
Director of
Restorative

Direct Service Staff

- FSRI Restorative Coaches, Restorative Specialists, school site person meet daily; often includes school Social Worker, Psychologist, Nurse or Guidance
- Less formal administrative circles to plan for school day and debrief at end of day
- Review high risk behaviors, safety concerns and incidents, restorative interventions and home visits to be completed
- Collect data and review daily referrals



Structure of the Partnerships



“The Restorative staff from Family Service of Rhode Island are an integral part of the Central Falls High School team. They are proactive and provide a valuable service to our school community. The Restorative team has been supportive in building a comprehensive plan that is aligned with our school’s values and priorities. The members of the Restorative team have been key partners in the transformation of Central Falls High School and we look forward to continuing our work together.”

*- Victor Capellan, Deputy Superintendent
for Transformation, Central Falls High School*



Additional supports

- FSRI provides therapists and in some cases psychiatry and/or case managers to districts/schools
- Trainings regarding trauma and other behavioral health diagnoses
- Wrap around services for families involved in child welfare, juvenile justice or children with severe emotional disturbance

- Walking school bus to assist with attendance and tardy issues
- Full Service schools helping create a positive, safe atmosphere for families to have all needs met
- Wellness programs through grants offering asthma education, linkage to medical resources

“With training and technical support from the Youth Restoration Project, Restorative Practices have supported our community’s need for students to reflect on their choices and behavior, so they can take responsibility for their behavior. Our partnership with Family Service of Rhode Island has allowed for wrap-around services that extend well beyond academics, social-and-emotional skill-building and those which promote mental health. With our partners’ help we can be proactive with staff about preventions and support. Increasingly, we are able to treat every student’s individual needs.”

- Heather Dos Santos, Principal of Calcutt Middle School



We've had some bumps...

- Miscommunications
- Depletion of fiscal resources
- Increase in multi-systemic behavioral health issues in children and families
- Supports needed for school personnel regarding standardized testing, student behaviors with reduced resources

- Agency vs. school district policies and procedures- especially around HR issues
- Conflicts requiring circles and conferences
- Journey of “buy in” for the implementation of Restorative Practices
- Personnel turn over at school and agency
- Systems issues- i.e. punitive justice system

But it works because:

- Open communication and mutual respect for each individual's role in providing Restorative Practices
- Everyone uses a common Restorative Practice language- from the students and parents to the CEO and Superintendent
- Learn from each other through highs and lows
- Uses many community partners including police/ fire, and other non-profits to solve issues

- Communication throughout the day- restorative staff, school administrators and school support staff have walkie-talkies and debrief
- Administrative circles give everyone an opportunity to check in and debrief
- Unique initiatives- such as Cross Fit, after school circles, alternative to suspension

- Creativity
- Flexibility for meeting times, interventions
- Expansion of a variety of resources which otherwise would be unavailable

"When she started she had a reputation of walking out of class and not following the rules. Since her first day of Cross Fit she has made huge progress in school and with her confidence. Over the summer she was part of the Restorative Cross Fit team who competed in a Spartan race. During the race, she was the driving force on our team. She lead the team all the way to the finish line. This school year she has joined as many after school programs as she could. Her grades are much better than last year and her attitude has changed for the better. Her goal is to go to college next year to be a nurse."

*- Josh Reis, Restorative Coach and Cross Fit Coach,
Veterans Elementary School and Central Falls High School,
Central Falls, in respect to a 17 year old female participating
in Restorative Cross Fit*



World's Best Teacher

Awarded to Mr. Reis

for being my friend.

He helps me make good decisions.
He helps me get me down.
He is silly and makes me laugh.



From, ROY

your signature

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