



Restorative Action – Information for Parents

Abbotsford Restorative Justice and Advocacy Association (ARJAA) is a non-profit, community-based organization that works in partnership with Abbotsford School District 34, to provide Restorative Action to students in local schools.

What might your child experience through the Restorative Action program?

Restorative Action practices can be divided into those that are *preventative* in nature and those that are attempts to *respond* in a restorative manner to instances of wrong-doing or hurtful behaviour.

Prevention

1. Circles of Dialogue and Engagement (CODE):

- These learning circles engage students in conversation covering various topics related to the social competencies necessary to succeed in school and everyday life. These include: understanding our values and how they impact decision making and behaviour; awareness of our emotions, empathy toward others and associated relational skills; communications skills; conflict styles and skills for conflict resolution, and; bullying prevention and skill development to effectively respond to situations of bullying and mean behaviour.
- Learning these essential skills has ripple effects beyond the classroom as students take these abilities into their other circles of belonging, helping them to enjoy healthier relationships throughout their lives.
- An advanced version of these circles (A-CODE) is offered to grade 7 or 8 students who have already taken part in the five CODE circles. A-CODE builds upon concepts and skills explored in the original series.

*I now know how to deal with conflict in a respectful manner. –
Middle School Student*

2. Restorative Action through Mentoring

In some cases where a need has been identified, a student is interested, and parents have consented, ARJAA will match students referred to our programs with responsible young adult mentors for additional support and positive role modeling.

Restorative Interventions

Wrongdoing is often viewed as the breaking of rules with some kind of punishment as a consequence. Restorative Action challenges us to look beyond traditional discipline to a deeper level of analysis and accountability. The principles of Restorative Action encourage us to look at wrongdoing as harm done to people and relationships.

Traditional Approach	Restorative Action Approach
<i>What rules have been broken?</i>	<i>Who has been hurt or impacted?</i>
<i>Who did it?</i>	<i>What are the needs of those affected or involved?</i> <i>What responsibilities have been created by this incident?</i>
<i>What do the individuals responsible <u>deserve</u>? i.e. punishment</i>	<i>Whose responsibilities are these?</i> <i>What can be done to address the needs and repair the harm?</i>

Restorative interventions are alternatives to traditional disciplinary approaches and aim to respond to student wrong-doing, address the behaviours in question and impacts on individuals and the school community. This approach provides youth with the opportunity to take responsibility for their actions, resolve conflicts, make amends as necessary and repair relationships.

Abbotsford's Restorative Action Facilitator/Trainers (RAFT) act as an **independent third party** (community partner) thereby providing a space where there is the potential for more open and transparent communication with students.

Three Restorative Interventions of the Restorative Action Program

1. Restorative Youth Conferencing

Restorative Action staff facilitate discussion between students involved in conflict. This provides students the opportunity to resolve conflict in a supportive and safe environment. When applicable, Restorative Action staff will facilitate conversation in order for youth to come up with a mutually satisfactory agreement with regard to how to address the harms which might have occurred and how to move on in a positive manner.

The thing that benefitted me the most was the fact that I got to see the other side of the story. Without this process I would never have seen the damage that I caused others.

- Middle School Student

2. Conflict Coaching

One-to-one support for students who struggle interpersonally or need extra help in learning skills necessary to manage conflict.

Who is the Restorative Action Facilitator/Trainer in your child's school?

Abbotsford Middle – Apjit Sangha
ASIA – Susan Havinga
ATMS – Ajay Klassen
Clayburn Middle – Ajay Klassen

Chief Dan George Middle – Sheila Neufeld
C&G Howe Middle– Susan Havinga
Fraser Middle – Ajay Klassen
Eugene Reimer Middle – Susan Havinga

For further information about Abbotsford Restorative Justice or the Restorative Action Program, please call our office at 604-864-4857.