

Building School Communities of Attachment and Relationship: A Restorative Approach to Schools in Nova Scotia

**Emma Halpern/Tri County Restorative Justice
April 28, 2011**

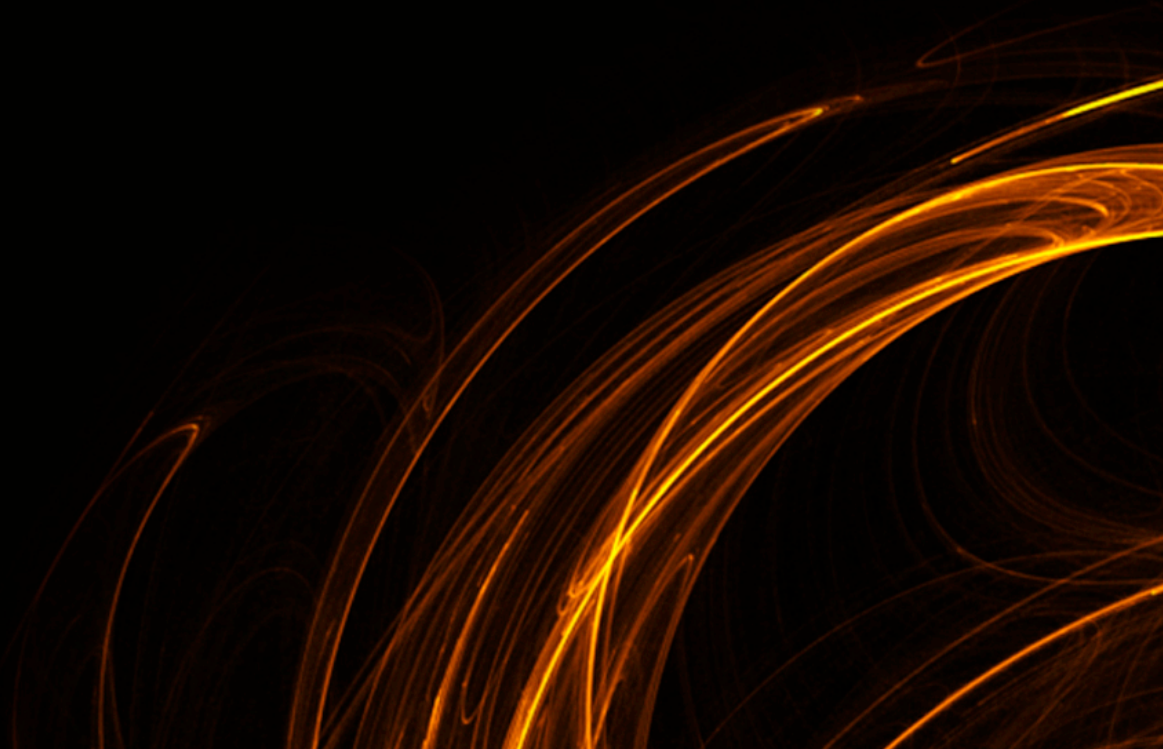


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Introduction

Over the past few years, a number of schools in Nova Scotia have adopted a restorative approach and are seeing extremely positive results. Principals report fewer suspensions, fewer discipline issues, and a more positive school environment. The success of these schools and a growing interest and enthusiasm for restorative approaches from educators around the province prompted the creation of this report.

I was impressed last year by the reduction in suspensions. We began to implement a restorative approach to deal with office referrals in late January of 2010. A comparison of the suspension rates from Jan to March of 2009 to the same time period in 2010 showed an 80% reduction (76 student days lost compared to 14 student days lost). The comparison this year is equally as impressive with an 83% reduction rate (64 student days lost compared to 11 student days lost). Since Sept of 2009 there has only been one instance of fighting on school property. The impact of using a restorative approach to address situations which have resulted in harm has had a positive impact on the school climate. Students, staff and community all report that they have noticed a positive change in the school climate. When you come into SRHS there is a real sense of community. Students are respectful and are becoming more aware of how their behavior affects those around them, the interconnectedness that exists between us. Using a restorative approach to deal with behaviour provides students with both the language and a process for dealing with disputes in a manner that promotes responsibility, respect, and communication.

Mary Manning, Principal of Shelburne Regional High School

While currently in Nova Scotia, a number of individual schools are finding success with a restorative approach, there is no coordinated provincial support structure. The process thus far has been that individual schools have sought out local and non-local resources for information and training but there is no provincial organization or entity which school administrators can contact in order to gain ongoing training and support. There is also no local place for newly interested schools to go to seek information about restorative approaches. For the most part, schools learn about this initiative through word of mouth and are therefore frequently unaware of the scope and possibilities offered through this approach and the wealth of resources and information that currently exists in pockets throughout the province. This report, then, is designed to do three things:

- 1) Identify the current use of restorative approaches in Nova Scotia schools;
- 2) Articulate a framework that clearly sets out the elements of a restorative approach in schools;
- 3) Recommend the most effective way to enhance and support the restorative work currently occurring in schools and propose a community-based, “made in Nova Scotia” solution that will provide support for all interested schools who wish to adopt this approach.

METHODOLOGY

This research initiative came with a number of deliverables that shaped the methodology. The first deliverable was a requirement to attend the International Institute for Restorative Practices conference in Hull, England and to study and research the experiences of practitioners and educators in Hull where a cross-system restorative practices initiative has successfully built it into a restorative city. The research undertaken in Hull consisted of a number of key interviews with community leaders and practitioners and attendance at the conference itself.

Also crucial to the research that informs this report was the invaluable feedback of the advisory committee, struck to offer strategic advice and provide insight into the direction of the research and the viability of the recommendations. The members of this advisory committee provided expertise in a number of areas and consisted of the following representatives and organizations:

- 1) Nova Scotia Restorative Justice Community Research Alliance— Professor Jennifer Llewellyn
- 2) Department of Justice, The Director of the NS Crime Prevention Strategy— Patricia Gorham
- 3) Department of Justice, The Director of the NS Restorative Justice Program— Janet Briggs
- 4) Department of Education, Student Services Guidance Consultant— Rola AbiHanna
- 5) Department of Education, SchoolsPlus Coordinator— Tara Moore
- 6) Department of Education, African Canadian Services Division, Student Services— Steven Carrington
- 7) Halifax Regional School Board, Safe Schools Consultant— Richard Derible

Additional research consisted of a review of academic and non-academic writing and reports on the topic of a restorative approach to schools as well as a review of programs, websites, and organizations that exist in other jurisdictions. The NSRJ-CURA, supported this portion through funds for a part-time law student whose research in this area proved to be invaluable. A summary of this research can be found in [Appendix I](#) of this report.

Finally, a significant portion of the research was devoted to surveying, both online and through telephone interviews, educators and restorative justice practitioners who have been involved, in some capacity over the past few years, in taking a restorative approach in schools. For a summary of the responses to the survey and telephone interviews please see [Appendix II](#).

The primary requirements of the research were to:

- 1) Identify guiding principles for a restorative approach to schools and align this approach with the projects, initiatives, concepts and theories currently being used through the Nova Scotia Restorative Justice Program, SchoolsPlus, PEBS, and the Race Relations, Cross Cultural Education, and Human Rights program.
- 2) Propose opportunities for collaboration, cross training capacities, formal training, teacher training, and long term support for this initiative.
- 3) Recommend a framework for moving forward with a restorative approach to schools in Nova Scotia.

A Restorative Approach in Schools

A restorative approach in schools is founded on the belief that in order to build safe and healthy¹ school communities, we must strengthen and support our social relationships through community participation, respectful dialogue, and sustainable processes that build and strengthen relationships. In this way, opportunities can develop for all school community members to feel empowered and engaged and hence to participate meaningfully.

“We took on this approach to effect a change in school culture.”

Developing a restorative approach in a school takes time because it entails not simply a new set of activities or a new program, but a new way of learning, thinking, and interacting. It is not simply a program to get students to improve their behaviour or a checklist that will help build classroom community (although these things are frequently accomplished through this approach); rather it involves a shift in how we understand and relate to human beings and the world. The school system, like many other Western institutions, was significantly influenced by ideas of liberal individualism.² As such, the prevalent view when working with children and youth, particularly as they grow older, is to teach them how to be strong independent individuals in society and to treat them as fundamentally separate from others. That is, the traditional school system takes as a starting assumption that all human beings must learn to be independent, autonomous individuals and so students are engaged with and taught accordingly. Students are rewarded as individuals through testing and grading and punished for misbehavior through separation and severing from the school community.

Teaching young people to be proud of their individual accomplishments, to strive to do well on their own regardless of external factors, and to understand that there are consequences for their actions is an important part of learning and growing up. It is, however, not sufficient to fully equip children and young people to relate and engage in the world. This is because liberal individualism misses a fundamental reality of human nature which is that we are, at our core, relational. This means that relationships shape and frequently govern our decisions and world view. A relational approach would suggest that students need to learn not only how to achieve on their own but also how to achieve in and through their relationships with others. Likewise, conflict and misbehavior should be understood not as something strictly individual but rather as having an impact on relationships and community. It is this relational understanding of our actions and their impact on others that develops a sense of social responsibility and accountability.

A restorative approach, which is rooted in a relational understanding of human beings, sees relationships as a fundamental aspect of being human and as the starting point for understanding human behaviour. This assumption about the centrality of relationships to who we are and how we live is rooted in the tenants of various religious, spiritual and faith traditions. It is also expressed in African philosophy as the idea of *ubuntu*: “a person is a person through other persons— that one’s humanity is tied up with the humanity of others”³. Our First Nations people also have developed cultures centered on relationships and see relationships as forming the foundation of teaching and learning.⁴ Our relational nature has also grounded a number of other disciplines, such as psychology and the social sciences, which recognize that in order to adequately address social issues it is important to examine and understand the way in which human beings relate.

¹ The use of the words safe and healthy refers not only to the physical health or safety of the individuals in the building but also to the safety to be oneself, express one’s feelings, ask questions and learn in a judgement free environment.

² Llewellyn J., “Linking Restorative Justice and Restorative Practice through Relational Theory”, Yarmouth, April, 2009

³ Llewellyn J., Key Note Presentation- “Mainstreaming Restorative Justice”, Texas, May, 2009

⁴ “Supporting Aboriginal Ways of Knowing”, firstnationspedagogy.ca

The fact that the centrality of relationship is a common element in many disciplines, religions and faith traditions speaks to a common understanding about the relational nature of human selves. What emerges from all of these disciplines and traditions is a relational account of the self — of us as human beings — one that regards connection over separateness as an essential element in the constitution and maintenance of the self. Social connection makes us who we are, who we become and how we live.⁵

If this insight is taken seriously then it compels us to examine the institutions that govern many aspects of our lives; schools and the school system are a crucial starting place because it is these institutions that play a complex and important role in forming who we are.

The centrality of relationships when working with children and youth was discussed by Justice D. Merlin Nunn in the Report of the Nunn Commission of Inquiry (hereinafter Nunn Commission) who expressed the view that in order to build attachments with youth, particularly high-risk youth, it is essential to develop programs and initiatives that strengthen the relationships between youth and their schools. Justice Nunn indicated that a lack of attachment is not only a risk factor for misbehavior and truancy at school but is also a quantifiable risk factor for criminal involvement.

I have heard from a number of witnesses, including our experts, who indicated the importance of educational attachment for youth at risk of being in conflict with the law... youth like AB need more connection to school not less⁶

For a young person, a lack of attachment at school can take the form of few or no relationships with others in the building (particularly adults), poor attendance, a disinterest in education, and significant behavioral problems. Unfortunately behavioral problems are most frequently dealt with by suspensions which further exclude young people from the school community and can sever any relationship or attachment that may have previously existed. A relational approach sees discipline as an opportunity to develop attachments through practices and processes that recognize and support the development of positive relationships. This does not mean that students are not held accountable for their behaviour, but rather that being made aware of the effects of their actions on others instills a new and richer sense of responsibility than would be likely to result from being suspended or otherwise separated.

In order to build schools that prioritize the development of attachment, it is not enough, however, to simply say that relationships are a starting point or that we must consider relationships in our schools. Rather, we need to move a step further to understand what kind of shift in our thinking needs to happen in order for us to move from seeing the role of schools as an agent of separation and individualism to an agent that helps us understand the crucial importance of our connection to one another.

A restorative approach is therefore about developing the capacity within a school for this shift in understanding to occur. It is an opportunity to introduce a social framework that supports a new way to understand human behaviour and to relate within a school community.

⁵ Llewellyn J., Key Note Presentation- “Mainstreaming Restorative Justice”, Texas, May, 2009

⁶ The Honourable Justice D. Merlin Nunn, *Report of the Nunn Commission of Inquiry* at p. 64

RELATIONSHIP WITH RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

It is the relational basis to all restorative theory and initiatives that makes it an approach which can be used in a number of contexts and environments such as community development, rehabilitation programs and of course the justice system. Restorative justice is often described as a holistic approach to justice – because it recognizes that the harm caused by wrongdoing is relational and therefore extends beyond the immediate victim(s) and wrongdoers to affect others associated with them. This includes family, friends and the support communities of victim and wrongdoer as well as members of the other communities affected indirectly by the wrong and indeed the broader community to which the parties belong⁷. Another way of saying this is that wrongdoing causes harm to people and their connections/relationships with one another. The webs of relationships that connect us one to the other are strained and damaged when we harm one another.⁸ The aim of restorative justice, like other restorative approaches, is to respond to harm, conflict or wrongdoing by understanding the context and cause of the harm and addressing the impact on people and their relationships with one another.

Restorative justice is a theory of justice that provides insights on how to build relationships and to live together more justly in many contexts. This understanding of justice as relational has led to a movement to apply restorative processes outside of the justice spheres and to use its processes to build community, improve connections and relationships, and promote collaborative and inclusive processes, particularly after conflict or harm has arisen. It is because of this grounding in restorative justice that initially when restorative processes were conceived in a school context, they were seen primarily as a process for dealing with discipline. Over time, however, it became clear that the broader insights of restorative justice are relevant and important in more general ways, as a means to build and nurture strong relationships within school communities. Thus a restorative approach in schools, with its own set of processes, principles and goals, began to be developed. Fundamentally, a restorative approach to school and restorative justice in the criminal context are aimed at the same goal and animated by the same principles and commitments. That is, the same insights and understanding are at the core of all restorative work – namely that human beings are inherently, fundamentally, relational in our nature.⁹

UNDERSTANDING RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Of course, a restorative approach in schools is more than simply a philosophy or a theoretical understanding of human beings. There are a number of processes and practices, known as restorative practices, that help school staff and students to think and behave restoratively and these can be learned and taught. Restorative practices are a set of activities, tools, programs, processes, standards and methods that help a school to become restorative in its approach. It is through the use of restorative practices that schools begin to see a relational shift in the way staff, administrators, students, parents, and communities approach their work and their day-to-day interactions. Overall, a restorative approach helps us evaluate the assumptions we make and that guide the way in which we approach and treat one another both on a day to day basis and when conflict and challenges arise.

Within the school, a restorative approach is structured to encourage, promote and enable leadership by building the capacity for positive relationships and conflict resolution. This approach introduces an exciting potential model, that is implemented or guided not only by the administration but rather by teachers and students as

⁷ Llewellyn J., “Linking Restorative Justice and Restorative Practice through Relational Theory”, Yarmouth, April, 2009 at pg 5

⁸ Llewellyn J., “Linking Restorative Justice and Restorative Practice through Relational Theory”, Yarmouth, April, 2009 at pg 6

⁹ Llewellyn J., “Linking Restorative Justice and Restorative Practice through Relational Theory”, Yarmouth, April, 2009 at pg 7

well, who play key roles in the development and implementation of these processes. In upper years, student case workers can be trained to implement and facilitate formal conferences and at all grade levels students are encouraged to take a major role in designing and shaping classroom circles and processes. A restorative approach holds individuals accountable for their actions while encouraging their involvement and voice within the school community.

A restorative approach can also be taken to handle conflict and discipline within the school while promoting and building positive relationships and school attachment. Among the processes that have been developed for this purpose are conferencing models that bring together all those involved or who have been affected and those that might offer support to address harm and plan for change in the future. Through ongoing use of restorative processes, every interaction with students becomes an opportunity to build and enhance the attachments that exist between students and school staff, thereby creating a stronger school community and an enhanced learning environment.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

There are some guiding principles that can be articulated to help understand the what, how, and why of restorative approaches. These principles can and should help structure our understanding of what is required for the shift to occur within a school:

“This is a whole school, whole community initiative.”

- Students learn best when they have positive relationships with adults within the school.
- Positive relationships require respect, dignity, cultural competence, tolerance, accountability, inclusion, and mutual concern.
- In order for students to understand and learn how to relate as human beings they must be held accountable for their actions.
- Accountability can best be fostered through an understanding of the impact of our actions on our relationships with others; it is rarely fostered through separation or severance from a community.
- Developing strong relationships requires student engagement, leadership and a restorative, community-based approach.
- Conflict provides an opportunity to restore and to build positive relationships.
- Practices and processes within the school should be centred on a relational, restorative approach.

Background

In order to effectively recommend an approach for moving forward with this work, it is essential to first look at what is currently happening in schools and communities across the province. The goal of this research is to identify how to best support the use of a restorative approach in schools currently underway in Nova Scotia and how to ensure that other interested schools have access to this approach. Given the finite financial and human resources that exist for this type of initiative, this must be done by enhancing existing resources without duplicating services.

Over the past four years in Nova Scotia, there have been a number of programs, organizations and individuals who have promoted, supported, and encouraged the use of a restorative approach in schools. In particular, there have been a number of key organizations and individuals that have led the way in introducing this approach to the province. I will begin with an overview of these initiatives and identify ways to augment and collaborate with what is currently happening on the ground.

The growing use of restorative approaches in Nova Scotia in a number of sectors including schools, correctional facilities and post secondary institutions can be attributed in large part to the research projects currently underway through the NSRJ-CURA (Nova Scotia Restorative Justice- Community University Research Alliance).¹⁰ NSRJ-CURA is an alliance of community and University researchers and organizations focused on issues related to the institutionalization of restorative justice and restorative approaches. Underlying restorative processes is a fundamental concern with addressing harms to individuals and their relationships in order to establish future relationships rooted in values of respect, equal concern, and dignity. The NSRJ-CURA is uniquely situated to conduct a number of crucial research projects in this area given the partners' experience and involvement with the implementation and development of the Nova Scotia Restorative Justice Program. NSRJ-CURA became engaged in research relating to a restorative approach in schools through a project that is looking at ways to transcend the compartmentalization of government funding and services through the use of restorative justice.¹¹ A restorative approach in schools illustrates the importance of working across government silos of health, education, community services, and justice in order to fully address the needs of the child and youth. It is through the contacts, support and foundational research of the NSRJ-CURA that this approach in schools has been able to take a firm hold in number of local communities.

Although NSRJ- CURA supported the cross departmental relationships needed for a restorative approach to take root, it was the specific funding of programs and initiatives of the Departments of Education and Justice which moved this approach from concept to reality.

In 2005, the Nova Scotia Department of Education trained lead teachers and administrators from every school across the province in the basic components of Positive Effective Behaviour Supports (PEBS), with the goal of having this program rolled out to all Nova Scotia schools over the course of the next few years.¹² PEBS is an approach to education founded on a broad range of systematic & individualized strategies for achieving social & learning outcomes while preventing problem behaviours. It is a relationship-oriented, whole school approach with a focus on shifting away from reacting to negative behaviour towards reinforcing positive behaviour.

¹⁰ www.nsrj-cura.ca

¹¹ www.nsrj-cura.ca/nsrj-cura/.../Silos_Project_Description_September_2008.doc

¹² http://www.ednet.ns.ca/index.php?t=sub_pages&cat=1012

There are some important commonalities between PEBS and a restorative approach. Moving forward, it will be crucial to build on the foundation that has been laid by PEBS throughout the province. PEBS has already begun encouraging thinking and practices that are relationship-based, community-centred and supportive of students. PEBS has also already made the link between behaviour and academic success and has encouraged staff to think about the impact of how they relate to students on a day to day basis. Rather than replacing PEBS, restorative approach should be seen as enhancing and giving life to the important work already done by PEBS within Nova Scotia schools.

“Restorative approach is PEBS in action!”

A restorative approach offers practices and processes that provide PEBS with a common language and strong framework to support schools in their attempt to understand how to think and act relationally, build community, and increase student attachment. A restorative approach also supports student leadership by providing students with skills and

“A restorative approach fits very well with PEBS. It enhances the programs currently underway in the school”

capacities to address harm and conflict on their own. Finally, a restorative approach offers the PEBS approach a way to understand and work with even the most challenging students in the school who have not been reached by PEBS programs in the past.¹³ Schools who have recently adopted PEBS may be hesitant to adopt a new program and approach. However, they are, and

will continue to be, eager to find ways to improve on and enhance the use of the PEBS philosophy within their school.

The second Nova Scotia Department of Education program that has promoted and encouraged the use of a restorative approach and that has been strengthened by this approach is SchoolsPlus. SchoolsPlus is a provincial initiative designed to improve delivery of programs and services for children, youth and families in Nova Scotia. The program is currently offered in four school boards but it is expected to expand into other regions within the next year. The goal of the SchoolsPlus initiative is to deliver government and other services to families from within the local school. Each SchoolsPlus location has an advisory committee including representatives from several different areas of government who identify gaps in services and resources and come up with solutions.

In 2009 when restorative approaches were first introduced in the school context in Nova Scotia, SchoolsPlus facilitators quickly saw that this approach could provide a language and set of practices that could articulate and animate a number of aspects of their program.

The restorative approach strengthened SchoolsPlus because, like the principles that guide this latter program, the relational world view that grounds the restorative approach requires that each student be viewed through the lens of relationships and those relationships link the various aspects of a student’s life together. One clear failing of a system of social institutions that views each individual as separate (ignoring the important connections that make us whole) is that this perspective, which undervalues our relationships, also presumes that we can address each aspect of the individual separately. That is, we address school issues in one sphere, health and family issues in entirely different locations and so on. Perhaps, if we operated entirely independent from each other then it might make sense to address aspects of the self in separate silos. However, if we start with a relational understanding of the self, then it is impossible not to recognize the interconnection between our health, education, and family. That is, when a child acts out in class and one looks at the incident through a relational approach, it won’t take long to link that behaviour to a number of factors like health (when was the last time the child ate?), or family (What conversations happened or didn’t happen at home before school?), or justice (what is that child’s understanding of right and wrong?). SchoolsPlus is a program designed to support

¹³ AbiHanna R, Meeting Notes, February 2011

and work with the whole child and therefore has found considerable traction with the use of a restorative approach.

In the four Nova Scotia communities that currently have SchoolsPlus facilitators; the use of a restorative approach in local schools has really taken off. Facilitators have been using circle and conferencing approaches in their individual work and many schools have sought training and support to begin to shift the school culture.

It was not, however, a Department of Education initiative that led to the first school adopting a restorative approach in Nova Scotia. The restorative justice agencies, with the Tri County Restorative Justice agency taking the lead, began conceptualizing a restorative approach in schools almost five years ago. This approach was a natural fit for some agencies because the staff already had the expertise and knowledge in many aspects of the training and development required. The agencies are also often seen as a natural link between schools and communities because they are aware of the resources in communities and the challenges faced by the students struggling in the schools. Ultimately, agency staff, engaging in a restorative approach in school, felt they were supporting their clients by reaching out to them and introducing a restorative approach early on in their lives. This relationship development with schools also increased public understanding and appreciation for the agency work in the justice context which has proven to be helpful with community support and involvement.

“The support of the RJ agency has been essential to developing skills in restorative justice”

Tri County Restorative Justice (TCRJ)¹⁴, who spearheaded this approach in the province, began their pilot project in two Yarmouth schools with the aim of reducing suspensions, building attachment to the school community and reducing youth criminality. The goals of this work were to encourage and promote accountability, positive relationships and strong school communities.

Within the school, the approach was structured to encourage and promote youth leadership through classroom circles and full participation in restorative processes. This initiative was peer led and premised on the concept that young people respond best to their peers. The peer mentorship relationship develops youth leadership and encourages positive role-modeling within the schools, particularly for younger students who are at risk of getting involved in negative behavior. TCRJ continues to take a restorative approach to schools in the Tri-County area and has developed training tools and an implementation framework as a result of their collaborations in their community.

The International Institute for Restorative Practice (IIRP Canada) has also played an important role in providing training opportunities in a number of schools to prepare them to take on a restorative approach and to ensure that staff and students are operating with consistent processes and practices.¹⁵

Over the past few years, there has been significant collaboration between the aforementioned parties, and this sharing of information, ideas and resources has played a key role in developing the local, grassroots element of this work in Nova Scotia. In April 2009, representatives of TCRJ, SchoolsPlus and the IIRP, with the support of the NSRJ-CURA, attended a one day conference where they began to share important ideas, resources and practices; this day was a catalyst that propelled a number of schools forward in this work.

¹⁴ www.tricountyrestorativejustice.com: Tri-County Restorative Justice provides services that promote peace and healing within communities affected by harm. This is achieved by supporting and encouraging community members to resolve conflicts using the following restorative justice principles: promotion of individual worth, accountability, reparation, and reintegration.

¹⁵ <http://www.iirp.org/canada/>

In the early fall of 2009, further collaboration, with the support of the NSRJ-CURA, between TCRJ and SchoolsPlus, with some training provided by IIRP, culminated in a number of schools throughout the province receiving training that helped them to begin to implement a restorative approach. Then, in November 2009, Tri-County Restorative Justice, again with support from SchoolsPlus, the Department of Justice and the NSRJ-CURA, hosted a two-day workshop for schools which, through connections to the NSRJ-CURA, SchoolsPlus or one of the Provincial Restorative Justice agencies, had shown a profound interest in and commitment to the restorative approach. At this training session there were teachers and administrators from Yarmouth, Shelburne, Bridgewater, Halifax, Amherst, and Guysborough.

This workshop provided opportunities to share experiences, and contacts were made between schools that were beginning to explore the possibility of developing a restorative approach. As a result of this workshop, a number of relationships formed that built lasting connections between schools from Yarmouth to Bridgewater to Guysborough and Halifax.

Over the last year and a half interest the interest and excitement in a restorative approach has continued to grow. Each month a new school eagerly expresses interest in adopting this approach. Many schools have begun to develop informal networks where they share information, visit each other's buildings, and recommend resources and training opportunities. A final significant area of support for a restorative approach comes from the student support workers through the RCH program (Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding and Human Rights) at the Department of Education.¹⁶ The RCH coordinators have indicated that this approach fits well with their work and philosophy and the student support workers have received training in this approach.

At this time 17 schools ranging from elementary to high school have begun to seek out the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to successfully implement a restorative approach and this number will continue to grow. *(For a list of these schools, please see [Appendix III.](#))* Up till now, these schools have been navigating this approach on their own, with the support of other schools and with the help of a group of committed volunteers with expertise in this area. There has yet to be a coordinated strategy developed to implement, support, and sustain a restorative approach. That said, although unstructured, the grassroots development of this initiative was born out of strong relationships and as such, has yielded extremely positive results. Now, however, in order to maintain this momentum and ensure that all interested schools have access to this approach regardless of location, demographics, or the finances of the school, a principled and purposeful approach is required. It will be important to adopt this approach in such a way so as to not lose the organic, relationship-based roots that have grounded this work since its inception.

Over the next few years, it will be important to work with the programs and initiatives currently operating in schools across the province. The adoption of a restorative approach offers a common language, a common theoretical underpinning and a common set of processes that will allow PEBS, SchoolsPlus, RCH, and the restorative justice agencies to work together, share practice, and strengthen and solidify the excellent work of all of these initiatives.

It is important, then, to articulate some common principles that can guide and enhance the future collaborative work between restorative approaches and PEBS, SchoolsPlus, RCH, and the Restorative Justice agencies. All of the named organizations espouse the following common values and take these principles as a starting point for how to work with children and youth.

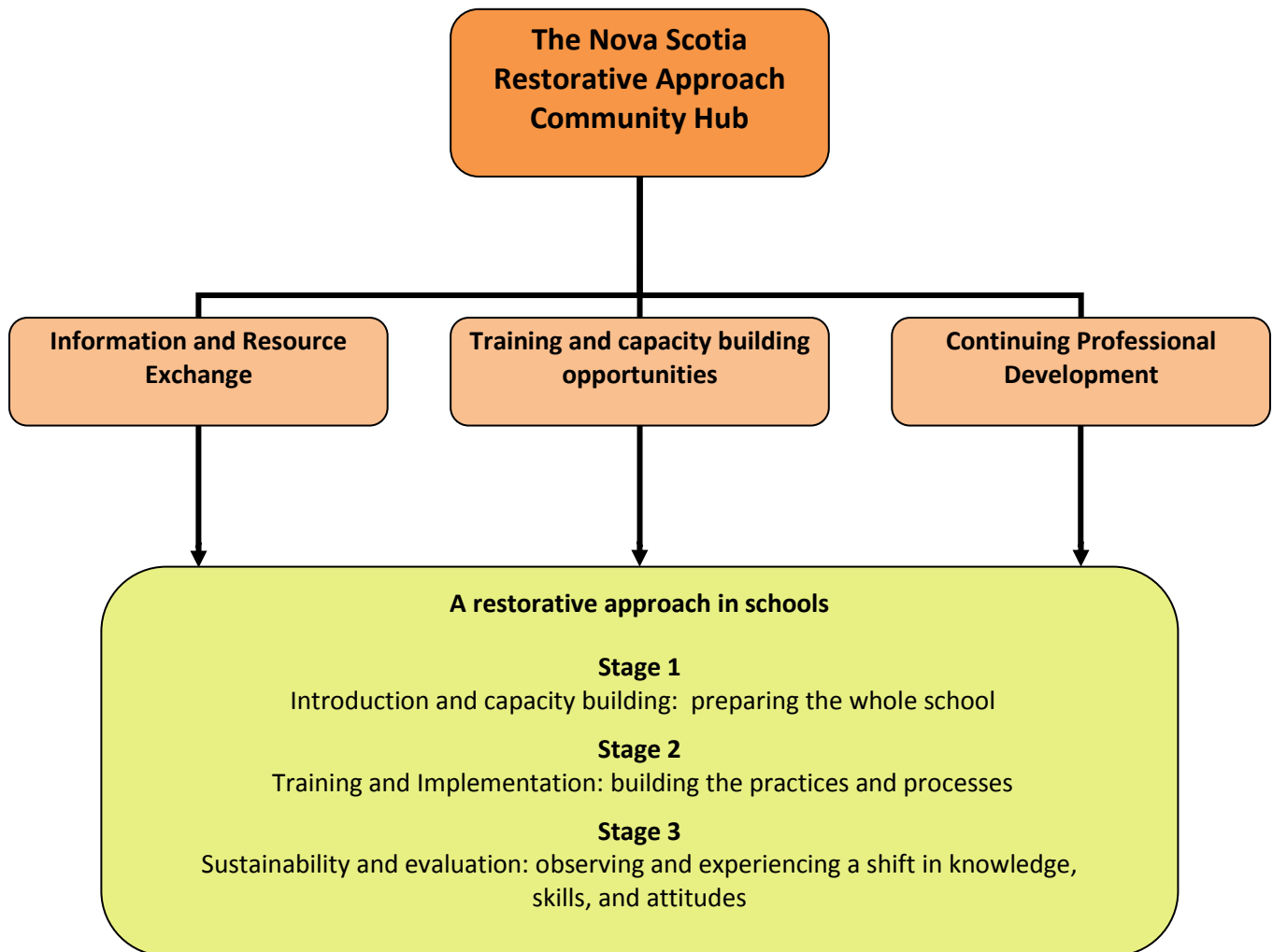
¹⁶ <http://rch.avrsb.ednet.ns.ca/home/8>

Statement of Principles to Guide Future Work:

- Relationships are at the core of each approach.
- Organizations and programs are community-centred.
- A whole child approach is adopted in order to increase attachments and improve relationships with school, communities, families and self.
- Student engagement requires leadership, responsibility and accountability.
- Understanding and addressing behaviour is a key component of academic and personal success.
- Increased attachments within the school community result in decreased conflict, fewer discipline issues, and less criminality.

Clearly, then, there are a number of strong programs and initiatives that support a restorative approach and will play instrumental roles in moving this approach forward in their schools and communities. That said, despite this important grounding of community based support, without a province wide supportive entity, the sustainability and long term viability of a restorative approach in schools will be significantly at risk. Those individuals and organizations currently engaged in a restorative approach are at capacity working within their own schools and communities. Although there have been many generous individuals willing to volunteer their time to support a new interested school, or to provide a resource or training, this model of volunteers doing all of the ground work for new schools is not sustainable. If a restorative approach is to have long term success in schools in this province, some financial and human resources need to be invested in the creation of a province-wide restorative community hub and web portal. This entity should be a virtual location where interested schools and staff could go to seek information, training, support and advice. The following graphic provides a visual representation of the role of the restorative hub and the remainder of the report will identify the elements required to successfully adopt a restorative approach and the role that the hub can play in supporting and overseeing the successful implementation of this approach.

The Nova Scotia Restorative Approach Community Hub



A Restorative Approach in Schools: On the Ground

Although the focus of this report is to recommend a province-wide support system, it is important to first identify the necessary components of a restorative approach in order to recommend a structure that will sustain the approach in its entirety.

STAGE 1: INTRODUCTION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Introducing a restorative approach to a new school necessitates the preparation of the entire school community. An effective restorative approach requires the involvement of all staff (administration, teachers, support staff, custodial staff, lunch monitors), parents, students, and community members who interact frequently with the school. This preparatory phase can occur through information sharing presentations by staff from schools who have already adopted this approach or other local experts from the restorative justice agencies or the Universities. Given the community-centered nature of the relational approach, there may be community elders, particularly those from the Mi'kmaq or African Nova Scotian communities who can ground this approach, through a discussion of the use of circles or talking pieces or a relational view of the world as embodied in some of the long standing traditions that formed this province.

There are also a series of other resources available on restorative topics for school staff such as DVDs, books, web resources, and testimonials. The school community should be engaging in a discussion about a restorative approach in staff meetings and there should be some consensus that this approach is appropriate for the school as well as a common understanding of the reason why the school is interested in shifting to a more relational community.

There are two other key components to the introductory, capacity building stage that will help set the ground work for training and implementation of a restorative approach. First, as a school it is extremely valuable to discuss and identify the programs and approaches that are currently working in the school and to begin to think about how to grow and build on those initiatives. Second, it is important to identify staff and administrators who are excited about this approach and who may be matched with staff and administrators at another school in the province that has implemented a restorative approach already. Mentorship and exchange relationships (which will be discussed in more detail later on in this report) are extremely useful as staff and administrator begin to navigate this new way of thinking and approaching their roles in the school.

Lead Teams

Identifying a lead team, or a number of lead teams, to address, consider, and evaluate progress of the approach is an essential component of a strong, effective program. Lead teams should be issue-based, meaning that a new lead team could be introduced at any point while a restorative approach is being implemented. One lead team might look at the use of circles in the classroom, another address parent and community engagement, a third design presentations and training for the new students coming into the school and a fourth consider evaluation strategies (and there are a number of other possibilities). When designing the teams themselves, thought should be put into who should be on the team: a parent engagement team for example requires parents and a team introducing the approach to new students should involve students. The role and purpose of the team should be explicit so that all participants know why they are there and what they are expected to bring to the table. Also essential is the opportunity for the lead teams to model the use of restorative processes and practices. Meetings should be in circle and there should be an opportunity for youth to take leadership roles.

Lead teams play a crucial role in evaluation and implementation. A restorative approach should be adopted through a structured, staged process, which means that a lead team should consider the goals for this approach within the school and should design a flexible structure that allows time for the principles of the new approach to sink in—through, for example, periodic training and frequent opportunities to assess what is working and what is not.

STAGE 2: TRAINING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The second stage of a restorative approach involves training the school community and implementing the practices, processes and initiatives that make up this approach. Quite often schools start here without taking the time to first build the understanding and capacity within the school community. If this occurs, it is not detrimental to the process but may require more time be spent working with school community members to ensure they fully understand the underlying theory and scope of the approach before implementing the practices themselves.

*“Training needs to be whole school—
even the parents need to be trained.”*

It is also tempting for schools to see training as both the beginning and end of the process; that is schools sometimes receive three or four days of training and expect that this will be sufficient to become a restorative school. Rather, training is just one component of a restorative approach. Training, delivered by external parties with some expertise in restorative work, will not be sufficient to support a culture shift rooted in a relational understanding of the school community. In part, this is because it takes time and practice to shift behaviour and understanding, but also, schools need to take ownership of the approach itself in order for it to effectively take root. The ultimate goal, when implementing this approach, is to ensure that there will eventually be many individuals within the school community who can and will lead the school towards a restorative understanding of education. For this reason, a staged approach to training is recommended because a staged approach allows for the processes and practices learned to be digested and understood in relation to the context and community of a particular school and for trainers to return periodically and offer support and encouragement to those within the school who have and will continue to take on a leadership role.¹⁷

It is also important when conceptualizing the training component of the approach that it is not conceived as a one size fits all model but rather training is adapted and shaped based on the unique needs of each school and is responsive to different learning styles. When working with trainers to design the training days it is recommended that the lead team play an active role in discussing training needs and the school context so that the culture, environment, and demographics of the school and its community are taken into account.

The most effective approach to training and implementation requires a whole school initiative. That is, everyone, including external parties such as school board officials and mental health counsellors, should attend the training. This is crucial because without a common understanding of the changes being made and widespread support for these changes it will be difficult to effect wholesale change. A lead team, with community, student and staff representation, can play an important role in supporting, shaping and introducing training to ensure continuity within the school and relevance of the training materials themselves.

*“Develop lead teams that meet regularly
and discuss training and implementation
and successes and failures!”*

¹⁷ Armstrong M., http://www.churchilltrust.com.au/site_media/fellows/Armstrong_Margaret_2004.pdf

THE TRAINING FRAMEWORK

Although it is clearly important to work with the school to ensure that the training reflects the needs and culture of a particular school community, this does not mean that there is no structure or essential training components that make up this approach. There are in fact some concrete and necessary training elements that schools require in order to move forward effectively.

The following five training areas support the development of a restorative approach in schools. The first two set the stage by providing participants with a concrete framework from which they can most effectively understand the practices and processes that facilitate the development of a restorative approach. The next three teach participants a number of processes, tools, and skills which will facilitate the implementation of the approach in the school.

1. **Explaining foundational principles to all employees of the school:** In order to set the stage so that all participants understand that this is more than a set of tools and processes, it will be important to begin with a training day that outlines the knowledge, skills, capacities and attitudes that make up this approach and to ensure that there is a comprehensive understanding of the theory and research that ground this work. This training is designed to begin the process of thinking or re-thinking about how we relate to others within our communities, particularly other staff and students both on the day-to-day and when conflict arises. Components of this day will include: relational theory¹⁸, attachment theory¹⁹, appreciative inquiry²⁰, cultural competence²¹, and asset based community development²².
2. **Introductory sessions for parents, students and community members:** The concepts delivered through the foundations training should then be offered to the entire school community. It will likely be necessary for the staff to understand these concepts at a higher level as they have the responsibility to teach this approach and model it for others. However, in order to be effective, it is important that all those who interact with the school have a grounding in the foundations of a restorative approach. To encourage ownership and leadership on a go forward basis, staff and administrators should be encouraged to offer these sessions to students and parents and the wider community.

¹⁸ Llewellyn J, “Restorative Justice: Thinking Relationally About Justice”, 2009- Grounds the way in which a restorative approach can be understood through the centrality of our connections and our relationships.

¹⁹ Twemlow S. and Fonagy P, “Transforming Violent Social Systems into Non-Violent Mentalizing Systems: An Experiment in Schools”, found in Handbook of Mentalization-Based Treatment, 2006- Attachment theory is key to explaining how young people come to understand their relationships with themselves and others. Children and youth can learn how to develop healthy attachment even if they have not had healthy attachment patterns in their lives. Attachment theory as a theory of human development can shed light on which processes will facilitate the development of healthy attachment – and contribute to emotional/psychological development through school. This theory also enables an understanding of how school staff can become emotionally attuned to their own mental and emotional states and those of others.

²⁰ Mohr B. and Watkins J., *Appreciative Inquiry: Change at the Speed of Imagination*, Jossey-Bass, California, 2001- Creating change through supporting and recognizing the positive things already happening in a community. Human systems are constructions of the human imagination and therefore capable of change at the speed of imagination; the AI process mobilizes strategic change and focus based on the strengths of an organization. AI is designed to engage whole systems to leverage the positive core of organizations.

²¹ Human Rights and Equity Service, McMaster University, “Cultural Competence: An Overview”- There are five key points about culture: 1) Culture is dynamic; 2) Culture is shared; 3) Culture is based on symbols; 4) Culture is learned; 5) Culture is integrated. Cultural competence is a dynamic, interactive process that results in the ability to communicate among and between cultures.

²² Green M., *When People Care Enough to Act*, Inclusion Press, Toronto, 2006- Asset Based Community Development is a community development approach that rests on the principle that recognition of the strengths, gifts, assets and talents of individuals and communities is more likely to inspire positive action for change than an exclusive focus on needs and problems.

- 3. Restorative Practices—Statements, Conversations, and Circles:** This training introduces the school community to a number of practices that will support the implementation of a restorative approach. The first portion of this training focuses on informal conversations with others within the school community and encourages the use of “I” statements and of questions designed to develop an understanding of the experience of others. The aim is to support the expression of emotions, and encourage processes that facilitate the resolution of low level conflict within the school community. The second portion of the training provides the opportunity to learn how to use circles to build relationships and strengthen the school community, address problematic behaviour, and enhance curriculum outcomes. Participants will learn the why, how, and when of circle usage and will have the opportunity to hear success stories, discuss challenges and role play the processes themselves. Linkages will be made in this training to traditional use of circle processes in many cultures, particularly African and First Nations traditions.
- 4. Restorative Conferences:** Conferences are used to respond to more serious incidents that impact the school community. They are an opportunity to address a harm that has occurred and to identify what needs to happen to restore or build a strong and healthy school community. These meetings occur in circle, are attended by the individual/s who caused harm, their support people, the victim/s (if they can be identified and are willing to attend) and their support people, community members and trained neutral facilitators. Sometimes, depending on the incident and the factors that precipitate the incident, other people may be invited to attend as well. Conferencing training will involve the following three components: 1) why conferences are an effective way to address discipline issues within a school; 2) what are the essential elements of a conference process; and 3) how to introduce conferencing into a school through training students and staff as neutral facilitators.
- 5. Student/Staff Conferencing Facilitation:** This training introduces participants to facilitation and can be offered to both students and staff. In order to encourage student leadership it is highly recommended that schools consider the use of student facilitators. This approach supports student role modelling and encourages ownership of this approach among the student body, which will increase the likelihood that this approach will take root in the school as a whole. Schools that have trained and begun using students to facilitate conferences report extremely positive outcomes.²³ Facilitation training involves an in-depth, hands-on skill building workshop where students and/or staff learn how to neutrally facilitate a conference or circle after an incident or conflict has occurred.

“The student facilitators have changed the environment of our school. They develop important skills that they pass on to their peers and they are a great resource and support to younger students.”

Although these five items form the core training framework, there are a number of other training elements that should be considered and woven through training and development of a restorative approach. Throughout these training modules, time should be taken to build in the capacity of schools, through lead teams and individuals, to offer refresher sessions, and train new groups of students and staff who come to the school following the formal training opportunities. Also, through the encouragement and support of a lead team, the logistical challenges and opportunities for implementation should be considered. The following is a list of some

²³ Shelburne Regional High School and Yarmouth Memorial Consolidated High School both report that the student facilitators in their schools are one of the most successful aspects of the implementation of a restorative approach.

of the questions that should be asked and discussed, though individual schools may have additional questions that will need to be answered to shape the implementation of their approach:

1. How do restorative conferences fit in with the current discipline structure?
2. How do we structure classrooms to use circles on the day to day?
3. Is there a space in the school that can be reserved for the use of circles and conferences?
4. What written policies, processes and procedures need to be amended to include a restorative approach?
5. How will progress be monitored? What processes are available to assess the effectiveness of the practices and procedures?
6. What needs to be adopted on a long term basis to ensure that the approach remains relevant and consistent with the guiding principles?

A RESTORATIVE APPROACH TO CURRICULUM

A restorative approach was first introduced into schools to address behaviour, school culture and conflict within the school community. Over time, however, this has led to a discussion about the use of a restorative approach to address curricular outcomes and to improve academic success. A number of recent studies have shown that a calm, focused, positive classroom environment supports learning and teaching.²⁴ Teachers who are not spending classroom time disciplining students report increased time spent on task and improved student engagement which results in improved learning and positive academic outcomes.

Asked if restorative practices have had a positive effect on academic performance, Principal Baumgartner said, “Kids can’t learn in a dysfunctional environment. If the teacher is spending valuable instructional time addressing a student who’s acting out, that detracts from the instruction. If teachers can be more focused on instruction, the answer to your question has to be yes. We’ve gone down 400 classroom referrals, so I know that the answer is yes.”²⁵

It has also been found that students who are attached to adults in the school are more likely to attend school, hand in school work, and produce higher quality material. A restorative approach, therefore, can and does have a positive impact on the overall academic success of a school.

There has also been some important recent success in the use of restorative practices such as circle techniques to encourage widespread student participation in core competencies. A quick overview of the Learning Outcomes Framework for Junior High children in Nova Scotia illustrates that a significant portion of measured learning outcomes come from class participation and an ability to respond to questions on a particular topic and address curriculum orally.²⁶ Restorative practices are extremely valuable tools of self expression and train young people how to respond quickly and thoughtfully to questions on a wide range of topics. These oral communication skills are valuable tools for young people to learn and help with a range of language competencies as well as encouraging higher levels of emotional intelligence and civic and community engagement.²⁷ Emotional intelligence plays an important role in building self awareness, resilience, empathy,

²⁴ Mirsky L, “Transforming School Culture with Restorative Practices”, http://www.iirp.org/article_detail.php?article_id=NDI4

²⁵ Mirsky L, “Transforming School Culture with Restorative Practices”, http://www.iirp.org/article_detail.php?article_id=NDI4 at pg 4

²⁶ Nova Scotia Department of Education, Learning Outcomes Framework, Grades 7-9, 2004

²⁷ Armstrong M., http://www.churchilltrust.com.au/site_media/fellows/Armstrong_Margaret_2004.pdf

and self motivation²⁸ and this type of learning should be encouraged in any school adopting a restorative approach.

Ultimately, the values of respect, dignity and mutual concern that orient and drive this approach as well as their connection to both aboriginal culture and human rights could contextualize teaching in a number of areas including but not limited to History, Social Studies, English, and Law. Finally, recognition should be given to the value of the skills and practices that are being learned through this approach and the impact that these new capabilities have on the day-to-day life of students.

STAGE 3: EVALUATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

The final stage requires schools to look at the impact and goals of a restorative approach over the long term. In order to effectively address the components of stage three it is important that the sustainability and evaluation framework be considered early on in the adoption of this approach. A lead team should be thinking about what types of outcomes are hoped for through the changes being made in the school and what tools will be used to measure these changes and re-evaluate the practices when things are not working. Given that this is a flexible approach, it is not recommended that a school adopt hard and fast goals or desired outcomes. Instead, it is important that the approach remain flexible and that schools be willing to shift based on what is working best within the community. It is recommended that lead teams examine the possibility of using a formative or developmental evaluation which is designed to improve programs and not simply look at outcomes.

Formative evaluations start at the beginning of the adoption of a new program or initiative and frequently use the techniques of other types of evaluations, such as: surveys, interviews, data collection and focus groups. Unlike other evaluations, however, which focus primarily on outcomes, formative evaluations use evaluative techniques throughout the implementation process so that there is a constant process of implementation, evaluation, shift in practice and re-evaluation. Evaluation, then, becomes an integral part of the process. This requires a constant assessment of the goals of a restorative approach and evaluation techniques that examine whether or not practices and programs are supporting those goals. Also, integral to this type of evaluation is ensuring that the target audience or consumer is part of the evaluation process. That is, if some of the goals reflect changes in the student body, then students need to participate in the formative evaluation.²⁹

In order to support long term sustainability, it is important to encourage ongoing training and support for staff. This may come through refresher courses offered through the Nova Scotia Leadership Consortium or the Summer Institute or it may involve international restorative justice conferences and partnerships with academic institutions who have expertise in this area. It may simply come from staff offering their skills and expertise to one another at professional development days or it may come from staff travelling to other schools and offering their training expertise to others. There are a number of ways that continuing development for staff could be supported and encouraged. Ultimately, ongoing training and education should be a priority of schools and should be supported by school boards and administrations.

²⁸ Mills H. and Dombeck M., "Resilience: Emotional Intelligence" 2005; Mirsky L., "New Research Shows that Social and Emotional Learning Improves Academic Achievement", <http://www.safersanerschools.org/library/caselstudy.html> 2007:

"The goals and philosophy of restorative practices are, of course, consistent with those of programs promoting social and emotional learning. These findings should therefore buoy the confidence of those working in schools to enhance social and emotional learning by means of restorative practice"

²⁹ Scriven, Michael (1967). Gredler, M. E.ed."The methodology of evaluation". *Program Evaluation* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1996)

It is of course access to ongoing training and support, and information about where to go for these resources, that is currently a challenge in Nova Scotia. It is important to devise ways of meeting the needs of schools who are seeing success with the use of a restorative approach but who do not know how to sustain the exciting things happening on the ground in their school. This is what has prompted the proposal for the Nova Scotia Restorative Approach Community Hub.

“We need to fill gaps”

The Nova Scotia Restorative Approach Community Hub

In order to support and sustain schools in Nova Scotia interested in a restorative approach there is a need for an organization that provides coordination, support, information, training, and resources. This organization would not be designed to take over or copy what is already occurring in schools and communities across the province; rather, its role would be to fill in gaps by providing an online and in-person community network: The Nova Scotia Restorative Approach Community Hub (The Restorative Hub). The mandate of the Restorative Hub would be to encourage and assist educators, administrators and practitioners to come together to share ideas, supports, and resources.

“We need an organization that can provide information, resources and training opportunities”

The Restorative Hub will be responsible for the following:

- 1) A restorative approaches web portal
- 2) Coordination and relationship building through information and resource exchange
- 3) Development and support of training and continuing professional development

Operationally, the Restorative Hub will use processes and practices consistent with the values, goals, and beliefs of restorative approaches and will model restorative practices for others. This community-based network will be designed to build on the work currently happening at a local level throughout the province, to provide information and resources for sustainability, and to support the growth of this approach in new schools.

“There needs to be an affordable support infrastructure in the province to train new staff and new parents and make sure that everyone is up to speed”

THE RESTORATIVE APPROACHES WEB PORTAL

The central locus of the Restorative Hub will be a web portal which will be a virtual space to link together schools, school boards, members of the public, parents, students, academics, restorative justice practitioners and others. This site will be an easily accessed location that could:

- 1) Host films highlighting a school’s experience with a restorative approach
- 2) Advertise upcoming training opportunities and events
- 3) Share articles, journals and books of interest.

Currently schools, restorative justice agencies, and others have this type of material available for training or on their own websites. This online location will allow easy sharing of such resources and materials.

Another use for the web portal will be as a tool to link people to one another through the creation of chat forums or listservs, which are very effective tools to share challenges and successes and seek advice on particular questions. There is also the opportunity to link to other sites such as Facebook and Twitter to advertise training and conferences and other upcoming events. Internet savvy teachers may want to use this web tool in the classroom through sites like Wiki which allows students to work with other students from other schools on collaborative projects online. For example, students in schools in one area of the province could join with students from schools in an entirely different region in order to build a Wiki that analyzes the use of circles in the classroom to build strong communities. The possibilities for online learning and relationship building are endless and will continue to increase with the growth and progress of technology. The restorative approaches web portal will be a crucial tool to facilitate the growth and strength of a restorative approaches community in Nova Scotia.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCE SHARING AND EXCHANGE

Another important function of the web portal will be to support the sharing and exchange of information. The site can host a space for schools to upload and share forms and documents such as parent letters, evaluation forms, and training materials. Through partnerships with academic institutions, new resources and research could be added on an ongoing basis which would help schools remain current and keep staff and administrators abreast of new developments in this area. The web portal has the potential to be the province's central repository for local and international information pertaining to restorative approaches in schools.

THE RESTORATIVE APPROACH COMMUNITY

Although clearly the web portal will play an important connecting role for those interested in a restorative approach in schools, it will not be enough to provide the support needed to really strengthen the community of restorative practitioners currently growing throughout the province. These practitioners range from administrators to school board officials to school staff to academics to restorative justice caseworkers and they are all interested in working together to create space for a restorative approach in Nova Scotia schools. There is a need for these individuals to be given the opportunity to meet one another, share success stories, discuss progress, and work through challenges. The Restorative Hub can and should take on this important hosting and connecting function. Membership to the Restorative Hub should be open and flexible, which means that there are no formal membership structures or membership dues or membership responsibilities. However, in order to solidify and strengthen the community, there are a number of ways to encourage connection with others who visit the web portal and contact the Restorative Hub. The following is a non-exhaustive list of active ways to engage with other community members through the Restorative Hub:

- 1) Attend a meeting with others interested in adopting a restorative approach (meetings could take place in communities around the province)
- 2) Attend a meeting to discuss with representatives from other schools the successes and challenges of adopting a restorative approach
- 3) Contact other schools and school staff through the listservs and chat forums
- 4) Put your name on a list to receive information about upcoming training and conferences

- 5) Advertise trainings that you can offer
- 6) Attend trainings offered in your community
- 7) Offer to host a school in a school exchange where a group of staff and/or students attends another school to observe the use of restorative practices
- 8) Attend another school through a school exchange
- 9) Offer to mentor staff and administrators from another school
- 10) Seek mentorship from staff or administrators who have adopted a restorative approach

School exchanges are a very useful way for schools to engage with and learn from one another. School exchanges occur when a group of staff and students from one school attend another school to observe and experience a restorative approach. Sometimes through such an exchange teachers will offer to train people from another school in a particular practice or process. Ultimately, the relationships that build between schools through the use of exchanges play a key role in the development of strong restorative school communities. Like the exchange practice, the mentorship relationship supports partnerships between newly interested administrators and administrators with experience in this approach. These relationships go a long way towards ensuring the sustainability and integrity of the approach within the school. Mentors answer questions and offer support throughout the process and schools develop strong ties as a result of these relationships.

VOLUNTEER COUNCIL

In order for the restorative approaches community to remain vibrant and successful a governance structure is required. At least initially, the most appropriate structure is a volunteer Council who make operational and organizational decisions on behalf of the Restorative Hub. The Council would be made up of members of the community from across the province, who have significant expertise in education, justice or restorative approaches. Council members will likely be required to offer some training, to support the development of resources, and to manage funds.

STAFF

Despite the great value of a group of dedicated volunteers, the Restorative Hub will be most effective and have the greatest success if there is a staff person available to provide ongoing support, linkages and training development. The most important characteristic of this individual would be the ability to develop the relationships between schools, communities and individuals. The staff person will facilitate access to training, mentorship and exchanges. She/he will answer questions when a school is stuck with a particular process or practice and will raise awareness about available training and learning opportunities both in the province and elsewhere. Her/his primary function will be to build relationships between the restorative justice agencies, PEBS lead teams, SchoolsPlus facilitators, the RCH coordinators and others. Much of the work of a staff person will be either online through the web portal or in-person in communities across the province and therefore he/she may not require an office space.

The staff person will also be responsible for updating material on the website, and keeping current with new developments in the international restorative approaches community as well as research being conducted by academics.

TRAINING

Staff will likely play an important role in developing locally-based training modules that take into account the unique cultures and communities that exist in Nova Scotia and that use the wealth of local skills and expertise. Although it is unlikely that staff will play a major role in delivering training, they can and should coordinate training. In order to do this effectively, the staff person would require a list of trainers and what they offer. This list could be made available through the web portal and the staff person could respond to questions about the trainings when needed. The staff person should be aware of all training that is occurring in Nova Scotia so that he/she can play a coordinating role for schools. That is, if one school is, for example, receiving training the staff person would inquire if other local schools are interested in this training to maximize access and lower costs. Finally, the staff person, with the support of Council and the local community-based trainers may be responsible for the development of training kits (information packages that contain a number of training modules and background readings associated with each module) and an online database that keeps track of who has been trained (individuals and schools) so that the Restorative Hub is able to assess which schools still may be interested in training or information.

“We need affordable, ongoing, flexible training”

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A final important role for the Restorative Hub is in supporting and coordinating continuing professional development. Again, this is a coordinating role for staff who may gather names of individuals who can offer courses, workshops or presentations and liaise with Universities, Bachelor of Education programs, the Summer Learning Institute and other continuing development opportunities for school staff and communities who are interested in keeping up to date.

THE ROLE OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

A restorative approach requires decision makers who work in justice and education to think differently about the role of justice, education and the artificial boundaries that, until recently, have forced us to deal with justice issues in one silo and education in another. In order for a restorative approach to effectively cross those lines and use theory and practice developed in a justice context in an educational setting it will be necessary to have support and legitimization from the Provincial Departments of Justice and Education. This support may come from joint funding from these Departments to help get the Restorative Hub off the ground and it may also come from recommendations for explicit inclusion of restorative approaches in the policy documents that govern conduct and behaviour. Beyond that, however, it will come through public endorsement of a restorative approach and a willingness to begin working across the government silos on issues that impact children and youth.

“I hope that the government supports and institutionalizes this approach across the province”

Conclusion

This report has illustrated that there are currently a number of organizations and individuals in Nova Scotia who are supporting, encouraging or actively engaging in a restorative approach in schools. It has also recognized the important link between a restorative approach and other successful programs such as PEBS, SchoolsPlus and the Nova Scotia Restorative Justice Program. These community-centered, relationship-based programs have played and will continue to play an instrumental role in moving this approach forward throughout the province. However, despite this important baseline of organizational and community support, without a province-wide initiative, the sustainability and long-term viability of a restorative approach in Nova Scotia schools is significantly at risk.

If a restorative approach is to have long-term success in schools, some financial and human resources need to be invested in the creation of a province-wide restorative community and web portal. School staff who have recently embarked on this approach, have clearly indicated that they want and need information, resources, and ongoing training to ensure sustainability. The creation of a Restorative Hub will allow a Nova Scotia-centered restorative approach to firmly take root in schools throughout the province.

It is the skills and knowledge of our local community of experts that make this work uniquely strong and effective in Nova Scotia. Schools and community partners have committed to supporting the culture shift that is integral to this approach and that is what has brought on the success that we are seeing in schools like Shelburne High and St. Catherine's Elementary. Without provincial support for a locally-based Restorative Hub we are at risk of losing the essential relational elements of a restorative approach. It is recommended that the province of Nova Scotia invest in the infrastructure required to build the web portal and staff the Restorative Hub, thereby supporting and nurturing the exciting, uniquely Nova Scotian restorative approach which is currently unfolding throughout the province.

Appendix I

Research conducted by Ben Frenken, Student Researcher, NSRJ-CURA 3 January 2011 – 17 March 2011

The following research was conducted entirely online. At the time this final research package was compiled, every link was live; if that is no longer the case, this initial list of most helpful links should at least provide a starting point for retrieving documents and sites.

The sections of research included below are the following:

- i) Major links / sites
- ii) Particularly Helpful Schools & Organizations in jurisdictions other than NS
- iii) Training in RA/RP
 - a. list of typical providers;
 - b. Opportunities for B.Ed training
 - c. Training Modules generally
- iv) Government Funding & Support in jurisdictions other than NS (very brief)
- v) The Connection between RA/RP and Academic Progress (classroom focus)
- vi) NS-Specific Research
 - a. Training Opportunities for NS Teachers
 - b. Existing or Possible ties with Mi'kmaq community
 - c. Existing or Possible ties with African Nova Scotian community
 - d. PEBS (PIBS)
 - e. SchoolsPlus
 - f. *Education Act* & Codes of Conduct
 - g. Online Survey Responses
 - h. Telephone Survey Responses

MAJOR LINKS / SITES

The following is a list of the most helpful websites I came across during this research.

- Organizations
 - o <http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/>
 - Restorative Justice Council
 - o <http://www.varj.asn.au/rp/education.htm>
 - The Victorian Association of Restorative Justice
 - o <http://www.restorativejustice.org/>
 - Centre for Justice & Reconciliation – a good source for articles covering all aspects of RJ including RA/RP in schools
 - o <http://voma.org/index.html>
 - Victim Offender Mediation Association – also a good source for articles
 - o <http://www.rjoakland.org/about.php>
 - Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth
 - o <http://www.euforumrj.org>
 - European Forum for Restorative Justice

- http://www.cjibc.org/conversation_peace
 - Fraser, BC: Community Justice Initiatives Association. Introduction to their curriculum design for RA/RP in secondary schools
 - http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Learning_Support/Safe_and_Healthy_Learners/Safe_Learners/Violence_Prevention_Restorative_Measures/index.html
 - Minnesota Department of Education, Restorative Measures
 - <http://www.sfu.ca/crj/popular.html#school>
 - The Centre for Restorative Justice at Simon Fraser University
 - <http://www.cbv.ns.ca/pebs/>
 - PEBS (Nova Scotia)
 - <http://pbis.org/>
 - PIBS (USA)
 - <http://schoolsplus.ednet.ns.ca/>
 - SchoolsPlus (Nova Scotia)
- Reports
- http://www.churchilltrust.com.au/site_media/fellows/Armstrong_Margaret_2004.pdf
 - To study restorative justice programs/models that focus on the development of emotional, physical and psychological safety for all members of the school community – UK, Canada, USA, NZ
 - <http://www.yjb.gov.uk/publications/Resources/Downloads/National%20Evaluation%20of%20Mentoring%20Projects%202001%20to%202004%20web%20ready.pdf>
 - Evaluation of Youth Justice Board Mentoring Schemes, 2001 - 2004
 - <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/08/24093135/0>
 - Restorative Practices in Three Scottish Councils: Final Report of the Evaluation of the First Two Years of the Pilot Projects 2004-2006
 - http://www.netcare-ni.com/documentbank/uploads/nw_restorative_practices_schools_2006.pdf
 - Pilot Implementation of Restorative Practices in Post-Primary Schools in the Northwest Region
 - <ftp://ftp.ednet.ns.ca/pub/educ/school-conduct/reportcode.pdf>
 - Report on School Code of Conduct, submitted to MOE, NS (December 2000)
 - <http://www.dest.gov.au/archive/schools/publications/2004/nssf/resourcepack.pdf>
 - Resource Pack for the National Safe Schools Framework (Australia, 2003)
 - http://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/11-2010_School-based_Restorative_Justice_As_an_Alternative_to_Zero-Tolerance_Policies.pdf
 - School-Based Restorative Justice As an Alternative to Zero Tolerance Policies – Lessons from West Oakland, UCLA Berkley, School of Law (December 2010)
 - <http://www.icjia.state.il.us/public/pdf/BARJ/SCHOOL%20BARJ%20GUIDEBOOK.pdf>
 - Implementing Restorative Justice – A guide for Schools, State Governor of Illinois
 - http://www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/studentsvcs/code_of_conduct/provincial_school_code_of%20conduct.pdf
 - Provincial School Code of Conduct and School Code of Conduct Guidelines (NS, 2008)
 - http://www.creducation.org/resources/cmher_vol_3_2_lewis.pdf
 - Teaching and Learning in Circle, Greg Lewis

The first direction for the research consisted of searching broadly for examples of RA/RP projects in other jurisdictions, preferably common law. The following were the most helpful results.

United Kingdom (England, N. Ireland, Scotland)

Northern Ireland: NetCare

Sites/ /Reports/Articles:

- <http://www.netcare-ni.com/services/solutions/viewdetails.asp?serviceID=3>
- http://www.netcare-ni.com/documentbank/uploads/nw_restorative_practices_schools_2006.pdf
 - o Restorative Practices Project (Government Funded), report on
 - o Aim is to create 'whole school' processes
 - Page 16 outlines the implementation process at schools for the pilot project
 - Includes description of practices and results from 6 schools
 - Includes recommendations
 - Short bibliography
- <http://www.netcare-ni.com/news/viewdetails.asp?newsID=133>
 - o 20 schools in Sefton (Liverpool) adopted government-funded restorative practices scheme... well-received

Youth Justice Board (UK): <http://www.yjb.gov.uk/en-gb/>

General Description of Practice: one of several UK government bodies (Education, Welfare) funding/supporting restorative justice in schools projects

Identify interests: this is a government body

Identify Funding: The YJB seeks to work with Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to promote the further development and evaluation of restorative justice in schools as a potential element of its youth crime prevention strategy and is currently funding restorative justice in Schools projects in five youth offending team areas through the YJB Prevention budget.

Scotland:

- Full Report of Evaluation of Restorative Practices in 3 Scottish Councils
- <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/08/24093135/0>
 - o The largest independent evaluation in the UK to date, commissioned by the Youth Justice Board of England and Wales, has recently reported on a pilot initiative in which youth offending teams worked with 26 schools in England and Wales (Youth Justice Board 2005). The aims of the initiative were to reduce offending, bullying and victimisation and to improve attendance, largely through conferencing.

British Colombia (Langley, Nanaimo, Vancouver)

Langley, BC – Education & Peacebuilding

Site/Contact Info/Reports/Articles:

- <http://www.voma.org/docs/connect13.pdf>
- http://www.cjibc.org/educating_peacebuilding
- http://www.cjibc.org/conversation_peace

- <http://www.marketwire.com/press-release/Vancouver-Association-Restorative-Justice-Vancouver-Students-Apply-New-Approach-Conflict-1077693.htm>
- <http://www.realjustice.org/articles.html?articleId=391>
- <http://www.icclr.law.ubc.ca/Publications/2008/Book%20on%20Community%20Corrections/07%20Randy%20Munro%20Nanaimo%20Restorative%20Justice.pdf>
- <http://windermere.vsb.bc.ca/programs.html/>
<http://windermere.vsb.bc.ca/docs/programs/restorative%20justice%20poster.pdf>

General Description of Practice:

Langley (<http://www.sd35.bc.ca/programs/counselling/default.aspx?ID=34>)

- CJIBC (registered charity) providing training in response to Langley School District #35 and the Fraser Region Community Justice Initiatives Association interest in RJ/RP in schools.
 - o CJIBC offers training sessions programs/has developed curriculum (Conversation Peace)
 - o A curriculum carefully designed to train secondary students and staff in Restorative Action principles and conflict resolution skills for implementing effective and meaningful responses to harm.
 - o “Through all of this, we are aiming for a systemic effect of changing school culture, but in the day-to-day reality, we are encouraged by individual students, parents and educators who are learning skills and changing their worldview one by one.”
 - NB the interest in creating sustained RP culture within schools

Nanaimo (Nanaimo Community Justice Forum (CJF))

- Schools as part of the larger RJ community (CJF, Crown Counsel, RCMP, Immigration, Corporate Partners)
- School liaison officers making referrals and RP conferences taking place at high schools

Vancouver (<http://vanrj.wordpress.com/>)

- Windermere School, Peer Mediator program as RP approach to conflict resolution

Minnesota:

http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Learning_Support/Safe_and_Healthy_Learners/Safe_Learners/Violence_Prevention_Restorative_Measures/index.html

- Minnesota Department of Education helps schools develop programming, curricula and intervention practices to create safe schools by teaching social skills, building positive school climate and repairing harm when it happens. Restorative measures are discipline interventions to hold student accountable for harm and address the needs of students or staff harmed and the needs of the school community.
<http://education.state.mn.us/mdeprod/groups/SafeHealthy/documents/Announcement/007622.pdf>

West Oakland Pilot Project (California)

Site/Contact Info/Reports/Articles:

- http://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/11-2010_School-based_Restorative_Justice_As_an_Alternative_to_Zero-Tolerance_Policies.pdf

- <http://www.rjoakland.org/>
 - o Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth

General Description of Practice: The Berkeley Study → Short pilot project with problematic implementation, but great results. This program was specifically designed for African American Students: published December 2010, by UCLA Berkeley.

- Teachers and some students committed to lengthy training sessions, and some students began to lead restorative justice practices themselves. Restorative justice practices became a way to build the school community and helped students, school personnel, and parents cope with violence in the community beyond the school
- The principles and practice of school-based restorative justice must be applied consistently in a school discipline program or students and teachers may become disenchanted with the process and refuse to adhere to restorative justice
- Practices: School administrators should ensure that the school's staff always includes experienced ambassadors of school-based restorative justice

School Community Conferences (Victoria, Australia)

Site/Contact Info/Reports/Articles:

- <http://www.varj.asn.au/rp/education.htm>
- <http://www.varj.asn.au/pdf/05VicEdu%20FSSS.pdf>
- http://www.churchilltrust.com.au/site_media/fellows/Armstrong_Margaret_2004.pdf
 - o Provides review of RP practices in USA/UK/Canada/NZ
 - o Recommendations, at page 20 includes
 - Network of facilitators/trainers required
 - Look to instituting training component as part of Teacher Education

Some links to organizations, or articles on organizations, in other jurisdictions that I did not end up following up on too closely

- Guam
 - o <http://inafamaolek.org/>; <http://www.voma.org/docs/connect23.pdf>
- Colorado (Olweus Bullying Prevention Program)
 - o http://www.olweus.org/public/school_bullying.page
- Hungary
 - o <http://www.restorativejustice.org/RJOB/rphungary>
- The Netherlands
 - o http://www.iirp.org/iirpWebsites/web/uploads/article_pdfs/nl03_henskensvanpagee.pdf
- Denmark (1st article)
 - o http://www.euforumrj.org/readingroom/Barcelona/workshop_3.pdf
- Catalonia, the Solé and Led article
 - o http://www.euforumrj.org/readingroom/Barcelona/workshop_3.pdf
- Singapore
 - o <http://www.rpsingapore.org/pdf/rp-brochure>.

Training Providers, Opportunities

1. Opportunities for / Examples of instituting training with teachers through state

- a. **Continuing Education / B. Ed. Opportunities for training Teachers**
<http://mrjc.ca/training-and-education/restorative-justice-training/>

Canada

1. UBC

- a. <https://courses.students.ubc.ca/cs/main?pname=subjarea&tname=subjareas&req=1&dept=CNPS>
 - i. Counselling Psychology [Faculty of Education]
 - 1. FGC & Group Conferencing classes

2. St. F.X.

- a. http://www.mystfx.ca/academic/education/programs/bachelor_courses.htm
 - i. Inclusive Practices I and II. For special needs, but...

3. Mount Saint Vincent

- a. <http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/programsdepartments/education/bachelorofeducationprogram/educationcourses.aspx>

- b. EDUC 5426/SOAN 3351
 The School as a Social System
0.5 unit

Prerequisite: SOAN 1101 or permission of the instructor

A theoretical and empirical examination of the social organization of the school. Topics that may be considered are socialization and learning, the formal organization of the school, the teacher and teaching, student social structure, teacher-student relationships, and the changing school.

4. NS [Professional Development Stuff]

- a. NS Teachers Union PD facilitating [RJ training could easily fit in here]
 - i. <http://www.nstu.ca/app?service=page/Opportunities>
 - ii. <http://www.nstu.ca/pklot/PD%20Brochure%202010%20web.pdf>
- b. <http://www.newswire.ca/en/releases/archive/October2010/20/c4122.html>

- "The October conferences represent just a small part of professional development activities undertaken by teachers—two-thirds of which is accomplished on their own time," continues Allen. "This commitment is on top of hours spent on university courses and other programs of study."

"The teachers who organize and conduct workshops during this conference day are to be commended," says Allen. "In sharing their expertise and resources with their colleagues from across the province, they are making an invaluable investment in public education in Nova Scotia and our students will reap the rewards of their efforts."

- c. http://www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/reports/EPDC-Report_Fall_2009.pdf
 - i. Report on Professional Development in NS [education] September 2009

UK

a. Nottingham University (MA in Special Education)

- i. <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/education/documents/masters/prospectusmastersspecialneeds.pdf>

b. University of Ulster

- i. Undergrad, post grad, MA credits for RJ

c. Scotland, Description of an SPHE course:

- i. <http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/current-students-staff/school-admin/committees/bos/08-09/231008/BoS-PaperC19-231008.pdf>

Ireland

1. St. Patrick University

- a. <http://www.spd.dcu.ie/main/courses/undergraduate/documents/BEdBooklet.pdf>
- Citizen Teacher: living and working in a diverse world [course offered, p 17]

Australia

1. University of Western Australia

- a. <http://units.handbooks.uwa.edu.au/units/educ/educ8492>
- This is a class on managing Disruptive Behavioural problems... does RJ have a place in this class (probably not), but it would be complementary...

2. Murdoch University

- a. <http://www.murdoch.edu.au/Courses/Secondary-Education/Course-structure/#>
- Education for Social Justice: it isn't mentioned, and probably not part of the course curriculum, but RJ could find a place in a class like this

3. University of Tasmania

- a. http://courses.utas.edu.au/portal/page?_pageid=53,33239&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&P_UNIT_CODE=ESH202&P_CONTEXT=NEW [Planning for Positive Behaviour]
- This is a course where RJ could be integrated if it is not already part

2. General Training Modules for RJ/RA/RP in any context relating to schools

a. RJ/RA/RP Training Modules

Organization: **NetCare**

Location: UK

Website(s): <<http://www.netcare-ni.com/services/solutions/viewdetails.asp?serviceID=4>>;

<http://www.netcare-ni.com/documentbank/uploads/nw_restorative_practices_schools_2006.pdf>

Length(s): the two courses listed on their site for RJ in schools training: an introduction over 1 day, and a course over 5 days.

Notes:

- Presentation of Restorative Practice theory, research and implementation issues. Video and live Restorative Conference with and for participants; 5 day description: Understanding of Restorative Practice Interventions, the history, philosophy, changing establishment ethos, introducing the concept into practice and the skills to facilitate Restorative meetings with or without the victims present.
- 3-day courses available
- NetCare is a for service training provider

Organization: **CJIA [Community Justice Initiatives Association]**

Location: Fraser River Valley / Langley

Website(s): <http://www.cjibc.org/private_training; http://www.cjibc.org/restorative_action_schools>;

<<http://vanrj.wordpress.com/2008/10/24/cji-fall-2008winter-2009-restorative-justice-training/>>

Types: CJIA offers public, private, and materials [including a 2-4 day RJ in schools private training program]

Notes:

- *Conversation Peace* aimed at high schools; introductory training to basics
- *Talking Peace* aimed at elementary schools: developing creative strategies for younger kids
- They have also held one-day introductory courses, Focus on Implementation, which appears to be more geared towards principals etc

Organization: **Scottish Government, Report on RP in 3 Scottish Councils**

Location: Scotland

Website(s):

<<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/08/23161140/0>;<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/08/24093135/0>>

Notes:

- Training/staff development was central - opportunities for internal and external training were both equally important.
- The cost of time for training was seen as a particular issue in rural areas with long travelling times and distances. The costs and availability of cover were particular issues noted.
- Because there is this report, it might be worthwhile to contact someone from the Scot Government about how they trained these schools for RP
- <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/08/24093135/10> [see 7.3]
- <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/08/24093135/11> [see 8.5 - 8.7]

Organization: **VARJ (Victoria Association of Restorative Justice)**

Location: Victoria, Australia

Website(s): http://www.varj.asn.au/pdf/09CRP_TrainingCalendar.pdf

Notes: the Training Calendar on the link simply gives an idea of the kinds of courses (& prices) of various training sessions

Organization: **Churchill Trust [report on RJ in schools]**

Location: Australia

Website(s): http://www.churchilltrust.com.au/site_media/fellows/Armstrong_Margaret_2004.pdf

Notes: The Recommendations

Organization: **Transforming Conflict**

Location: Reading, UK

Website(s): <http://www.transformingconflict.org/courses.php>

Length(s): 1, 3, 5 days

Notes:

- Advised that training elapsed over 6 weeks to allow for practice in between sessions

Organization: **Churchill Trust Report on Canada (BC)**

Location: BC

Website(s): http://www.churchilltrust.com.au/site_media/fellows/Armstrong_Margaret_2004.pdf [see p 11]

Notes:

- This training was extensive, involving students for a full year, rewarding their efforts with academic credits. They were then available to the student body as mediators working mainly during lunch breaks. Students were often referred to them by teachers or some students, self-referred having experienced previous mediation successes. The students facilitate the whole process and have their own website (see resources) to help the student body understand mediation [<http://www.freewebs.com/mediation/>]
- Other schools visited, mainly Clayton Heights Secondary School and Princess Margaret Secondary School were adopting a different process of implementation. The training here was supplied by Real Justice (an affiliate of the International Institute of Restorative Practices), and counsellors at the respective schools were trained as facilitators of community conferences only. It was also planned to introduce the entire staff of both schools to restorative practices during holiday professional development sessions. Plans after that weren't cemented yet, but implementation was to be taken slowly and transition managed strategically

- Another community organization involved in schools is the Fraser-Burrard Community Justice Society who provide community conference facilitator training to volunteers who then make themselves available to schools and juvenile justice to facilitate conferences when require renamed Communities Embracing Restorative Justice (CERA)
 - o <http://www.cerasociety.org/>

Organization: Community Conferencing Center

Location: Baltimore, Maryland

Website(s): <http://www.communityconferencing.org/>

Notes:

- The Director of the CCC, Lauren Abramson is speaking to schools and communities to, as she says, “get people to do the radical thing of sitting down and talking to each other” in order to reduce the numbers of these incidents of harm and encourage schools to do things another way. They have, during 2004, introduced into schools, training for teachers in Daily Rap sessions. The Daily Rap is an opportunity for students to sit in a circle with their classmates and teacher to learn to listen, express sympathy, solve problems and share their feelings. The aim of these sessions is to build much needed relationships amongst the students and to learn how to problem solve in safe way.

Organization: Life Trax

Location: Aurora, Colorado

Website(s): <http://www.csmp.org/guest.htm>

Notes:

- Included in Training Module:
 - o 16 hours of peer mediation training;
 - o 3 hours of coaching and technical assistance;
 - o 2-half hour kick-off presentation to introduce the program to the student body and/or parents.
 - o 3 hours of mediation observations;
 - o 3-one hour mediation team meetings;
 - o 4-one hour Site Leadership Team Meetings; and
 - o Materials including Student & Coordinator Manuals and Role-Play Manuals.

Organization: RJOY / Berkeley Project

Location: West Oakland, CA

Website(s): http://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/11-2010_School-based_Restorative_Justice_As_an_Alternative_to_Zero-Tolerance_Policies.pdf

Notes:

- To establish a restorative justice culture at the school, all teachers and staff took part in the initial training sessions. At first, students were only involved as participants in disciplinary circles. As teachers and staff learned more about restorative justice, they extended its philosophy and methodology to non-disciplinary community building activities. One year after the onset of the pilot program, OUSD expanded its support by authorizing the disciplinary case manager to devote her work time to implementing the program more broadly

Organization: Restorative Solutions LLC

Location: Lafayette, Colorado

Website(s): <http://www.restorativesolutions.us/schools.html>;
<http://www.restorativesolutions.us/workshops.html>

Length(s): Events/Classes list training courses from 3 hours – 2 days

Notes:

- For K – 12 schools, training modules include:
 - o One Year of Training & Support in Restorative Discipline
 - o Training Students & Staff to be Restorative Justice Facilitators
 - o Training Community Restorative Justice Teams in School Issues
 - o Holding Circles for School Issues

Organization: VISTA

Location: Europe [produced through the University of Surrey]

Website(s): <http://www.vista-europe.org/downloads/English/overview.pdf>

Length(s): 5-module approach

Notes: this is more geared towards violence in schools & also looks more like a curriculum for college training

Organization: JLD Restorative Practices

Location: Tasmania

Website(s): <http://jldrestore.com.au/content/view/13/27/>

Length(s): 2 hours to days

Notes:

- day staff training sessions, (introductory and advanced) or
- 2-hour training modules presented at times that best suit the school community and practical application sessions.
- information sessions to families
- information sessions to students (all ages)
- facilitation of more complex problems that may involve a combination of student(s), families, teachers and schools
-

Organization: Restorative Justice Online

Location: online

Website(s): <http://www.restorativejustice.org/programme-place/06training/training>

Notes: list of manuals prepared worldwide

Organization: Ministry of Justice

Location: Jamaica

Website(s): http://www.moj.gov.jm/pdf/rfp/Final_RFP_RJ_training_modules.pdf [call for tenders];
<http://www.moj.gov.jm/node/view/10>

Notes: MOJ provides training for mediators; supports placement of RJ programs across the country

Organization: Ministry of Justice, NZ

Location: NZ

Website(s): http://www.justice.govt.nz/policy/criminal-justice/restorative-justice/copy_of_restorative-justice-facilitator-induction-training-and-accreditation

Notes: MOJ offers training and accreditation to mediation facilitators

What is the connection between these practices and education?

1. Connection between RA/RP or EI and academic progress / focus

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/08/24093135/9>

- The sort of ‘progress’ chiefly measured

<http://www.restorativejustice.org/articlesdb/articles/2772/?searchterm=schools%20student%20success>

- Support for well-rounded development through RA (student mediation)
- Note: available through Dal online

<http://www.restorativejustice.org/10fulltext/johnsondavidw/view?searchterm=schools%20student%20success>
http://www.churchilltrust.com.au/site_media/fellows/Armstrong_Margaret_2004.pdf

- From the Churchill Trust piece: re recommendations:
 - o “4. Schools embarking on a restorative practices pathway would benefit from a review of the curriculum component. The inclusion of curriculum relating to emotional intelligence, values education, civics and citizenship, discovering democracy and the protective behaviours program would significantly enhance the success of these practices” [p 18]

http://www.iirp.org/article_detail.php?article_id=NDI4

- Palisades High School Disciplinary Data section re RA & positive effect on academic performance
- “Asked if restorative practices have had a positive effect on academic performance, Baumgartner said, “Kids can’t learn in a dysfunctional environment. If the teacher is spending valuable instructional time addressing a student who’s acting out, that detracts from the instruction. If teachers can be more focused on instruction, the answer to your question has to be yes. We’ve gone down 400 classroom referrals, so I know that the answer is yes.”

<http://www.safersanerschools.org/articles.html?articleId=551>

<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3750554>

<http://www.safersanerschools.org/library/caselstudy.html>

“The goals and philosophy of restorative practices are, of course, consistent with those of programs promoting social and emotional learning. These findings should therefore buoy the confidence of those working in schools to enhance social and emotional learning by means of restorative practice”

- CASEL update: <http://www.casel.org/downloads/metaanalysisissum.pdf>

Debra Viadero in *Education Week*, Vol. 27, Issue 16.

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/05/05/31group.h28.html>

“Weissberg also noted that the effect of these programs on academics was nearly twice as strong as that of smaller class size. He added that the programs were more effective when they were provided to students by teachers or other school staff, rather than by program developers or researchers.”

<http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/resource/schools/> [<http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/>]

- <http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/resources/publications/>
- http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/resource/restorative_justice_in_schools_restoring_the_balance_2_new_publication_for_schools_from_the_lewisham_restorative_approaches_partnership/
- http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/resource/restorative_practices_build_positive_culture_and_improve_discipline_at_a_primary_school_in_australia_april_2005_by_abbey_j_porter/

<http://www.realjustice.org/pdf/IIRP-Improving-School-Climate.pdf>

- http://www.creducation.org/resources/cmher_vol_3_2_lewis.pdf [Circle]
- http://works.bepress.com/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1001&context=christopher_davis [AI]
- <http://www.encompassworld.com/resources/bridgingtwodisciplinesarticle.pdf> [AI / Evaluation]
- <http://culturalacademy.pbworks.com/w/page/9905020/FrontPage>
- http://www.eisrjc.com/journals/journal_1/aera-rj-vol-2-6.pdf [2011 paper]
- <http://www.marthalakecov.org/~building/spneeds/inclusion/systems/frodge%202.htm>

- <http://www.aishe.org/readings/2005-1/carlile-jordan-IT WORKS IN PRACTICE BUT WILL IT WORK IN THEORY.html>
- Strategies that emphasise the emotional aspect of learning include the use by students of reflective journals, together with such techniques as 'critical incident' and storytelling because these techniques incorporate the emotions along with the cognitive and narrative elements of experience therefore promoting deeper levels of meaning.
- <http://nadabs.tripod.com/research-intell2.html>
- <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/47023303/The-relationship-between-emotional-intelligence-and-academic-achievement-in-elementary-school-children>

Nova Scotia

Summer Training for Teachers

1. Summer/Continued Learning/Training Possibilities
 - a. <http://certification.ednet.ns.ca/>
 - b. http://certification.ednet.ns.ca/continuing_service.shtml
 - c. http://certification.ednet.ns.ca/approval_upgrading.shtml
 - d. http://www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/calendar/school-calendar-e-2010-11_excluding-HRSB_Metro-CSAP.pdf
 - i. No more than eight (8) days may be used for organizational and administrative purposes or for in-service training programs in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations under the Education Act and the Agreement Between the Minister of Education and the Nova Scotia Teachers Union. In addition, two, one-half days may be used for purposes of parent-teacher meetings. All teachers are required to be present on the days used for organizational and administrative purposes or in-service training programs and parent-teacher meetings so provided.
 - e. Summer Institutes 2010 links

Existing or Possible ties with Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian Communities

<http://rch.avrsb.ednet.ns.ca/home/8>

The primary role of the Student Support Worker (SSW) is to provide support for students of African descent and their families in order to make their schooling a more positive experience, thereby helping the student achieve success and remain in school.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20091210005>

<http://hrsbstaff.ednet.ns.ca/roachad/Caledonia%20SSD%20brochure.pdf>

<http://www.ednet.ns.ca/publicschools.shtml>

http://www.ednet.ns.ca/mikmaq_liaison_office.shtml

http://www.ednet.ns.ca/african_canadian_services.shtml

http://www.ednet.ns.ca/diversity_equity_special_projects.shtml

<http://www.novascotialife.com/chartermembers/millbrook-first-nation>

PEBS & SchoolsPlus

PEBS

<http://www.cbv.ns.ca/pebs/>

<http://www.cbv.ns.ca/Schools/>

PIBS

- About PIBS, <http://pbis.org/about_us/default.aspx>
- <http://pbis.org/common/cms/documents/Coach_Trainer/Articles/Safety%20Without%20Suspensions.pdf>
 - o PIBS outline piece: (proactive approach as alternative to zero-tolerance of 1990s). Interesting is the approach to training/funding (supported by US education departments and supported by universities... can't quite tell why RJ/RA isn't an aspect of this program)
- http://pbis.org/resource_catalog/default.aspx [resource catalogue, includes online training modules]
- <https://pcsd.wikispaces.com/PBIS>
 - o PEBS has PIBS training/materials
 - o Alberta training manual:
<<http://www.cbv.ns.ca/pebs/modules/myiframe/index.php?iframeid=1>>
- <https://pcsd.wikispaces.com/Staff+Development>
- PIBS is funded by Office of Special Education (US), Department of Education (US), and supported by 8 universities and 4 educational agencies
- <<http://pbistacenter.ning.com/profiles/blogs/how-do-i-get-pbis-in-my-school>> [also not a bad model for web hub in this context]
 - o Funding re training: "Some states have grants that provide the training to districts or schools wishing to join the SWPBIS teams. Other states have different pockets of training activities going on within the state. Some states are connected with the Universities and some are connected with the state departments of education."
 - E.g. <<http://miblsi.cenmi.org/Home.aspx>>
 - <http://miblsi.cenmi.org/MiBLSiModel.aspx>
 - <http://miblsi.cenmi.org/MiBLSiModel/Support.aspx>

SchoolsPlus: <http://schoolsplus.ednet.ns.ca/>

http://www.resilienceproject.org/resilience_9702.html

- On-going review of SchoolsPlus NS

<http://schoolsplus.ednet.ns.ca/sites/default/files/Respectful%20schools%20are%20happ...pdf>

SchoolsPlus

- o The SchoolsPlus facilitator is invited to the school program planning team meetings as required.
- o The intensity of the response to a referral will depend upon the level of need identified at the time of referral. Sometimes this will mean a simple sharing of contact information to connect families with the services they need. At other times, the facilitator may organize a meeting with a number of service providers to create an action plan for a family. We call this action plan an individual comprehensive service plan.
- o Services + centres at each site: health, mental health, education, justice...

- Referral system (planning teams; service providers; students; families)
- “At other times, the facilitator may organize a meeting with a number of service providers to create an action plan for a family. We call this action plan an individual comprehensive service plan.”

Education Act & Codes of Conduct

<http://www.canlii.org/en/ns/laws/stat/sns-1995-96-c-1/78356/sns-1995-96-c-1.html#history>

- *Education Act*, SNS 1995-1996, c 1 ss:
 - 64(2)(r) [Codes of Conduct]
 - 121 – 127 [Student conduct section]
 - 142(l) [Regional Education Officers]; 142(a)-(d), esp (d)

<http://www.canlii.org/en/ns/laws/regu/ns-reg-80-97/latest/ns-reg-80-97.html>

- *Ministerial Education Act Regulations*, NS Reg 80/97
- see s 47, esp ss (5)-(7)

http://www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/studentsvcs/code_of_conduct/provincial_school_code_of%20conduct.pdf

Appendix II

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES: ONLINE SURVEYS AND TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

The online survey conducted via surveymonkey.com had 14 respondents.

Online Survey Responses: survey conduct via surveymonkey.com throughout February 2011:

2 Overarching Concerns:

1. Sustainability
 - a. Independence from IIRP: funding issues
2. Coherent / Comprehensive Implementation & Support Structure re: introducing RA/RP to each school
 - a. Building on what already exists; focusing and extending

We asked what previous training in RA/RP respondents had received:

- Some programs implemented re student peer-to-peer mediation → goal to reduce suspensions/expulsions (punitive/zero-tolerance measures)
 - o Model influenced/led to teachers beginning to adopt RP
 - o Students involved on one end sometimes become involved as facilitators
 - Exposure/experience leads to interest/acceptance
- Every respondent has had some training; some have had training made available to admin/teachers/students; some have been very successful in implementing student facilitators; some in getting teachers to lead circles.
- Training lasts for a few days and/or a few workshops on average for the individuals at key admin positions... for some it was a day/workshop and an evening training session...
 - o A province-wide org able to facilitate exchange of approaches; coordinate trainings; work with teachers on professional development days

We asked what respondents found to be the most successful aspects of RA/RP implementation in their schools:

- Notable:
 - o Whole school approach
 - Special emphasis on role of student facilitators & close work with admin
 - Students involved developing important skills
 - Student facilitators as great resource for introducing younger students to RA/RP framework
 - Emphasis on collective training/development
 - Whole school – whole community
 - Role of parents, especially in rural NS, but all NS, is difficult
 - o Too formal
 - o Way to tier conferences to accommodate work schedules
 - o Support of local RJ agencies
 - Support in developing (training) RA/RP skills
 - Role of facilitator [critical point] → with broader implementation the importance of this role should be able to be relaxed to most formal conferences and coordinating training/development
 - o Important not to forget that the basic model should continually be improved/developed to suit particular schools/students/situations etc... the success of RA/RP fundamentally has to be well-

- executed conferences [timely referrals; appropriate RA/RP response to situation; appropriate/effective follow-up]
 - Anecdotal evidence suggests suspensions/expulsions have decreased dramatically
 - Q: RA/RP implementation at primary/junior/high schools → how has it looked; how close to PEBS; how much admin/teacher/student involvement on facilitation side at each level?
- *We asked respondents what the least successful aspects of RA/RP had been:*
 - Ability to hold conferences (informal/formal) in a timely manner
 - 'Buy in' to RA/RP. Period. [see involvement → adoption → success above]
 - Clarity of RA/RP aims/framework [teachers – admin need fundamental understanding][not long, just clear explanation/guidance]
 - One comment re using circles only after conflict; instead of check-in/check-out → a call for building the framework into school culture (PEBS is a good vehicle for this); whole-school approach. Consider how building circles into day/week/bi-weekly curriculum could encourage 'buy in' of RA/RP
 - Significant that about ½ respondents identified no least successful aspects → whatever has been implemented has been positive/effective [the corollary must be there just isn't enough being implemented widely enough]
 - Leadership of Administration lacking → whole school 'buy in' important; is there a way to ensure RA/RP activity without concentrating so much importance in one/few administrators?
- *We asked respondents what obstacles they had experienced in implementing RA/RP in their schools:*
 - Funds
 - Limited ability of SchoolsPlus to fund implantation in more schools
 - Training modules / Professional Development
 - Time
 - Continued/Initial school staff training
 - Ability to involve parents
 - Amount of "extras" to regular class that teachers are asked to balance
 - Administration
 - Caught between punitive structure and RA/RP framework
 - Teacher turnover: teachers know RA/RP by connection to school where it is implemented, not by virtue of being a teacher in NS... [Goes to advisability of implementing training at B.Ed. level.]
 - Lack of resources to sustain development/interest/implementation
 - Formal conferences are rare enough, it seems, that even where RA/RP has been integrated, there is not enough familiarity with / exposure to running this level of conference
 - Attention to informing students of the whole process, especially following up to conferences
- *We asked respondents what resources (from a closed list) they would be most interested in making us of if the resources were offered through a provincial organization dedicated to developing a sustainable RA/RP system:*
 - Every aspect of networking and training opportunities that go to the sustained development of RA/RP implementation in schools / ability of staff/students were seen favourably
 - An organization that can close the gaps of the piecemeal implantation across NS
 - An organization that can provide platform for resource-sharing
 - An organization that can ensure access to training/development opportunities
 - An organization that can enhance the implementation/support capacity of 'facilitators'

- Aspect attracting most interest: opportunity of professional network
 - Also special suggestion that there be a facilitator on-hand to trouble shoot/advise remotely (web / phone contact)
- *We asked respondents for suggestion regarding what would be most helpful to receive from such a provincial organization:*
 - Integration of RA/RP in schools with other established RJ/RA/RP agencies
 - [pitch that the new org will link existing RA/RP agencies/schools in order to learn from each/extend to new places & support those existing agencies/schools with deeper resource base, and develop coherent NS sustainable approach]
 - Will organization be able to secure most dependable funding / execute more efficient use if it?
 - [DOE/DOJ?]
 - [Success of broad implementation / web-based resource centre → institutionalized familiarity = less need for costly training sessions etc]
 - NS RA/RP managers to coordinate efficient use of resources (facilitators / training)
 - Figure out how to support admin/staff; i.e. relax the pressure of initial implementation and professional development
 - Since networking seems most desired feature → make sure this aspect is well designed & very functional
 - Close work with DOE re institutionalizing RA/RP across province

TELEPHONE SURVEY SUMMARY RESPONSES: SIX ADMINISTRATORS INTERVIEWED

1. Why did you embark on a restorative approach for your school?
 - a. Some exposure to the idea or something like it appealed to a need or attitude that already existed
 - i. Replacing another model; complementing an existing process (PEBS/SchoolsPlus/Peace Rugs)
 - ii. The 'attitude' generally is a desire to improve school culture; build student confidence/self-respect/communication skills
 - b. Training Made Available to Principal/Teacher or two
 - i. Evidently common sense and straightforward to adopt
 - c. Particularly with Elementary Principals that early exposure of students to RA/RP would benefit students/schools in Middle/High Schools as well
2. What experiences could you share with other schools about the most effective way to develop a school-wide culture shift? What have you done to get staff and students to behave more restoratively?
 - a. Trust that the approach will take root; accept that it will not catch immediately with everyone
 - i. Same as Q#1(a) → exposure and self-generated interest
 - b. Building some aspect of RA/RP into routine (check ins/outs), and not just as a substituted response to 'consequences' reaction
 - c. Start at the Elementary level [students internalizing and bringing it with them to new schools]
 - d. Using staff-service days to explain/discuss with teachers
 - i. Invite teachers/admin into process of achieving long-term school goals
 - e. Having a lead-team in the school (admin + teachers) as resource/encouragement for others
 - f. Important that at initial point, for teachers, that experiences/encouragement come from colleagues, not from facilitator/administrator/trainer

- g. Finding a way to introduce new students to RA/RP upon entering new school
3. What could be offered that would help you sustain/enhance/grow the restorative approach you are currently taking in your school?
- a. Follow-up training/discussion sessions
 - b. Supplemental Training/Re-Fresher sessions
 - i. There is teacher turn-over; or teachers who might not have 'bought in' at first training
 - c. Student training (mitigated by introduction at Elementary level)
 - d. Recognizing that RA/RP works in Nova Scotia, particular communities → local experience seriously legitimizes the undertaking [also, IIRP training is just too expensive to continue]
 - e. If there is already a sustained/active interest in RA/RP in the school/general community: just support it, but if there is particular success, don't mess with it
4. What outcomes do you want to see in the long-term from using a restorative approach?
- a. Move away from punitive approach to behaviour/discipline/culture
 - b. Shifting dialogue re conflicts from 'why' to 'what' conversations → teaching responsibility
 - c. Improved school climate: improved relationships between students, students & teachers, students & administration
 - d. Reduction in bullying & violent behaviour
 - e. Developed experience with Emotional Intelligence
 - f. More time to focus on academics
 - g. Ability of teachers, administrators and students to listen → and all the benefits associated with taking the time to listen & converse
5. **Best Practices**
- a. Dedicating a single room in the school as the 'Circle Room'
 - b. Instituting a Restorative Practices Committee
 - i. Regular meetings; discuss training & implementation & success/failure
 - c. Institution at the Elementary level
 - d. Shift circle dialogue from 'why' did this happen to 'what' happened [avoiding excuses; getting to understanding, restoring, & improving]
 - e. Use of RA/RP as preventative resource and not just as reactionary
 - f. Taking the time to involve teachers in whole process (we're doing this to affect this change in school culture)
 - g. Inter-school/school-board networking

Appendix III

LIST OF SCHOOLS WHO HAVE BEGUN TO ADOPT A RESTORATIVE APPROACH

Tri Counties:

- Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School- 2007
- Yarmouth Junior High- 2007
- Maple Grove Junior High- 2010
- Drumlin School-2010
- Shelburne High School-2009

South Shore:

- Aspotogan Elementary- 2009
- Chester Area Middle School-2009
- North Queens High School-2010

Halifax:

- St. Catherine's School- 2009
- Sycamore Lane School-2010
- Harbour View Elementary-2010
- St. Patrick Alexandra School-2010

Cumberland:

- Amherst High School-2009
- EB Chandler Junior High-2009
- West Highlands Elementary-2010

Straight Area:

- Chedabucto Education Centre/Guysborough Academy- 2011