



## Intended Benefits of School-Based Restorative Practices

- A **safer**, more supportive school.
- A greater **sense of belonging** for students and teachers in the school community.
- **Fewer conflicts:** student-to-student, student-staff, and parent to school.
- **Reductions** in disciplinary referrals and suspensions/expulsions.
- **Improved attendance** rates.
- **Increased parent confidence** in the school as a safe, healthy environment for their child.



## Meaningful Accountability

- Repairs the harm done to people and relationships rather than simply punishing.
- Gives students, parents, staff, and the community the knowledge, strategies, and skills required to develop and sustain a safe, inclusive school.
- Provides an opportunity for the person who caused the harm to take responsibility for their actions, be held accountable, embrace change, receive support, accept consequences and make amends.



PO Box 8937  
Vancouver, WA 98668-8937  
360.313.1000  
[www.vansd.org](http://www.vansd.org)

# What We Do When Harm Happens:

# A Restorative Approach

This brochure was developed in collaboration with:  
Black Lives Matter, Vancouver, WA  
Clark County Juvenile Court

When conflicts occur or when people are hurt, either physically or emotionally, a Restorative Approach asks us to reflect on:

- What harm was done?

---

---

---

- Who was harmed?

---

---

---

- What needs to happen for accountability and healing?

---

---

---

For the children who cause harm the school community wants them to:

- Understand & take responsibility for the harm done
- Have the opportunity to make things right
- Re-join the school community as an accepted, contributing community member

For the children who are harmed, the school community wants them to:

- Be heard – to have the harms done to them understood and respected
- Be given a voice in how the harm is addressed
- Feel they can re-join the learning environment as an accepted, contributing community member

## Restorative Practices is an approach, not a program

Everyone makes mistakes. Our challenge is to help members of our community who have made poor choices to accept responsibility for their behavior, see how it has affected others, determine how to repair the harm, and accept the consequences in order to learn, grow and move forward.

Restorative school communities value relationships, accountability, and wholeness by:

- **Developing** shared community **values** and expectations.
- **Providing** high levels of **support** and care for individuals.
- **Recognizing** that wrong-doing primarily causes **harm** to relationships, and that this harm must be repaired in order to move forward.
- **Following** a meaningful **process** in dealing with all cases of conflict and wrong-doing.

## Restorative Practices

The foundation of restorative practices is establishing, maintaining, and repairing relationships in a safe and supportive school environment. Community building in a culture of restorative practice is proactive and preventative. Members of a restorative school community recognize the mutual responsibility they have to one another.

A key component of restorative practices is **acknowledging** and addressing **the needs** of everyone involved. Another focus is addressing **the harms** done, both to individuals and to the broader school community. Giving the person(s) harmed **a voice** and the person(s) who caused the harm **a chance to make amends** are both essential to restorative practice.

Meaningful accountability is an intended outcome of restorative practices. This accountability occurs when support is provided for both parties, the impacts of the harm are understood, relationships are repaired, and people feel safe to re-enter their community.