

## Historical Overview

Restorative Practices have a rich history within Chicago Public Schools. The Restorative Practices approach was first introduced to CPS as Balanced and Restorative Justice with a focus on responding to incidents that had occurred. This approach stressed seeking justice for the victim by allowing the offender to make up for the harm caused. The goal was to heal all those involved in or affected by an incident including offender, victim, and other involved parties. Historically, when CPS staff spoke of Restorative Justice they were referring to Peer Jury and, more recently, Peace Circles. While this is still one aspect of the CPS approach to Restorative Practices, we have now expanded on this vision to include a variety of other strategies. Restorative Practices in schools is a set of values, attitudes and practices that holistically prevents and repairs harm, builds community and strengthens relationships, resulting in a positive, supportive school climate. Restorative Practices in CPS spans across the realms of prevention, Social Emotional Learning, and intervention.

Restorative Justice as a field emerged in the 1970s in response to the inadequacies of the punitive system of justice. It traces its roots to the traditions of First Nations people in North America, the Mennonites, and is steeped in African Tradition. The practice of Restorative Justice has since been contextualized for use in a variety of environments, including schools. Restorative Justice, when used in response to an incidence of harm, focuses on who has been harmed, what their needs are, and whose obligation is it to make things as right as possible. The process is inclusive and involves those who were harmed, those who did the harm, and other community stakeholders who have a stake in the outcome of the process. The inclusive, collaborative process seeks to put right the wrongs, as well as strengthen relationships and build community. The practice of Restorative Justice is rooted in the shared values of the participants of the process, which may include interconnectedness, respect, honesty, humility, sharing, courage, empathy, belonging, and confidentiality.

Restorative Practices have been used in some form in CPS since the mid 1990's. Peer Jury was established by Patricia Zamora working with students and administrators at Senn High School as part of an after -school program with Alternatives Inc., a local youth and family non- for profit organization. In the 2001-2002 school years CPS funded Alternatives Inc. to provide training, and technical support for Peer Jury programs in 21 target schools. This was envisioned as a way to address conflict and harmful behavior and to provide an alternative disciplinary approach. In 2006 CPS “recognize[d] and embrace[d] the philosophy of restorative justice” by including the use of **Restorative Practices** in the CPS Student Code of Conduct (SCC), as effective responses to misconducts. One of the major goals of BARJ at CPS has been to reduce suspensions at schools.

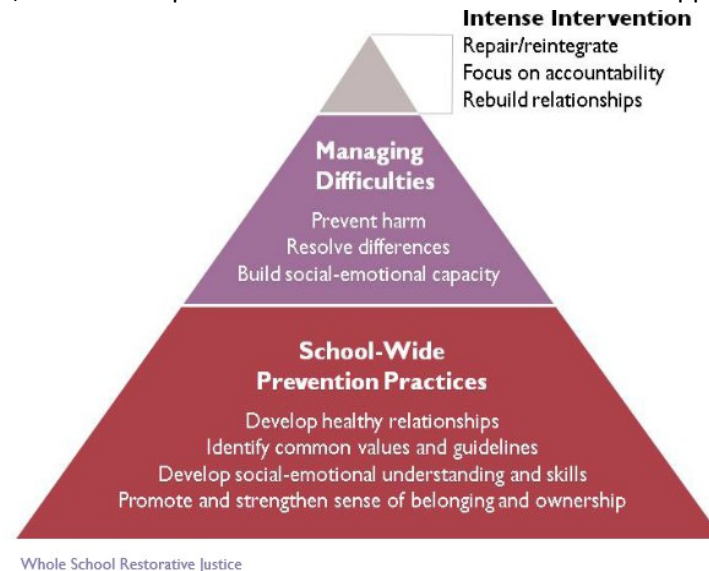
## CPS Restorative Practices Approach Today

A Restorative Practices approach is a philosophy that provides the framework for a set of practices and values. CPS has adopted the term “Restorative Practices” rather than Restorative Justice to move towards a focus on prevention as well as intervention. **Restorative Practices are ways of thinking about, talking about and responding to issues and problems by involving all participants to discuss their feelings and opinions, identify what happened, describe how it affected everyone, and find solutions to make things better.** The use of Restorative Practices helps strengthen

**relationships among students and between students and staff; reduces behavioral disruptions, de-escalates volatile situations, decreases suspensions and detentions; and supports students impacted by violence. Over time, Restorative Practices can improve the overall health of the school community, can help to increase student attendance and academic achievement, and provide youth with opportunities for social and emotional skill development.**

At the core of Restorative Justice Practices are Peace Circles. There are different types of Peace Circles with different functions, including: Talking, Understanding, Healing, Support, Community Building, Conflict, Reintegration, and Celebration. Restorative Practices are more than just formal programs available only to students who have violated school rules and are not simply reactions to incidents. Rather, Restorative Practices and Principles are prevention strategies that if used properly by everyone in the school, can help to increase social-emotional strength, a sense of belonging, and a culture of caring in the school. Using Restorative Practices proactively builds a sense of community through the development of relationships that can result in fewer interventions later. When we speak of Restorative Justice Practices we should keep the notion of ‘making things better,’ our first stated goal for the students and also for the families and the greater school community. Restorative Practices helps us to understand the root causes of a particular behavior and what led up to the behavior so that it can be addressed in a more empathetic and holistic way.

This pyramid, developed by Brenda Morrison, illustrates a preventative model that informs the CPS approach.



## Implementation Guidelines

Restorative Practices can be implemented by school personnel, community practitioners, parents, youth and volunteers. The CPS Office of Social and Emotional Learning provides professional development in utilizing restorative questions, Restorative Conversations, empathetic listening skills, and other essential elements of the restorative justice philosophy. Further, Circle Keepers and peer conference members are trained to resolve conflict. To insure the sustainability of Restorative Practices at a school, a person(s) should be designated to oversee the program and integrate the Restorative Practices philosophy into the overall culture, climate, and practices of the school as a whole.

Restorative Practices are a voluntary process for the staff and students involved. A talking piece should be used in peace circles as well as in other Restorative Practices when appropriate.

ELEMENTAL COMPONENTS	DESCRIPTION	WHEN TO USE	OUTCOME	Tier
<p><b>RESTORATIVE QUESTIONS</b></p>	<p>A set of questions crafted to engage the referred student to express their feelings as well as prompt them to consider the feelings of others and the consequences of their actions. By using a series of Restorative Questions, the facilitator moves the participant from their own immediate needs to consider how others might be affected by their be-</p>	<p>Restorative questions are asked following an incident and are used in most Restorative Practices</p>	<p>Restorative questions can engage a referred student in a reflective process and empower them to solve problems. Restorative Questions provide opportunities for participants to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express themselves</li> <li>• Explain what happened</li> <li>• Describe their feelings</li> </ul>	<p>Tier 1, 2 and 3</p>

havior, what can be done about it, and how to take responsibility for their actions.

Examples of Restorative Questions include:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- How do you feel about the situation now?
- Who has been affected by your behavior?

- Understand and the impact of their behavior
- Determine what they can do to change their behavior
- Understand and harm or potential harm. Restorative questions can also help those affected to acknowledge the harm done to them and expose the

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the impact of your behavior?</li> <li>• What can you do to assure us this will not happen again?</li> <li>• What do you need to do to make things right?</li> </ul> <p>A second set of questions should be asked of those who were affected by the incident.</p>		<p>impact to those who may have offended them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can help uncover the root causes of behavior</li> </ul> <p>Restorative questions can provide opportunities for facilitator to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support</li> <li>• Understand the root causes of behavior</li> <li>• Develop trust with participant</li> </ul>	
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ELEMENTAL COMPONENTS	DESCRIPTION	WHEN TO USE	OUTCOME	Tier
<b>AFFECTIVE (“I”) STATEMENTS</b>	Affective Statements share the impact on the person harmed with those responsible in an effort to build social and emotional skills and to encourage empathy.	Are elemental to each Restorative Practice	Sharing feelings is an important part of building relationships and is critical to establishing expectations, building empathy, and helping each person to understand the impact of their behavior and take responsibility for their actions	Tier 1, 2 and 3
<b>EMPATHETIC LISTENING</b>	Empathetic Listening is when one person essentially listens to the thoughts, feelings, and needs of someone else. Using a talking piece can be helpful to promote	Is elemental to each Restorative Practice	Allows for non-judgmental communication leading to a deeper understanding of the thoughts, feelings, and needs of the participant(s).	Tier 1, 2 and 3

	empathetic listening			
<b>RESTORATIVE PRACTICES</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>WHEN TO USE</b>	<b>OUTCOME</b>	<b>TIER</b>
<b>RESTORATIVE CONVERSATIONS</b>	<p>This process follows the use of Restorative Questions, Affective Statements, and Empathetic Listening for both the referred student and the person affected. (Instead of the student being chastised for an incident, the student is engaged in a Restorative Conversation)</p>	<p>Restorative Conversations can be used at the moment of a minor occurrence in a safe space and when the respondent has accepted responsibility for his/her behavior. Restorative Conversations can also be used to better understand an incident that has occurred and the root causes of the behavior exhibited.</p>	<p>Restorative Conversations encourage using the language of Restorative Practices. They promote resolving conflicts and give participants an opportunity to calm down and/or refocus.</p>	<p>Tier 1 and 2</p>
<b>PEER CONFERENCE (Formerly Peer Jury or Peer Mediation)</b>	<p>Peer Conference is a</p>	<p>Peer Conferences can be used in response to chronic inappropriate</p>	<p>Peer Conferences</p>	<p>Tier 1, 2 and 3</p>

	<p>voluntary student-led process in which a small group of trained Peer Conference members work with referred students (students who have broken a school rule or who are in conflict) to understand the impact of their actions.</p> <p>Peer Conference members bring the perspective of the person harmed either by inviting them to participate or by reading statements they have prepared that shares how they perceive impact of the incident on them.</p>	<p>behaviors; persistent disruptive behaviors; some seriously disruptive behaviors (ex. classroom misconduct, conflicts with teachers, student to students conflict, tardiness, minor property damage, name-calling, threats, etc.).</p> <p>Used after an incident has occurred.</p> <p>Referrals usually come from the discipline office or directly from teachers.</p>	<p>create a non-judgmental space for the referred student(s), those affected, and members of the school community to discuss what happened, build accountability, and collaborate to find solutions.</p> <p>The Peer Conference process seeks to increase empathy, promote relationship building, strengthen communication skills, and encourage the promotion and inclusion of all students</p>	
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	<p>Peer Conference members ask Restorative Questions to get to the root of the issue and to help the referred student(s) develop agreements that provide solutions, repair harm, build relationships and reconnect the student to the school.</p> <p>Peer Conference never uses suspension/detention as a consequence.</p>			
<b>RESTORATIVE PRACTICES</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>WHEN TO USE</b>	<b>OUTCOME</b>	<b>TIER</b>
<b>PEACE CIRCLES</b>	<p>Peace circles encompass different types of circles with different functions including a</p>	<p>Examples of ways circles Can be used: To build intra-class relationships; check in or reflect; safely discuss topics with multiple opinions or sensitive topics; to heal from a loss; to celebrate; to process a shared event.</p>	<p>Peace circles may result in collaborative agreements between the participants that outline steps</p>	<p>Tier 1, 2 and 3</p>

	<p>broad range of proactive circles.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking</li> <li>• Understanding</li> <li>• Healing</li> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Community Building</li> <li>• Conflict</li> <li>• Reintegration</li> <li>• Celebration</li> </ul> <p>Circles are held to build relationships and promote dialogue in areas that otherwise might not be discussed. Some topics could be considered sensitive. Using a safe space and a restorative approach</p>	<p>As a morning meeting, circles can be effective to set a positive tone before the start of the day</p> <p>Can be used as part of a student reentry protocol (Tier 2 or 3)</p> <p>Can be used by whole classrooms</p> <p>Can be used by staff for sharing ideas and support.</p> <p>Conflict circles are used in response to specific incidents; by bringing together affected participants to discuss what happened, what the impact was and how it can be repaired.</p>	<p>that can be taken to repair the harm as well as measures for preventing future harm. Peace Circles help heal the affected parties and transform relationships</p>	
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	<p>brings value to these topics.</p> <p>Peace Circles use circle rituals and structures to help heal all affected parties and build a collective and holistic understanding of what occurred and the underlying factors that contributed to the incident</p> <p>Peace Circles are used to de-escalate or resolve conflicts that involve and/or affect individuals and/or multiple persons</p>			
<p><b>MEDIATION</b></p>	<p>Mediation is a voluntary process where two or three individuals in conflict with each other</p>	<p>Mediation is used to de-escalate or resolve conflicts that involve multiple individuals</p>	<p>Mediation often results in an agreement between the people involved, outlining steps that each can</p>	<p>Tier 2 and 3</p>

	meet with a trained adult mediator in a non-judgmental and confidential space to talk about what happened and to resolve the specific issues contributing to the conflict.		take to make things better, prevent or manage future conflict, and re-connect to the school community	
<b>RESTORATIVE PRACTICES</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>WHEN TO USE</b>	<b>OUTCOME</b>	<b>TIER</b>
<b>RESTORATIVE GROUP CONFERENCING</b>	Restorative Group Conferencing is a more formal, scripted intervention comprised of a series of restorative questions that are asked in a structured order to assist young people in taking responsibility for their wrongdoing while helping the person harmed to seek	Generally in response to an incident that could include, suspension, expulsion, and/or police involvement if not satisfactorily resolved, as well as for truancy interventions.	Restorative Group Conferencing should only be led by staff or volunteers trained in the practice	Tier 3

	<p>closure. It can include families and support persons for both the harmed person and the harmer. Known as Accountability Conferences in some communities, this model emphasizes reintegrating or keeping the referred student into the school and can be used as an alternative to suspension.</p>			
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**Contact Information**

Area	Contact	Phone, Email
Restorative Practices	Edwin D. Johnson	(773) 553-3736, ejohnson@cps.edu

This document was created by CPS and the “Embrace Restorative Practices in CPS Collaborative”:  
 Adler School of Professional Psychology, Alternatives INC, Andrew Tonachel , Austin Peace Center, COFI/ POWER-PAC, Community for Justice Youth Institute, Illinois Balanced and Restorative Justice (IBARJ), Juvenile Justice and Child Protection Resource Section of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Kirstin De Mello, Linda Cooper, Mansfield Institute for Social Justice and Transformation at Roosevelt University, Nehemiah Project, Pamela Purdie, Sandra Mann, Strengthening Chicago's Youth convened by the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, and Umoja.

*Please access CPS University for Restorative Practices professional development opportunities.*

You can find resources specific to the strategies you're implementing or search for new approaches in the Positive Behavior Supports Knowledge Center!

<https://sites.google.com/site/cpspositivebehavior/>

# APPENDIX

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION	WHEN TO USE	OUTCOME	TIER
<p><b>Practices recommended but not centrally supported in CPS</b></p>	<p><b>Restorative Practices Hubs and other after school programs.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trauma informed community based programming and mentorship.</li> </ul> <p><b>Student Outreach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community outreach/home visits that systematically reach out to truant student</li> </ul>	<p><b>Restorative Practices Hubs and other after school programs.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For youth at-risk of entry into the prison pipeline, court involved youth, youth who have obstacles in their lives and could benefit from support, advocacy, advice, and education outside of school</li> </ul> <p><b>Student Outreach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When a student misses 5 school days, or 2 days after a school suspension if the student fails to return</li> </ul>	<p><b>Restorative Practices Hubs and other after school programs.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth will receive additional restorative intervention, engagement, and mentorship in the community.</li> </ul> <p><b>Student Outreach</b></p>	<p>Not applicable</p>



	<p>s, or students that have received out of school suspensions and have failed to return with regular attendance. This is used to identify obstacles to attendance and to express an interest by the school in successfully restoring this student</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping youth from being exposed to violence in the community, from dropping out, potential criminality, and from entry into the prison pipeline.</li> <li>• Higher graduation rates for at risk youth.</li> <li>• Sends the message that education for all youth is a priority.</li> </ul>	
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	<p>into the school community. Community workers partner with school personnel to identify what is needed for the student to reintegrate successfully. On the school side, a work plan for tutoring, make up work, or other remediation steps</p>			
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	needed will be made in partner ship with the student and, if relevan t, that student 's family membe rs			
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