

# Restorative Practices: What Do These Look Like in Practice

Jo Ann Freiberg, Ph.D.

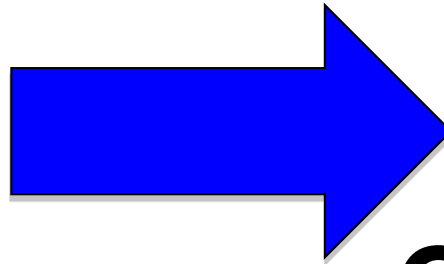
CT State Department of Education

Co-Chair, National School Climate Council

***Restorative Practices represent a philosophy that recognizes the importance of prioritizing the relationships and connections between and among all people within a school community and provides a framework for creating positive school climate and culture.***

# Pivotal/*Paradigm* Shift in Thinking & Engaging

**Fixing  
Problems  
& Putting  
Out  
Fires**  
*(reactive)*



**Developing  
Character  
&  
Creating the  
Climate\*\***  
*(pro-active)*

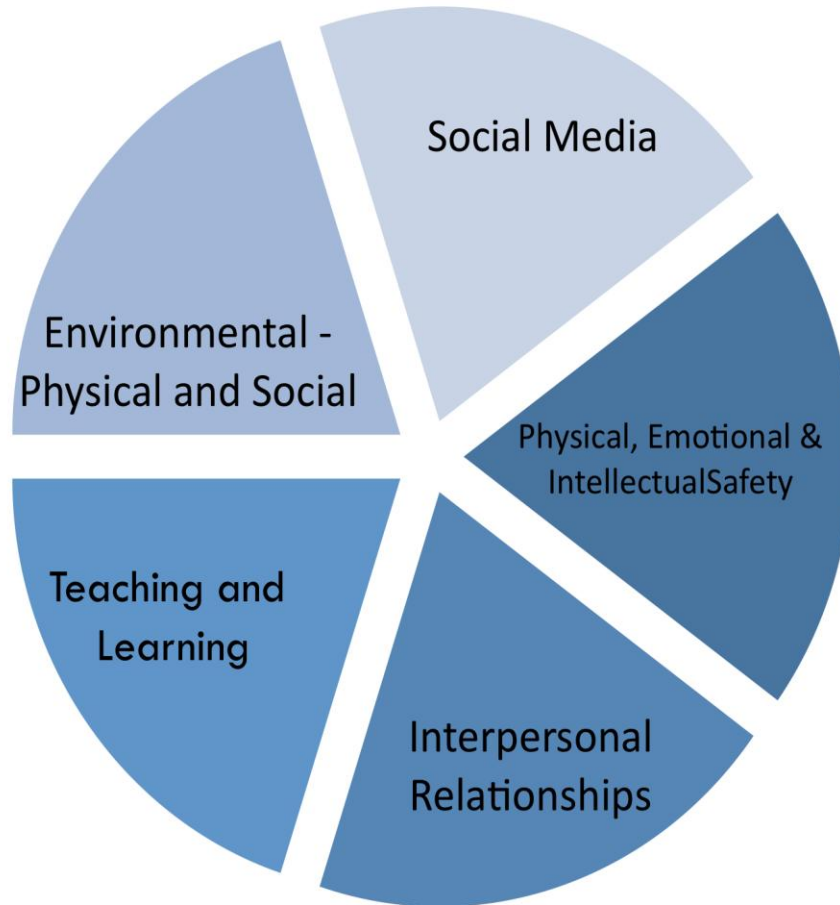
# **\*\*School Climate**

Simple definition:

***The Character and  
Quality of School  
Life***

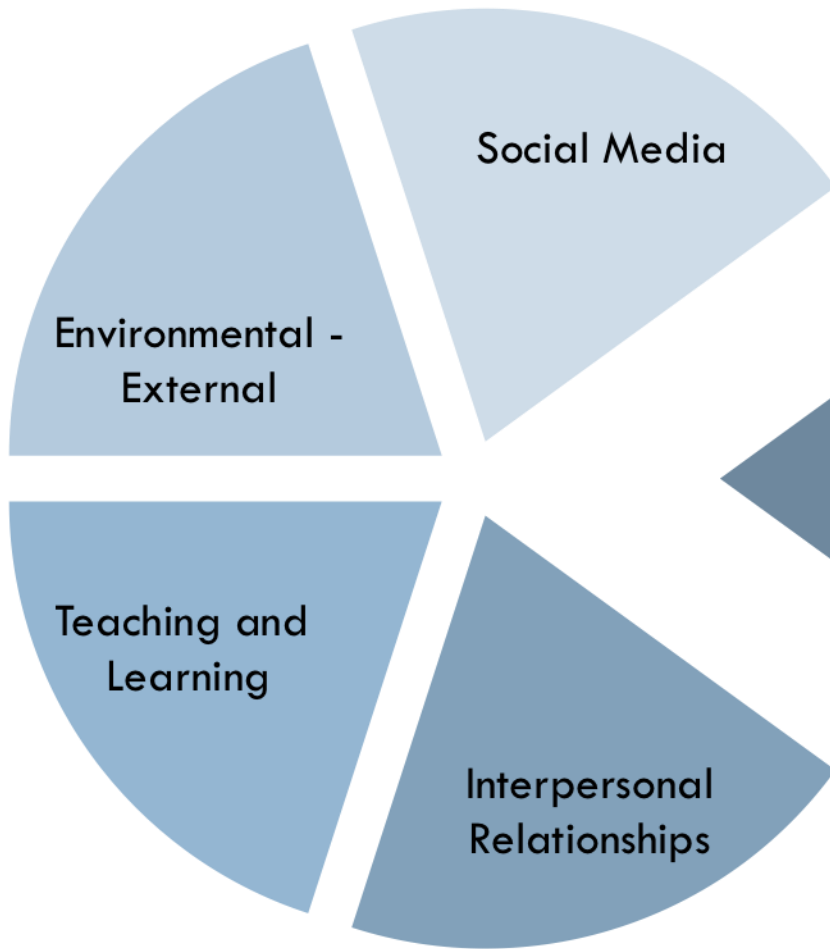
# **DIMENSIONS OF SCHOOL CLIMATE**

# School Climate: Key Dimensions\*\*



\*\* Strong, Positive Leadership in embedded and assumed in every dimension

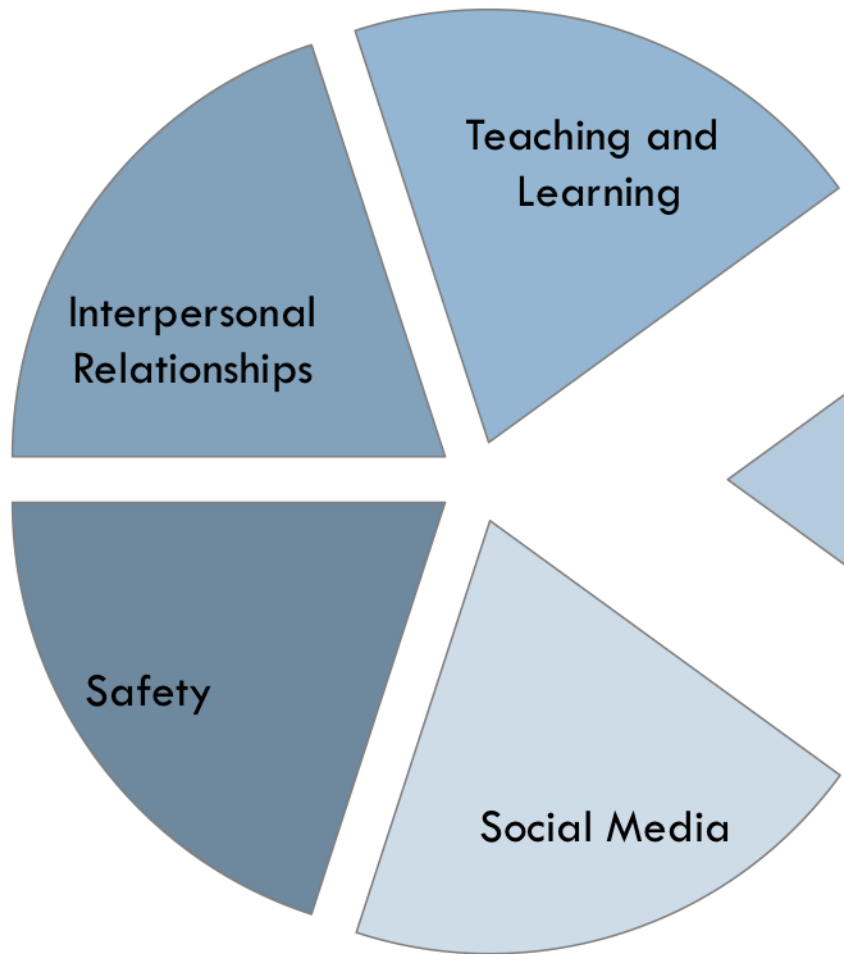
# School Climate: Key Dimensions



## Safety

- Rules and Norms
- Sense of Physical Security
- Sense of Social-Emotional Security

# School Climate: Key Dimensions

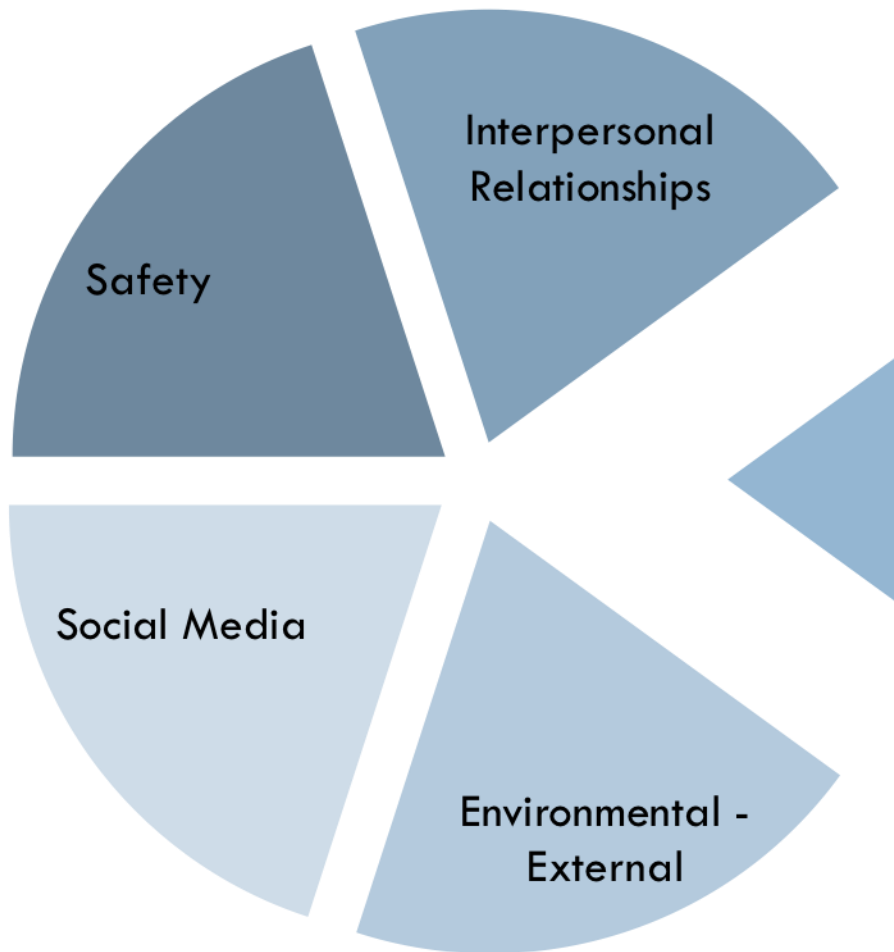


## Interpersonal Relationships

- Respect for diversity
- Social support – adults
- Social support – students
- Professional relationships
- Strong bonds to school
- Effective/Available support
- Leadership



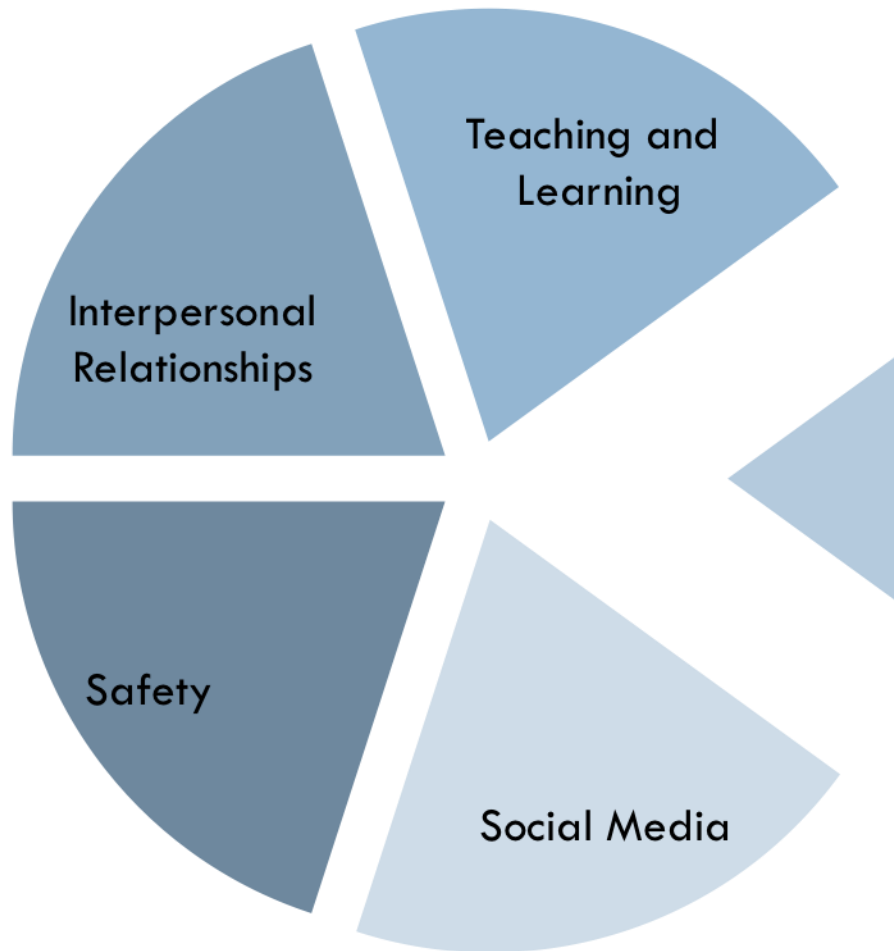
# School Climate: Key Dimensions



## Teaching and Learning

- Support for learning
- Social, emotional, civic & intellectual learning
- Leadership

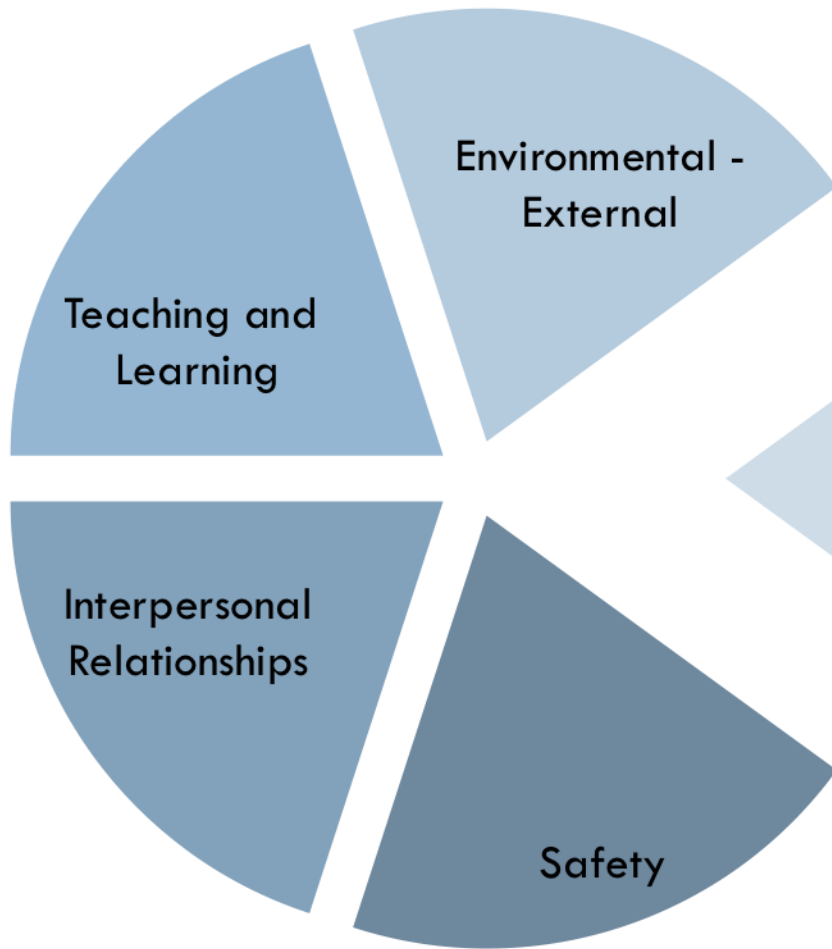
# School Climate: Key Dimensions



## Environment

- School Connectedness (social environment)
- Physical Surroundings

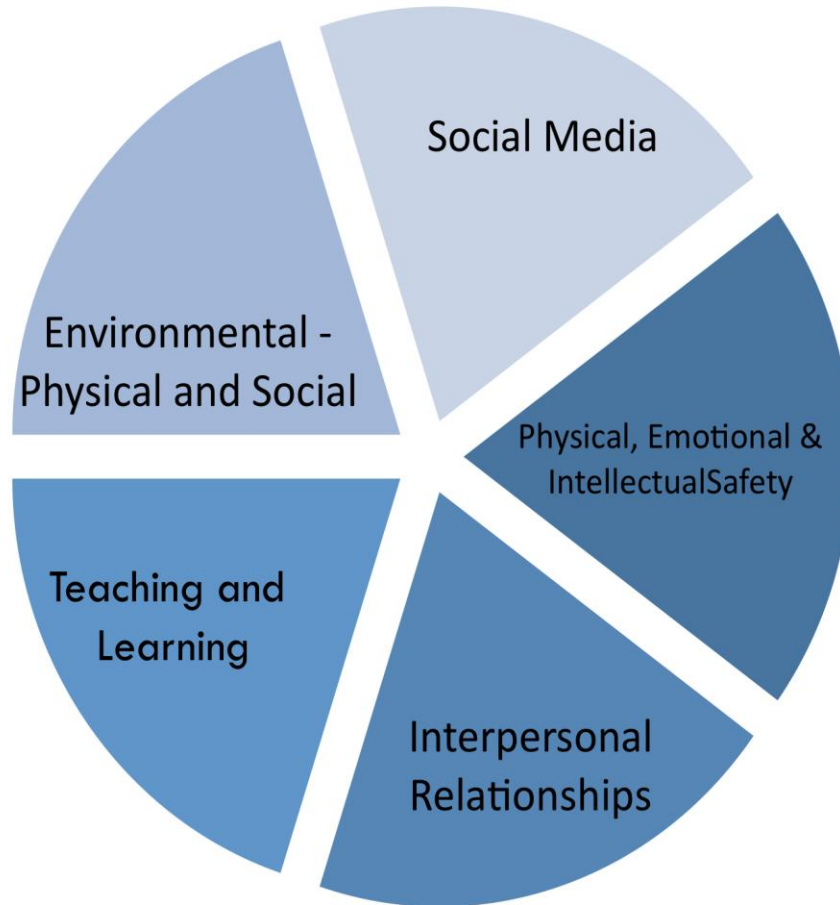
# School Climate: Key Dimensions



## Social Media

- Sense that students feel safe when online or on electronic devices

# School Climate: Key Dimensions\*\*



\*\* Strong, Positive Leadership in embedded and assumed in every dimension

# National School Climate Standards: Finalized March 2010

“There is growing appreciation that school climate –

**the quality and character of school life**<sup>1</sup>

– fosters children’s development, learning and achievement. School climate is based on the patterns of people’s experiences of school life; it reflects the norms, goals values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning and leadership practices, and organizational structures that comprise school life.”

<sup>1</sup>This definition of school climate was consensually developed by members of the National School Climate Council (2007). **The terms “school climate”, “school culture”** and “learning environment have been used in overlapping but sometimes quite different ways in the educational literature. Here, we **use the terms interchangeably.**

# National School Climate Standards

*Present a vision and framework for a positive and sustainable school climate. They compliment national standards for Content, Leadership and Professional Development and the Parent Teacher Association's National Standards for Family School Partnerships*

# National School Climate Standards: Endorsements

- American School Health Assoc.
- ASCD (Assoc. for Supervision & Curriculum Development)
- Character Educ. Partnership
- Nat' l Network of Educ. Renewal
- Nat' l School Boards Assoc.
- Public Education Network
- School Mental Health Project
- Search Institute
- FairTest
- Nat' l Assoc. of School Psych.
- American School Counselors Assoc.
- Committee for Children
- Pacer Center
- Teaching Tolerance
- Nat' l Rural Educ. Association
- Nat' l Org. for Youth Safety
- National PTA
- CT Juvenile Justice Alliance
- Futures without Violence
- iKeep Safe (Internet Keep Safe Coalition)
- Nat' l Cntr. for Student Engagement
- **Westbrook, CT Public Schools**
- **Portland, CT Public Schools**

# Model School Climate Policy

- “Umbrella” policy for all other relevant legislation and policies
  - Used for *all school and district improvement*...not just school climate
  - Nearly a 1 ½ year process for Westbrook to write
- Unanimously adopted March 19, 2014
- CT Assoc. for Boards of Educ. Policy # 5131.914
- Shipman & Goodwin Education Law Firm review
- Model for other CT districts and states
- Model for the National School Climate Center



# Standard One

The school community has a shared ***vision*** and plan for promoting, enhancing and sustaining a ***positive school climate***.

# Standard Two

The school community sets *policies* specifically promoting (a) the development and sustainability of social, emotional, ethical, civic and intellectual *skills, knowledge, dispositions and engagement*, and (b) a *comprehensive system to address barriers to learning* and teaching and reengage students who have become disengaged.

# Standard Three

The school community's ***practices*** are identified, prioritized and supported to (a) promote the learning and positive social, emotional, ethical and civic ***development of students***, (b) enhance ***engagement in teaching, learning***, and school-wide activities; (c) address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage those who have become disengaged; and (d) develop and sustain an ***appropriate operational infrastructure*** and capacity building mechanisms for meeting this standard.

# Standard Four

The school community creates an ***environment*** where all members are welcomed, supported, and ***feel safe*** in school: socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically.

# Standard Five

The school community develops meaningful and engaging ***practices***, activities and norms that promote ***social and civic responsibilities and a commitment to social justice.***

# Restorative Practices: Primary Channels

## ■ Pro-active

- Strengthen relationships
- Develop community

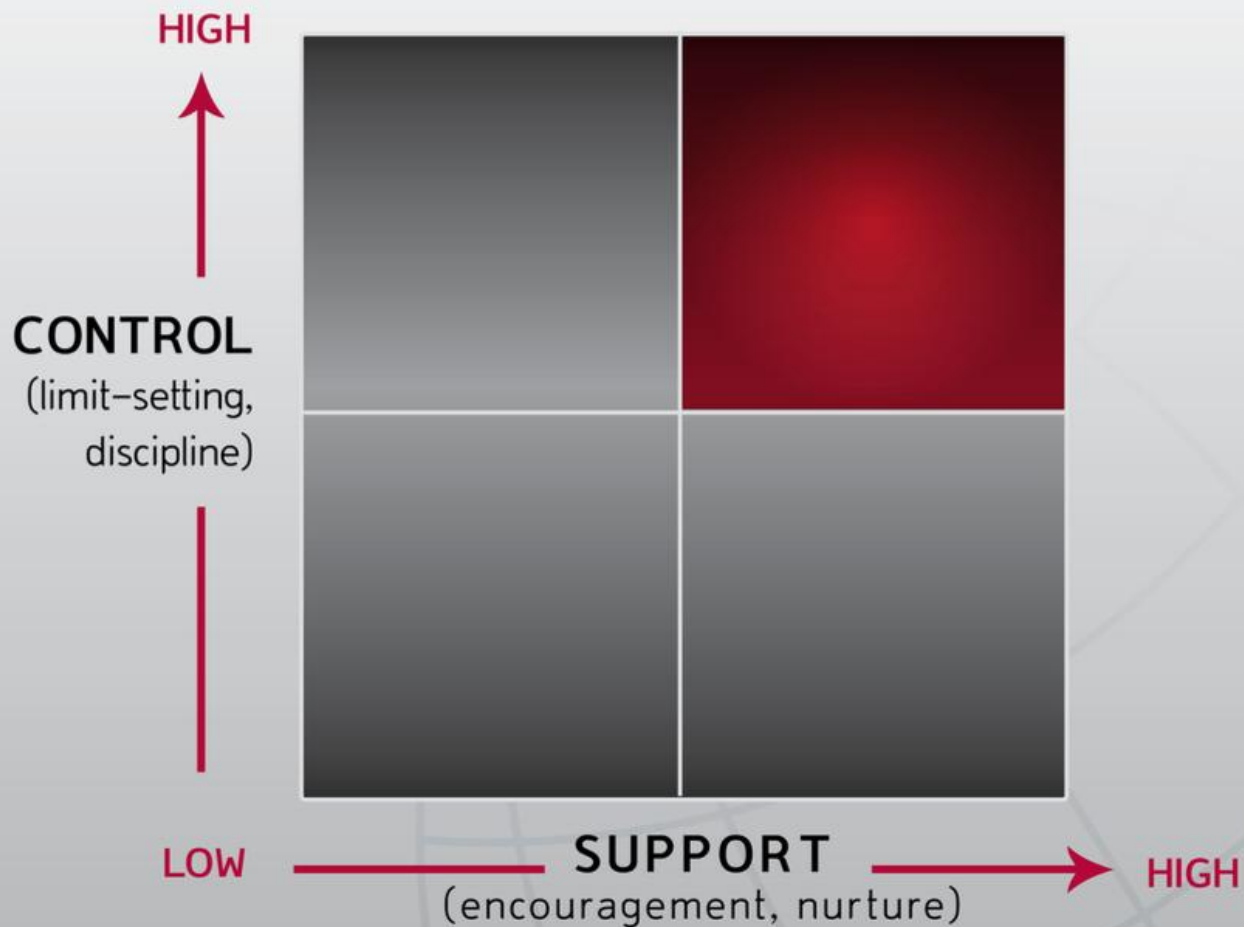
## ■ Responsive

- Manage conflict and misbehavior
- Meet needs
- Repair harm
- Restore relationships

**" Human beings are happiest,  
healthiest and most likely to  
make positive changes in  
their behavior when those in  
authority do things *with them*  
rather than to them or for  
them."**

Ted Wachtel

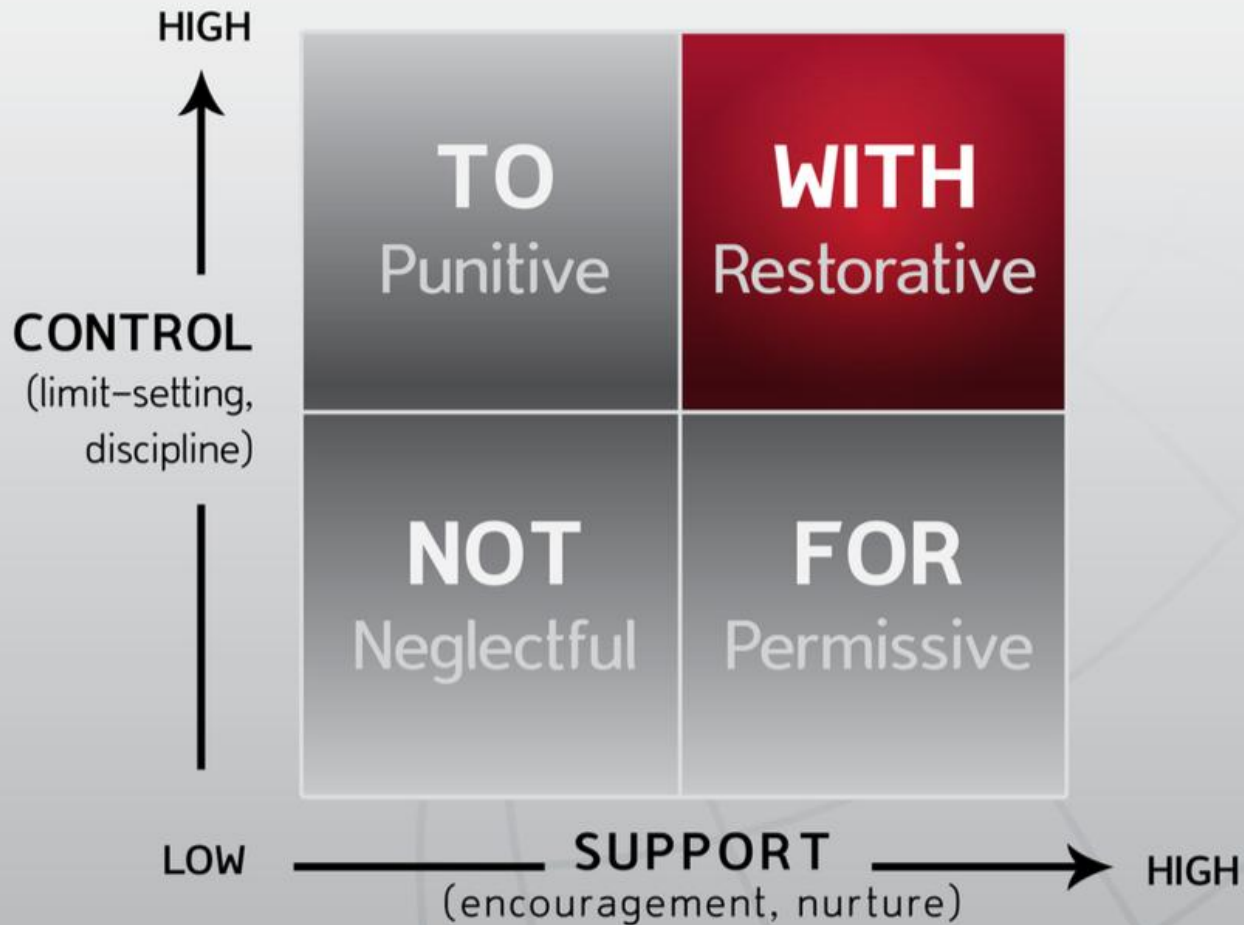
# SOCIAL DISCIPLINE WINDOW



Adapted by Paul McCold and Ted Wachtel from Glaser, 1969

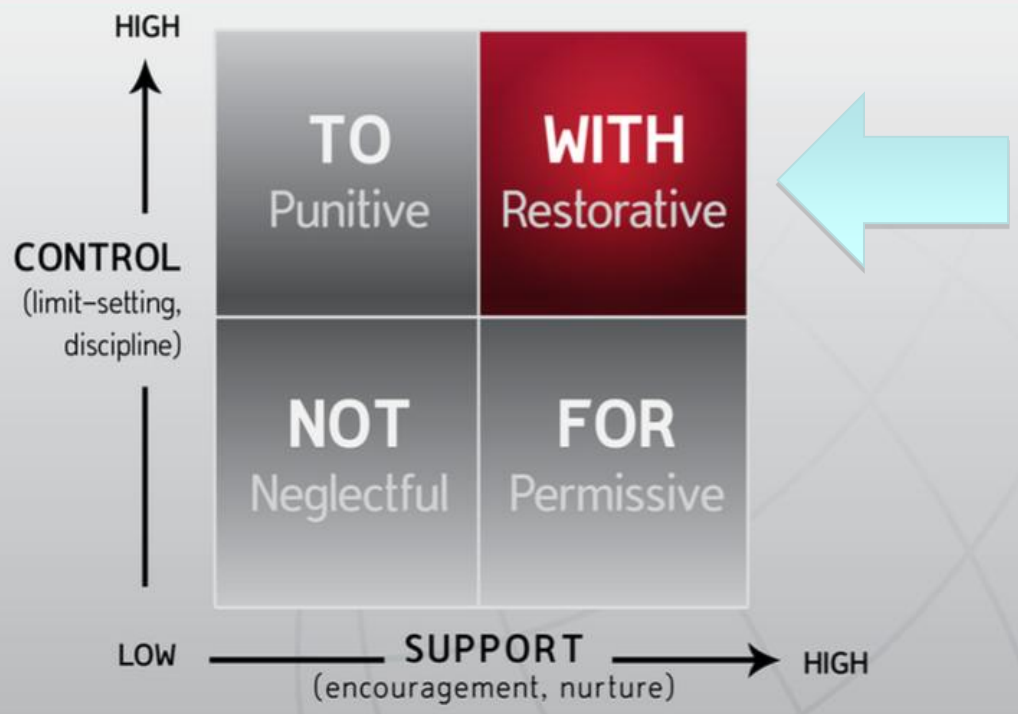


# SOCIAL DISCIPLINE WINDOW



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This is not a new idea. The people you respected, good teachers, mentors, coaches and counselors have

always treated people like this. But this simple framework is meant to give us a way to describe what we know works; it also gives us a way to teach other people to do it.

# **SCHOOL CLIMATE DEVELOPMENT MODEL**

# Time

From the cards provided, select the one that represents the area you spend the majority of your time on.

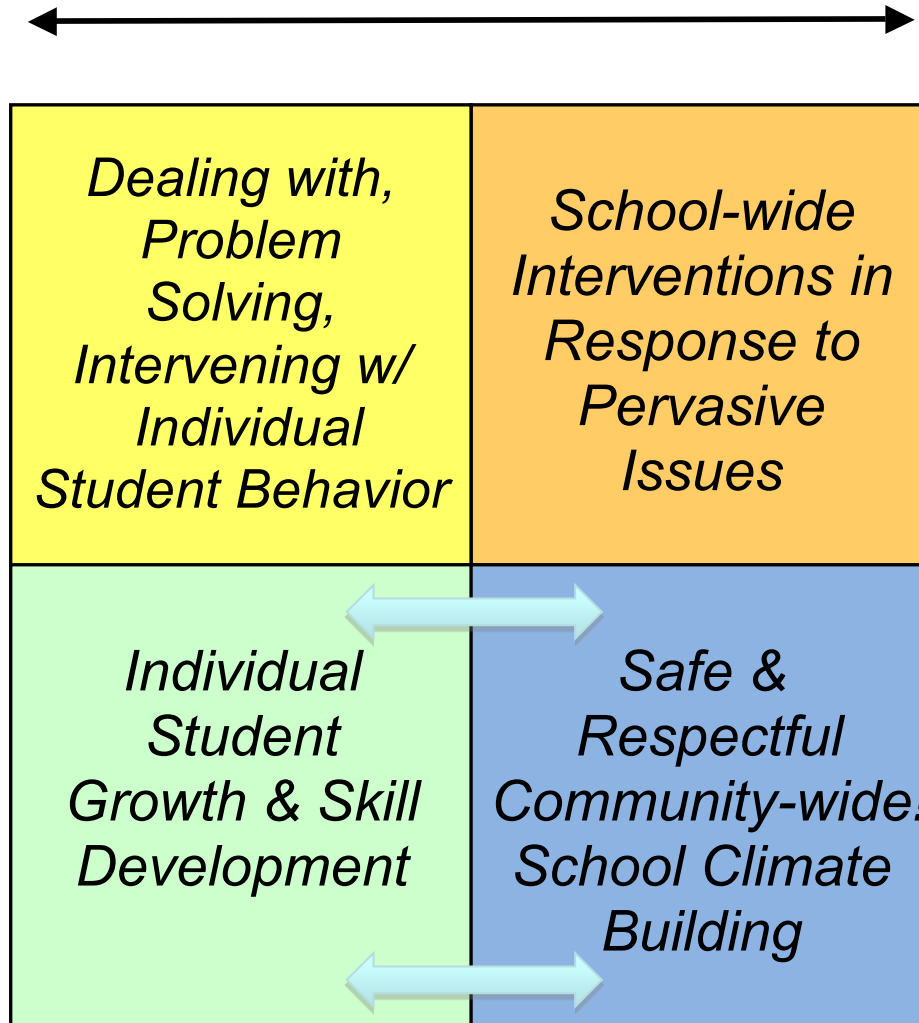
# Putting it Together

Using the grid provided, place the four cards in the area that best matches title with description.

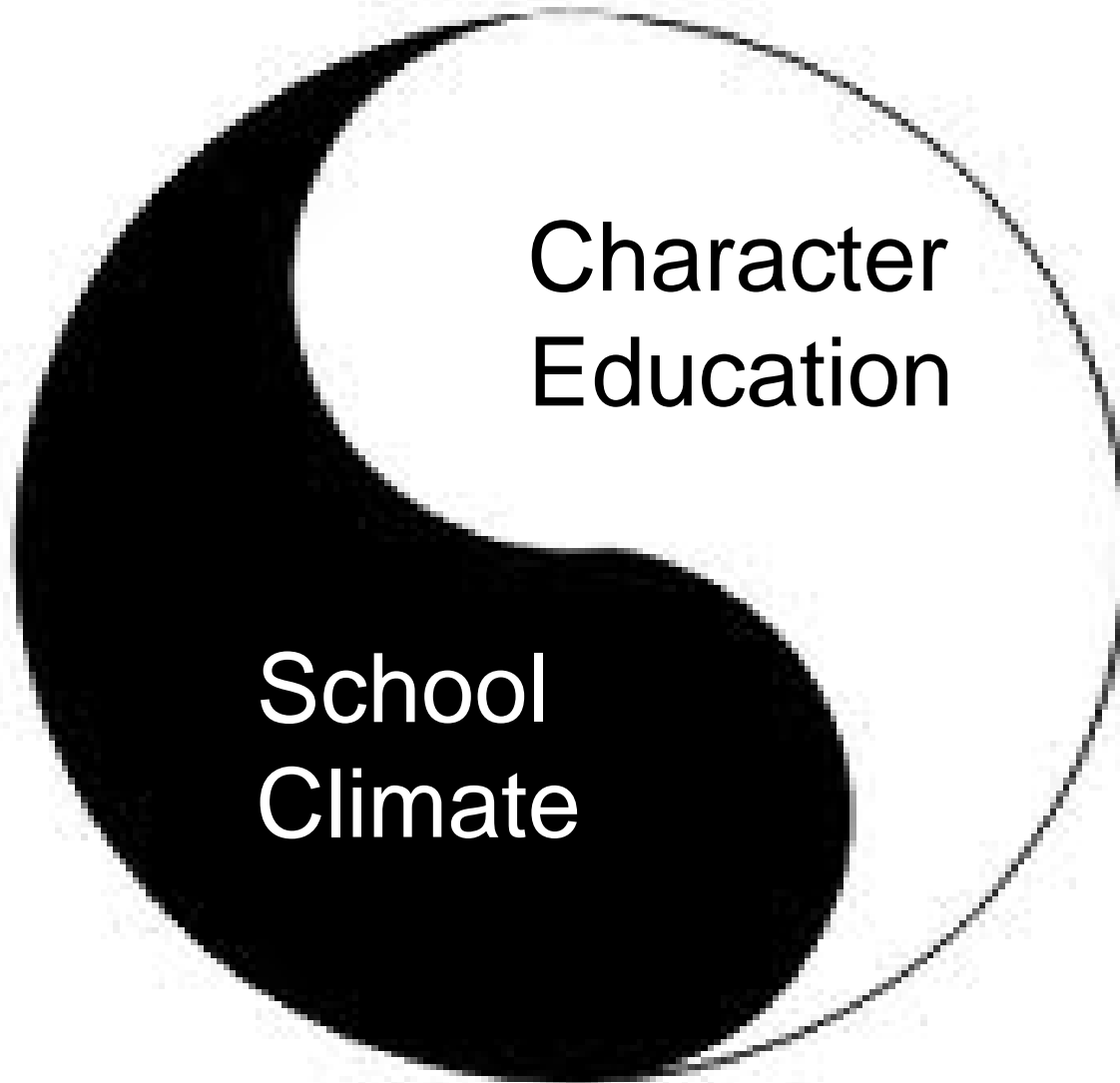
<b><u>Individual Intervention</u></b>	<b><u>School-Wide Community Intervention</u></b>
<b><u>Individual Development</u></b>	<b><u>School-Wide Community Development</u></b>

Individual **FOCUS** Environment!

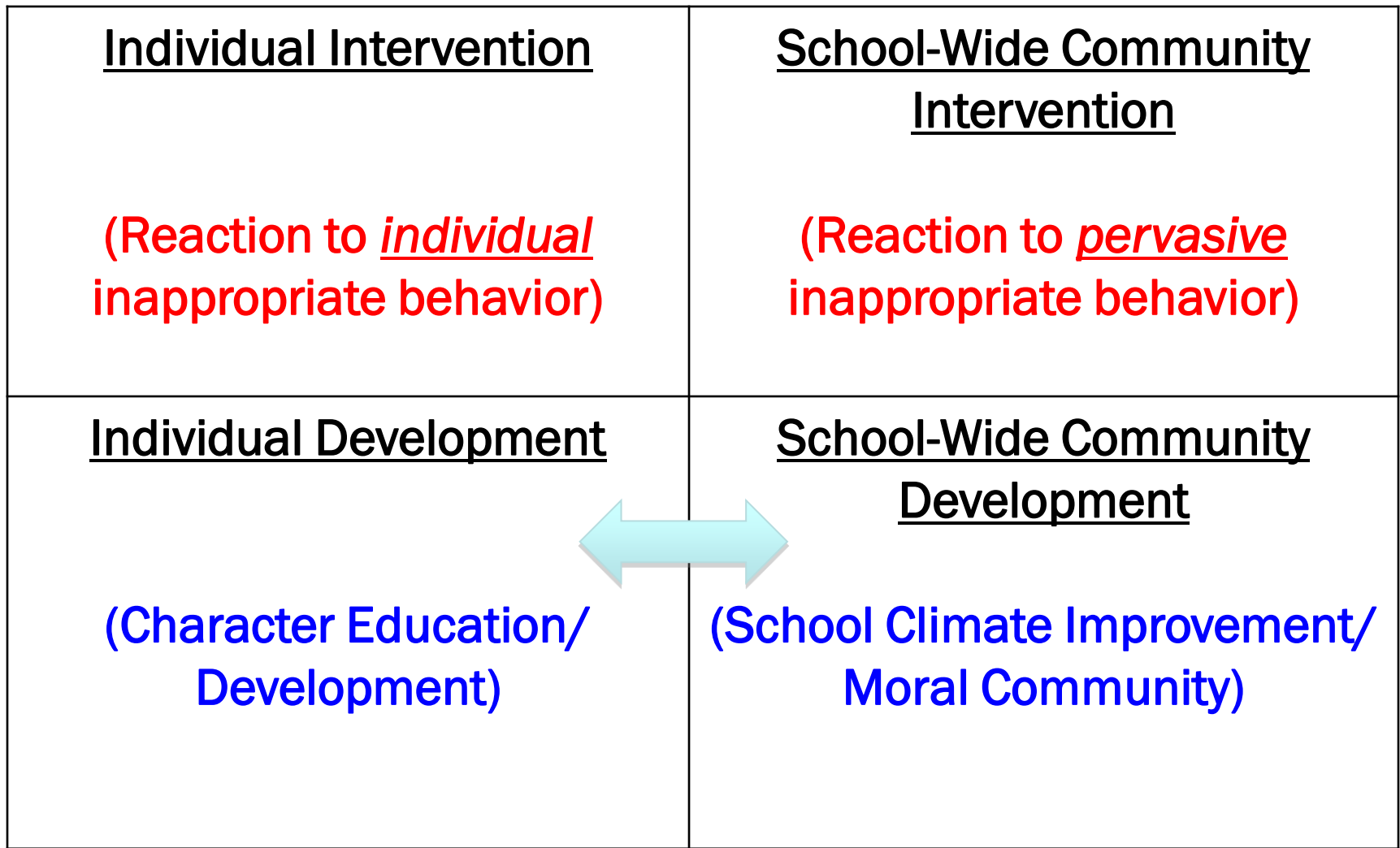
Development **PURPOSE** Intervention!



Inextricably Interconnected and interrelated







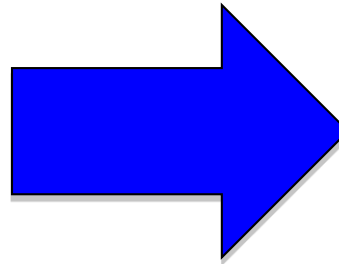
**Adult Responsibility and  
Looking Through a  
“Restorative Practices”  
Lens  
(another paradigm shift in  
thinking and leading)**



# ***Paradigm Shift for Adults***

**Focusing on  
changing  
student  
behavior**

**(reacting to &  
teaching  
students skills)**



**Adult  
actions and  
reactions  
determine  
student  
behavior  
**(Adults matter)****

# Tragedy Vs. Solution Aligned

- Students at Risk Factors (School Shooters)
  - No Caring Adult
  - Alienated from School Culture
  - Peer Marginalization
- Connectedness Factors
  - Close to people at school
    - Special adult connection
  - Happy to Be at School
  - Feeling a part of the school
    - Sense of belonging at school
  - Adults treat students fairly
  - Sense of (physical, emotional and intellectual Safety) at School

*“I’ve come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom [school]. It’s my personal approach that creates the climate. It’s my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher [administrator], I possess a tremendous power to make a child’s [adult’s] life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. **In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child [adult] humanized or dehumanized.**”*

Haim Ginott, Teacher and Child

# Paradigm Shift

## ■ From Punitive



- Rule broken
- Establish guilt or innocence
- Suppress misbehavior
  
- Authority driven disciplinary action
- Accountability = Punishment
  
- Using fear of punishment and exclusion to motivate positive behavior (or the use of “carrots”)

## ■ To Restorative

- Who has been harmed and how
- Address needs
- Recognize misbehavior as a learning opportunity
- Those impacted determine resolution collectively in Circles
- Accountability =
  - Understanding the impacts
  - Taking responsibility
  - Suggesting ways to repair harm
- Positive Behavior results from the opportunity to make amends and honorably reintegrate

# Filling Tool Boxes and Getting Off The Island of Punishment!

- Many (unfortunately) believe that if there is not a “punishment” then nothing happens
- There are miles and miles of **restorative consequences** between the Island of Punishment and the Island of Permissive
- Academic skill needs **must** be treated identically as social/behavioral needs
  - Educators **never** give up on academic skill learning
  - Behavior is almost always treated differently



# The Nature of Restorative Practice

## ■ Restorative Practices is not:

- A program or a curriculum
- A discipline system
- Reactive
- Punitive

## ■ Restorative Practices ARE:

- A way of thinking and being
- About changing school climate and culture
- Proactive and responsive
- Relational

# Create Balance: Restorative Practices Achieve Both

## ■ The Outside Approach:

### **SECURITY**

– **Security focused**

– **Adult driven**

– **Punitive policies**

– **Control oriented**

## ■ The Inside Approach:

### **CLIMATE**

– **Relationship focused**

– **Student centered**

– **Formative/Restorative**

– **Focused on changing social norms**

# Key Points of Restorative Practices

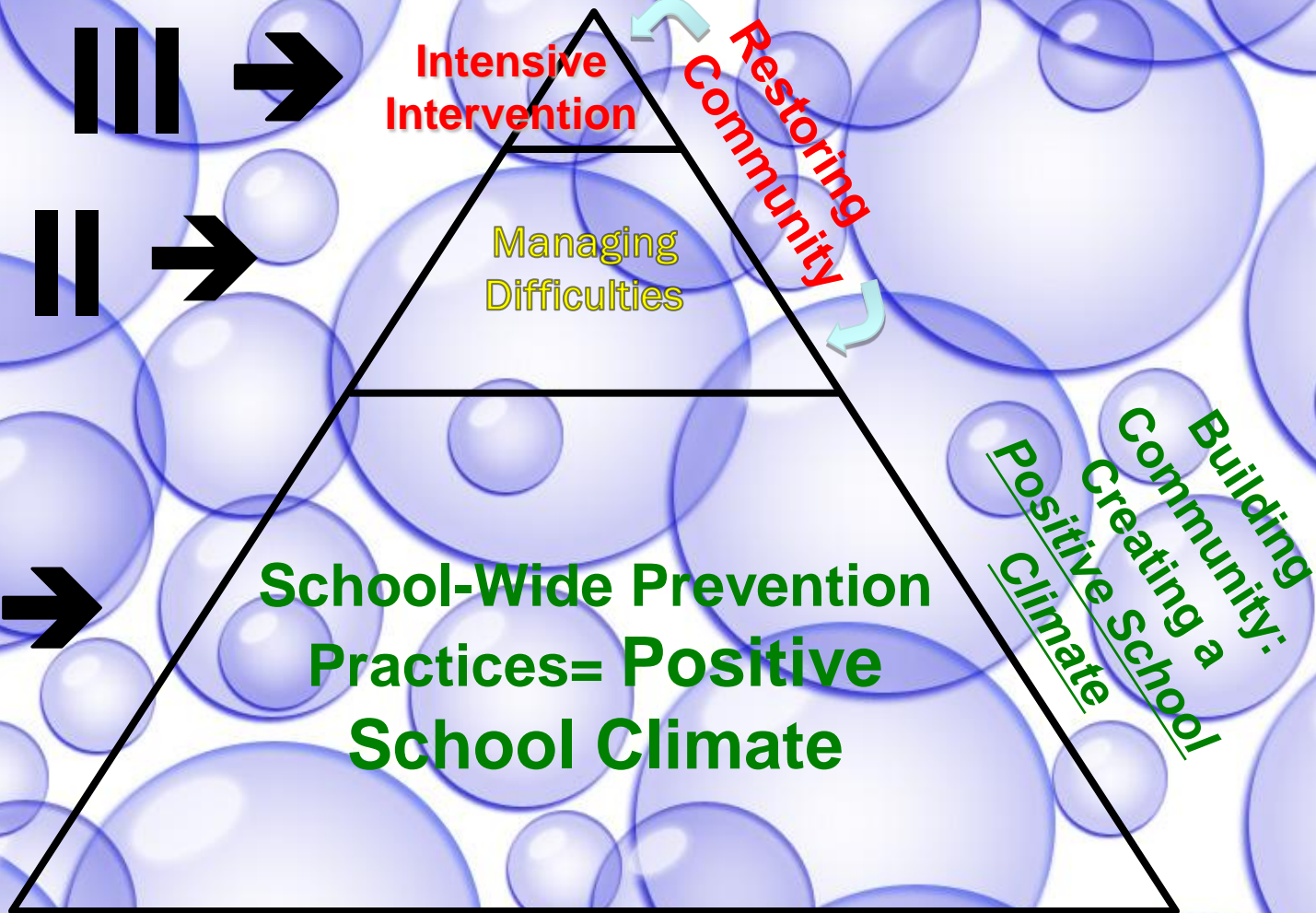
- The root cause of most misbehavior is a result of our disconnected world
- Build community and respond to conflict and misbehavior restoratively
- Authority works **“WITH”**
  - Not “to” or “for”
- Continuum of practices
- Paradigm shift from *punitive* → *restorative*

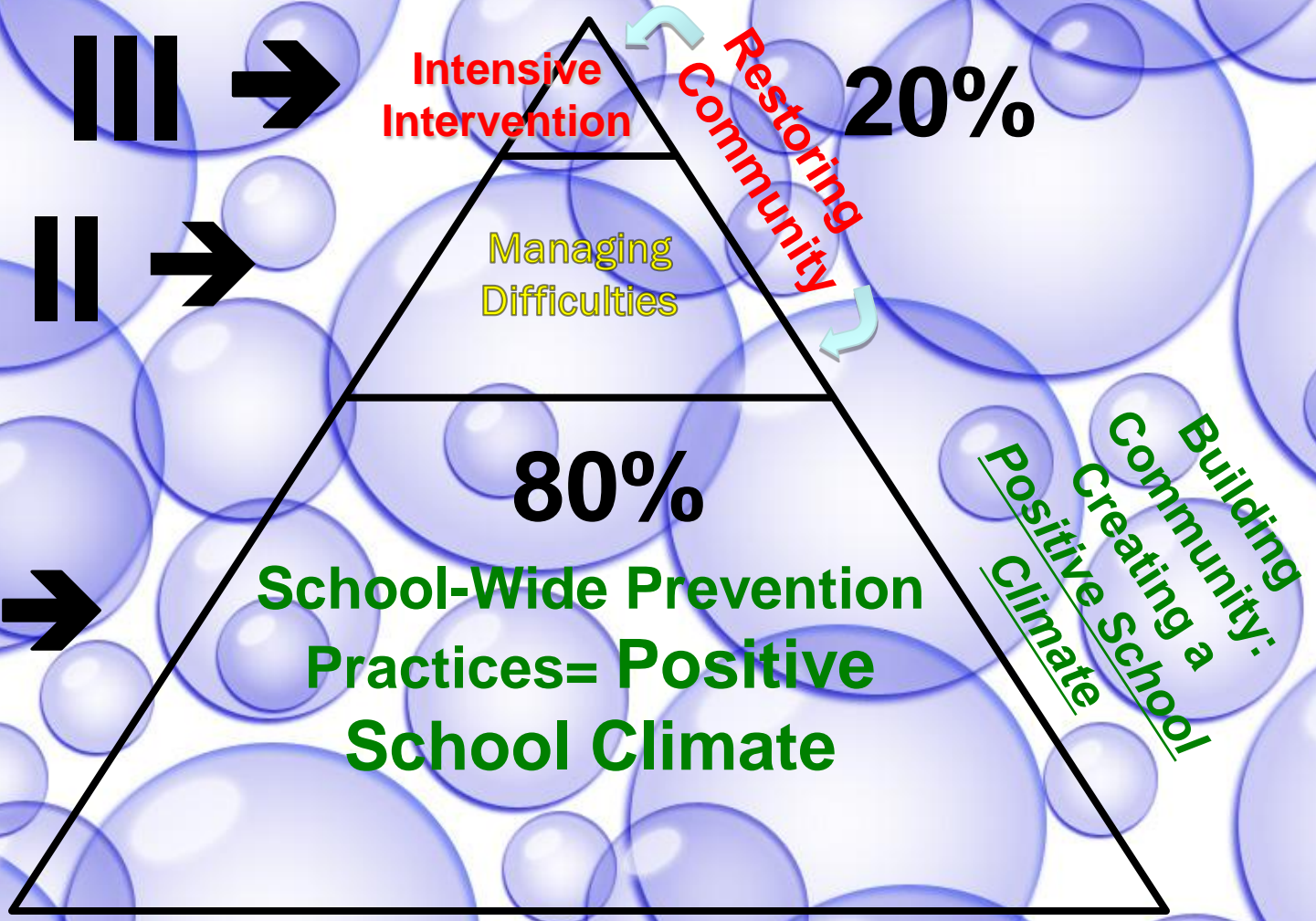
# Positive Outcomes of Implementing Restorative Practices

- Reductions in the number and intensity of fights and physical altercations
- Fewer classroom and cafeteria disruptions
- Drastic reduction in the number of students suspended and expelled, as well as referred out of the classroom
- Higher academic performance including standardized test score increases
- Greater sense of physical, overall safety in the school
- A more positive school climate for students and school personnel
- Healthier relationships among and between students and adults – including parents and guardians
- Increased and more meaningful communication

***“One of the goals of implementing restorative practices school-wide is to build a cohesive, caring school community that allows for improved and increased communication. This includes setting a school climate that promotes healthy relationships, identifies common values and guidelines, develops social-emotional understanding and skills, and promotes a sense of belonging to the school community.”***

Alameda County School Health Services





# Restorative Practices Triangle

In a small group, put the provided cards together to create a triangle that represents the levels and activities that comprise the Restorative Practices Triangle.



III



Title & Definition (2 cards)

Practice

Practice

Practice

II



Title & Definition (2 cards)

Practice

Practice

Practice

Practice

Practice

I



Title & Definition (2 cards)

Practice

Practice

Practice

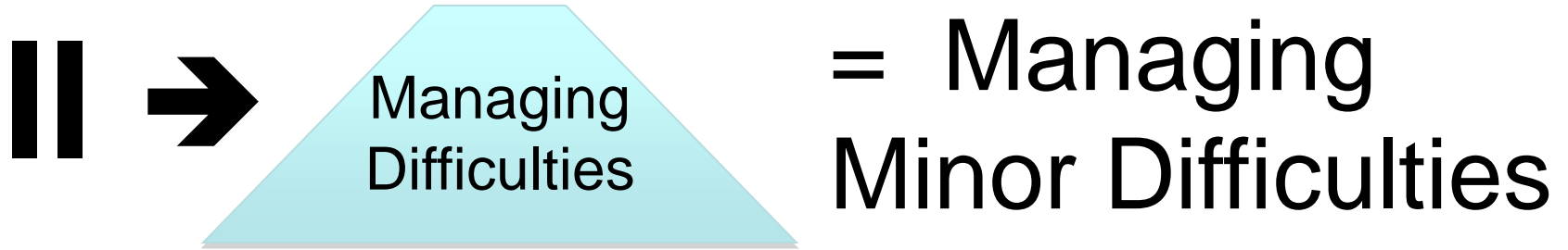
Each Practice also has 2 Cards: Title & Description



The Foundation  
of Restorative Practices  
**School Climate**

= School-Wide  
Prevention  
Practices

***Building a cohesive,  
caring school community  
that allows for improved  
and increased  
communication***



***Responding to situations with a restorative intention; represents a shift in thinking; behavior issues provide youth with teachable moments***

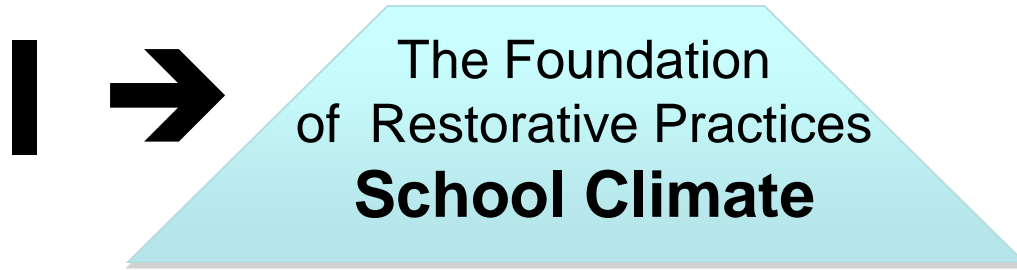
III



Intense  
Intervention

= Intense  
Intervention

***Focusing on rebuilding  
relationships and  
relationships and  
repairing harm***



= School-Wide  
Prevention  
Practices

- **Relational Practices**

- Working to understand how individuals in the classroom or school community relate to one another

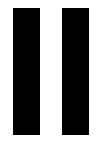
- **“Circles”**

- Coming together to facilitate student and teacher connectivity

- **Routines**

- Creating classroom values, such as working agreements/social contracts, adhering to them, discussing them and questioning them (continually over time)

***“When school-wide prevention practices are in place, there is a sense of trust in a school, and difficulties can be more easily dealt with through methods that do not punish or exclude students from the learning environment. Disruptions and fledgling conflicts should not require intensive intervention (level III), yet without response (level II), they can develop into top-tier crises. A restorative approach represents a shift in thinking for the school community; behavior issues provide youth with teachable moments.”***



Managing  
Difficulties

= Managing  
Minor Difficulties

- **Problem-Solving Circles**

- Brings people together to give voice to every individual; makes space in the classroom to resolve conflict and solve problems

- **Restorative Conversations**

- Having informal conversations using restorative language to repair or prevent harm

- **Hallway Conferences/Conversations**

- Quick conferences/conversations to understand how people were affected and take steps to prevent harm

- **Restorative Conferences**

- Meeting formally to prevent harm, enable people to resolve differences, and build social-emotional capacity through empathy

- **Peer and/or Adult Mediation**

- Appropriate neutral third party supports those in conflict to come to a mutually acceptable resolution, or to find a way of moving forward

# Restorative Questions

- Can you explain what happened?
- How did it happen?
- What was the harm?
- Who do you think was affected?
- How were you affected?
- How were they affected?
- How do you feel about what happened?
- What needs to happen to make things right?
- How are you doing now in relation to the event and its consequences?
- What were you looking for when you chose to act?
- What would you like to offer and to whom?



## IIRP Restorative Questions I (To respond to challenging behavior)

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

## IIRP Restorative Questions II (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?

# Questions Never to Ask Adolescents.....

- Why did you do that?
- ***What*** were you thinking?

III



Intense  
Intervention

= Intense  
Intervention

## • **Intervention Circles**

- Brings people together to make space in the classroom to resolve conflict and solve problems at the intense level

## • **Special (Stipulated) Circumstances**

- Considering the individual and contextual issues to come to an agreement that provides appropriate consequences and honors the principles of Restorative Practices

## • **Restorative Conferences**

- Meeting formally with those involved to repair harm, enable resolution of differences, and build social-emotional capacity through empathy

***“Intense intervention (level III) focuses on rebuilding relationships and repairing harm. Practices at this level involve facilitated dialogue with those affected to determine what the harm was, what needs have arisen in its wake, and who has responsibility to address those needs.***

***Discipline concerns at this level often involve people who were directly harmed. However, in just about all cases, the school as a whole or in part is also directly impacted. In some cases the neighborhood is affected as well.”***

Alameda County School Health Services

***Restorative Justice is a way to bring people back into relationship with their community rather than cause further separation***

## ***Adolescent Identity Exploration***

***“Especially for circumstances that involve intensive intervention (level III), Restorative Justice allows youth – who often experiment with different identities – to explore their identity without being trapped by the experimental behavior.***

***Nancy Riestenberg (2006) suggests, in addition to a renewed connection to their school, students are ‘relieved that while they experimented with their own identity, trying out various roles, they did not have to commit themselves irrevocably to being vandals and fools.’ ”***

***Implementing a restorative practice approach allows for redemption, education, empathy building, stronger bonds to school and more engagement. All of these outcomes contribute directly to increased student academic and social success and a far better overall school climate; everyone in the entire school community is positively impacted by using restorative practices***

# Restorative Practices

- ◆ Acknowledge that relationships are central to building community
- ◆ Build systems that address misbehavior & harm in a way that strengthens relationships
- ◆ Focus on the harms done rather than only on rule breaking
- ◆ Give voice to the person harmed
- ◆ Engage in collaborative problem-solving
- ◆ Empower change and growth
- ◆ Enhance responsibility

# 5 Key Strategies for Successful Implementation of Restorative Practices:

- Restorative Leadership
- Creating a Learning Organization
- Staff Engagement/Overcoming Resistance
- Using Systems Thinking
- Strategic, Incremental Implementation



# Restorative Leadership

## ■ Restorative Leadership

- The restorative leader upholds and models restorative principles and practices

- “...*individuals are most likely to trust and cooperate freely with systems – whether they themselves win or lose by those systems – when fair process is observed*”

- **Engagement** – *involve individuals in decisions that affect them. Listen to their views and genuinely take their opinions into account*

- **Explanation** – *explain the reasoning behind a decision to everyone who is affected by it*

- **Expectation Clarity** – *make sure that everyone clearly understands a decision and what is expected of them*

# Creating a Learning Organization

- Creating a Learning Organization
  - Recognize the importance of team learning
  - Reflect on continuous self-improvement
  - Reflect and model a shared vision
  - Understand the impact of belief systems on the organization
  - Use a systems approach

# Staff Engagement and Overcoming Resistance

- Take the long view
- Prioritize Relationships and Community Building
- Use Fair Process
  - Engagement – involve individuals in decisions that affect them. Listen to their views and genuinely take their opinions into account
- Know Your People
- Use Systems Thinking
- Be Strategic... Incremental Implementation

# Using Systems Thinking

## ■ Questions for Consideration

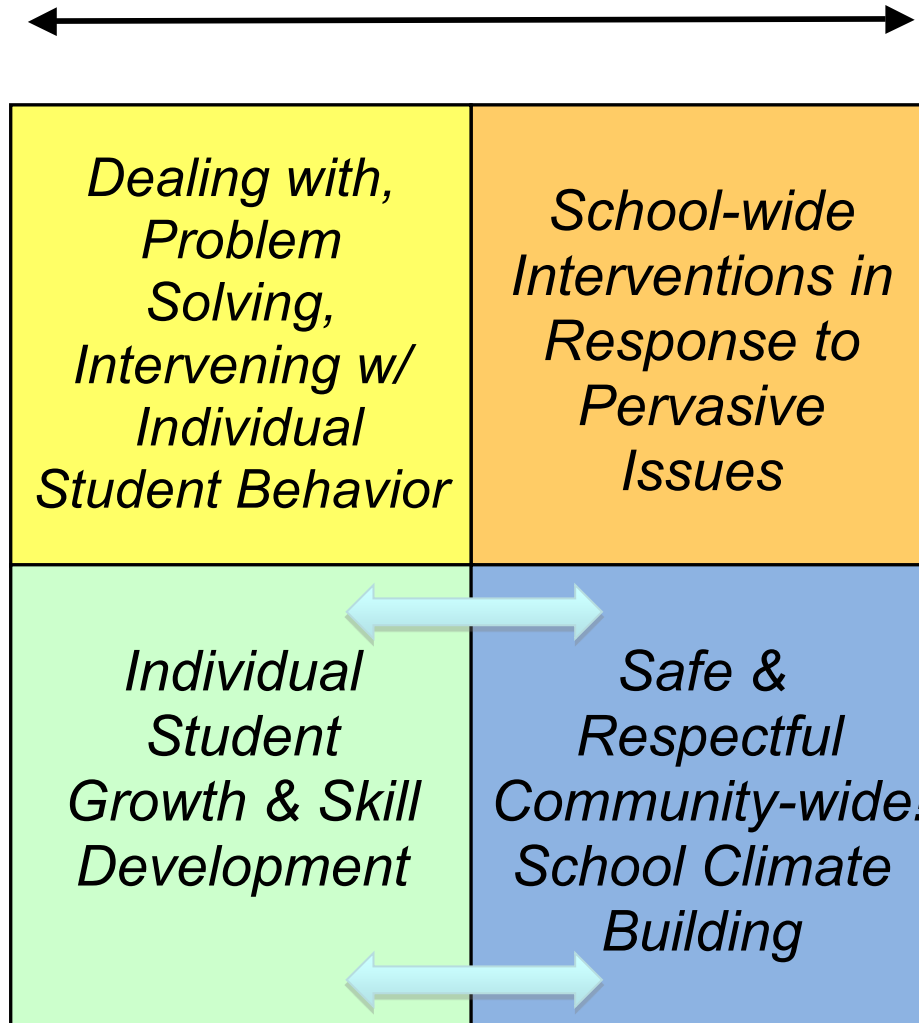
- What is the current need and how can Restorative Practices address it?
- How receptive is the culture to a relational approach?
- How can Restorative Practices inform programs already in place?
- How can these programs support implementation of Restorative Practices?
- Is a realignment of policies and procedures necessary?

# Strategic, Incremental Implementation

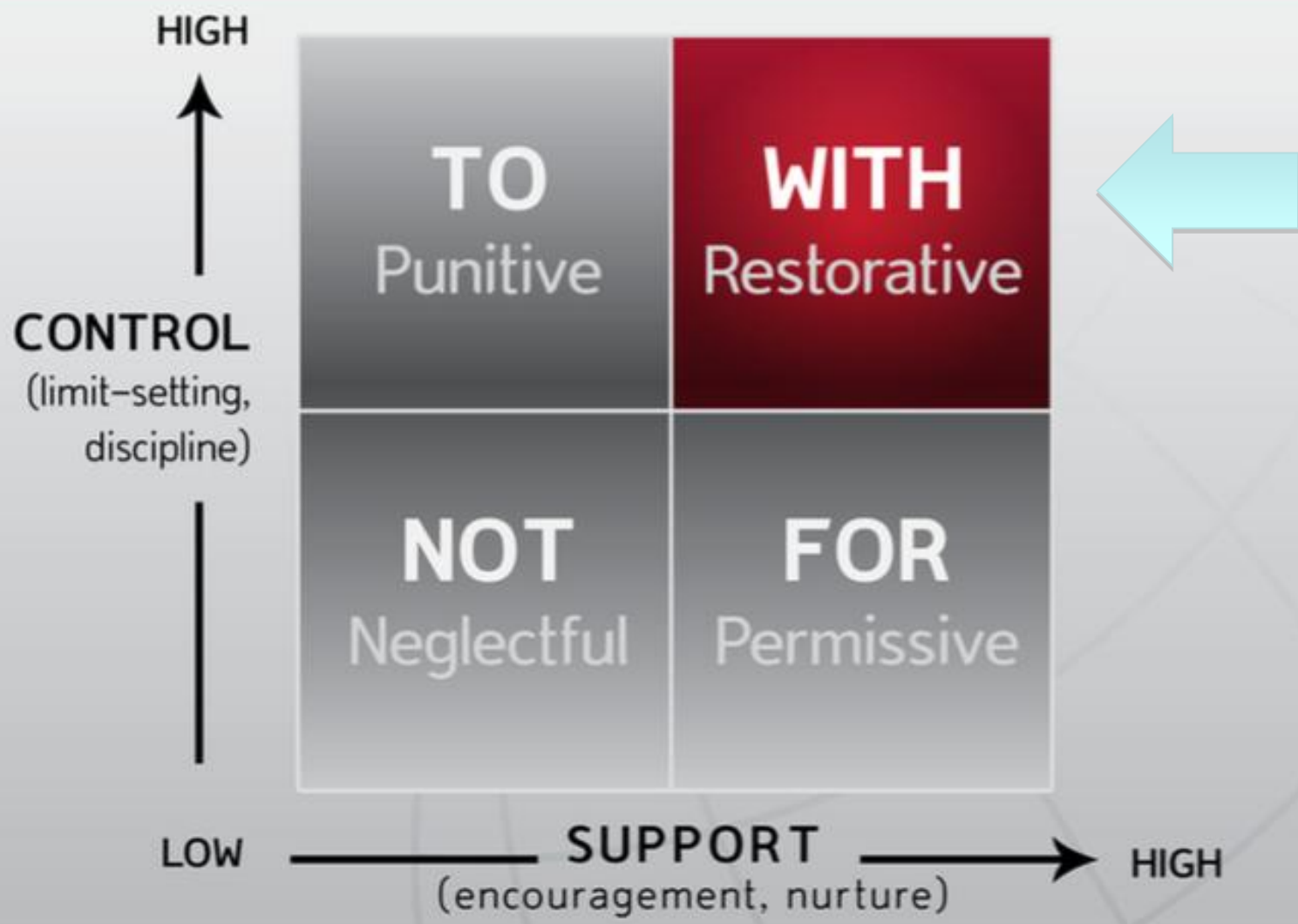
- Create 3 year roll-out plan including strategies for:
  - Gaining buy-in
  - Training
  - Experimentation
  - Ongoing learning
  - Monitoring progress and gathering feedback
  - Updating policies and procedures
  - Reporting out progress

Individual **FOCUS** Environment!

Development **PURPOSE** Intervention!



# SOCIAL DISCIPLINE WINDOW



Adapted by Paul McCold and Ted Wachtel from Glaser, 1969



Horton, the Elephant  
says....



***“A person’s a person, no matter how small”***



# Adult Modeling: *We Are All Models...We might As Well Be Good Ones*

- Language Use
- Moral/Ethical Behavior
- Demonstrating Compassion
- Living Core Values
- Listening
- Mentorship, not Friendship
- Conflict Resolution
- Display of Common Courtesy

**CIRCLES!!!!**

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