



HAMILTON-  
WENTWORTH  
DISTRICT  
SCHOOL  
BOARD

# Safe & Caring SCHOOLS



## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

*Information for Parents and Students*

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board is committed to making each and every one of its schools a caring place that is safe for learning.



[www.hwdsb.on.ca/programs/safeschools](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/programs/safeschools)

ALL STUDENTS ACHIEVING THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

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*Every student deserves to feel and be safe in a school, on the school grounds, on the school bus, and at school events and activities. At Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB), we know safety is essential to good learning. Students learn and teachers teach more successfully when schools are safe. If a student misbehaves, the principal decides on what steps to take to help the student improve his or her behaviour.*

**Restorative Justice Practices represent one possible step.**



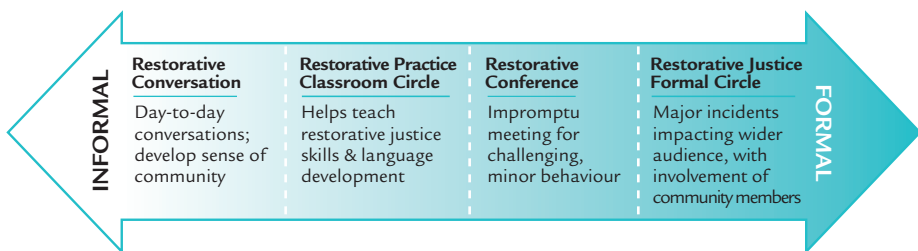
## What are Restorative Justice Practices?

Restorative Justice (RJ) is one way to respond to harm, in that it allows those who have been harmed the opportunity to be heard, have input into resolution and have access to support. RJ also provides those who caused the harm to be held accountable to those they hurt, while taking a role in how to make amends. When conflict exists, RJ can provide guidance for respectful communication through non-blaming language and a problem-solving approach. This approach:

- ▶ gives anyone the opportunity to ask for this problem-solving method;
- ▶ can voluntarily include all the people who have been affected;
- ▶ focuses on repairing relationships and strengthening community;
- ▶ supports the person who is harmed as well as the person who has harmed another person;
- ▶ helps repair damaged relationships;
- ▶ holds people accountable while finding ways to move forward;
- ▶ does not replace consequences, but can replace, or reduce the *need* for consequences.

Restorative Justice Practices (RJP) use the principles of RJ to build relationships between the members of a community, creating increased understanding and communication. Our schools use RJP in classrooms and in the school as a whole to help create supportive and caring environments among students, **when asked by parents or if an issue is identified.**

## Types of Restorative Justice Practices



## Questions Asked During Restorative Justice

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking/ feeling at the time?
3. What have you thought about since?
4. Who has been affected by what happened?
5. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

## How Do You Determine a Type of Restorative Justice Practice?

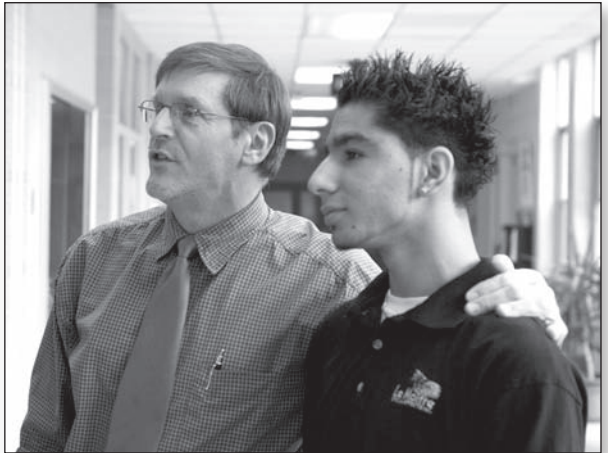
The type of RJP varies based on the specific details of the incident or incidents. The approach can be used as a preventative or responsive mechanism, or to mitigate a consequence.

Three groups must have their needs considered and met in the Restorative Justice process:

- those who have been harmed;
- those who have caused harm;
- the school and/or community as a whole.

Those involved need to have opportunities to:

- share perspectives and find solutions that can help repair harm in a meaningful way;
- be reintegrated back into their school and community as healthy, cooperative members of society;
- be supported in a safe and inclusive environment.



## How Can I Help?

Parents and guardians can also be part of Restorative Justice Practices, helping to problem-solve and encouraging an understanding that conflict resolution is a shared responsibility. Parents/guardians are asked to participate in restorative justice circles if the students involved are under 18 years of age. After age 16, a student can decide if he/she wants their parent/guardian present for support.



## How Can Restorative Justice Help in the Classroom?

The skills learned through Restorative Justice Practices can also be developed in the classroom, through:

- classroom circles;
- questioning for reflective thinking and problem solving;
- lessons about student responsibility;
- circles that develop oral language skills;
- peer mentorship; and
- promoting and teaching empathy.

## Engaging Students, Building Character

Restorative Justice Practices can help promote a positive school climate. A focus on positive school climate includes student engagement and supports youth empowerment. This builds a student's capacity and resilience to learn and grow while contributing to a safe, caring, and inclusive school community.

### HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD'S PARTNERS IN RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES

**JohnHoward**

SOCIETY OF HAMILTON, BURLINGTON & AREA



Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board  
*Believing, Achieving, Serving*



**Hamilton**  
Culture & Recreation

Initial funds provided by The Ontario Trillium Foundation

## LEARN MORE

Superintendent of Safe Schools: 905-527-5092 x 2323  
John Howard Society Youth Program Manager: 905-522-4446 x 292

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## SAFE & CARING BOOKLET SERIES:

1. Code of Conduct
2. Progressive Discipline
3. Bullying
4. Suspension
5. Expulsion
6. Gateway
7. Appropriate Dress
8. Safe Arrival Check
9. Restorative Justice



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**HWDSB new address effective July 2012-14:  
Standard Life Building  
120 King Street West, Suite 1120  
Hamilton, ON L8P 4V2**

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