Family Power- Restorative Strategies to Engage and Communicate with your Children

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What it is .....  

• Restorative Practices are a framework for building community and for responding to challenging behavior through authentic dialogue, coming to understanding, and making things right.

• “People are happier, more cooperative and productive, and are more likely to make positive changes when those in authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them.”

~ Ted Wachtel, IIRP, Defining Restorative
Restorative Practices (RP)

What is Restorative Discipline
• Restorative vs Retributive
• Repairing harm/enhances connection
• Alternative to traditional discipline
• Seeks to repair harm, build relationships, and develop an agreement on future conduct

Benefits for Families/Children
• Limits isolation/removal of child
• Promotes family connection
• Improves family communication
• Skill-building: empathy, impact of behavior, conflict resolution, social-emotional, kindness, community values, communication
• These skills translate to life skills, resiliency, and positive mental health outcomes
Continuum of Restorative Practice
SOCIAL DISCIPLINE WINDOW

CONTROL
(limit-setting, discipline)

HIGH

TO
Punitive

WITH
Restorative

LOW

SUPPORT
(encouragement, nurture)

NOT
Neglectful

FOR
Permissive

Adapted by Paul McCold and Ted Wachtel from Glasier, 1969
Page 8 in Restorative Circles in Schools book

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Family Circles

Everyone is respected and heard

Everyone is equal

Culture of belonging

Build community and connection

Collaboration & Understanding
Restorative Language and Affective Statements

Restorative Language
Addressing conflict and repairing harm.

Affective Statements
Personal expressions of feelings in response to others’ positive/negative behaviors.
The Goal of Restorative Language:

• Connect our children with HOW their behavior is “affecting” or impacting self/others.
• Discourage harmful behavior.
• Repair harm when possible.
• Improve/maintain relationships between family members.
Respectful Communication

• Neutral or concerned facial expressions (don’t roll your eyes)
• Non-sarcastic tone of voice
• Raise voice/catch attention, then lower it
• Use “I” statements
• Keep language neutral
• Breathe before you speak
• State positive behavior expectations
Affective or “I” Statement:

I feel .......(state feeling) .......
When you ........(state action)
Because .......
I need you to ........
Typical response

- Stop yelling!!
- Sit down and be quiet!!

Affective statement

- I feel mad when you yell because it’s distracting while I’m driving. I need you to lower your voice.
- I feel happy when you are sitting down and talking quietly because I can drive safely. I need you to keep following the rules.
Restorative Questions II
(for person harmed)

• What did you think when you realized what had happened?
• What impact has this incident had on you and others?
• What has been the hardest thing for you?
• What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

• International Institute for Restorative Practices, www.iirp.org
Restorative Questions I
(for Wrongdoer)

- What happened?
- What were you thinking of at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

Family Meetings

The Agenda

➢ Norms
➢ Compliments
➢ Identify Areas for Improvement/Brainstorming for Solutions
➢ A family fun activity such as a game, cooking, or popcorn and a movie.
➢ Progress not Perfection
RP Leads & Co-leads

• Ashburn Cluster – Kim Hager/Blaise Carland
• Leesburg Cluster – Beth Weatherford/ Wendy Young
• South Riding Cluster – Darren Madison/Jennifer McLemore
• Sterling Cluster – Lisa Harris/Grace Charriez
• West Cluster – Amy Iliffe/ Heidi Buckner

Jennifer Wall, LPC
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Resources

• *The Restorative Practices Handbook for teachers, disciplinarians and administrators*; Bob Costello, Joshua Wachtel and Ted Wachtel; [www.iirp.org](http://www.iirp.org)

• *Just Schools: A whole school approach to restorative justice*; Belinda Hopkins; [www.jkp.com](http://www.jkp.com)

• *Teaching Restorative Practices with Classroom Circles*; © Amos Clifford, Center for Restorative Process Developed for San Francisco Unified School District; [www.healthiersf.org](http://www.healthiersf.org)

• Family Meetings; Dr. Jane Nelsen; [https://www.positivediscipline.com/articles/family-meetings](https://www.positivediscipline.com/articles/family-meetings)