



# Restorative Practices

## Helping Students Build Strong and Healthy Relationships—In School and In Life

Restorative Practices is a positive way of living—NOT a disciplinary tool. Through Restorative Practices, students learn to connect with teachers and other students to build a strong community. They develop appropriate social-emotional skills, come to understand how their actions affect others, and work to repair any harm done.

It is an approach built on respect, communication, and strategies for success.

We understand that when everyone is treated with respect, classrooms are safe and healthy environments that support both teaching and learning.



**Restorative Practices is not unique to Pittsburgh Public Schools. It is used successfully on college campuses, in the world of business, in counseling and social work, and in the criminal justice system.**

## Taking a Proactive Approach

At Pittsburgh Public Schools, we start by setting expectations for students, then coupling these expectations with support and communications. Teachers and staff in all PPS schools have been formally trained in Restorative Practices techniques in order to build a positive school culture. They participate in monthly meetings to discuss how Restorative Practices is working in their school.

Throughout the school day, students will experience many things that are part of Restorative Practices. They might sit in a circle and discuss positive behaviors that would benefit the entire class or school community. Or they will hear teachers and staff members using specific language that is an essential part of Restorative Practices. For example, they will hear:

- **Affective Statements:** These are statements that express feelings about someone's behavior. For example, instead of reprimanding a child for being late, a teacher may say something like, "I'm concerned that you're late for class again because I must stop and re-teach a lesson that the class has already heard. That is not fair to you and everyone else."
- **Restorative Questions:** These are specific questions that invite the student to explain his or her actions. A teacher might say, "What were you thinking when you acted in that way?"
- **Ways to make things right:** A teacher might ask a student to think about how his or her actions affected others, and what might be done to make things right.

## Language is an Essential Part

Students will hear teachers and staff members using specific language that is an essential part of Restorative Practices. For example, they will hear:

Affective Statements

Restorative Questions

Ways to make things right

Read more about these types of practices below!

  
**Expect  
great  
things.**

 Pittsburgh  
Public Schools



## Part of the PPS Multi-Tiered System of Supports

The goal of Restorative Practices is meaningful accountability. It is designed to help students understand the impact of their behavior, and find ways to “restore” their place in the school community.

Although It is not a disciplinary tool, Restorative Practices is accompanied by appropriate consequences. Think of it as one prong in our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). In the event that a student needs additional support to correct behavior, Restorative Practices follows a specific protocol that might include impromptu one-on-one conferences between the student and principal, teacher, or guidance counselor and/or a more formal conference that includes a parent or guardian.

During Restorative Practices conferences, there is always a focus on bringing the student back into the school community.

**Important note: Restorative Practices separates the deed from the doer. Every student is valued as a person!**

## How Can Parents Get Involved?

You can follow the Restorative Practices model at home in the following ways:

- Make sure your children understand what behavior is expected of them.
- Develop strategies for dealing with conflict in the family.
- Engage in dialogue with your children, using restorative questions such as “How do you think your behavior affected the rest of the family,” etc.
- Guide your children to make amends and work with them to create happy and healthy family relationships.



**According to the International Institute of Restorative Practices, students are happier, healthier, and more likely to make positive change when those in positions of authority do things *with* them, rather than to them.**



**The lessons learned through Restorative Practices apply to all aspects of life. It provides students with a toolkit that they can use to avoid conflicts and make amends as they progress through school and enter into the workforce and adult communities.**

## Need more information?

Contact your child's school,  
or send an email to  
[restorativepractices@pghschools.org](mailto:restorativepractices@pghschools.org).

© April 2019 Pittsburgh Public Schools

Para asistencia con este documento en español, por favor llame a la línea nueve al 412-529-6463 y seleccione la opción #1.

यो दस्तावेज सम्बन्धी सहयोगको नमिती कृपया नाइन लाइन नम्बर (४१२)५२९-६४६ मा फोन गरी अंक # २ चुनुनु होला।

Kwa msaada kwa nyaraka(document) hii katika Swahili , tafadhali piga msitari wa tisa 412-529-6463 kisha chaguwe uchaguzi la #3.

=如需获得本文件的中文帮助，请拨打电话412-529-6463致电九号线，并选择选项 #4

حصول على المساعدة باللغة العربية ، إضغطوا على #5

Чтобы получить помощь по этому документу на русском языке, пожалуйста позвоните на Девятую Линию 412-529-6463 и нажмите #8.

Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs, activities or employment and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries may be directed to the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Title IX Coordinator or the Section 504/ADA Title II Coordinator at 341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, 412-529-3950, TitleIXCoordinator@pghschools.org or 412.529.HELP (4357).

