

Restorative Practices at Garfield STEM



What Are Restorative Practices?

Restorative Practices move away from punitive practices and emphasize the importance of positive relationships as central to building community. Rather than just isolating and punishing those responsible for harm, restorative practices provide opportunities to restore relationships when this harm has occurred. In a restorative school community, both students and adults are held accountable for their actions by identifying who has been harmed, what they can take responsibility for, and how they can repair the harm.



Why Restorative Practices?

Historically, national, state, and APS statistics have shown that exclusionary discipline such as suspensions and expulsions are implemented in disproportionate ways. This means students of color, students with learning disabilities, and males are suspended at higher rates than their peers.

Exclusionary discipline practices have long term consequences. Students who are kicked out of class, suspended, or expelled are more likely to feel disconnected from their school, fail classes, drop out, or become involved in the criminal justice system. This is known as the school to prison pipeline.

At Garfield Middle School we are committed to creating a compassionate community where our students, staff and families feel safe and welcome. Our goal for restorative practices is to help students develop those skills that are so important to their social emotional well being and academic success: empathy, self-awareness, conflict resolution and problem solving skills, and a strong sense of responsibility to one's community.



THE 6 R's

Restorative Practices are based on the values that we call the 6 R's:

Relationships
Respect
Responsibility
Repair
Reintegration
Radical Love





Punitive vs. Restorative Discipline

Punitive Discipline

- Person breaks rules
- Accountability=punishment
- Punishment directed at "offender" only
- Person is punished when rules are broken
- No opportunity for remorse or amends

Restorative Discipline

- Person harms people and relationships
- Accountability=understanding impact and repair
- Process involves person who caused harm, persons harmed, and community
- Person is held responsible for harm caused, repairing harm, and working towards positive outcomes
- Opportunity to express remorse and make amends



Our Practices

Tier I Practices are those that all students will experience. They are implemented with the intention of creating a safe, welcoming, and positive school environment.

- Connection Circles*
- Restorative Conversations*

Tier II Practices are a step up from Tier I and are used when more intervention is needed. These practices are often implemented with the support of the restorative practice coordinator or an administrator, and the focus is on repairing harm and restoring relationships.

- Problem Solving or Harm Circles*
- Restorative Agreement Meetings*

Tier Three Practices are the most intensive practices. These practices are used in response to the most severe instances of harm and take more time, support, and follow up than Tier I and II supports.

- Restorative Agreement Meetings*
- Community Group Circles*



Four Restorative Questions

What happened?

Who was affected and how?

What can you take responsibility for?

What needs to be done to make things right?



Our Successes

In the first four years of implementation we have:

Cut suspensions by 73%

Cut the total number of students suspended by 62%

Cut the number of students suspended for fights by 83%

Trained over 60 student Circle Keepers

Facilitated Over 250 Mediations

Student Circle Keepers have trained over 80 student teachers and teacher residents in RP and circles.

Established our Student Success Center, keeping more kids in school and supporting them in repairing harm.