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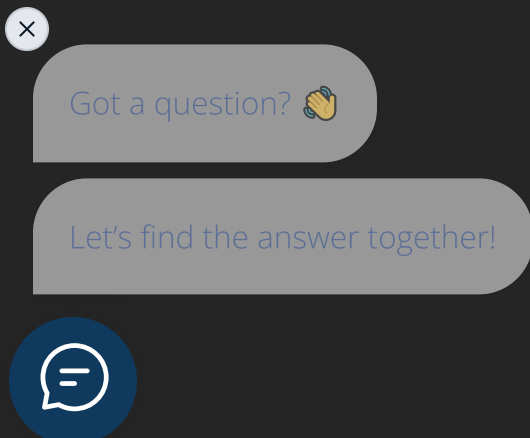
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Restorative Practices at Home

Restorative practices include collaborative processes that both build relationships and repair harm. These practices used in BVSD schools across the district can certainly be applied at home as well. Restorative practices assist us with developing and then maintaining healthy and positive relationships and with conflict resolution skills. More specifically, the processes help to ensure all voices are equally heard, address challenging behaviors, and help us take accountability for actions and make things right.



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Graphic Notes by Laura Chow Reeve / [Radical Roadmaps \(http://radicalroadmaps.com/\)](http://radicalroadmaps.com/)

► Restorative Conversations

Got a question? 🙋

Steps to Having a Restorative Conversation

Let's find the answer together!

Restorative conversations often help elicit emotions and allow for family members to reflect upon how actions have affected others and what can be done to repair harm caused. Restorative conversations are composed of restorative questions, empathetic listening, which is a concerted effort to fully hear out the other person and try to understand their perspective, and



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ensure that they have an experience of being fully heard and understood without judgment. Here are some examples of restorative questions that can be asked to address behaviors through a restorative conversation:

- What happened? (***Notice we don't ask "why" because that typically leads to pushing our children further into a shame moment since there's inherent judgment in that question. Asking what happened opens the dialogue with stating observations rather than evaluations about the situation.***)
- What led up to this?
- Can you share what you were thinking about at the time this happened? What have you thought about since? (*if your child responds with "I don't know" typically to these questions, you could encourage them to really think about this one and come back to it, or skip these questions if necessary*).
- How do you feel about what happened? (***feeling face sheets*** (<https://storage.trailstowellness.org/trails-2/resources/feeling-faces-chart.pdf>) for elementary/middle aged and feelings/needs sheet for middle/high & adults). How do you think others felt at the time?
- What can be done to make things better/as right as possible?
- How can we ensure this doesn't happen in the future?

It is critical to remember that many factors impact how our children might engage in a restorative conversation, including your body language, tone of voice, facial expressions, and mood. Restorative conversations can be quick, impromptu chats that can take place in the moment, but if emotions are heightened, it is best practice to explicitly tell the other person you need space and time to cool down. In other words, this process allows us to hit the pause or time out button. We call this having a "WAIT" moment- "Why Am I Talking?" or "What Am I Thinking?"... because anything I say right now to this other person or my child is probably not going to be connecting and I need a moment to calm down?

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Breakdown of Restorative Questions

The below chart breaks down restorative questions, a critical component of restorative conversations. Let's find the answer together! You can also use these questions when there are two or more family members in conflict, having every person answer them.



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RESTORATIVE QUESTION**PURPOSE IN ASKING THIS****PERSON TO RESPOND FIRST****ALTERNATIVE QUESTIONS TO ASK**

What happened?

To hear the story from both perspectives

Child

-What was happening before I asked you to stop _____ (behavior)?/ What led up to this?

-I saw _____ (behavior). Is there anything that's important to add about what was happening from your perspective?

-What is a choice that you made?

Who was impacted/affected?

To understand the impact and affects of behavior

Child

-How do you think ____ might have felt when you did/said that?

-Who saw you do that/who heard you say that? How do you think they might have felt?

Got a question? 🙋

Let's find the answer together!

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RESTORATIVE QUESTION	PURPOSE IN ASKING THIS	PERSON TO RESPOND FIRST	ALTERNATIVE QUESTIONS TO ASK
What can be done to make things better/ as right as possible?	To make a plan to repair harm and relationships	Child, with adult support if they struggle to identify next steps	-What can be done to help us move forward? -How will we fix it? -What do you think your consequence should be? -***What part of this incident can you take responsibility for?
How can we prevent this from happening again?	To ensure follow-through	Either adult or child	-What would you do differently next time?

***In some circumstances, the adult may be responsible for part of the conflict with your child. Sharing what part you can take responsibility for first is an opportunity to truly be a "restorative parent" and self-reflective. It's called having "a do-over" and naming that with your child is so important. It's also a strategy to model taking responsibility and accountability for our part in conflict. Here are some examples:

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- "I could have provided more clear expectations up front."
- "Next time, I will wait to ask you to do that task until I have your full attention."
- "I regret raising my voice with you. I was also very upset and stressed too, just like I'm guessing you were too?"



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Restorative Approach Example - Primary School

Cornerstore Media Productions



Watch on

WATCH VIDEO: Having a Restorative Conversation with Two Children

► Nonviolent Communication

We know that when our emotions are heightened, we can respond in ways that we perhaps regret later. As adults, we sometimes want to lecture, criticize, or blame when our kids act up. In Nonviolent Communication, these are referred to as Other Conversational Responses, but if we are honest with ourselves, responding in these ways usually doesn't help the situation and can often push kids further away or make them more upset or frustrated. Using Nonviolent Communication can help everyone, including you, to pull our brains "back online" and develop a plan to move forward.

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Nonviolent Communication: An Overview & Role-P

Florida Institute for Child Welfare



Watch on

WATCH VIDEO: An Overview of Nonviolent Communication and Role-Play Demonstration

Why Do We Lose Control of Our Emotions?

Kids Want to Know



Got a question? 🙋

Watch on

WATCH VIDEO: Share this with younger children to help them understand why we sometimes lose control of our emotions and “flip our lids”



As adults, it is important to practice empathetic and reflective listening to help our children pull their brains "back online". If we find ourselves not having space to provide empathetic and reflective listening in that moment, that's a sign that we probably need to be heard about what's going on from someone else. Empathetic and reflective listening includes.



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- Presence- being physically, mentally, and emotionally fully “with” the individual
- Reflection- restating what you’re hearing your child say so they know you got them and they are fully heard
- Feelings and Needs Guesses- using the feelings/needs sheet above to take guesses at what is going on for the other person

You can use this **Nonviolent Communication resource**

(https://www.nonviolentcommunication.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/4part_nvc_process.pdf) or **this document**

(https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mLZ3g8_oktel1DAeclSz1Q99SkKYkwbtp90ilY0ylxA/edit?usp=sharing) as ways to have a restorative conversation with your child. There is opportunity in

this process to not only provide empathic and reflective listening, but **to also share with our child about our experience with the behaviors or issues** (use the left column in the first resource).

► Restorative Circles

Families can use circles as a tool to talk further about an array of topics and can be used not only to strengthen relationships, but also to address conflict. Each person, if they want, gets to share their thoughts, feelings, and responses without interruption. Circle topics at home might include talking about expectations for behaviors at events/gatherings, developing family values/norms, holding family meetings (to be proactive in addressing potential conflicts or challenges), goal-setting for the week, school-related conversations, etc.

After reading the suggestions, you may be thinking to yourself "oh we already do those things!" So with or without knowing it, you probably are already "doing" restorative practices at your house.

Circles typically involve asking thoughtful questions to hear from everyone if they want to respond. If you are the one asking questions, you can answer them as well. Circles don't necessarily require loads of planning or time in the home, especially proactive ones that are meant to maintain connection and open communication. **They can be short conversations at breakfast or bedtime, or even embedded in the nighttime routine.** Here are examples of restorative circle questions that can be asked:



What is one thing or goal you want to accomplish this weekend? Is there any support needed in accomplishing this goal?

- Within reason, what is one thing you want to do for fun this weekend?



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- What are important values or norms to you that you want to work on or bring to our family?
What specific behaviors or things can you do to demonstrate this value in action?
- What is a small problem that you would like to address with someone in the family? What can you do to try to make it better? What would you like to prevent it from getting bigger?
- After school check-in: On a scale on 1 to 5, 1 being low and 5 being high, how was your day?
Why?
- What was one low and one high for you this week (on a Friday)?
- What can you do in school/at work (for parents) when we don't see or hear things that are kind to others?

► Repairing Harm

When we talk about making things right and repairing harm, a common strategy is for the responsible person to apologize. However, any restorative approach is not tied to a strategy or outcome. **Forced apologizes don't tend to be effective** if they're not sincere, causing more damage than good. Just saying "I'm sorry" or "I'm sorry you felt that way" to another person doesn't provide clarity around accountability and a plan for next steps. If a person wants to apologize, you can use this framework: "I'm sorry for _____ because _____. Next time, I will _____." We also want to encourage our children to use one of the suggested responses back based on their experience:

- Ready to forgive and move on: "Thank you. I accept your apology/I forgive you."
- Need something further before being able to move forward: "Thank you. I hope that _____ or I want _____." or "Thank you. Can we come up with a plan to things better or to make sure this doesn't happen again?"

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Repairs are a critical part of any restorative process. It's important that the adult is not just arbitrarily picking consequences or punishments. Rather, a restorative conversation allows everyone to develop agreements together that are directly related or connected to the impact and harm of behaviors, often referred to as logical consequences. You can use this agreement template that is used in BVSD schools as an accountability tool to repair harm. It's important to ensure that these agreements support positive skill-building approaches and help your child to be reconnected and supported by you and the rest of the family.



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Behaviors and Ways We Can Support Our Children

Children need to have a sense of autonomy in developing ideas for repairs, and when we provide that opportunity, they are more willing to follow-through and have a desire to do better next time. It also teaches them tremendous problem-solving skills.

The list below is not intended to be the be-all and end-all list for what agreements should be done, but are simply some suggestions for possible repairs, again, remembering these agreements are developed as those involved in the incident or challenge:

BEHAVIOR	KEY CONCERN TO ADDRESS	POSSIBLE REPAIRS
Picking on or fighting with a sibling	Fixing or repairing a relationship	-Make up or play a game together after school for 30 mins. -Create a lemonade stand together -Come up with strategies in the future for when we notice our lids starting to flip- what we can say or do in that moment to signal to the other person we made need space?
Not helping with chores, cleaning up room, etc.	Increasing responsibility	-Clear plan with child giving input on one or two things they enjoy doing around the house and that they will commit to doing each week/each night -Help with making the budgeted grocery list and shopping -Child can help plan their weekly school lunches (within reasonable bounds) and they can help pack it

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Let's find the answer together!



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BEHAVIOR	KEY CONCERN TO ADDRESS	POSSIBLE REPAIRS
Use of alcohol or marijuana	Closing knowledge gap/understanding impacts of choices	-Research and share information with adult on impacts of alcohol/marijuana on a child's brain -Attend a <u>Natural Highs</u> (https://www.naturalhighs.org/) free, open class or utilize their resources
Use of put-downs or unkind words/actions towards adults	Developing appreciations & repairing a relationship	-Write short notes sharing with adults or others in your family specific things you appreciate about them -Share a list of strengths that the other person brings to the family

Got a question? 🙋

Let's find the answer together!



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