



“Restorative Practice is grounded in an understanding that relationships are at core of what it means to be human. We cannot exist outside of relationship. The healthier the relationships, the stronger we are, both individually and as a community.”

JTHS
District 204

The mission of Joliet Township High School, a historically rich, unified and innovative learning community, is to empower every student to compete and contribute positively to our community and global society by providing a rigorous and personalized education through an academy environment.

Joliet Township High School District 204 is committed to cultivating an inclusive community that values and embraces diversity and respects the humanity of all people.

Purpose

Joliet Township High School has partnered with the Joliet Region Interfaith Educational Council (JRIEC) to offer a community-based intervention for students on Expulsion Warning. The intervention utilizes Restorative Practices Problem Solving Circles and provides students with the opportunity to earn their way off Expulsion Warning. During the Problem Solving Circle, the student examines and addresses the following Restorative Questions in relation to the Expulsion Warning:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- Who has been affected by what you have done?
- What do you think needs to be done to make things right?

Program Goals

The goal of the Restorative Practices Problem Solving approach is to reduce the rate of student violence and conflict in schools through communication, problem solving, and conflict resolution. Problem solving circles:

- Provide an opportunity for students, family, and community members to participate in the restoration and healing process
- Empower community members to come together to repair, rebuild, and strengthen relationships
- Provide a safe and non-judgmental environment for all parties to express their feelings and emotional needs
- Increase problem-solving and conflict resolution skills

PSC in Action

Circles are a structured way of bringing people together. Borrowed from the restorative traditions of native and aboriginal peoples, the circle process fosters a sense of respect and equality among participants. The basics of the Problem Solving Circle include:

- Circle Facilitator—This is an individual who accepts the responsibility for helping the circle participants create and maintain a safe space.
- Setting—The chairs are arranged in a circle with an open space in the center.
- Talking Piece—This is an object of significance or interest that is passed among circle participants. The person holding the talking piece is allowed the opportunity to speak. This creates a culture of respect and order.
- Shared Agreements—These are guidelines describing behaviors that the participants feel will make the space safe for them to share openly.

Participants

During the JTHS Restorative Practices Problem Solving Circle, participants come together to answer and examine the Restorative Practices essential questions. The individuals listed below participate in four, 1-hour sessions that take place during the evening.

- The Student on Expulsion Warning
- The Student's Parents/Guardians
- An Invited Guest of the Student Participant
(Example: Teacher, Pastor, Aunt or Uncle)
- A Certified Problem Solving Circle Facilitator
- A Community Member Volunteer

How You Can Help

JRIEC is seeking community volunteers to participate in the Problem Solving Circle Program. Volunteers commit to one circle per week, for four weeks. This is a total of four hours of volunteer service. There is minimal training necessary to participate. During your volunteer time, you will share experiences and build relationships to assist in the Problem Solving Process.



If you are interested in volunteering or would like more information, please contact:

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Problem Solving Circle Coordinator
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The Restorative Practices Problem Solving Circle Program is an extension to the Joliet Region Interfaith Education Council (JRIEC).

JRIEC is a group of community and faith-based leaders who meet monthly with JTHS administration to share communication and support JTHS students and families.