



Restorative Practices (RP) is a philosophy and practice based on the idea of taking responsibility for actions that have hurt or harmed someone else and/or yourself. Rather than focus on punishment and isolation from the community, RP focuses on meaningful accountability which includes actively engaging in understanding what harms have been done, what needs have arisen as a result of the harms caused, and how to repair those harms. The values of RP include respect, truthfulness, self-control, self-discipline, acceptance, dependability, responsibility, and accountability.

The vision of Palmer RP is to create a safer school, greater student respect, authentic and meaningful accountability, and to alter the outcomes of disciplinary referrals that might have otherwise ended in more serious offenses leading to suspension, expulsion or a referral to the court system.

By using RP, we strive to help students and staff see that making a bad choice does not mean one is a bad person. We want them to know what they did yesterday and what they do today does make a difference--to themselves, to those harmed, to their families, and the school community. Coming face-to-face with the person one has harmed takes tremendous courage, and those that go through a Restorative Justice facilitation know they will walk away from the experience with new tools to deal effectively with future conflict situations. In a facilitated conference, those involved talk about the many ripples of harm the behavior has caused not only to each other but to the school community, to their families, and ultimately themselves. The process helps them understand that although they can't undo what they did, they can, and do, have a responsibility to repair, *as much as possible*, the harm they have caused.

Restorative Practices is a confidential process that:

- Focuses on *harms* and consequent *needs* (the victims', as well as the community's and the offenders')
- Addresses *obligations* resulting from those harms
- Uses *inclusive, collaborative* processes
- *Involves* those with a legitimate stake in the situation (victims, offenders, community members)
- Seeks to *put right* the *wrongs*

Restorative Practices positively change the culture and the dynamics of conflict resolution by using restorative dialogue skills. These skills include asking questions that elicit different types of information, active nonjudgmental listening, reframing, setting a respectful tone, define ground rules for the conversation, the use of silence, allowing for emotion, encouraging responses from participants, and crafting an agreement.

RP can be used in the following situations:

- Student conflict
- Student/teacher conflict
- In-class disruption
- Gossip
- Disrespect of peers
- Bullying
- Defiance of Authority
- Ethnic and Racial Slurs
- Lying/False information
- Theft
- Vandalism
- Fighting
- Harassment