



*Restorative Practices at Home:
Building Stronger Family
Connections*

December 5, 2025

Let's Practice: A Community Building Circle

- Respect the talking piece
- Speak from the heart
- Listen from the heart
- Trust that you will know what to say
- Say just enough

What Are Restorative Practices?

A relationship-centered approach to resolving conflict and building community.

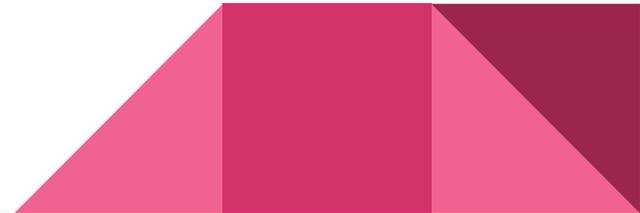
Core idea: Doing things *with* children, not *to* or *for* them.

Goal: Promote accountability, empathy, and healing.

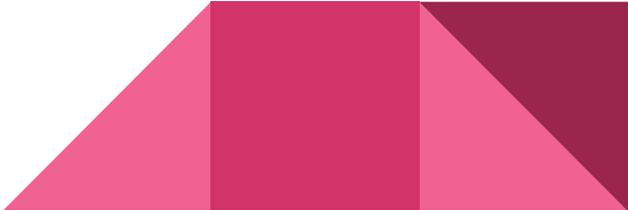
Traditional Approach	Restorative Approach
School rules are broken	People and relationships are harmed
Justice focusses on establishing guilt	Justice identifies needs and responsibility
Accountability = punishment	Accountability = understanding impact and repairing harm
Justice directed at the offender, the victim is ignored	Offender, victim, and school all have direct roles in the justice process
Rules and intent outweigh whether the outcome is positive or negative	Offender is responsible for harmful behavior, repairing harm, and working towards positive outcomes
Limited opportunity for expressing remorse and making amends	Opportunity is provided to make amends and express remorse

Why Use Restorative Practices at Home?

- Builds **trust and respect** between family members.
- Helps children learn **responsibility and empathy**.
- Reduces yelling, punishment, and power struggles.
- Encourages **open communication** and problem-solving



Key Concepts for Families

- **Restorative Questions:**
 - What happened?
 - Who was affected?
 - What needs to be done to make things right?
 - **I-Messages:** “I feel ___ when ___ because ___.”
 - **Family Respect Agreements:** Create shared expectations for behavior
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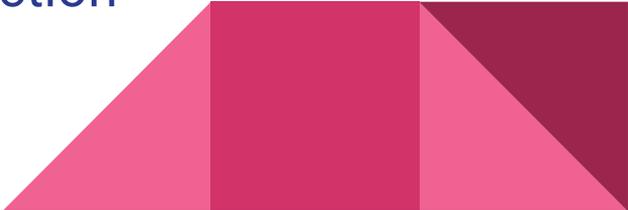
Try a Family Circle

What is it? A structured conversation where everyone gets a turn to speak.

How to do it:

- Use a “talking piece” (toy, object) to take turns.
- Choose a topic: “What’s one thing that made you smile today?”
- Listen from the heart without interrupting.

Benefits: Builds empathy, listening skills, and connection



Everyday Restorative Tools

Repair conversations after conflict

- Focus on feelings and impact, not blame.

Daily check-ins

- “How are you feeling today?”
- 5-point scale
- Rose, Bud, Thorn

Shared responsibilities

- Encourage ownership of chores and routines.

Model accountability

- Adults admit mistakes and make amends too.



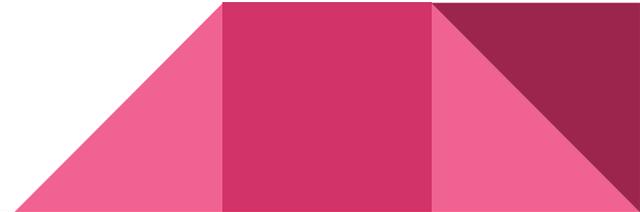
Supporting Kids Through Conflict

Stay calm and curious.

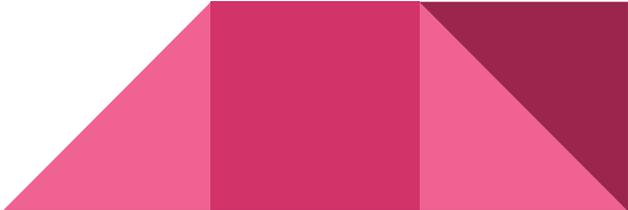
Ask restorative questions.

Help them reflect on choices and impact.

Guide them to make amends (not just say “sorry”).



Sample Home Scenarios

- **Sibling fight over toys**
 - Use a circle to hear both sides.
 - Ask: “How did that make you feel?” “What can we do differently?”
 - **Missed chore**
 - Ask: “What happened?” “How can we fix it?”
 - **Disrespectful tone**
 - Use I-messages: “I feel disrespected when I’m spoken to that way.”
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Tips for Success

- Be consistent, not perfect.
- Practice active listening.
- Celebrate small wins.
- Keep it age-appropriate and flexible.



Let's Check Out

- Respect the talking piece
- Speak from the heart
- Listen from the heart
- Trust that you will know what to say
- Say just enough



Resources

[Restorativeresources.org](https://restorativeresources.org) (see handout)

[*Teaching Restorative Practices with Classroom Circles*, Center for Restorative Process](#)

[Soundsupportsk12.com](https://soundsupportsk12.com)

