

Restorative  
healing  
peace  
community building

community circles  
mediation  
Justice  
RELATIONSHIPS  
reconciliation

# in LAUSD

*"Restorative Justice is a process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offense and to collectively identify and address harms, needs, and obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible"*

*- Howard Zehr, 1990*

The District adopted the School Climate Bill of Rights in May 2013 and committed to implementing Restorative Justice practices in all schools by 2020. Restorative Justice emphasizes community building and commits to restoring relationships. Restorative practices promote and strengthen positive school culture. Moreover, pro-social relationships also improve within the school community.

## Restorative Justice at a Glance

The following principles reflect the values and concepts for implementing Restorative Justice practices in the school setting:

1. Acknowledge that relationships are essential to building a successful school community.
2. Ensure equity of voice amongst all members of the community. Everyone is valued, everyone is heard.
3. Sets high expectations while offering supports, emphasizing doing things **"with,"** not **"to"** or **"for"**.
4. Build systems that address student misconduct and harm in a way that strengthens relationships and focuses on the harm done rather than only rule-breaking.

## What are Restorative Justice practices?

Increasingly used in U.S. school districts and worldwide, restorative practices promote trust and respect in relationships, setting the foundation for teaching and learning. In addition, the practices provide meaningful opportunities for students to develop self-discipline and positive behavior in a caring and supportive environment.

## What is Restorative Justice?

Restorative Justice practices promote values and principles that use inclusive, collaborative practices for being in a community. Restorative Justice practices help schools create and maintain a positive school culture and climate. Restorative Justice practices:

- Build community
- Celebrate accomplishments
- Intervene in offending behavior
- Transform conflict
- Rebuild damaged relationships
- Reintegrate students into the learning environment

## Why Restorative Justice in schools?

Restorative Justice is a philosophy and an approach to discipline that moves away from punishment toward restoring a sense of harmony and well-being for all those affected by a hurtful act. It provides families, schools, and communities a way to ensure accountability while at the same time breaking the cycle of retribution and violence. It is based on a view of resilience in children and youth and their capability to solve problems, as opposed to the youth themselves being the problems adults must fix. It focuses not on retribution but on reconnecting severed relationships and re-empowering individuals by holding them responsible. This approach acknowledges that, when a person does harm, it affects the persons they hurt, the community, and themselves. When using restorative practices, an attempt is made to repair the harm caused by one person to another and to the community so that everyone is moved toward healing.

- A restorative approach in school requires students to think about themselves and how they deal with one another, and to work on developing healthy relationships and learning how to manage conflict. Implementing a restorative approach in a school can have a positive impact on students at school and at home.
- When Restorative Justice practices are consistently applied within a school wide context, they improve school climate, promote community, and reduce student misconduct. They will also strengthen positive school culture and enhance pro-social relationships within the school community.
- The Restorative Justice model is a three-tiered model of prevention, intervention and reentry in response to conflict/harm.
- Restorative Justice practices work to lower suspension and expulsion rates and to foster positive school climates with the goal of eliminating racially disproportionate discipline practices.

# What are the benefits of Restorative Justice in LAUSD schools?

Members of the school community will:

- Build safer and more caring school environments.
- Have an opportunity to be heard.
- Understand the greater impact of one's actions and learn to take responsibility.
- Repair the harm one's actions may have caused.
- Recognize one's role in maintaining a safe school environment.
- Build upon and expand on personal relationships in the school community.
- Recognize one's role as a positive contributing member of the school community.
- Increase instructional time on task and a decrease in student misconduct.
- Build practices to take time to listen to one another.
- Reduction in bullying and other interpersonal conflicts.
- Increase awareness of the importance of connectedness to young people.
- Recognize the need to belong and feel valued by peers and significant adults.
- Greater emphasis on responses to inappropriate behavior that seek to reconnect, and not further disconnect young people.
- Schools will see a reduction in suspension and expulsion rates.
- Build confidence in the school community to deal with challenging issues.

**For additional information contact Central or the Educational Service Center (ESC):**

Central School Operations	213-241-5337
ESC-East School Operations	323-224-3177
ESC-North School Operations	818-654-3600
ESC-South School Operations	310-354-3417
ESC-West School Operations	310-914-2110
ESC-ISIC School Operations	213-241-0167

## Restorative Questions

**When responding to misconduct, a Restorative Justice approach consists of asking the following key questions:**

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking at the time of the incident?
3. What have you thought about since?
4. Who has been affected by what happened and how?
5. What about this has been the hardest for you?
6. What do you think needs to be done to make things as right as possible?



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# Tips for Community Building Circles

## Core Circle Guidelines

- Respect the talking piece
- Speak from your heart
- Listen with your heart
- Speak with respect
- Remain in the circle
- Honor privacy

## Sample Prompting Questions

- Share a happy memory.
- What do you appreciate about your school?
- If you had an unexpected free day, what you like to do?
- If you were an animal, what animal would you be and why?
- What are three “gifts” (attributes of yourself) that you bring to the school community?
- What do you most appreciate about someone who is important to you in your life?

## Check-in Circle

- What value would you like to offer for our classroom?
- What is something that you are thankful for? Why?
- Talk about something that you want and something that you need. What is the difference?
- What is a goal you have for yourself? How will you celebrate yourself when you accomplish it?

## Check-out Circle

- Appreciate someone in the circle.
- Talk about one of your academic goals that you accomplished this week and how.
- Where do you see yourself moving forward?
- What can you take away that is useful to you?
- How will these insights help you in the next two weeks?

*Adapted from Heart of Hope Resources Guide by Kay Pranis*



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Office of the Superintendent-School Operations

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- What do you think other people see as your best quality? Why?

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# **Distrito Escolar Unificado de Los Ángeles**

## **Preguntas de reconstitución**

Al responder a la mala conducta, un enfoque en Justicia Reconstituyente consiste en hacer las siguientes preguntas claves:

1. ¿Qué ha pasado?
2. ¿En qué pensabas en el momento del incidente?
3. ¿Qué has pensado ya?
4. ¿Quién se ha visto afectado por lo sucedido y cómo?
5. ¿Qué fue lo más difícil sobre esto para ti?
6. ¿Qué opinas que se necesita hacer para que las cosas se corrijan de la mejor manera posible?

# Ideas para Formar Círculos Comunitarios

## Directrices para la Base del Círculo

- Respetar la parte de la conversación
- Hablar desde el corazón
- Escuchar con el corazón
- Hablar con respeto
- Permanecer en el círculo
- Honor a la privacidad

## Contáctate con el Círculo

- ¿Que valor te gustaría ofrecer a tu aula de clases?
- Sobre que cosa te sientes agradecido? ¿Y porque?
- Habla sobre algo que quieres y que necesitas. ¿Cual es la diferencia?.
- ¿Que metas tienes para ti mismo? ¿Como celebrarás cuando la logres?

## Muestras para Iniciar Preguntas

- Comparte un recuerdo feliz.
- ¿Que aprecias de tu escuela?
- Si tuvieras un día libre inesperado, ¿que te gustaría hacer?
- Si fueras un animal, ¿que animal te gustaría ser?
- Dime tres talentos(atributos de ti mismo) que aportas a la comunidad escolar.
- ¿Que es lo que más aprecias en alguien que es importante en tu vida?

## Retirándose del Círculo

- Aprecia a alguien en el círculo.
- Habla sobre una meta académica que lograste esta semana y como.
- ¿Como te ves a ti mismo yendo hacia adelante?.
- ¿Que puedes llevarte que es de uso para ti?
- ¿Como esta percepción te ayuda en las próximas dos semanas?

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- ¿Que valor te gustaría ofrecer a tu aula de clases?
- ¿Sobre que cosa te sientes agradecido? Y ¿porque?
- Habla sobre algo que quieres y que necesitas. ¿Cual es la diferencia?.
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*Adaptación de la guía de Recursos de Heart of Hope por Kay Pranis*

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