



YOUTH COURTS:

***USING RESTORATIVE AND STRENGTH BASED
PRACTICES FOR POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT***

Our kids are not at-risk, they are at-hope. They are their future not their past.

***“I’ve never met a kid who didn’t want to be a somebody”
Dr. Henry Yzaguirre***

What is Restorative Justice?

Repair

Responsibility

Justice

RELATIONSHIPS


HOPE

Affected

Impact

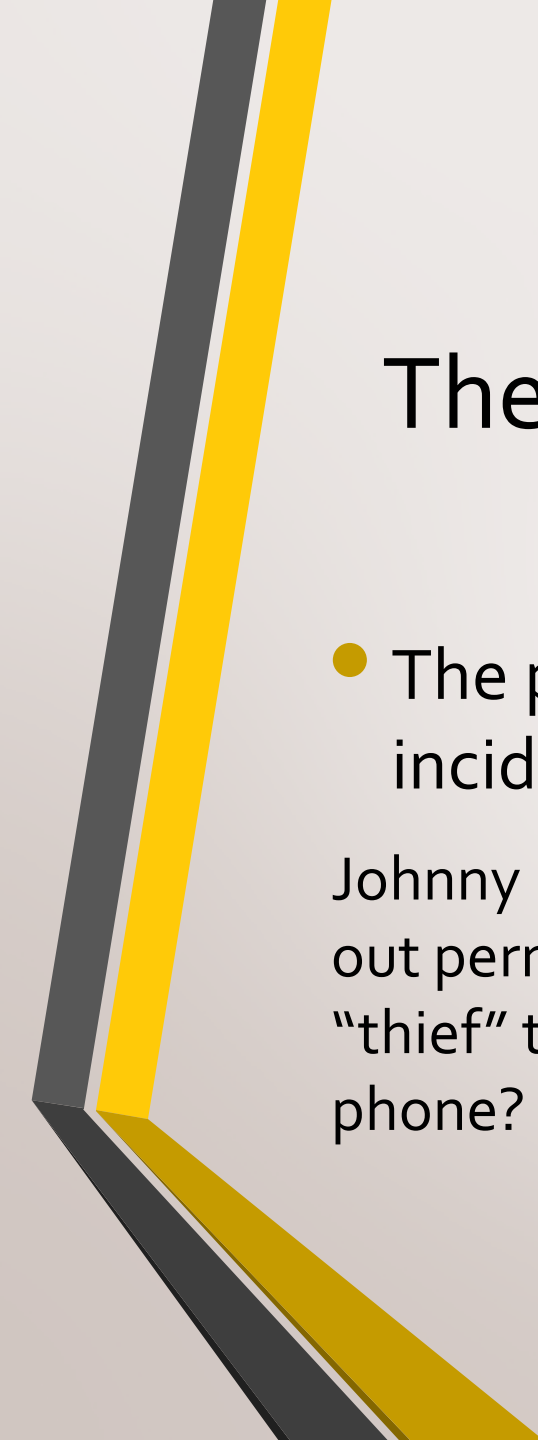
Needs

HARM



A new way of thinking:
We want to CHANGE
BEHAVIOR not
Punish.

Traditional	Restorative
School and rules violated	<i>People and relationships</i> violated
Justice focuses on establishing guilt	Justice identifies <i>needs</i> and <i>obligations</i>
Accountability = punishment	Accountability = understanding impact, repairing harm
Justice directed at offender, <i>victim ignored</i>	Offender, victim and school/community <i>all</i> have direct roles in justice process
Focus is on punishment when rules are broken and harm has occurred.	Offender is responsible for harmful behavior, repairing harm and working toward positive outcomes
No opportunity for remorse or amends	<i>Opportunity given</i> for amends and expression of remorse



The person is not the problem.
The problem is the problem. – Michael White

- The problem is not the character flaw of the person, it is the incident itself.

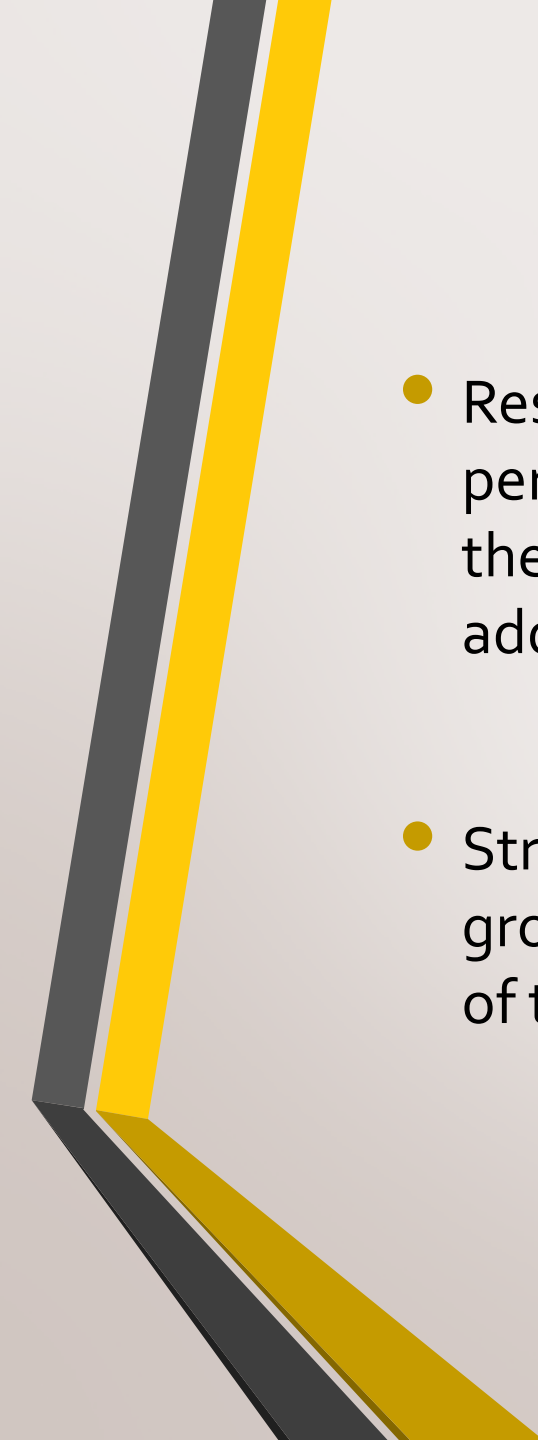
Johnny is not a thief. The problem is that he took someone's cell phone without permission. Traditionally, we assume the motivation and ascribe the term "thief" to Johnny. What are some reasons Johnny could have taken the phone?



The Three Questions of Restorative Justice

1. What is the harm that was done?
2. How can that harm be repaired?
3. Who is responsible for this repair?

- Naming the Problem comes first and is sometimes included as a question.

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- Restorative Justice combines deficit and strength based models where the person is not the problem but the problem is the problem. It sees value in the person or group as well as the deficit and attempts to use the value to address the problem.
 - Strength Based Justice focuses on the value or strengths of a person or group and regardless of the deficit uses the value to recognize the capital of that person or group to move them forward.

Strength Based vs. Deficit Thinking

"If we ask people to look for deficits, they will usually find them, and their view of the situation will be colored by this. If we ask people to look for successes, they will usually find it, and their view of the situation will be colored by this". (Kral,1989)

Seven Universal Emotions

What do you notice?

- Anger
- Fear
- Disgust
- Happiness
- Sadness
- Surprise
- Contempt

A Comparison Between Deficit & Strength-Based Thinking

Deficit-Based Thinking	Strength-Based Thinking
Focus on What's Broken	Focus on What's Working
Overcoming Weakness	Emphasizing Possibilities
Problem Solving	Co Constructing
Externally Driven	Internally Driven
Short-Term Solutions	Sustainable Solutions
Dependent Relationships	Independent Relationships
Reliance on Expert Knowledge	Reliance on Personal Strengths
Reform and Transition	Transform and Invent
Highlight Past Failures	Highlight Past Successes
Predict & Control	Discovery & Surprise

Strength-Based Thinking is a common sense idea which discovers the greatest qualities of what we do by combining:

- **Personal Strengths**
- **Positive Experiences**
- **Individual Initiative**
- **Personal Responsibility**
- **Independence**
- **Capacity to Act**

Positive Rephrasing

Negative Characterization	Positive Quality
Bossy	Natural Leader, Good Director
Clingy	Affectionate, Connected
Defiant	Strong Beliefs, Courageous
Dramatic	Emotionally Aware, Expressive
Impulsive	Spontaneous, Bold, Risk Taker
Loud	Exuberant, Confident
Nosey	Curious, Inquisitive
Shy	Inner Directed, Self Aware
Talkative	Good Communicator, Sociable
Tattletale	Seeks Justice

Strength Based Jury Questions

- Tell me about what a good day looks like for you? What makes it a good day?
- What do you want to achieve in your life?
- What would your family and friends say you were good at doing?
- What are three things that have helped you overcome obstacles?
- If you had the opportunity what would you like to teach others?
- Can you think of one small manageable step that would improve school for you?

OUR AIM IS TO CREATE A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT WHERE STUDENTS' STRENGTHS ARE EMPHASIZED AND ENABLE ACADEMIC AND FUTURE SUCCESS.



If you only look at what is wrong with a student, you will only see them as a burden and never see their gifts!

Adverse Childhood Events and Trauma Informed Practices

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) is the term used to describe all types of abuse, neglect, and other potentially traumatic experiences that occur to people under the age of 18.

Adverse Childhood Experiences have been linked to

- risky health behaviors, chronic health conditions, early death, less life potential.
- An increase in the number of ACEs increases the risk for these outcomes.

Positive Experiences and Protective Factors that develop Resiliency help limit the damage from ACEs. (40 Developmental Assets)



The Six Guiding Principles of a Trauma Informed Approach

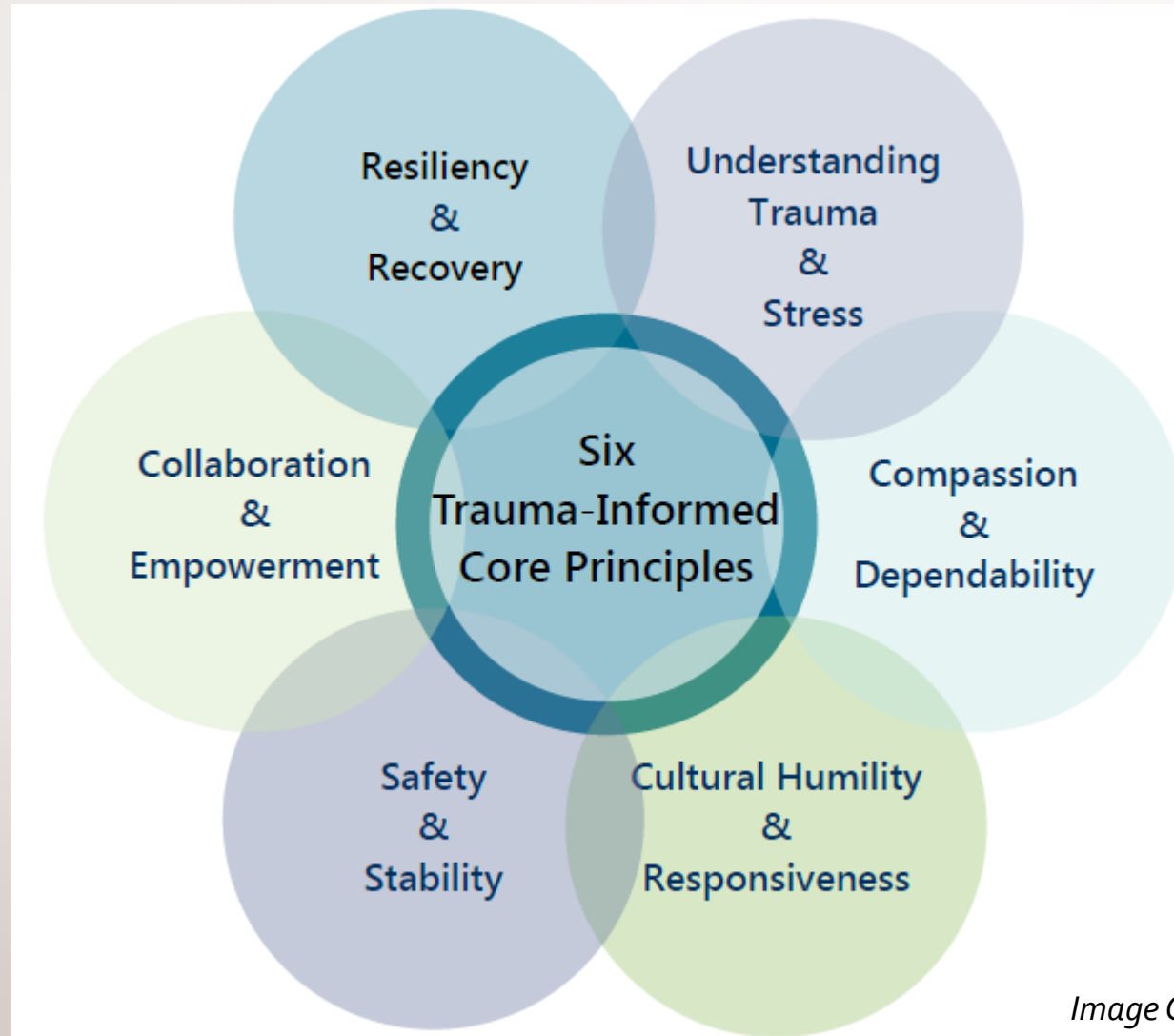


Image Courtesy of the County of Santa Clara

The Benefits Trauma Informed and Strength Based Practices

Resiliency & Recovery	Discovery and Surprise & Internally Driven
Understanding Trauma and Stress	Focus on What's Working & Emphasizing Possibilities
Compassion & Dependability	Independent Relationships
Cultural Humility and Responsiveness	Reliance on Personal Strengths & Highlight Past Successes
Safety & Stability	Sustainable Solutions
Collaboration & Empowerment	Co-Constructing & Transform and Invent



The Power of One- YOU!

https://youtu.be/u_Oapo1Q7_w

Youth Court

- Justice for Youth by Youth as an alternative approach to traditional juvenile justice systems
- Began in Odessa, Texas and Humboldt & Contra Costa Counties in California
- Holds respondent/offender responsible within a positive network of support

Youth Court Models

- Peer Jury
- Adult Judge
- Tribunal
 - May include youth roles such as attorneys or advocates, court clerks, bailiffs, forepersons and jurors

TYPICAL YOUTH COURT CASES

- Misdemeanor charges (Penal or Education Code)
- Graffiti
- Truancy
- Shoplifting
- Possession of marijuana or alcohol
- Under the influence of marijuana or alcohol
- Fighting with no serious injuries
- Minor weapons possession
- Other Penal or Education Code violations

The Connection Between YC and RJ/SB/TI

- Provides peer support
- Focuses on repairing harm and relationships
- Empowers student/youth to make changes
- Opportunity for one positive adult relationship
- Allows for community involvement
- Encourages social-emotional growth
- Accepts the student where they are and encourages self-reflection

Benefits and Challenges of YC

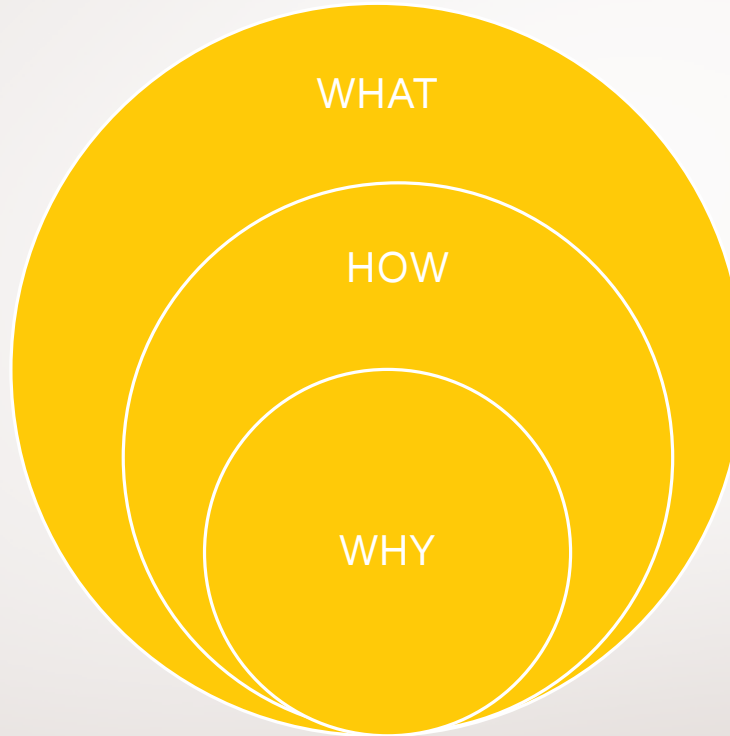
- BENEFITS

- Fosters positive youth identity in respondent and volunteers
- Allows student/youth to be held accountable and works to change behavior
- Helps student/youth understand impact of their actions
- Repairs relationships
- Community involvement

- Challenges

- Student follow through on disposition plans
- Volunteers and funding
- Program monitoring
- Mind shift in justice practices

WHY? WHY it Matters In Your Court Room



“People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it.”

Simon Sinek

KNOW YOUR WHY!

The why is restorative and strength based and focused on positive results for the students/youth we serve.





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