

**Collaborating Partnership
between
Bismarck Public School District
(Simle and Wachter Middle Schools)
and
Lutheran Social Services/ND
Restorative Justice Program**

LSS/ND Restorative Justice Program

Lutheran Social Services is a statewide private not for profit agency that provides a lifespan of care to individuals, families and communities. Restorative Justice is one of 19 LSS/ND programs. Since 1999, Restorative Justice services have been available throughout North Dakota for youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system. These cases are referred by Juvenile Court and the North Dakota Division of Juvenile Services.

Collaboration with Bismarck Public Schools

In the summer of 2009, the Missouri Slope Areawide United Way announced a Request for Proposal (RFP) regarding restorative communication processes. With the consent of Dr. Paul Johnson, the Restorative Justice Program proposed a collaboration with Bismarck Public Schools to provide restorative programming as a proactive measure in school settings. Simle and Wachter Middle Schools were identified. This proposal was approved in December 2009 and is scheduled to begin in February 2010.

Services

The following services will be provided for students who have been specifically referred to the Restorative Justice program by the Assistant Principal.

Accountability Conferences

Accountability Conferencing is a process which provides those who have been harmed by an incident the opportunity to meet with the person who caused the harm in a safe and structured setting, with the goal of holding the person who caused the harm directly accountable for their behavior. With the assistance of a trained facilitator, the person harmed is able to let the person who caused the harm know how the incident affected him or her, to receive the answers to the questions they may have, and to be directly involved in developing an agreement. The person who caused the

harm is able to take direct responsibility for their behavior, to learn the full impact of what they did, and to develop a plan for making amends to the person(s) they violated.

Reintegration Circles after suspension

Reintegration Circles provide a process which will assist the student in being reintegrated back into the school environment once they return from suspension. This process would involve the student, school administrators, guidance counselors, teachers and especially other students who may have been harmed or affected by the student's actions.

Who benefits?

The Harmed

- Feel listened to
- Understand why they were harmed
- Receive an apology/see remorse from the harmer
- Be involved in the reparation process

The Harmer

- Take responsibility for ones own actions
- Hear how their actions have impacted others
- Be a part of the solution to the problem
- Learn from the experience

The School Community

- Helps to create a harmonious and focused classroom environment
- Reduces time spent dealing with re-occurring conflicts
- Promotes healthy relationships between pupils, parents and staff

Staff

Michelle Dire has been a Restorative Justice Facilitator since 1999 and will primarily be assigned to Simle Middle School.

Kari Dohrmann has been a Restorative Justice Facilitator since 2008 and will primarily be assigned to Wachter Middle School.

Joel Friesz is the Restorative Justice Program Director at Lutheran Social Services and is responsible for program management.

Questions?

Until program implementation, questions can be directed to Joel Friesz at jfriesz@lssnd.org or 701-271-3241. For more information on the Restorative Justice Program visit our website at www.lssnd.org



Guided by God's love and grace, Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota brings healing, help and hope.

