RJ Principles, Practices, Data

Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth (RJOY)
Webinar Housekeeping

- Everyone is in “listen-only” mode.
- Two listen options: phone or web (phone tends to be better!)
- Call in #: 415-655-0003, Access Code: 663 571 249
- Type questions in the sidebar to the right and there will be time for questions at the end.
- The webinar is being recorded.
- Supporting materials will be emailed to you and available on our website.
About California School-Based Health Alliance

The California School-Based Health Alliance is the statewide non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health and academic success of children and youth by advancing health services in schools.

Our work is based on two basic concepts:

- Health care should be accessible and where kids are, and
- Schools should have the services needed to ensure that poor health is not a barrier to learning
Presentation Objectives

Review:
- RJ Principles
- RJ Practices or Models (with focus on Circle Model)
- RJ Data
- Applications in Oakland
RJ Principles
Restorative Justice is a philosophy and theory of justice that emphasizes bringing together everyone affected by wrongdoing to address their needs and obligations and to heal the harm as much as possible.
Paradigm Shift RJ Invites

From a harming justice to a *healing justice*, from a *retributive* to a *restorative justice*

- **Three Questions Retributive Justice asks:**
  1. What law/rule was broken?
  2. Who broke it?
  3. What punishment deserved?

- **Three Questions Restorative Justice Asks:**
  1. Who was harmed?
  2. What are needs and responsibilities of everyone impacted?
  3. How do all impacted come together to address needs and responsibilities and heal harm?
Contemporary RJ arose in Ontario, Canada, about 40 years ago out of frustrations with dysfunctions of justice system.

Though RJ Movement only about four decades old, RJ is a contemporary expression of ancient reconciliation and conflict resolution processes, once universal to most societies.
4 Different Ways We Respond to Conflict

- **TO**
  - punitive
    - authoritarian
    - irresponsible

- **WITH**
  - restorative
    - authoritative
    - paternalistic

- **NOT**
  - neglectful

- **FOR**
  - permissive

Support (encouragement, nurture)
Three Basic Conferencing Models:

- Victim Offender Dialogue
- Family Group Conferencing
- Peacemaking Circles

ADDITIONAL MODELS (VOEG, TRC, others)
Our Focus: Peacemaking Circle Model

- Community-Building
- Re Entry
- Conflict
- Healing
- Talking
- Learning

- Celebration
- Sentencing
- Alternative School Discipline
The 5 Structural Elements of Circles

(1) Circle Keeper

(2) Talking Piece and Center piece

(3) Ceremony

(4) Consensus

(5) Values/Guidelines
The 4 Relational Elements of Circles

- Meeting, getting acquainted
- Trust-Building
- Issues
- Solutions

- Developing Plans/Sense of Unity
- Meeting, Getting Acquainted
- Addressing Vision/Issues (content)
- Building Understanding and Trust
Circles Assume We Are Connected and Interdependent

- The ancients know this. Speak of our interrelatedness with all of Creation - Prana, chi, ashe, mitake oyasin, all my relations
- Modern neuroscience, astrophysics, quantum physics, psychology are learning we are profoundly connected, coded to be in relationship
- We know this - in everyone of us there is a deep desire to connect to others in a good way.
How is a Circle Different from Similar Processes?

• Circles and Groups
  Facilitator lectures, gives advice vs. sharing stories
  • Facilitator dominates

• Circles and Therapy
  • Clinical training/experience is not primary resource for understanding issues
  • Circle facilitator does not control or run the group as in therapy

• Classroom Circles - *Teacher* Dominated
Senior Stress Circle
1. Are harms, needs, and causes addressed?
2. Adequately victim-oriented?
3. Are persons causing harm encouraged to develop empathy and take responsibility?
4. Are all relevant stakeholders involved?
5. Is there an opportunity for dialogue and participatory decision-making?
6. Is the model respectful to all?
Diverse Applications
RJ being used in justice system (juvenile and adult) as a diversion from incarceration, for in-custody education, and for re-entry
By faith based organizations as a ministry to their communities
By schools for behavior intervention and to create a more caring community
Harm Circle Example

- Ms. Rover’s Health Education class
- Mostly 9th graders, some upperclassmen
- Issues around classroom management, respect, work completion, classroom disruption, office referrals
- Wellness Center staff requested to observe class and conduct harm circle
- Student leaders engaged and participated in circle
- Follow up circle planned in one week
By police departments to further community policing and community building
To Heal Wounds of Mass Social Conflict
RJ is a Worldwide Movement
2009 study of RJ in 6 Pennsylvania schools shows reduced violence, suspensions, and disruptive behavior.

- 50-87% drops in suspension rates not uncommon

- Significant reductions/elimination of violence, racial disparities (Completely eliminated at some schools in Oakland)

- Will review latest study from OUSD in a moment
Restorative Conference example

- Conflict between student and teacher
- Teacher requested conference
- Facilitated by 2 Wellness Center staff
- Followed restorative questions protocol
- Did not require disciplinary action or intervention by administrator
Restorative Questions

To respond to challenging behavior...
- What happened?
- What were you thinking of at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
- What do you need to do to make things right?

To help those harmed by other’s actions...
- What did you think when you realized what happened?
- What impact has this incident had on you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?
Reduced Recidivism
(Criminal/Juvenile Justice Programs)

- San Francisco County: 20%
- Sonoma County: 10%
- New Zealand: 30%
Reduced Incarceration

Rate per 10,000 14 to 16 year-olds appearing in the New Zealand Youth Court
Satisfaction of Persons Harmed

Over 90% victim satisfaction
(Sonoma County Restorative Conferencing Program)

Victims have a voice

Victims show reduced fear after meeting with the person who caused them harm
(Restorative Justice: The Evidence, Sherman & Strang, 2007)
Fiscal Benefits

- Reduction in Average Daily Attendance funding loss when suspensions decrease
- $1 spent on restorative justice may save $8 in the criminal-justice system
- Housing 1 juvenile with an average sentence in Alameda County will cost $55,000. (Recidivism 75%)
- Diverting 1 youth through an restorative Conference will cost only about $5000, including staff salary and benefits. (Recidivism 15%)
RJOY - Cole Middle School Pilot
2006

- Reduced Suspension Rates by 87%
- Eliminated Violence
- Higher test scores
- Eliminated Teacher Attrition
- Consistent with national studies on effectiveness of school programs (Minn., Pa. and Colo.)
Oakland School Resolution - 2010

Oakland Unified School District

expect Success
Latest Data from OUSD
(Study of RJ v. non-RJ schools 2011-2014)

- 76% of Circles Successfully Resolved Conflict
- Racial disparities reduced and eliminated in some schools (e.g. eliminated Ralph Bunche)
- Increased Youth Capacity to Navigate Conflict (Doing Circles at Home)
- Dramatically Higher Academic Outcomes RJ schools v. non-RJ schools
  - 60% increase in graduation rates v. 7% increase
  - 128% increase in reading levels v. 11% increase
  - 62% reduction in chronic absence v. 24% increase
  - 56% reduction in drop out v. 17% reduction
Alameda County Restorative Juvenile Justice Strategic Plan - 2009

- Institutionalize evidence based RJ practices in Alameda County’s juvenile justice system, schools, community based youth serving organizations

- More effectively address youthful wrongdoing and associated mental health and behavioral issues
Restorative Juvenile Justice in Alameda County

- Pilot Programs 2008-2009
- Work Today – Community Works, RJOY, Insight Prison Project
Gandhi’s Justice:
That act alone is just which does no harm to either party to a dispute.

MLK’s Justice:
Justice is love correcting that which revolts against love. Wherever justice stands, you find love stands beside it.
THANK YOU

Supporters of RJOY include The California Endowment, Measure Y, The San Francisco Foundation, Oakland Unified School District, The Van Loben Sels Foundation and Individual Donors