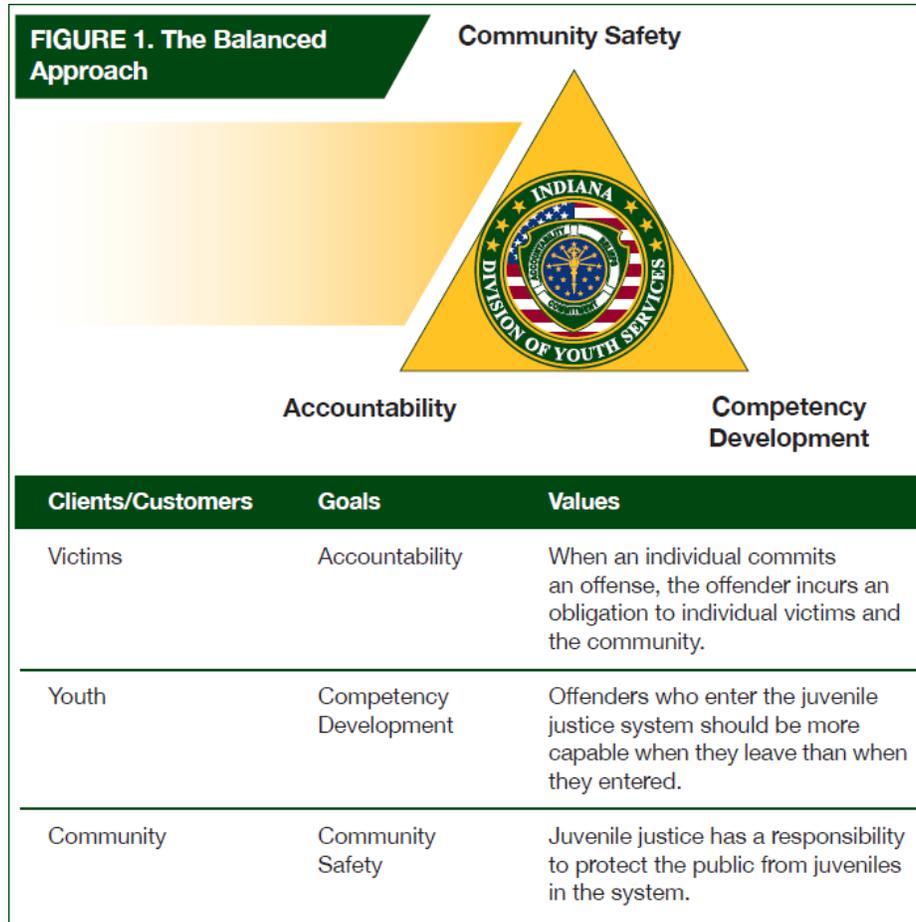


Restorative Justice in the Juvenile Justice System  
 Presentation at the Southern California Mediation Conference  
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\*The Balanced Approach, Indiana, Division of Youth Services

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Panelists:  
 Carlos Alvarez, MA RJRPP Facilitator, Dean of Students, Bright Star Secondary Charter Academy  
 Iona Antonyan, CFLS, Partner at the Family Law Firm of AntonyanMiranda  
 Denise Yusuff, Denise Yusuff Mediation, Centinela Youth Services

1. Panelist Introductions with relationship to Restorative Justice and juveniles.
2. What is Restorative Justice? Can this mean different things to different people?

In contrast to conventional justice, restorative justice offers more to offenders, victims, and other participants because it utilizes the effected community to lend support to the underlying issues the offender and victim face. It meets the offender and victim where they are, while offering rehabilitation from the crime and assistance to the victim in addressing personal needs to not re-offend.

The exact definition of Restorative Justice varies from person to person. However, the values are mainly universally accepted. Restorative justice should promote healing and foster respect to all involved, including society. Restorative Justice consists of three main principles: (1) Encounter with stakeholders and community members, (2) Repair (includes making amends), and (3) Transformation of thought and approach by the victim, offender, all stakeholders, and the community. When restorative justice accomplishes these three principles, an offender is significantly less likely to re-offend. Therefore, society should place a high level of importance on juvenile offenders because, if they are not rehabilitated, society will pay a high price for the offenders' life of crime and incarceration.

(Julie O. Wolff)

3. What is the process?

## Restorative Questions

### To respond to challenging behavior...

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done?
  - In what way?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

### To help those harmed by other's actions...

- What did you think when you realized what had happened?
- What impact has this incident had on you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

\*Woodlan Jr/Sr High School

4. How did you come to know restorative justice?
5. What lead YOU to start working in juvenile justice?
6. What part do you currently play in juvenile justice? What dispute resolution techniques do you use or do you advocate for your clients to use?

**Oakland Unified School District Academic Outcomes  
Restorative Justice vs. Non-Restorative Justice schools**

Outcome	RJ Sites	Non-RJ Sites
Graduation Rates (HS)	60%	7%
SRI Reading Level GR 9	128%	11%
Chronic Absence (MS)	-24%	62%
Dropout Rates	-56%	-17%

\* schmidtlawservices.com

7. In your experience, what part do families play in a young person’s journey inside the criminal justice system?
8. What types of backgrounds do youth in the judicial system have?

**1 Promoting school connections for youth in child welfare Ensuring Educational Stability, Continuity, & Success of Children in Foster Care A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH**

2 Presenter Kristen Hayden-West VT-FUTRES Implementation Coordinator The University of Vermont

3 Goals for Today To better understand the importance of educational stability in the overall wellbeing of a child involved with DCF To further consider how your school responds to youth in care and strategies for improvement To receive materials and resources help you support youth in care

4 What is VT-FUTRES VT-FUTRES (Vermont Fostering Understanding to Reach Educational Success) is a two-year project to promote the educational stability and well-being of Vermont youth in foster care. It is a collaboration between UVM, DCF, the Agency of Education and the Vermont Family Court Improvement Project. educational outcomes for Vermont youth in foster care. t has the following goals:e educational stability strategies developed by the Justice for Children’s Task Force and piloted by a Vermont DCF resource coordinator, Joan Rock in the Barre, VT district. enhance multi-disciplinary efforts on this issue through

collaboration, outreach, and trainings, including the Endless Dreams Train-the-trainer curriculum. collect data and use it to improve educational outcomes for youth in ca engage youth in sharing their experiences and vision to support educational success.

5 Showtime Endless Dreams

6 Why focus on educational stability? Every time a student changes schools they lose approximately 4-6 months of educational progress. High school students who changed schools even once were less than half as likely to graduate, even when controlling for other variables that affect high school completion. Youth in foster care are less likely to repeat a grade, drop out of school, suffer depression or social phobia, and end up living in poverty. Researchers attributed these disparities in performance to the educational mobility frequent for so many foster youth.

7 School Challenges for Youth in Foster Care Frequent changes in home placements can result in school transfers – thus requiring the youth to adjust to new peers, teachers, school culture, and curricula. Often, new schools lack complete information about student's academic needs. Due to the trauma they have experienced, many youth in foster care may have poor peer relationships and social skills. This can lead to peer rejection, which is often related to poor school achievement. This instability in schooling and lack of coordination and effective partnership between school, students, and families can lead to (a) declines in academic skills, (b) higher drop-out rates, and (c) grade retention for youth in foster care.

8 CHILD WELFARE IS CHANGING 8

9 The Child Welfare Focus is On: Prevention Family finding Reunification Permanency

10 Coming into care "Children come into custody not because of bad parenting, but because they are unsafe." VT DCF Worker

11 What constitutes harm : Abandonment of the child; Emotional maltreatment; Neglect; Physical injury; or Sexual abuse.

12 Or risk of harm Means a significant danger that a child will suffer serious harm other than by accidental means, which would be likely to cause physical injury, neglect, emotional maltreatment, or sexual abuse.

13 FROM REPORT TO PLACEMENT THE CURRENT CHILD WELFARE PROCESS 13

14 14

15 EDUCATIONAL STABILITY The Law The Policy The Strategy 15

16 Educational Stability and Well Being for Youth in Foster and Out of Home Care Premise 1: Youth are entitled to remain in their same school when feasible and it is generally in their best interest to do so.

17 Educational Stability and Well Being for Youth in Foster and Out of Home Care Premise 2: If it is determined that a child will change schools, the transition should be as coordinated and child-centered as possible.

18 The laws The Fostering Connections Act requires DCF to coordinate with local education agencies to ensure that children remain in the same school at the time of placement, unless it has been determined NOT be in the student's best interest to do so. The Uninterrupted Scholars Act amends FERPA to permit schools to release education records to "an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency" who has the right to access a student's case plan, and when the agency or organization is "legally responsible" for the child's "care and protection." Vermont DCF/AOE Memorandum of Understanding provides the legal structure for children to stay in their familiar school When they are state placed in another community.

19 Educational Stability and Special Education Fostering Connections Act – DCF determines where the child is educated Good Practice – DCF will use the Educational Best Interest Determination form in conjunction with the input of the child's team. IDEA – is the Special Education law. Among many other things, it says that the IEP team is responsible for how a child is educated. If a child is in DCF custody and on an IEP, s/he must be assigned an educational surrogate (who can be neither DCF nor school staff) who will be the child's education decision maker. Please note that birth parents are encouraged to fill this role.

20 Keep School Placement Front and Center DCF Social Workers are charged with completing an Educational Best Interest Determination prior to a child being placed in a resource home to ensure that school stability is promoted. School Social Workers and others would ideally be consulted.

21 CONSIDERING YOUR CASELOAD Have you experienced a child on your caseload going into custody and moving to a new community? Did the school setting stay stable or did the child change schools because of the home placement? What did collaboration about this decision look like? What was your role as the school social worker?

22 Educational Stability and Mental Health A nationally representative survey suggests that between 1/2 and 3/4 of the children entering foster care exhibit behavior or social competency problems warranting mental health services. In a sample of 2,500 youth in foster care, over 70% reported at least 2 of the traumas that constitute complex trauma.

23 KEEPING A CHILD EDUCATIONALLY STABLE: How School Social Workers Can Help 23

24 Strategies for Stability Support birth families so that removal is not necessary. Build/encourage school relationships with DCF staff and other partners. Schools are important resources for family finding. Recruiting local families is the MOST effective way of keeping kids in their familiar school. DCF can't do it alone. Brainstorm creative transportation solutions.

25 IF A CHILD MUST CHANGE SCHOOLS... Easing the Transition 25

26 Ways to Smooth the Transition to New School: Good Communication Provide child opportunities for closure and reconnections at former school. Communicate with Prior School and Other Partners. Make every effort to ensure that the student's school record is transferred to the new school before the student arrives. Obtain information from the student's current school prior to the student's transition (re: student strengths and successes as well as challenges). Share knowledge with teachers at new school. School Social Worker Action Brainstorm:

27 Ways to Smooth the Transition to New School: Connect Student with Supportive People Get input from adult supports (guardians, mentors, birth parents, DCF social worker etc.) involved in child's life. Identify a staff support person upon entry into the new school so that the student has someone to talk to if problems arise. Identify a strong student who can serve as a "buddy" or "peer mentor" School Social Worker Action Brainstorm:

28 Ways to Smooth the Transition to a New School: Establish Guidelines & Policies Encourage school to develop specific guidelines that outline the roles and responsibilities that support staff and foster care parents should have when enrolling students in a new school and to ensure continued success in school. Establish policies that facilitate information sharing between the school and foster care workers/other agencies and programs working with the child. School Social Worker Action Brainstorm: 29 SCHOOL AWARENESS OF CHILDREN IN STATE CARE QUESTIONNAIRE 29

30 General Strategies to Help Youth in Foster Care Succeed in School Foster parents and school mental health providers maintain regular contact with the student's teachers. Encourage foster parents to advocate for student educational and social/emotional/behavioral needs. Ensure that relevant educational laws and resources are shared. Provide each student in foster care with an educational advocate who can continually work with the student, despite changes in placement, and effectively advocate for the student's educational needs.

31 General Strategies to Help Youth in Foster Care Succeed in School, Continued Identify students in foster care who may be in need of more intensive educational and mental health services. Refer the child to the team in charge of student supports/assessments for more intensive evaluation if needed. Encourage adequate academic supports early (e.g. tutoring, enrichment programs, state achievement test preparation, SAT prep, VSAC programs, job fairs). Offer teachers materials on supporting the educational well-being of youth in foster care.

32 ACTIONS MOVING FORWARD What would be a next step for you? Who could we contact at your school to offer additional resources? Please write a name and contact info on this card. 32

[Download ppt "Promoting school connections for youth in child welfare Ensuring Educational Stability, Continuity, & Success of Children in Foster Care A COLLABORATIVE."](#)

9. Do parents who are separating often have children who act out? If so, what techniques do you suggest the parents use to prevent their child from entering the justice system?
  
10. How can mediators and legal professionals best help juveniles who commit crimes?

**Mandated Community Service is in all Youth Justice Programs.**

- Mandated Community Service
  - Requires the youthful offender to help the community.
  - The youth volunteers in the program deliberate and required the youthful offender to complete community service hours for their crime, offense and/or violation.
  - Community service agencies are often utilized to help oversee completion of community service obligations and/or a program may operate their own program or a combination of both.
  - Strive to make the mandated community service meaningful to the youthful offender and the community.

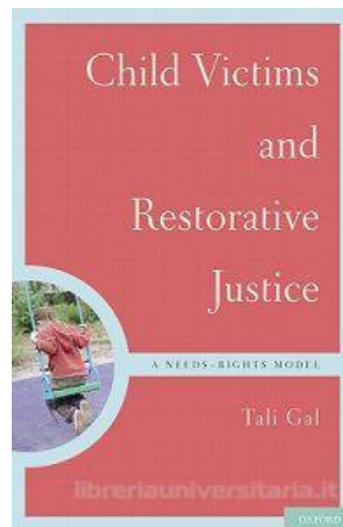
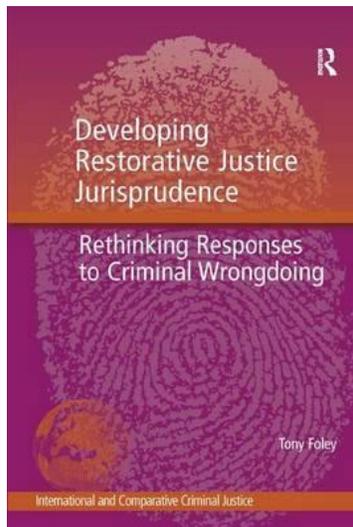
\* <http://slideplayer.com/slide/4295>

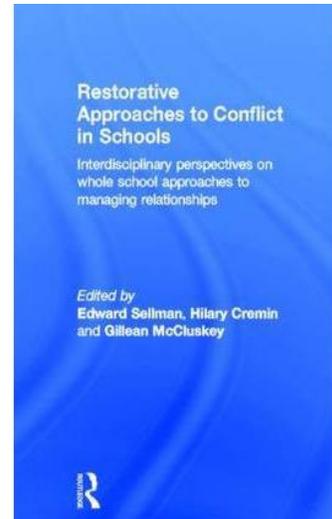
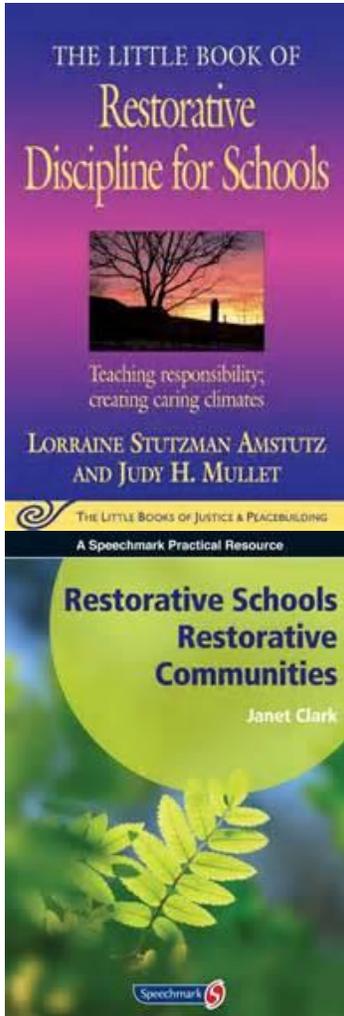
11. Is this practiced in schools? If so, what is an example?

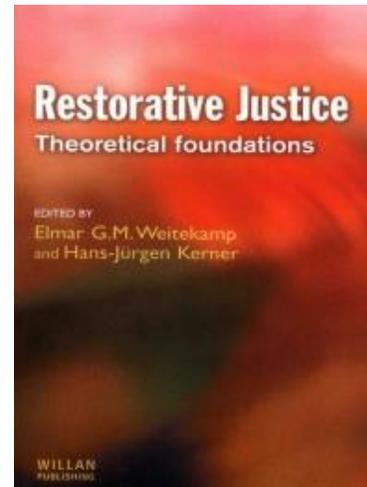
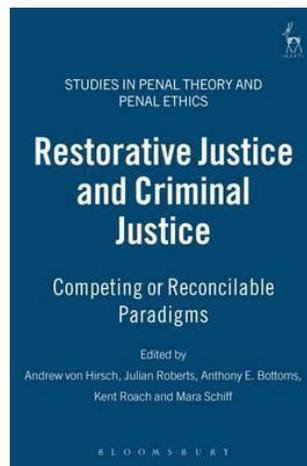
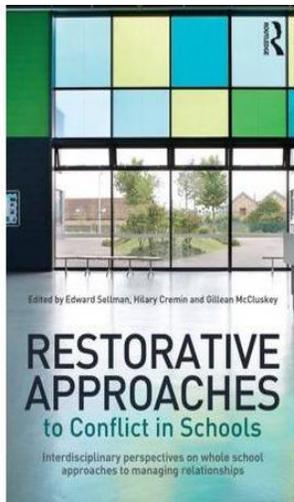
12. How do you think the justice system can improve the way it handles rehabilitating juvenile offenders?

13. Take away for group?

**Reading:**







### **You can get involved!**

If you live in the Los Angeles Area, Centinela Youth Services may be a great way to start participating. Below, is more information about their programs.

Centinela Youth Services (CYS) was established in 1975 through a collaboration of city governments, schools, community volunteers and law enforcement personnel determined to reduce the disproportionate criminalization of youth living in under-resourced communities. Since then, CYS has steadily delivered results, preserved public resources, empowered youth and strengthened communities for more than 40 years. In 1992, CYS launched its Victim Offender Restitution Services (VORS) program which quickly became a leading national model for Restorative Justice Practices that are proven to be effective for both improving services to victims and reducing recidivism by over 50% among diverse populations of under-resourced youth through participation in a victim-offender mediation process. Central to the Restorative Justice Principles of CYS is placing the power to repair harms and resolve conflicts in the hands of the parties most impacted. CYS' mediations are facilitated by volunteer community members who have received 40+ hours of DRP-certified mediator training. Empowering neighbors to take on this mediator role in facilitating a dialogue between responsible youth and their victim creates a space for the repair of harm and for future healing. The Families Able to Resolve Situations (FARS) program is another mediation service provided by CYS. FARS mediations are facilitated for families (primarily youth and parent/guardian) experiencing some form of conflict or communication barrier at home, school, or in the community. After an initial session of conflict identification, hearing from both the parent/guardian and child view point, trained mediators help families develop written agreements that work to establish new behavior patterns and communication styles. The goal of Family Mediation is to strengthen relationships with the family unit, help resolve present conflicts,

increase constructive communication skills, and link to other beneficial community resources as needed.

In 2011, with support from the Everychild Foundation, CYS formalized its 20-year partnerships with the juvenile courts, law enforcement agencies, schools, and more than 60 community service partners as the Juvenile Arrest Diversion Collaborative (JADC) dedicated to the transformation of school and law enforcement system responses to delinquency in Los Angeles County. The JADC established two Everychild Restorative Justice Centers in Inglewood and South Los Angeles to increase the availability of CYS court-level diversion and intensive case management services and to implement an innovative pre-arrest diversion program to address unmet youth needs and inhibit preventable criminalization. This CYS pre-arrest diversion model is the first of its kind in the State of California. Participating youth willingly take responsibility for their actions via a victim-offender or family mediation while simultaneously receiving individualized case management services to support unmet learning, health, mental health, or other needs contributing to lack of resources and low achievement. CYS' Everychild Restorative Justice Centers directly and intentionally facilitate system change through effective collaboration with community leaders, families, youth, schools and professionals at all levels of the juvenile justice system. At a cost of \$1,000 to \$4,000 per youth, the diversion services provided by CYS are a fraction of the \$233,000 expended to detain a young person in an LA county juvenile justice facility for a year.

In addition to pre-arrest and court diversion services, CYS also implements its STARS Peer Mediation Program in a variety of South Bay area schools by training elementary, middle, and high school students as peer mediators to resolve conflicts at school. STARS is operated as a school-based club by Peer Mediation Facilitators (school personnel or college interns) who work to strengthen the conflict resolution skillset of the mediators while also ensuring the fidelity of each mediation session. Peer Mediation is recognized by the US Department of Justice as an effective method of reducing school violence. Research indicates that conflict resolution education and reduction in campus violence also improves students' academic progress, among the disputants as well as the peer mediators. By implementing Peer Mediation as a Tier 1 intervention when conflict occurs on campus, the overall learning environment is supported by reducing tensions between students and allowing teachers to focus on classroom instruction instead of student discipline.

Annually, up to 2,500 youth participate in CYS case management, victim-offender mediation, family mediation, and/or peer mediation programs which all focus on strengthening community safety and preserving the potentials of youth who are at greatest risk of marginalization and lost opportunities when subjected to unnecessary criminalization in our schools and communities.