

Office of Prevention and Health Initiatives

Tools for Schools, Providers and Families - Restorative Practice

The COVID-19 pandemic has had devastating effects on New York State, including its educational institutions. For many students, staff and families, such significant effects are accompanied by loss and trauma. Critical needs exist for intentional listening, understanding, and healing. Restorative Practice provides an innovative hybrid model of internationally recognized and empirically based approaches to address these needs.

When understood and actively practiced, restorative approaches lead to:

- Improved relationships between school-based staff and students
- Improved student to student relationships
- Improved work climate and employee engagement
- Improved relationships between school-based staff and families
- Increased positive youth development and social and emotional learning
- Stronger sense of school connectedness
- Improved student well-being
- Equity through inclusion of all students
- [Addressing Social Determinants of Health/Mental Health](#)

The Office of Mental Health provides interested school districts with consultation, training, and information on a hybrid Restorative approach that is completely at no cost to participants. Below are details on the many available options.

Restorative Practice: Building Relationships, Respect and Responsibility: Introductory presentation encompassing topics described below.

Affect, Shame and Vulnerability – The Building Blocks for Community: We are social beings wired to connect with others and feel better. While key to living and learning, disconnection, conflict, and relationship challenges abound. Teachers, administrators, and staff will examine the 9 biological affects, with a special emphasis on shame and its multi-faceted behavioral expression, and address ways to utilize these concepts to enhance relationships, learning and community.

Effective Leadership: Accomplishing our Mission to Educate: Teachers, administrators and staff will examine key concepts which lead to positive, supportive and meaningful relationships between leaders (those with authority) and those who are served (Teachers/Staff, students, students' families): Psychology of Affect; Self-Care; Social Discipline framework; Fair Process; Restorative Practices; addressing conflict.

First, Don Your Own Mask – It's going to be a bumpy ride. While curriculum is important, we know that relationship with the student is the key to teaching, and learning. The individual, whether in the role of teacher, administrator or other staff, must be at their best most of the time

to serve the students and the students' families – each plays an important part of a larger and complex education system. This presentation will highlight the importance of serving others by first attending to one's own experience and engaging with confidence, calmness, and courage – all valuable amid a storm (e.g., Pandemic).

Restorative Practice for the Classroom: From Assertiveness to Circles: Restorative Practice is a way of being with others which has the potential to strengthen relationships and to address harm and conflict when relationships are challenged. Teachers, administrators, and staff will learn the range of practices, informal to formal, available to them which promote learning, social/emotional skills, and positive school climates. Moreover, educators will understand the all-important underlying frameworks for such practice.

What to Expect When the Unexpected Happens: Governor Cuomo has suggested that dealing with COVID is traumatizing and is like being at war – there are bound to be effects on school children. We already know some of the results – increased domestic violence and substance abuse. Teachers, administrators, and staff will be engaged in conversation about experiences thus far for their students, students' families and even themselves, what they may expect going forward and key approaches to support learning and healthy outcomes.

Consultation

Presentations vary in length, focus and schedule based upon needs.

For additional Information, or to schedule a consultation or training session, please contact:

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