



This NEPS Handout has been developed by educational psychologists and is based on current knowledge in this area. It is intended as a guide only. Not all the advice here may apply to any one student or situation. Teachers and parents may wish to identify the strategies that will work best for them.

Restorative Justice

Restorative practice is based on the idea that the best way to help someone who has done wrong is to give them the opportunity to put things right. The outline presented here is based on the principles of restorative justice. For more information, see the end of this handout.

A mentor (this could be a class teacher, year head, student support team member etc) meets separately with both the 'victim'/ 'harmed person' and the person who showed the challenging behaviour.

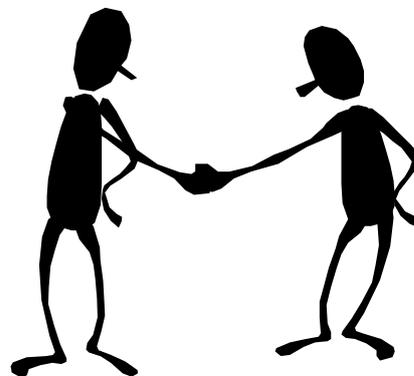
The following questions are asked...

to the person showing challenging behaviour:

1. what happened?
2. What were you thinking at the time?
3. What have your thoughts been since?
4. Who has been affected by what you did?
5. In what way have they been affected?
6. What do you think needs to happen next?

to the harmed person...

1. What happened?
2. What were your thoughts at the time?
3. What have your thoughts been since?
4. How has this affected you and others?
5. What has been the hardest thing for you?
6. What do you think needs to happen next?



Then both come together with the mentor who puts the same series of questions to them again (the earlier separate meetings are a practice and the mentor may have given support in structuring their thinking). The idea is that a workable solution or way of making up for the harm caused is agreed (and empathy is supported).

The practice says that 'why?' questions are unhelpful e.g. 'why did you....?'

For behaviour disruptions that are not serious but occur frequently and are annoying use Bill Rogers 4W Plan, which is also rooted in restorative justice.

The 4W Form asks the students to reply to the following questions:

1. **W**hat I did, was it against our class or school rules (my behaviour)
2. **W**hat rules (or rights) did I break or ignore?
3. **W**hat is my explanation?
4. **W**hat I think I should do to fix things up or work things out.

Important Note: Restorative Justice is known to work best where it is part of a whole school approach to discipline.

The following information is based on information provided by the **Restorative Practices Ireland**. This organisation can link your school to local trainers and further resources and support.

<http://www.restorativepracticesireland.ie>

What are the benefits of restorative practices?

At its most basic, restorative practices improve the quality of relationships we have. Using this approach can both avoid and minimise conflict, and help us to manage it better when it does arise.

More specifically, restorative practices have been found to reduce school exclusions, improve staff sickness rates, reduce tensions in the work place, and give people greater confidence in managing difficult situations.

People who have participated in restorative practice training and are using it as a way of working, report that their work is easier, more enjoyable and more effective.

Who can use restorative practices?

Many people use restorative approaches in their work already without naming them that. In order to use restorative practice consistently, it is helpful to attend an introductory training day and then consider what further training is most relevant.

Anyone can use restorative practice: parents, young people themselves, teachers and youth workers, police, and others in the criminal justice system.

The training for adopting and using a restorative practice approach is accessible and appropriate to anyone aged 12 years or over. Anyone can become competent to begin using restorative practice after training for one day.