

It is important to begin by stating that many of these practices originally come from indigenous communities. Specifically, the Maori people in New Zealand and First Nations in North America. (A few articles about this can be found [here](#) and [here](#).)

### **A General and Simplified Definition:**

Restorative Practices are practices that support and sustain relationships. They engage people to work towards building community, repair and reconciliation, and healing and hope. These practices vary from informal to formal. They seek to place relationships first, to work with people to build empathy and to strengthen community. (Please note- these practices, while highly adaptable, are not for use in all situations. A desire for repair is a necessary component to most restorative circles. Community Building circles are another type of circle, described below. )

### **Basic Academic Definition of RP:**

Restorative practices is a social science that studies how to build social capital and achieve social discipline through participatory learning and decision-making.

Restorative practices include those practices that use informal and formal processes that proactively build relationships and a sense of community to prevent conflict and wrongdoing. ([International Institute for Restorative Practices](#).)

### **Definitions about specific RJ practices**

- [Criminal Justice systems](#)
- [Schools](#)
- Community Building or [Peace Making Circles](#)

### **Theology of Restorative Practices –**

Our Universalist roots and first principle call us to recognize the sacred in each person. Restorative practices seek to strengthen community and repair harm by building empathy and transforming society.

A [UU frame](#) by Fredic Muir

### **Restorative Practices work in Schools:**

To keep kids out of the school to prison pipeline we have to change the way we discipline in school - for a history of Zero Tolerance go [here](#) (Anna Deavere Smith).

Kids as young as six are being handcuffed and removed from schools. Kindergarteners of color are being suspended from school for infractions that, for a white child, gets a call home. Examples can be found [here](#).

Examples of RP in schools: [Oakland schools](#) Go [here](#) for videos in Oakland Schools.

[Philadelphia Schools](#) Go [here](#) for video in Philly Schools

A quick google search on “restorative practices in schools” will provide LOTS of video and other resources for RP work in schools

### **Resources for more research- more education/information**

[International Institute for Restorative Practices](#) [Schott Foundation](#)

<http://www.safersanerschools.org>

[Suffolk University](#)

[Tedx Talk](#) by Jean Klasovsky

<http://restorativeworks.net>

[John’s Hopkins Inst. For Edu Policy](#)

### **A few helpful basic tools, found at the IIRP website:**

[Social Discipline Window](#)

[Compass of Shame](#)

[Fair Process](#)