

Child Side School Positive Educational Environment Statement:

The learning environment for Child Side children includes the physical, cultural, temporal, social and emotional environments both indoors and outdoors, on school property and in planned explorations of the wider community.

Child Side is a 'small by design' school with a high adult: child ratio, a reciprocal family information exchange with relevant staff, a constructive communication flow and a focus on the importance of trusting reciprocal working relationships. We work around the 3 pillars of Caring for Country, Caring for Children and Caring for Community.

Natural play spaces and indoor environments are constantly evolving in response to children's interests and curriculum needs.

Drawing from Reggio Emilia, Steiner, Louise Porter, Donna Cross and Maggie Dent (see Influences), Child Side educators and families:

1. Live the school motto: be safe, be kind, be creative
2. Follow a code of conduct and implement protocols at ALL levels across school community (Governing Council, Leadership team, all staff, all children K-10, Playgroup, volunteers/mentors)
3. Structure the shape of the day to allow for quality interactions that grow healthy relationships
4. Involve, consult and engage children in preparing, maintaining and changing the physical learning environment
5. Involve, consult and engage children in a restorative justice approach and a solution based approach to problem solving in the work environment
6. Invest a great deal of time in researching the potential for children's learning, incorporating analysis of learning and using frameworks for critical reflection (e.g. Early Years Learning Framework).
7. Invest a great deal of time and intentional teaching in enabling Personal, Social and Relationship, Ethical and Protective Behaviour Competencies to enable an accountable, brave and child-relatable learning culture to flourish.
8. Invest a great deal of time in constructing a physical environment that supports children's curiosity, and agency through exploration and investigation in developmentally relatable ways
9. Invest a great deal of time in constructing a culturally accountable and collegial environment that promotes informed decision making that considers Search Institute's reciprocal relationships, open-ended resources, flexible and adaptable, responsive time frames and interactions
10. Using intentional teaching strategies to promote a positive environment. These include:
 - using language and strategies developmentally appropriate and relatable to the phase of childhood
 - using language that clarifies the differences of expectations between requirements and requests
 - defining, modelling and expecting reciprocal considerate behaviours and interactions
 - defining the expectations of each shape of day/week/term
 - acknowledging individual and collective capacity within developmental phases of childhood
 - using the shape of the day to help children 'code switch' (determining the right time and place

for different behaviours and interactions suited to the task, people, context)

- avoiding the use of personal praise, bribes, rewards and threats
- using constructive instructional language with kind, specific and helpful feedback (see Austin's Butterfly- Gallery Critique approach), informing children and staff what is expected and how to do, rather than what not to do. Describing the constructive behaviour agreed upon (e.g. 'please walk' instead of 'don't run')
- acknowledging and responding to children's choice and voice within the context and capacity of the shape of day
- enabling children's 'right of reply', at an appropriate time and in the appropriate environment
- modelling respectful interactions and equal dignity when setting and keeping within 'beautiful boundaries' (Maggie Dent)
- enabling and respecting procedural fairness for all
- working within the Universal Design for Learning guidelines UDL
- working within the principles and practices of educational equity
- acknowledging and understanding the individual child's perspective and children's collective developmental perspective, helping them find relevance to the real world or a way to make things relatable for them, even when they are dis-interested
- acknowledging the child's emotions and supporting time and place to express these
- 'two hands approach' (set the boundary and offer constructive alternative) for decision making
- scaffolding small steps or achievements that build capacity and/or confidence
- clarifying 'take-aways' from learning or social conversations to match the learning intentions or social context (especially important for children who live and learn with neurodiversity)
- creating and maintaining a physically and emotionally comfortable work space, with well-defined purposes eg: STEM exploration, art spaces, kitchens, gardens, meeting places...

11. Empower, enable and protect working relationships between all children, all staff, all families with each other – invest time and active teaching of reciprocal teaching and learning skills, develop competencies for children and families to interact as MKO/MEOs (More Knowledgeable and More Experienced Others) to impart and exchange knowledge and skills to others.

12. All staff are viewed as being the '**MKO/MEOs**' (along a continuum) in creating and maintaining a positive learning environment and as all being responsible and responsive adults to lead and engage by example, for children across K-10.

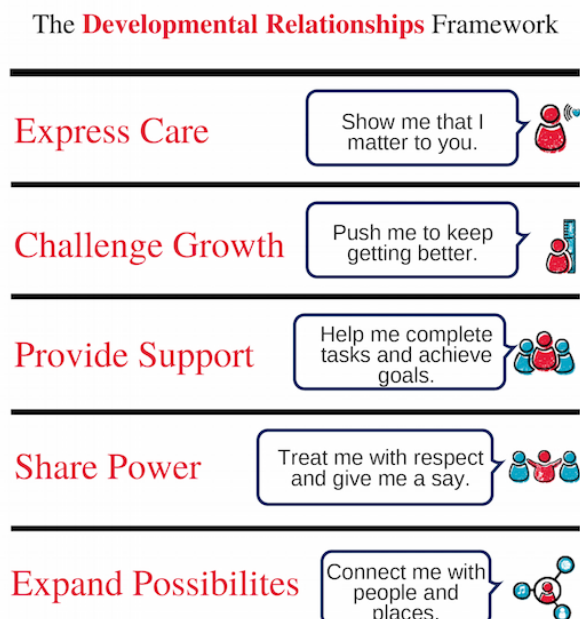
13. Child Side validates and enables the "National Principles for Child Safe Organisations" vision and guiding principles for its whole community (Playgroup, K-10, staff, parents, partnerships, visitors). This impacts upon both the working conditions for staff and children and underpins Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Child Side as a Choose Respect School and the learning culture of our school. The following extracts from 'The Australian Student Wellbeing Framework' both inform our practice and policies and validate our practices enabled by our 'small by design' principle, family engagement, our Code of Conduct and 'No Blame' and Restorative Justice approaches to conflict resolution.

The Australian Student Wellbeing Framework (the Wellbeing Framework) is a foundational document that provides Australian schools with a vision and a set of guiding principles to support school communities to build positive learning environments, and to consider reviewing their current safety and wellbeing policies and support requirements.

The five key elements of the Wellbeing Framework are:

- Leadership: Principals and school leaders play an active role in building positive learning environment where the whole school community feels included connected, safe and respected.
- Inclusion: All members of the school community are active participants in building a welcoming school culture that values, diversity, and fosters positive, respectful relationships.
- Student Voice: Students are active participants in their own learning and wellbeing, feel connected and use their social and emotional skills to be respectful, resilient and safe.
- Partnerships: Families and communities collaborate as partners with the school to support student learning, safety and wellbeing.
- Support: School staff, students and families share and cultivate an understanding of wellbeing and support for positive behaviour and how this supports effective teaching and learning.

Child Side School enables procedural fairness for all children, staff (including leadership), our Governing Council members and families. We are further supported by access to resources such as: Search Institute's :



Transforming Conflict: The National Centre for Restorative Approaches in Youth Settings UK

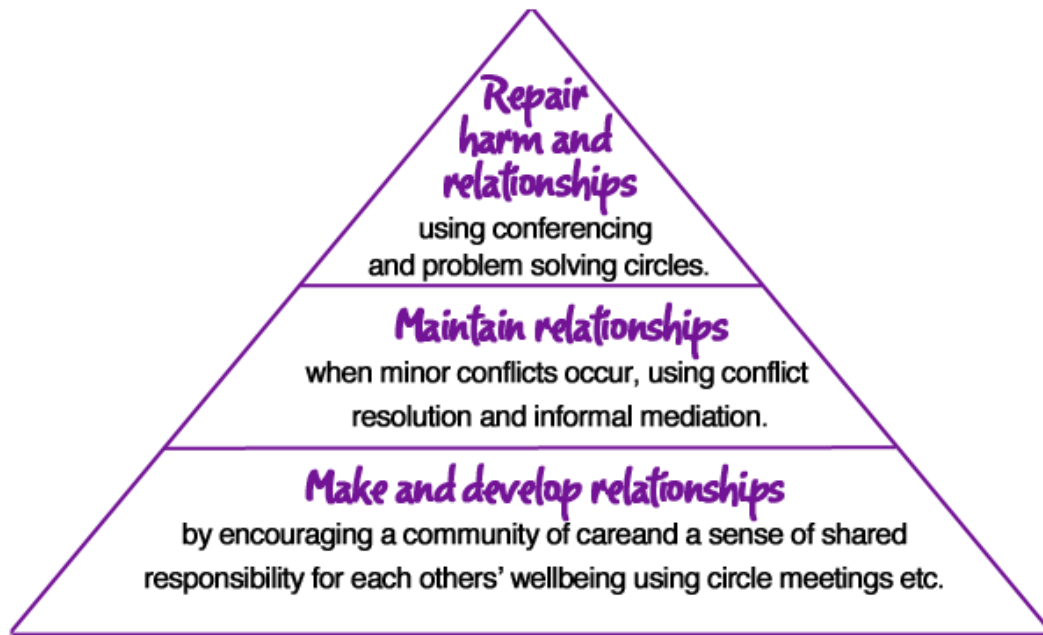
Restorative Justice in a school context (2001) Restorative Justice stresses the importance of relationships over and above rules. It seeks at all times to restore the relationships between people when these have been damaged by inappropriate or offending behaviour. This has profound implications for any community that seeks to embrace restorative principles - and none more so than the school community where young people are learning to be effective and reflective citizens.

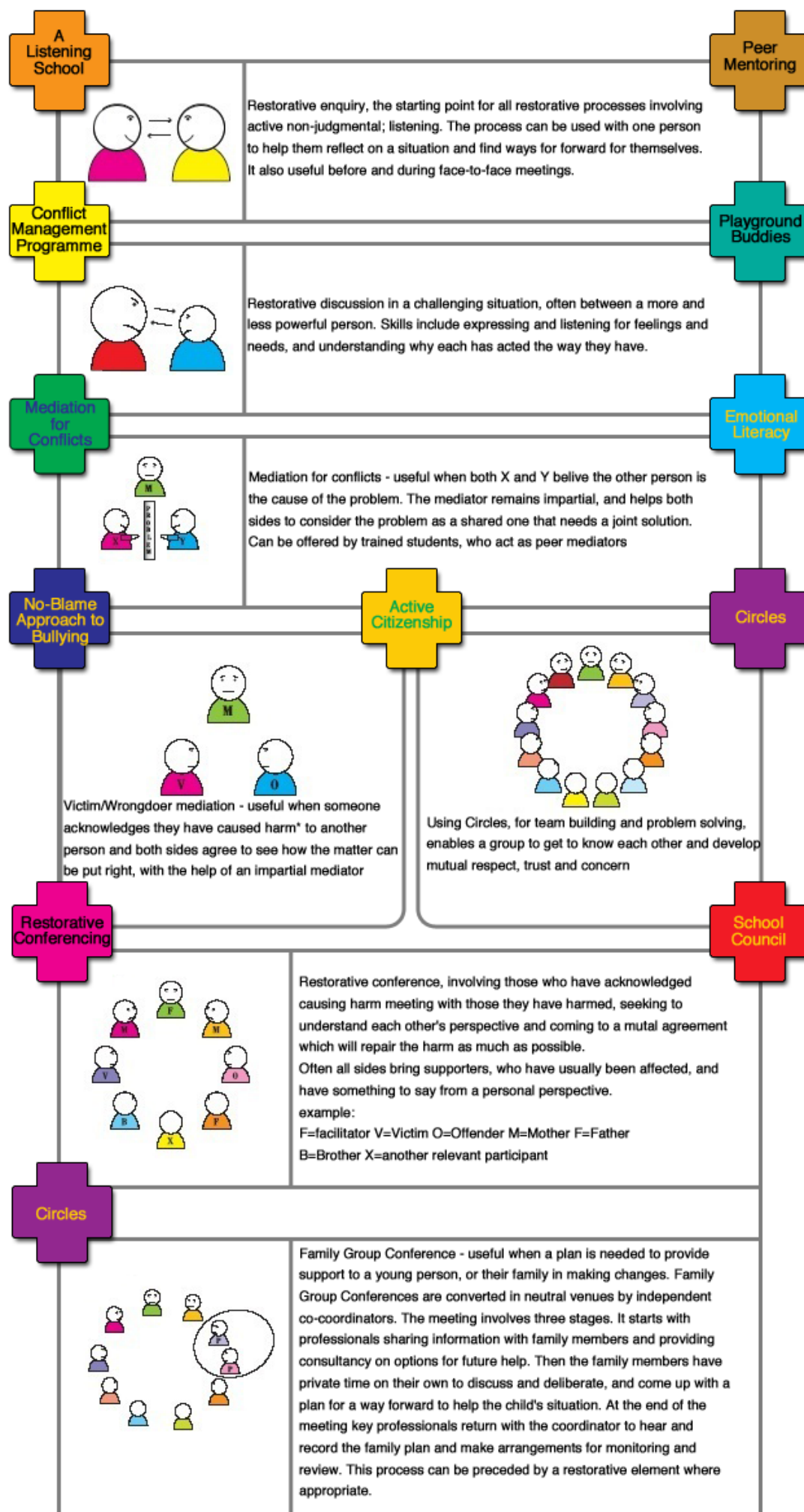
<http://www.transformingconflict.org/content/restorative-approaches-0>

When harm has been caused by inappropriate, sometimes thoughtless, negative behaviour then all sides need:

- a chance to tell their side of the story and feel heard-
- to understand better how the situation happened
- to understand how it can be avoided another time-
- to feel understood by the others involved
- to find a way to move on and feel better about themselves

If conflicts and challenges are dealt with in a way that get these needs met then those involved can repair the damage done to their connections with the others involved, or even build connections where there were none previously. They feel fairly treated and respected, since they have been trusted to find solutions for themselves and put things right in their own way. Because they have been listened to, people in conflict are more ready to listen to others' perspectives and emotional responses, and so empathy is developed. This can change the choices made in future situations, as mutual respect and consideration develop. The school-wide restorative model can be based on the following diagram:





A comparison of traditional retributive justice philosophy with restorative justice values and ideas (1990):

Wrongdoing often defined as breaking the school rules/letting the school down.	1	Wrongdoing defined as harm done to well being of one person or a group by another or others.
Focus on establishing blame or guilt, on the past -what happened? Who did it?	2	Focus on problem solving by expressing feelings and needs and exploring how to meet them in the future.
Adversarial relationship and process - wrongdoer in conflict with a person in authority, who decides on penalty	3	Dialogue and negotiation - everyone involved in communicating and cooperating with each other
Imposition of pain or unpleasantness to punish and deter/prevent	4	Restitution as a means of restoring both/ all parties, the goal being reconciliation and future responsibility.
Wrongdoing represented as impersonal and abstract: individual versus school	5	Wrongdoing recognised as interpersonal conflicts with opportunities for learning
One social injury replaced by another	6	Focus on repair of social injury/damage
People affected by wrongdoing not necessarily involved; victims' needs often ignored; they can feel powerless. Matter dealt with by those in authority.	7	Encouragement of all concerned to be involved - empowerment
Accountability of wrongdoer defined in terms of receiving punishment	8	Accountability defined as understanding the impact of one's actions, taking responsibility, seeing it as a consequence of choices and helping to decide how to put things right.

Restorative Justice in Schools (2003)

Belinda Hopkins (2003)

Child Side also has specific policies related to:

1. Guiding children's behaviour
2. Bullying behaviour
3. Cyber Safety