MAKING CONNECTIONS: RESTORATIVE PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS

by

PATRICK T. VARLEY

A THESIS SUMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

GRADUATE COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM

We accept this thesis as conforming

To the required standard

……
Marvin McDonald, PhD., Thesis Supervisor

……
Liz Elliott, PhD., Second Reader

……
José Domene, PhD., Thesis Coordinator

……
Brenda Morrison, PhD., External Examiner

TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY

DECEMBER, 2008

ABSTRACT

In this thesis project, students who had been suspended in secondary school reflected on their experiences, emotions, and perceptions arising from suspension and the effects of those experiences on their connectedness to school. Student accounts fit well-documented deficiencies of the practice of suspension as noted in available literature: suspensions led to academic difficulties, and the process was perceived by students as punitive, unfair, unhelpful, ineffective, and sometimes harmful. Students unanimously preferred restorative models of discipline characterized by high levels of behavioural control and limit-setting on the one hand, in combination with needed help and support on the other. The interpretive framework in this research was a reflective practitioner model: an interaction between my professional practice and the research process itself. Themes that emerged from interviews arose via inductive, deductive, and abductive reasoning. My previous training and practice in restorative justice provided background and insight that facilitated identification of core restorative justice themes from the interviews. Emergent themes were sorted, sifted and distilled by repeatedly poring over interview transcripts and were further refined over several months in my restorative practices as a school counsellor. Transcribed interviews were analysed using a three-column methodology that (1) identified themes in the transcripts, (2) thematically coded and paraphrased salient transcript contents, and (3) further refined and abstracted themes and highlighted thematic interactions. Thematic definitions were refined by continual checking of fit between the interview data, the abstracted definitions of themes, and the relevance and usefulness of these themes in my elementary school counselling work. Refinement of thematic definitions was facilitated by condensing representative

quotations, paraphrases, and abstractions under a separate heading for each theme to provide a condensed reference source based on the interview data. The analysis process (identifying interview themes by representative quotations, coding transcripts, paraphrasing, abstracting, and integrating themes) facilitated distillation of values, processes, and behaviours central to restorative interventions. The result is a set of themes to guide school discipline practices in the form of a condensed template to guide the practical dynamics of applying restorative discipline interventions. Relationships among themes developed into a working model that provides an action-based template for designing, implementing, and evaluating restorative disciplinary interventions in school settings in a way that keeps students relationally connected to school. Results of the interview analysis converged with the feedback from key informants such as teachers, administrators, and restorative practitioners. Each time I shared my results with other professional educators and laypeople alike, the themes and the intervention template were met both with interest and with intuitive affirmation of their relevance and potential for utility in school discipline interventions. The reflective practitioner approach was guided by my professional training, the integration of restorative justice in my life and work, and by ongoing feedback from students, educators, and restorative practitioners. The template comprises one tier of a three-tiered restorative school model for promoting and maintaining school connectedness: (1) a school-wide, cultural approach to behaviour and discipline; (2) core restorative competencies for staff, parents, and students; and (3) the restorative intervention template derived from this research.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the love and support of my family, Wendy, Jonathon, and Noah. Sincere appreciation goes to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Marvin McDonald, for his skilful, caring assistance throughout the project. Special thanks to Dr. Liz Elliott and Dr. Brenda Morrison for their valuable insights and contributions. Sincere regards to the many people who contributed to this project: restorative practitioners, colleagues, community members, and students. My deepest appreciation to all student-participants for sharing their own school suspension stories, along with their valuable insights into restorative practices in schools.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The central concern of this research is to develop school discipline interventions that are safe and fair, and that also keep students connected to school. Student connection to school is a desirable outcome for all students because it predicts academic success, health and well-being in youth. Promoting connection to school also reflects healthy relationships and the community-building value orientation of schools. The present study adapted the protective factor 'school connectedness' from large Canadian and U.S. studies on adolescent health. The McCreary Centre Society of British Columbia research re-affirmed large U.S studies of adolescents by emphasizing the importance of relational attachment to school, or school connectedness. Several students who had previously been suspended from school were interviewed about their suspension experiences, with particular concern given to their school connectedness, and the results of the data analysis are presented in this thesis.

Discipline models in school often reflect what happens in criminal sanctions - a mixture of retribution, rehabilitation, and restoration. Restorative justice values and processes guided this research, thanks to conceptual relationships between restorative thinking and relational connectedness. Relationships are central to restorative justice and 'community-building' might be called its meta-value. Restorative justice practices have been found effective in youth criminal justice and school settings on indicators such as higher participant satisfaction, lower offender recidivism, and greater acceptance and fulfillment of responsibility by offenders. Restorative values and processes guided data collection, analysis, and interpretation in this research. Restorative themes to guide

school discipline practice emerged from the data and were applied and refined in a school setting in my work as a school counsellor and restorative practitioner.

Restorative justice thinking asks who was harmed, who is responsible to heal the harm, and how the community will support the victim and offender to reintegrate into the community. Retributive approaches focus on broken rules and laws, who did the crime, and what punishment applies. Rehabilitative approaches highlight something to be cured in an offender. I argue in this research that a restorative justice school discipline model provides a more secure basis than retributive and rehabilitative models for responding to wrongdoing, offences, and crimes. A restorative paradigm represents values, attitudes, beliefs, processes and behaviours enacted in response to wrongdoings. This research is important because punitive and alienating school censuring structures like suspension are widely considered to be ineffective and sometimes harmful to students. Yet suspensions continue to be widely used as discipline interventions. Through a restorative 'lens' (Zehr, 1995), school suspensions and other discipline interventions are defined as effective if they heal harm and restore relationships. And while the participant interviews related specifically to suspensions, themes generated from those interviews apply broadly to school discipline interventions such as classroom management strategies, and not simply to suspensions *per se*. The lens metaphor represents a restorative paradigm which focuses interventions on healing harm, meeting the needs of students, and keeping students connected to school.

One can imagine having committed an offence, the painful shame affect and feelings and emotions that arise from it, the social-moral confrontation of the discipline experience, and how our affects, feelings and emotions might influence our responses. A

specific focus in this research was on student emotions in school discipline because of the way emotions like shame, remorse, and empathy mediate future school-related behaviours and attitudes, and relational attachment to school. Students who had been suspended from school were invited to talk about how their suspension experience affected them. Interviews allowed students to talk in a safe, comfortable setting about their thoughts and feelings around suspension, and how suspension affected their academic progress, thoughts, attitudes, emotions, and connection to school.

Traditional retributive justice tends to ask: “Was there a crime?,” “Who did it?,” “What punishment should be applied?” Rehabilitative approaches might ask, "What can we do to cure or rehabilitate the offender?" Restorative justice asks, "Who was harmed?," "What are their needs?," "Who is responsible to meet their needs?" The varied questions reflect assumptions about appropriate (values-oriented) and effective (process-oriented) responses to wrongdoing and crime. Looking at student suspension experiences through a restorative justice lens helps us see how the actions of offending students can be censured, and how the student can be held accountable and re-integrated in a way that preserves and promotes relational attachment to school.

Through a restorative lens, censure is defined as formal disapproval of an act because of the harm caused to people and school community by the act. Care is taken to intentionally communicate how people and community were harmed and who is morally obligated to heal the harm. But the offending student is also viewed positively as a good person, worthy of respect and dignity, and an asset to the school. The relationship with the student is highly valued. This intentional relationship-building occurs in the context of framing the wrongful act as a learning opportunity; an opportunity to also heal harm,

to be accountable, and to stay connected to school. Connection to school is a valuable end in itself and a good outcome for the school and broader community. Connected students find school fair and safe, and they feel happy, a part of things, and connected to people. Connected students are also healthier, and practice safer, more pro-social behaviours.

School responses to wrongdoing and crime have important consequences for the health and well-being of youth, and can affect their future trajectories in life. It is important then, to develop good school practices that build connectedness, and mitigate those that detract from it. Restorative thinking directs actions that tend to promote connectedness and inhibit disconnectedness. Broadly speaking, we need actions that maximize student resiliencies and minimize risk factors. Retributive and rehabilitative responses tend to frame the offender as more passive than active, recipients of punishment and cure, respectively. Restorative responses invite and require active participation of the offender, the victim, and the community to heal harm and restore relationships. Direct involvement in healing and restoration can and ought to promote connectedness, build resilience and minimize risk factors like academic failure and alienation from a community of care. Active responsibility and involvement of the offender also facilitates learning. The focus on relationships reflects and promotes the community-building value of public schools.

A focus on relationships affects our understanding of how to respond fairly and justly to student misconduct. Even the language we use to describe incidents reflects this understanding, since speaking about a "broken law" is much different than speaking about "people harmed." Restorative justice asks different questions and arrives at different answers about how to respond to wrongdoing and crime. Retributive responses

can sometimes work to secure a desired behavioural change in the short term; however, the payback aspect of retribution, that of punishment for punishment's sake, is more likely to damage relationship bonds that are, in fact, the foundation for healthy student development in schools. Punishment is embedded in parenting structures, school discipline and criminal justice systems, and our culture in general, so a paradigm shift is needed to move parents, educators, and community members toward restorative thinking.

Restorative thinking helps identify elements of school disciplinary interventions that maximize important outcomes, such as healing harm, not re-offending, and being connected. Schools play a central role in building democratic societies and promoting healthy citizens, so it is important that school censuring structures embody democratic ideals and nurture healthy student development. Since schools exist to socialize and educate citizens in a democracy, they must embody the highest ideals and employ best practices for nurturing virtues like freedom, justice and respect. Censuring models that heal harm, and build relationships and school connectedness also align with rights and values embodied in international human rights charters. Schools are in a unique position to educate citizens, and particularly, to promote models of censure that embody restorative practices, models that promote healing, problem-solving, peace-making, and connection to school.

Restorative practices are comprised of restorative values, processes and behaviours. The focus is on issues of hurt and harm (substantive experience of people), whereas formalized justice focuses on a retributive response to law-breaking (conceptual abstraction). School practices are restorative when they reflect values, processes and behaviours like community-building, respectful and truthful dialogue, support for those

harmed, promotion of healing when an offence has occurred (victim, offender, and community), direct involvement and accountability of offenders in the healing process, prevention of future harm, and ultimately, closure and reintegration of all persons as fully-functioning members of the community.

Restorative values guide processes and behaviours which strive for restorative outcomes. For offending students, restorative processes enable them to follow a resolution-restoration sequence: acknowledgement of harm → demonstration of remorse → acceptance and fulfilment of responsibility to repair harm (with necessary support) → closure, forgiveness and reintegration. Schools naturally integrate restorative justice's strong emphasis on social, emotional, and moral learning throughout the school day, using restorative responses to wrongdoing as teaching-learning opportunities. Restorative practices depend on respectful face-to-face dialogue that supports victims, that challenges, supports and teaches offenders, and that builds mutual understanding and relational attachment to the school community.

School censuring practices that build connectedness must be sensitive to the whole child and consider multiple modalities of intervention such as academic, social, emotional, spiritual, and family. Emotional reactions of students were of particular interest in the present research because of the way emotions influence thinking and behaviour. Since censuring experiences like suspension are shame-inducing by nature, the pain and social threat of shame can lead to maladaptive shame reactions like anger, withdrawal, or denial. For these reasons, it is crucial to understand how to manage shame that naturally arises. The qualitative nature of the shame experience in the offender has immediate and future consequences for that person. Shame reactions can be either

adaptive (e.g., contrition and obligation to persons and community) or maladaptive (e.g., denied, by-passed or persistent shame, blame externalization, and violence).

The research approach adapted in this research respected the need to both elicit and manage the shame inherent in the suspension experiences. A safe and comfortable interview setting permitted, encouraged, and enabled students to tell their stories. The facts of their stories were embedded in powerful, often shame-laden emotions. The nature of the interview design and process enabled students to safely expose their emotions in a well-managed and pro-social way. There was a good fit between the research questions (e.g., managing shame and keeping students connected to school) and the overall research approach (i.e., asking students who have been suspended how it affected them).

This research is a field study in the qualitative research tradition, aimed at local, contextualized understanding of causality (e.g., Maxwell, 2004). It asked students to describe how suspensions affect them emotionally, socially, and academically. The specific focus was on how student perceptions and emotional reactions arising from suspension affected their connectedness to school. The vision here is to generate core processes, behaviours, and value-orientations vital to effective censuring responses in schools. School censuring practices are effective when they maintain and promote school connectedness, and when they respond to well-established notions of justice, such as reparation to the victim. The purpose was to construct a restorative template for designing, implementing, and evaluating restorative school discipline interventions in the aftermath of student offences - school responses that enhance student-offender connectedness to school and inhibit disconnection. The overall school discipline model proposed in this thesis is a three-tiered approach to restorative school discipline: the

derived restorative intervention template is sandwiched between a whole-school cultural model for promoting positive behaviour, and individual restorative practitioner skills for adults and students. I do not claim novelty or originality for the three-tiered model, but have emphasized the top and bottom tiers of this model so that the restorative template, the actual result of the present research, is contextualized in a useful format.

The template functions to more consistently and comprehensively implement restorative justice in school discipline by allowing practitioners to look at the different themes and evaluate how to move conflict toward resolution, healing, and reintegration. An ideally restorative template would be comprised of themes representing essential elements of fully restorative interventions. The utility of a template lies in its simplicity and its flexibility, so that a small number of themes can be applied creatively in varied contexts, depending on situational factors such as cultural backdrop, severity of wrongdoing, formality of process, and so on.

But the template is not a catch-all. Restorative competencies also include the process of educating participants about restorative justice. That means pre-meetings where participants consent to values and processes of restorative justice. For instance, in a pre-meeting, a facilitator would educate the offender on the values, processes, and desired outcomes of restorative justice. Care is taken with all participants to ensure that all parties consent to rules like speaking respectfully and truthfully. Restorative justice thinking is built on a meta-value of community-building that incorporates values like respect, honesty, trust, humility, sharing, inclusivity, empathy, courage, forgiveness, and love (Pranis, Stuart, & Wedge, 2003). Larger, more formalized restorative conferences would have certain structures built in, such as pre-conferencing agreements that apply not

only to the restorative conference, but also to subsequent fulfillment of obligation, and eventual closure.

The present research is typical of reflective practitioner research in educational settings because it springs from a practical need for better discipline procedures in schools. What is practical in this context is a response to wrongdoing that has lasting positive effects. It might take more time and effort for educators to implement restorative interventions (although often not), but the potential for community-building around values like respect, honesty, and forgiveness far surpasses any lasting positive outcomes that might accrue from punitive interventions like suspension. The reflective practitioner model in education is concerned with the effective application of knowledge. In the case of school discipline, we know that talking to kids and helping them feel that they have value and they belong is more useful than suspending and expelling them. The restorative justice template makes a useful contribution to the literature by applying restorative justice theory to school settings in a simple, flexible format. It is a form of application research, the use of knowledge in novel ways and diverse settings (Halpern, Smothergill, & Allen, 1998). Based on the following background knowledge and processes, it makes a valid scholarly contribution as application scholarship in a school setting: the author's own training and grounding in counselling psychology and restorative justice practices; innovation in the design of a restorative discipline template; replicable procedures; documentation; ongoing review by the research team; potential for effective implementation of the research outcomes in schools practicing restorative justice.

The current research contributes in a valuable way to the restorative justice literature by applying restorative justice thinking in novel ways in a school setting.

Implementation of a condensed set of fundamental restorative justice themes in a school setting fills a large gap in the literature. A practical, flexible restorative school practices template is either hard to find in the literature, or not currently available in widely accessed social science databases. The current research bridges that gap by providing a basis for designing, implementing, and evaluating restorative interventions. The template is practical because it has been condensed to a one-page diagrammatical format with non-technical language. It provides clear guidance by orienting the restorative practitioner around core restorative themes.

The restorative template is intended to facilitate meaningful communication with offending students, so they understand, accept and respond appropriately to effects of their behaviour on others. Students found the themes that comprise the template more meaningful and effective than retributive measures (i.e., consequences, punishments, one-way adult-to-child discourse). Restorative discipline practices were unanimously supported by student participants in this research. The template counteracts systemic resistance to restorative interventions based on concerns that restorative justice is unrealistic, impractical, too resource-intensive, or that youth should simply learn from their punitive consequence (e.g., suspension), pull up their bootstraps, and behave better in the future. Unfortunately, research on school discipline finds punitive consequences predictive of student failure, poor health, and troubles with the law.

The best place for kids is in school where they have good relationships with peers and caring adults. The intended fruit of this research is that when students offend they can learn from their mistake in a safe, respectful space where they can participate in horizontal dialogue with the victim and community members. This encourages

remorseful contrition, and the opportunity for apology, restitution, closure, and reintegration into the school community. It is flexible in its adaptability to a wide variety of restorative justice settings, ranging from minor classroom infractions to serious criminal action. The practicality and flexibility of the restorative template counteract systemic institutional resistance to restorative justice. Finally, it ought to reduce numbers of suspensions, encourage school connectedness, and inhibit disconnection for students who experience school discipline.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review represents a flow of thought relating to three general areas of inquiry that inform restorative practices in school discipline. The first section describes school discipline practices and speculates on the differential effects of retributive versus restorative discipline models in influencing the nature and degree of student connectedness to school. The second part of the review examines restorative justice theory, reviews the efficacy of some restorative justice programs, and proposes a definition to guide restorative justice practices. The final section integrates theories of shame and emotion with restorative justice theory to suggest how school discipline interventions (e.g., suspensions and other censuring practices) can heal harm, restore offenders, and promote connectedness. Each of these areas of inquiry informs a three-tiered restorative school practices model: (1) universal, pro-active, coordinated whole-school strategies for building healthy and virtuous school culture; (2) a reactive discipline intervention model built around core restorative practice themes (i.e., the central focus of this thesis); and (3) restorative skill-sets for professionals, students, and other members of the school community.

Restorative School Discipline Practices and School Connectedness

General agreement exists that whole-school approaches that focus on school climate most effectively reduce all forms of aggression in schools (Greene, 2006). These social-ecological approaches involve key stakeholders and target interventions at individuals, classrooms, schools, and communities. The importance of school culture and community-member involvement aligns closely with the heart of this thesis: how schools

build relational connectedness and a caring community in the ways they respond to harm and wrongdoing.

I have worked in three schools using a Positive Behaviour Supports (PBS), whole-school approach to shaping behaviour (Horner & Sugai, 2000). My current school demonstrates how restorative practices integrate well with whole-school approaches to behaviour (i.e., PBS) and moral education (i.e., The Virtues Project; Kavelin-Popov, 2000) to support moral learning and promote healthy, positive student behaviour, and minimize the impact of negative behaviour. This strategic integration offers potential to help not only the most "at risk" students stay connected to school, but also to influence all students through virtuous and restorative practices in the classroom and other school settings. Restorative practices particularly complement proactive whole-school behaviour systems when schools have to react to wrongdoing. While the focus in this research is on reactive restorative practices built on a thematic template, it is critical that the template be situated in a positive, pro-active model that promotes desirable pro-social behaviour. Schools have often neglected both the pro-active and reactive aspects of positive discipline. As in the criminal justice system, schools have relied heavily on retributive reactions to wrongdoing, opting not infrequently for punishment (Skiba & Peterson, 2003).

Schools use punishment as a control strategy despite research that demonstrates punishment of students to be counter-productive (Skiba & Peterson, 2003). Much discussion has been made of harsh and punitive "zero tolerance" policies with respect to behaviours related to drugs, violence and other infractions. A Harvard Law School study (The Civil Rights Project, 2000) concluded that zero tolerance policies in U.S. schools

alienate children from the education system, and systematically discriminate against minority and special education students. Punitive responses like suspension and expulsion provide no opportunities to meet the developmental need of building strong, trusting relationships with adults, and encourage delinquency by providing too much unstructured free time. Students learn little about fairness and justice, they fall behind academically, and often fail and drop out of school. Many are eventually incarcerated and criminally charged.

In the same Harvard study (The Civil Rights Project, 2000), administrators who set a standard that children only be suspended under extreme circumstances had schools with the fewest suspensions and the most positive learning environment. Administrators agreed that good teaching practice and classroom management reduce disruptive behaviour and improve learning. Safe schools with low numbers of suspensions and high achievement tend to create opportunities to develop teacher-student relationships, provide classroom management training for teachers, clearly establish and communicate conduct codes, and practice future-oriented, preventative discipline (Morrison, 2007).

School suspensions as disciplinary interventions. Detentions and suspensions have been identified as the most frequently imposed forms of disciplinary interventions in schools (Skiba, Peterson, & Williams, 1997; Skiba & Peterson, 2003). However, these same researchers noted a paucity of research to validate the efficacy of current discipline practices, and hypothesized that punitive approaches may create a coercive cycle that increases likelihood of disruptive behaviour (Skiba et al., 1997). Suspension has been linked to school dropout; in one study, 31% of high school dropouts were previously suspended (Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack & Rock, 1987).

One literature review showed that frequent causes of office referrals and suspensions include aggression, disrespect, non-compliance, defiance, general disruption, truancy and tardiness (Skiba et al., 1997). Aggression was the most common reason for suspension in 10 U.S. states, and 42% of suspended students had been previously suspended (Costenbader & Markson, 1994). In a sample of 19 U.S. middle schools (N = 11, 000), 42% of students referred to the office had a previous discipline record (average 3.77 referrals in a year), while 59% of students received no office referral during the school year (Skiba et al., 1997). Insubordination and non-compliance were the most common reasons for disciplinary referrals in the middle school sample. Data revealed a systematic bias against some groups: Native American and Afro-American, low-socio-economic status, emotionally handicapped, learning disabled, mildly mentally handicapped. A large body of research literature on discipline in U.S. schools identifies disproportionate disciplinary consequences for racial minorities, males, and low socio-economic status (Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002).

Disproportionate disciplinary consequences for special needs students are doubly unjust since unmet learning needs constitute a setting event for student frustration that leads to misconduct. Students get caught in a pernicious cycle of unmet needs leading to misbehaviour, followed by punitive discipline, negative experience of school, alienation, decrease in self-esteem, further delinquent behaviour, and more disciplinary sanctions (Morrison & D'Incau, 1997; Skiba & Peterson, 1999).

Out-of-school suspension is one of the most commonly used disciplinary sanctions, particularly for fighting or physical aggression, but is not uncommonly given for relatively minor disciplinary infractions such as disobedience and disrespect,

attendance problems, and general disruption (Morrison & Skiba, 2001). However, suspensions have not proven effective (Sugai & Horner, 1999), and may be counterproductive because they remove the youth from supportive learning environments. Suspension for truancy or tardiness is not a logical consequence, especially when parents are responsible for poor student attendance.

Several studies of in-school suspensions cited by Morrison, Anthony, Storino, and Dillon (2001) provide demographics of students, and the types of their offences, but offer little information about the effectiveness of this practice for particular types of students. In-school suspensions provide the obvious benefit of supervision and limit-setting for students, while also providing opportunity for meeting academic, social and emotional needs. In one study, students experiencing discipline interventions also had academic and social deficits (Morgan-D'atrio, Northup, LaFleur, & Spera, 1996), while in another study, more severe disciplinary action was associated with greater socio-emotional impairment (Costenbader & Markson, 1994). Severe, punitive consequences appear counter-productive for students already disadvantaged and at-risk of failure. Delinquent students need academic support and encouragement, along with skills to effectively cope with stress and conflict. Endorsement of delinquent behaviours and rebelliousness predict future delinquency and conduct disorder (Hawkins & Lishner, 1987; Morrison et al., 2001).

Risk factors suggested by other studies include family management problems, early onset of behavioural problems, academic failure, cognitive deficits, low commitment to school, association with anti-social peers, and hyperactivity (Morrison et al., 2001). Students referred to the office tended to be "repeat offenders" with academic

problems, low optimism for the future, and a history of family conflicts (Morrison et al., 2001). The latter authors cite several studies that identified protective factors that mitigate risk factors: strong attachment to parents, strong external support system, academic success, pro-social orientation, school-bonding, and pro-social skills. These results suggest that academic success and connection to school are both protective factors and barometers of student health and well-being.

Alternatives to punishment. School disciplinary practices have historically mirrored retributive elements of the criminal justice system, simply replacing jail time and fines for lawbreaking with corporal punishment, scolding, isolation and deprivation, detentions, suspensions, expulsions, and other punitive measures. Restorative school practices seek to redress harm and hurt to persons and community rather than punish students for rule-breaking. A restorative process engages participants in moral dialogue about consequences of wrongdoing, framed as harm to people, and it appeals to inherent goodness and dignity of offenders, victims, and communities. Restorative processes encourage admission of wrongdoing, contrition, reparation, and apology. Along with proactive approaches to building healthy, just, and restorative school culture (Hopkins, 2004), restorative processes also educate participants and the wider community to distinguish accepted norms of behaviour from wrongful acts (Braithwaite & Braithwaite, 2001).

One broad social function in censuring activities is that of educating the community about right and wrong behaviour (Hopkins, 2004; Morrison, 2007). Schools can and ought to embody a meta-value of community-building, a rubric encompassing shared values like respect, fairness, and kindness that can appeal to international

standards of human rights to protect community members and promote desirable behaviours (Greene, 2006). Restorative responses to wrongdoing redress harm to victims, require accountability and redress by offenders, and actively involve community members in ways that address the human rights and educational needs of students and other community members.

Restorative justice in schools. The phrase "restorative practice" is more fitting language for school usage than "restorative justice," since the word "practice" fits with common school parlance and avoids punitive connotations of the word "justice" (Restorative Action, 2004). Restorative practices are foundational to conflict resolution and peer mediation in schools. Sweeney and Carruthers (1996) reviewed the history, philosophy, theory, and educational aspects of conflict resolution, a process analogous to restorative justice in that both seek respectful, consensus-based resolutions through reasoned dialogue and internally-based motivation. Conflict resolution, restorative justice, and reintegrative shame management also align with the internal motivation of choice theory (Glasser, 1998), in contrast to external control psychology typified in punitive school behaviour sanctions. It is intuitive that where students exercise meaningful choice and can have their needs met, they will be more receptive to acknowledging their wrongdoing and fulfilling their obligations to individuals and community. In everyday language of schools, they are more likely to "own their behaviour" and to "buy in" to school interventions.

Restorative justice approaches have been introduced widely in schools in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia, although empirical evaluations of such programs are limited (Morrison et al., 2005). However, two large

reviews of school-based restorative justice programs in the United Kingdom have shown promising results. Recently published books on whole-school approaches to restorative school practices have provided a condensation of current best practices in a useful and accessible format for schools (Hopkins, 2004; Morrison, 2007).

The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales began a pilot restorative justice project in 2000 in London which was subsequently extended across England and Wales for three more years (Wilcox & Hoyle, 2004). Twenty-six Youth Offending Teams (YOTs: 20 secondary and six primary) each took a different approach to development of restorative practices in their respective schools. The restorative interventions focussed on three areas: interagency cooperation in restorative conferences, restorative skill development for school staff, and peer mediation. The program goals were to reduce offending, bullying and victimization, and to improve attendance. A baseline survey and a follow-up survey were conducted that included contextual data and performance data (e.g., exclusions, attendance, and number of restorative conferences). All Year 7 and 9 students in participating schools were surveyed regarding levels of bullying, victimization, safety, and effectiveness of school interventions. The same surveys were given to students in non-restorative justice program schools as a cross comparison to help identify effects of the restorative justice program in participating schools. Staff surveys provided data regarding pupil behaviour, exclusions, and teaching time lost to poor behaviour. A total of 538 conference participants were interviewed and 166 gave follow-up interviews. Key stakeholder interviews were analysed according to emergent themes.

Results of the England and Wales study showed promise for restorative interventions (Wilcox & Hoyle, 2004). Ninety-two percent of conferences resulted in an

agreement in the form of apologies, repaired relationships, and stopping the offending behaviour, while only six percent failed to reach a satisfactory agreement. Where follow-up interviews were conducted, 96% of agreements made had been upheld. Eighty-nine percent of students stated their satisfaction with the outcome, and 93% said they thought the process was fair and justice had been done. Evidence existed that showed offenders gained a better understanding of the effects of their behaviour, and that victims were empowered to assert themselves regarding offensive bullying behaviour. There were, however, no statistically significant differences between the baseline and follow-up levels of bullying and victimization between restorative program participating schools and non-participating schools. Results were stronger in schools that had more time to implement restorative programs. Teacher surveys indicated a significant improvement in student behaviour in program participant schools. Many positive comments were made about peer mediation and circle time (e.g., class meetings) to settle lower level student conflicts. However, conferences had no discernable effects on the numbers of exclusions (i.e., suspensions) for a variety of reasons, but particularly since many schools used conferences to reintegrate offending students post-exclusion.

One other comprehensive study on the effects of restorative practices in schools was conducted by the Scottish Executive via a collaborative effort with researchers from the University of Edinburgh and the University of Glasgow (Kane et al., 2007). This research began with a 30-month pilot project in 2004 to implement restorative practices in three Local Authorities (akin to School Districts) and was subsequently extended until 2008. The findings reported here come from the executive summary of the collaborative findings from the first two years of restorative practices implementation in 18 of the pilot

schools. The Scottish study gave considerable thought to defining important values and processes that underpin restorative practices, such as: positive social relationships and mutual engagement; responsibility and accountability for one's actions and their effects on others; respecting others views and feelings; empathy, fairness, and commitment to equitable process; active involvement of stakeholders; and willingness to engage in opportunities for change. The Scottish Executive also focussed on the variety of restoratives strategies, such as: ethos building; prevention curriculum; restorative language, scripts, enquiry, and conversation; and a variety of meeting formats, including mediation, circles, informal and formal conferences. The objectives of the report were to: identify effective staff training and support; integrate restorative practices into curriculum; analyse ways participants (school staff, students, parents) respond to restorative interventions and identify conditions that produce beneficial outcomes; identify characteristics of schools and staff that contribute to positive or negative outcomes; and identify support required from local authorities to effectively promote and implement restorative practices. Data collection took a variety of forms: individual and group interviews with students; school staff survey; observations of meetings, activities and lessons; analysis of school and local authority policies; various school-based meetings; analysis of national and school statistical data; and focus group meetings with school and local authority staff. Evaluation of restorative practices addressed two major themes: development of restorative practices in pilot schools; and perception of restorative practices by participants.

Some of the general results from primary schools in the Scottish study were that restorative practices acted as a 'glue' to integrate a variety of compatible programs already

in place, that there was strong evidence for restorative language and ethos and positive cultural change (e.g., calmer), that students thought staff were fair and listened to both sides of the story, and that students were generally more positive about their school experience (Kane et al., 2007). Staff reported comfort using restorative practices language and an improvement in staff morale. Of particular relevance to the present research were the following: improved attainment; and a decrease in exclusions and in-school and out-of-school discipline referrals, although these reductions could not be solely attributed to the restorative practices programs. There was clear evidence of children developing conflict resolution skills.

Scottish secondary schools participating in the restorative practices implementation also reported promising findings (Kane et al., 2007): some staff and some departments adopted restorative language, conversations, and strategies; some staff indicated significant change in classroom climate; most schools implemented restorative meetings to resolve conflict between students and between students and staff; several schools were developing restorative practice skill-sets in students via buddying and anti-bullying initiatives; some schools developed formalized restorative conferencing structures that involved students, parents, and staff to generate restorative outcomes. Secondary schools had more diverse approaches to implementation of restorative practices that generally reflected the degree of readiness to adopt restorative practices. Schools with more resistant staff adopted more modest, smaller-scale approaches, whereas schools with an ethos (i.e., school climate and culture) that was already very positive were more likely to integrate restorative practices more broadly and in a way that complemented existing practices. Secondary school implementation focussed more on

reactive aspects of restorative justice that respond to discipline issues. An important aspect of this implementation dealt with challenging deeply held beliefs about authority and discipline, such as the need to punish. Overall, primary schools were more able to develop restorative practices in ways that integrated with the overall school culture, but that also made research isolating the effects of restorative practices more difficult.

Key findings of the Scottish study across schools were as follows: evidence of school change; mainly positive views from staff; most staff and students familiar with restorative ideas; positive outcomes; improved relationships; students feeling listened to; integration into culture and curriculum of the schools; focus on values, strategies, and processes; clear impact on school climate and discipline (Kane et al., 2007). However, for secondary schools, the study did not provide clear evidence that restorative practices reduce exclusions, improve achievement, or make students feel safer, happier, and more connected to school.

A number of school districts in British Columbia have implemented restorative approaches to school-based conflict, such as the Restitution program in Saanich (MacGregor, 2003), and the Restorative Action program in Langley (Bargen, 2003). The Fraser Region Community Justice Initiatives and the School District No. 35 (Langley) (2006) have developed extensive curricula for both secondary and elementary school settings. The secondary program includes a trainer's guide and videos, and has an accompanying student workbook. The elementary school program has a teacher's guide with reproducible pages for use in school settings. The Scottish study quoted above has an extensive annotated resource section to assist restorative practices implementation (Kane et al., 2007). The New Zealand Institute of Policy Studies and Office of the

Children's Commissioner have developed a guide to restorative practices in schools (Buckley and Maxwell, 2007). Stutzman and Mullet (2005) have developed an inexpensive and highly usable resource for teaching responsible behaviour and creating caring climates based on restorative practices.

Restorative school practices are described by Hopkins (2002) as a three-tiered pyramid (although not to be confused with the complementary but different "three-tiered model" endorsed in this thesis) with a philosophy and ethos at the base, skills in the middle, and processes at the top of the pyramid. Processes are the formal and informal interventions that aim to repair harm and address the needs of people. The various kinds of interventions, from mediation to healing circles and conferencing, share certain steps: all persons affected in a conflict have a voluntary opportunity to speak about how they have been affected, what they are feeling, and how they would like to see the harm repaired. These processes require certain skills that should be nurtured across the entire school community, skills such as remaining non-judgmental, respecting the perspective of all involved, listening empathically, developing rapport among participants, empowering participants to come up with their own solutions, creative questioning, warmth, compassion, and patience. The grounding of these skills is an "underlying ethos that encompasses the values of respect, openness, empowerment, inclusion, tolerance, integrity and congruence" (Hopkins, 2002, p. 145). Congruence ensures that all activity at the school is informed by this ethos, and in particular, a commitment to building, maintaining, and repairing relationships.

Hopkins is a restorative justice advocate and practitioner in the United Kingdom who advocates a broad and flexible model of restorative justice that incorporates various

procedures such as conferencing, mediation, and circles. Hopkins endorses a whole-school model for most effective school improvement, a proactive approach where staff, students, and parents learn and practice restorative skills and processes built on a foundation of valuing relationships and community (Hopkins, 2004; Morrison, 2007; Johnstone, 2002; Morrison et al., 2005). A broad vision incorporates diverse practices such as classroom meetings, peer mediation, peace-making circles, and other forms of healing dialogue and interaction. Reactive practices fall on a continuum that ranges from formal (e.g., restorative conferences) to informal (e.g., classroom, playground, and corridor conferences) (Wachtel & McCold, 2001). Hopkins' (2002) extension and integration of Zehr's (1995) work in school settings has been further adapted in Table 1.

School connectedness. School connectedness measures a student's relational attachment to school. A large U.S. adolescent health study (Blum, McNeely, & Rinehart, 2002; McNeely, Nonnemaker, & Blum, 2002) and a study by the McCreary Centre Society in British Columbia (Tonkin, 2005) have determined that student relational connectedness to school has many important health and learning benefits for adolescents, both for the years they spend in school and as they move into adulthood. Students who are connected to school practice healthier, less risky behaviours (e.g., related to substance abuse, violence, and sex). Students with high school connectedness scores are more well-connected socially, more involved in school (Blum et al., 2002), and less emotionally distressed (Tonkin, 2005). Good school connection appears to be a powerful protective factor against many adolescent health risks, and provides youth a significant advantage in the transition to adulthood. Relational connection to school is a worthy end in itself

Table 1

Retributive Versus Restorative Paradigms

Old Paradigm - Retributive	New Paradigm - Restorative
- Misbehaviour defined as breaking school rules	- Misbehaviour defined as harm (emotional, mental, and physical) done to persons and the community.
- Past-oriented. Focus on establishing blame or guilt. What happened? Who did it? What is the punishment?	- Future-oriented. Focus on problem-solving by expressing feelings and needs and exploring how to meet them. Who was harmed? What are their needs? Who is responsible to meet those needs?
- Adversarial relationship and process. Authority figure, with power to decide on penalty, in conflict with the wrongdoer. Vertical power structure and dialogue.	- Dialogue and negotiation. Participants communicate and cooperate with each other. Horizontal power structure and dialogue.

Table 1 (cont.) *Retributive Versus Restorative Paradigms*

Old Paradigm - Retributive	New Paradigm - Restorative
- Imposition of consequences or punishment. Pain or unpleasantness used to punish, deter, prevent.	- Acknowledgement of responsibility for choices. Healing and restoration are priorities. Restitution as a means of restoring both parties.
- Attention to rules and adherence to formal process. Consistency of enforcement is a priority.	- Attention to relationships and achievement of mutually desired outcomes between persons in conflict.
- Conflict and wrongdoing represented as impersonal and abstract: an individual versus the school.	- Conflict and wrongdoing recognized as interpersonal conflicts with opportunity for learning.
- One social injury replaced by another.	- Focus on healing of social injury.

Table 1 (cont.) *Retributive Versus Restorative Paradigms*

Old Paradigm - Retributive	New Paradigm - Restorative
- School community as spectators, represented by staff members.	- School community involved in facilitating restoration. Those affected are taken into consideration and involved in the process. Empowerment.
- Accountability defined as receipt of punishment. Offending student is passive recipient of imposed consequence.	- Accountability defined as understanding and acknowledging the impact of actions. Active taking of responsibility for choices and participation in the reparation of harm.

Note. Descriptions in the columns show how to reframe retributive thinking and to replace it with restorative thinking. Material in this table is adapted from Hopkins, B. (2002). Restorative justice in schools. *Support for Learning, 17*(3), 144-149, adapted from the original work, in Zehr, H. (1995). *Changing lenses: A new focus on crime and justice*. Herald Press: Waterloo, ON.

because it exemplifies the social and community-building values of schools. Moreover, students who are connected to school are healthier. They are more likely to learn and profit from their school experiences, and become happy, productive adult members of society. Development of disciplinary practices that promote school connection and inhibit disconnection makes good sense. It is good educational and public health strategy to develop policies and programs that promote school connectedness. School connectedness was used in this thesis as an indicator of the effectiveness of school suspension practices. Development of the school connectedness measures is taken up in the methods section.

Restorative Justice Theory and Practice

Process-oriented and values-oriented definitions. Restorative justice is more than a theory of criminal justice; it really is a different way of being in the world, a different paradigm based on democratic and humanistic value-orientations of peacemaking and community-building. In his overview of restorative justice for the British Home Office, Tony F. Marshall (1999) acknowledges that there is no universally accepted definition, but offers the following widely accepted and internationally used definition: "Restorative justice is process whereby parties with a stake in the specific offence collectively resolve how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and its implications for the future" (p. 5). It is a rather spare definition, for it says little about core restorative justice values and practices, types of outcomes, or who the various stakeholders are and what justice means for them (Roche, 2001). It also narrows the scope of restorative justice to exclude cases where there is no clear offender, or where interaction between parties is not possible (Roche, 2001).

Process-oriented definitions like Marshall's have given way to definitions that focus on values as well as process (Roche, 2001). Values-oriented definitions help prevent undesirable outcomes, widen the range of cases for which restorative justice is applicable, and distinguish restorative justice from informal community-based interventions (Roche, 2001). Restorative justice processes promote values such as repairing harm by bringing people together in a way that builds mutual empathic understanding, and embody a less punitive approach towards offenders (Roche 2001). But processes alone do not always prevent non-restorative outcomes.

Vaes (2001) distilled core values for a values-based restorative program evaluation tool: respect and dignity; inclusiveness and interconnectedness; fairness; empowerment of all stakeholders; community involvement; victim sensitivity; personal and mutual responsibility; cultural sensitivity (a broad notion of culture, beyond race and ethnicity, that includes factors such as age, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and mental or physical disability); harmony and balance. Roche (2001) lists other values: participation, deliberation, mercy, forgiveness, and reintegration of offenders and victims into their communities, but notes that mercy and forgiveness can only be offered by the victim and not demanded or expected. This corroborates my restorative work in schools, where a space for mercy and forgiveness can be created, and where apology is invited, but not coerced.

Braithwaite (2002) advocates a broad value-base embodied in documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He views restorative justice in the context of social movement politics, with potential to reform not only criminal justice systems, but also deeply entrenched societal inequities. A value-based approach drawing on

international consensus-derived values prevents subjectivity regarding what constitutes "healing harm" and prevents non-restorative outcomes (Roche, 2001). Therefore, evaluation of the restorativeness of a program would depend on the basis of the evaluation, whether on process, or values, or both.

The present research is grounded in both process and values. The following working definition used in this thesis was adapted from Vaes (2001):

> "Restorative justice is a consensus-based, community-building process that is primarily oriented toward doing justice - by repairing the harm that victims and community have suffered through a conflict, including criminal conflict, and by reintegrating the offender in the community."

This definition also retains core values of harm reparation, community-building, inclusiveness, and restoration. The word "justice" and the phrases "consensus-based" and "community-building" promote values enumerated by Vaes (2001), Roche (2001) and others, such as respect, fairness, and mutual responsibility. The definition preserves process- and value-orientations central to restorative justice, and deals with the critical aspect of what happens to the offender.

Restorative theory and practice in criminal justice. Alternative measures such as restorative justice complement criminal justice systems in many Western countries, including Canada, England and several other European countries, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, the United States, and Japan (Hughes & Mossman, 2001). Restorative justice conceives of crime and wrongdoing as acts that harm people, rather than simply a violation of the law (Latimer, Dowden & Muise, 2001).

Howard Zehr (1995, pp. 65-66) outlines assumptions in retributive models of justice: "Guilt must be fixed; the guilty must get their just deserts; just deserts require the infliction of pain; justice is measured by the process; the breaking of the law defines the offence." Blame-fixing focuses on the past with questions like, "What happened?," "Who did it?," and "What should their punishment be?" A disconnect often occurs between the actual experience of the crime for the victim and offender, and the abstracted charge in the criminal justice system. There are no degrees of guilt, it is dichotomous, and one is either guilty or not guilty.

Restorative responses to crime consider context and place primacy on healing harm to people and relationships. For this reason, restorative practices require direct involvement of persons most directly involved in a crime. Marshall (1999) offers these foundational principles: personal involvement of those concerned (victims, offenders, families, community members); crime viewed in its social context; forward-looking and problem-solving oriented; and flexibility of practice. He states that the purposes of restorative justice are: to attend to the victim's needs (e.g., emotional, financial, material, social); to prevent re-occurrence through reintegration of the offender into society; to enable offenders to take active responsibility for their actions; to engage the community to support victim and offender and prevent crime; and, to avoid escalation of costs and delays in the legal justice system.

Certain preconditions are operative if restorative justice is going to work: truth-telling, offender acknowledgement of harm caused and responsibility to redress harm, and willingness to openly and honestly discuss the effect of offender actions with the victim and other affected community members (Latimer et al., 2001). Restorative justice

is largely about creating safe and respectful spaces for the cultivation of emotions that create opportunity for healing and change. Certain emotional dispositions like contrition, remorse, and moral obligation are the fertile ground where healing, reparation and reintegration can take root. Restorative justice can be beneficial for both victim and offender because it emphasizes "recovery of the victim through redress, vindication and healing, and by encouraging recompense by the offender through reparation, fair treatment and habilitation" (Van Ness & Strong, 1997; as cited in Latimer et al., 2001, p. 7). The offender does something positive and pro-social in the process, which ought to better to encourage healthy pride and self-esteem than would incarceration or other forms of punishment.

Empirical evidence for the effectiveness of restorative justice. A growing body of research over the last two decades has shown restorative justice to be more effective than retributive, formal justice on a number of evaluative indices. Studies from Australia and North America have demonstrated that restorative justice programs can significantly reduce recidivism. A meta-analysis of previous research on restorative practices in North American criminal justice systems found restorative approaches to be more effective than retributive approaches at preventing recurrence of offences, increasing restitution compliance, and increasing satisfaction with the justice process for both victim and offender (Latimer et al., 2001). A meta-analysis of victim-offender mediation in 21 service sites in the U.S. found participation in the mediation program associated with a 34 percent reduction in juvenile recidivism (Bradshaw, Roseborough, & Umbreit, 2006).

A New South Wales study that compared court versus restorative conferencing noted a 15 - 20 percent reduction in recidivism for conferencing across different offences,

regardless of gender, criminal history, age, and aboriginality (Luke & Lind, 2002). Another study compared recidivism rates for Australian offenders randomly allocated to court versus restorative conferencing, and while they found little difference between interventions for young property offenders and a 6% increase in recidivism for drink-drivers, there was a 38% decrease for young violent offenders who experienced the conferencing option (Sherman, Strang, & Woods, 2000). The authors proposed that restorative justice affects offenders differently based on the nature of the offence, which influences the emotional climate and the perception of legitimacy of legal intervention via either court or conferencing.

Extrapolating empirical data regarding effectiveness of restorative justice to a school setting, they imply that restorative practices in schools could result in less undesirable behaviour and greater pro-social resolution of conflict. Results also suggest that students will perceive suspensions and other censuring interventions as more legitimate when they take into account various personal and contextual factors related to the conflict. Though empirical research on school-based restorative practices is sparse, these and many other promising results in offender programs recommend restorative discipline models for schools.

The Role of Shame and Emotion in the Censuring of Students

Principles of censure. There is a connection between how society censures criminals and how it censures its students because both levels of community share similar concerns. The fundamental concerns of a system of criminal censure are summarized by Brunk (2001). First, the justice system should protect citizens from harm. Secondly, offenders should get what they deserve, their “just deserts”, and the punishment should fit

the crime. Thirdly, the system should redress the injustice done by requiring offenders to 'pay' for their wrongdoing. A fourth, but less influential concern, is that the form of censure used should not make the offender a 'worse' person, but ideally should make him a better person. Translating these four concerns to a school system, censure of harmful acts would keep school safe, hold students accountable for their behaviour, ensure offending students make reparation, and would accept, support and educate the offending student.

A central question in a restorative process is what enables an offender to admit fault, accept responsibility, and be accountable to victim(s) and the community. What are key ingredients of restorative practices, and what are the internal cognitive and emotional processes that help move an offender toward acceptance of responsibility and away from unproductive alternatives, like ambivalence, recalcitrance, denial, and externalized blame and anger? Reintegrative shaming theory (Braithwaite, 1989) explains how the quality and intensity of shame-related emotions experienced by offenders in censuring rituals affects outcomes for victims, offenders, and communities with respect to safety, accountability, reparation, and reintegration.

Reintegrative shaming theory. Reintegrative shaming theory states that societies that effectively communicate the shamefulness of crime will have lower rates of crime (Braithwaite, 1989). Bullying continues in the playground until the school community confronts the bullying, white-collar crime is more likely if the deceit is considered cunning business acumen, and racial discrimination endures where its injustice remains culturally acceptable and unchallenged (Braithwaite, 2000b). Conversely, where there is moral clarity in the community about what behaviours are wrong and harmful, such

behaviours are not as likely to occur. In some cases, persons refrain from wrongful behaviour because of the risk of being caught. But more often than not, says Braithwaite, persons will avoid wrongful behaviour because the shamefulness of the behaviour is well understood in the community. People refrain from murder not because of the risk of what will happen if they are caught, but because the wrongfulness of it is well understood - it is not even deliberated because it is unthinkable (Braithwaite & Braithwaite, 2001). This reasoning strongly supports implementation of school-wide programs that teach, model, praise and reward virtuous behaviour, such as the previously mentioned PBS and The Virtues Project.

Early conceptions of Braithwaite's theory perhaps over-emphasized the role of shame at the expense of integration of concepts from positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), such as the influence of pride (Nathanson, 1992) and empathy (Harris, 2003), and positive resilience characteristics in people (Morrison, Brown, D'Incau, O'Farrell & Furlong, 2006). There is also a problem with the language of "shaming," since it implies doing intentional harm, something not congruent with restorative justice philosophy.

Theories of shame. Nathanson's (1992) theory of emotion explains the biological basis for affect, feelings and emotions, and the fundamental role of shame in behaviour and social regulation. Nathanson describes the ubiquitous nature and inevitability of shame throughout life, and the way humans cope defensively with it on the "compass of shame," a graphic that represents four basic, defensive shame-management themes: avoidance, withdrawal, attack-other, and attack-self. His theory describes two major groups of responses to shame experiences: a*cceptance*, where a person takes ownership,

learns from the experience, and chooses to personally grow from it; versus *defence*, where a person manages painful, threatening shame on one or more poles of the compass of shame. Nathanson spends little time discussing acceptance, however, because defensiveness is so much more common in humans. This suggests that shame management techniques must recognize the truism that shame is a by-product of simply calling attention to a wrongdoing, whether by formal or informal process. The shame experience in the offender is not required for a restorative process and outcome; however, it is highly likely that people will experience shame-related emotions when attention is drawn to the wrongful act. Some work on shame suggests that while the focus is on censuring the act in restorative justice, the experience of the offender may be a shame-guilt complex where guilt (feelings about the act) and shame (feelings about the self) are somewhat conflated (e.g., Harris, 2001, shame-guilt factor). Persons who censure offenders' actions and victims who participate in censuring processes are likely to respond positively (at least in some cultures) to offenders who make gestures of contrition, or voluntary acceptance of shame.

By integrating the two theories of shame (i.e., Braithwaite's and Nathanson's), one would build censuring processes that enable the offender to *accept* responsibility for his wrong actions without maladaptive shame responses characteristic of the compass poles. Where defensiveness occurs, it needs to be managed on the "attack self" pole, so that the offender can voluntarily experience shame at lower levels that do not trigger excessively defensive shame reactions. It is empathic attunement of participants (victim, offender, community members) in a restorative process that can help the offender transcend the shame, and transform it into something healing and growth-inducing (Nathanson, 1997).

Since it is unlikely that offenders regularly demonstrate perfect *acceptance* reactions in shame-laden environments characteristic of censuring processes, empathic attunement is the mutative shame management force that can rescue offenders from their *defensive* shame reactions. Empathic attunement can pluck the offender from the shame-laden environment of the "attack self" pole, so the offender is not overwhelmed and incapacitated by shame, but rather, can effect a resolution-restoration sequence, as follows: admit fault, experience regret and remorse, take responsibility, make reparation, offer apology, and accept closure and forgiveness. The *act* is shamed, but the *actor*, the offender, is accepted, supported, and cared for by the community.

An effective approach to school censuring would mitigate maladaptive shame reactions in students, engender their adaptive shame responses (e.g., remorse, reparation, empathy), and promote and exploit their resilience traits (e.g., academic success, pride, self-esteem). Administrators and teachers need to understand shame and other emotions when students are censured so they can respond appropriately to students, offenders and victims alike. Sensitivity to emotional needs of students facilitates healing and learning for students, prevents re-occurrence of offensive behaviour, and builds healthy relationships.

Retzinger and Scheff (2000) have developed an anthropology of shame experience and expression that can help parties in a conflict "save face." Awareness of verbal, paralinguistic, and visual indicators of shame can help a skilled facilitator prevent escalation of shame in interactions. Apart from the diverse lexicon of shame-related words, there are paralinguistic cues like hesitation, mumbling or stammering. Visual cues of shame include face covering, gaze aversion, blushing, biting or licking lips, false

smiling or other masking behaviours. Anger is a typical response to shame, and has its own set of cues. This knowledge is part of the skill set of the restorative practitioner because it enables the practitioner to 'read' people and adjust to their changing needs. Restorative school practitioners require great sensitivity to shame experienced by offending students and victims, and need to understand how student reactions are often defences to escape painful shame experiences.

Psychological foundations of restorative justice applied in schools. More theory-building needs to occur to describe the psychological foundations of restorative justice in schools, the cognitive and emotional processes that move an offender toward reconciliation and reintegration. Integration of different theoretical connections increases explanatory power of restorative justice theory, the how and why it works: among them are theories of reactivity and defiance, reintegrative shaming, social identity and procedural justice (Braithwaite, 2002). Such integration suggests a differential framework could operate with respect to the likeliness of connectedness versus disconnectedness that is contingent on the overall school climate. For instance, where schools consistently embody and promote a school culture of community-building and inclusion, healthy relationships, moral education, procedural justice and pride, censured students are more likely to embrace active responsibility and enact the resolution-restoration sequence. Schools lacking in these positive, healthy elements of school community would be much more likely to induce reactivity and defiance in censured students.

Braithwaite (2000a) distinguishes between positive and counter-productive forms of shaming, a term he uses to describe disapproval communicated in formal censuring

procedures and rituals. According to Braithwaite's theory, shaming is re-integrative when an offender is held accountable for harm done to the victim, in a setting where the basic dignity and worthiness of the offender as a person is upheld. The theory explains that transformative shame reactions can occur in offenders in restorative justice processes when the offender faces the victim, hears that person's story, accepts responsibility for a harm done, apologizes, and seeks to repair the wrong. Orientation toward communitarian and human rights values means that restorative justice envisions a community committed to support and restoration of both victim and offender. One notable criticism of the use of the word *shaming* as a verb is the notion of intentional shaming to *induce* shame in an offender, despite the "reintegrative" qualifier (L. Elliott, personal communication, March 17, 2008). Current thinking in restorative justice emphasizes the "empathic attunement" of the community as the mutative force to encourage an adaptive shame reaction (Nathanson, 1997). Empathic attunement implies a communitarian response incongruent with deliberate shaming. There is no need to actually induce shame in the offender, it is a fact of life that shame is induced by the process of confronting the wrongdoing. Empathic responsiveness in the reintegrative process can enable the offender to transcend the shame and respond in an adaptive, growth-oriented way to the confrontation.

Summary, Focus and Importance of this Research

This research asks how suspensions affect students, and how such student experiences affect the quality and degree of their relational connection to school. It asks how the suspension experience will affect student emotions and perceptions of school, and how these internal reactions will affect school connectedness, or student relational attachment to school. School research has validated connection to school as a desirable

outcome because it is a strong predictor of academic success, and of healthy, pro-social behaviours in adolescents. The literature review covered three areas of inquiry related to the implementation of restorative practices in school disciplinary interventions.

First, a review of current school discipline practices showed that punitive discipline interventions like suspension are ineffective and potentially harmful, and might particularly do considerable harm via discriminatory application of suspensions to minority and special education students. Suspensions and other harsh, punitive sanctions also interfere with academic progress and alienate students from their community of care. Restorative practices appear more likely to maintain and promote student connection to school for a variety of reasons: they focus on healing and reintegration; they are founded on principles of fairness, respect, and justice; they are democratic, consensus-based, and dialogical; they consider contextual and personal factors; they shame the action, not the actor; and they uphold the view of the offender as basically a good person.

In the second section, a working definition of restorative justice was proposed as a guiding framework for developing restorative school practices. Restorative justice alternatives to adversarial and retributive criminal proceedings were described as more effective on a number of measures, like reduced recidivism. Restorative practices are currently employed in numerous school districts around the world and across British Columbia, including the author's home school district. The effectiveness of restorative justice in criminal settings bodes well for effective application of restorative discipline practices in school settings that focus on community-building as a meta-value.

Thirdly, an integration of theories of emotion and shame suggested how school discipline interventions can heal harm, restore offenders, and promote connectedness. An

understanding of shame reactions in offending students in school discipline interventions helps mitigate the negative effects of maladaptive shame reactions, and maximizes the opportunity to induce adaptive shame responses like remorse, acknowledgement, and moral obligation. Emotional understanding also enables a discipline intervention process to encourage self-pride, self-esteem, and empathy in offending students. Each of these areas of inquiry informs a three-tiered approach to restorative practices: (1) universal, pro-active, whole-school approaches to building a healthy school culture and community, (2) a reactive model for designing, implementing, and evaluating restorative interventions, and (3) development of restorative practitioner skills for staff, students, parents, and the broader community. Students ought to remain connected to school when school culture, discipline interventions, and practitioner behaviours are congruent with restorative values and processes.

The current research is important because it contributes to the restorative justice literature in a novel way by listening to the voices of suspended students and by designing an intervention template based on their discipline experiences. The restorative intervention template represents a distillation of core restorative justice concepts comprised of values, process, and behaviours that promote desirable outcomes. It is novel in the sense that there appears to be nothing currently available in the literature that captures fundamental elements of restorative justice in a concise, usable format. Its special contribution is its potential for flexible application in school settings. It can guide a wide range of interventions, from informal hallway conversations to formalized restorative conferences, and can be adapted to different settings (e.g., classrooms, playground, office, secondary and elementary schools). The results of this research also

provide practitioners and advocates of restorative justice a more comprehensive understanding of the meaning and uses of restorative justice, particularly in school settings. Future research could focus more on victim and community needs and roles within the context of fundamental themes such as healing harm and building and maintaining relationships. Different themes might emerge from focusing on victim and community needs and outcomes.

This research was an affirmation of the student-participants' voice in the broader school community. It was about translating that voice of experience in the school discipline system (i.e., suspensions) into a different form of discourse, one that can be condensed and flexibly adapted for different applications. The research makes those voices relevant and potent by applying their insights to improving the restorativeness of schools, by building on the capacity of schools to build community and promote relational attachment of students to school, or school connectedness.

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

Introduction to Methodology

This research is a field study in the qualitative research tradition, aimed at local, contextualized understanding of causality (e.g., Maxwell, 2004). The global methodological approach in this project was that of the reflective practitioner (Smith, 2008; Kinsella, 2007; Duffy, 2007). While the notion of 'reflection' and 'reflective practice' are debated and sometimes ambiguous in the literature (Kinsella, 2007; Duffy, 2007), my own reflective practice in this research can be described in general terms as a process of thinking about what we do as educators, how we do it, and why we do it, with a vision to constantly improve our practice. It is a process that promotes understanding and insight, and that can lead to positive growth and transformation of personal professional practice and of the larger learning system in which we participate (Ottesen, 2007). My own professional organization, the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, references the following understanding of reflective practice from the Center for Support of Teaching and Learning (CSTL, 2005; see Schon, 1990, and Brookfield, 1995):

> Reflective practice involves thinking about and learning from your own practice and from the practices of others so as to gain new perspectives on the dilemmas and contradictions inherent in your educational situation, improve judgment, and increase the probability of taking informed action when situations are complex, unique and uncertain. With ongoing reflection, your practice can develop into a systematic inquiry that begins alone with reflection on your own teaching and learning experiences but becomes collective when informed by your interactions with colleagues, students, and theoretical literature.

Reflective practice embodies deliberate and critical reflection that challenges current values, norms, assumptions, and practices in the educational system (CSTL, 2005). It is a dynamic process of self-reflection in and about our practice (i.e., our tacit knowledge and our explicit, or propositional knowledge; Kinsella, 2007), that integrates our understandings from diverse sources such as collegial interactions, relationships with students, their families, and the community, literature, and other media. It is a process grounded in personal experience and professional expertise that can lead to personal and systemic transformation (CSTL, 2005). Reflective practice might well be described as a dynamic figure-ground spiral, an alternation between theory and practice, and between small scale details and the 'big picture.'

The motivation for this research project grew out of my experiences as a secondary school teacher, when I would often reflect on the utility of suspensions for students, teachers, the school, and the broader community. It seemed to me generally counter-productive to remove students from school when these students would simply have unstructured and unsupervised time away from school, and they would fall behind in their academic progress. Once I became a school counsellor and developed my understanding and skills in restorative justice, it became apparent that restorative approaches to school discipline might be more effective than simply suspending students. Thus the motivation, framing, and methodology of this research grew out of my own experiences, sensibilities, and training as a teacher and school counsellor.

This research began with an impression formed over ten years of teaching secondary school, that schools often alienate rather than connect students by suspending them, and that restorative discipline approaches might work better than suspensions and

other punitive approaches to solve problems and support students. From beginning to end, the research was guided by a multiplicity of influences from the researcher's professional work as a school counsellor and restorative justice practitioner (e.g., restorative process facilitation; consultation with teachers, administrators, and restorative practitioners; Royal Canadian Mounted Police Community Justice Forum training; restorative justice seminars and conferences; and restorative justice literature). The research was also guided by certain values like grace and mercy, peace-making, and relationship-building, and by value-oriented processes such as the respectful, egalitarian dialogue characteristic of the interviews.

The data analysis methodology adapted for this thesis used an approach that approximated data treatment strategies used in grounded theory (cf. Glaser & Holton, 2004). Grounded theory employs the constant comparative method, a systematic method of generating theory from data using deductive, abductive and inductive thinking to generate hypotheses from prominent themes that emerge through a process of immersion in the data. While I did not use a grounded theory methodology *per se*, it did inform my systematic approach to data treatment. Abductive thinking was particularly important, since it involved following hunches and applying intuition and insights gathered over several years of immersion in restorative theory and practice. I tried to avoid pre-conceived data-fitting, while recognizing that my selection of items for the semi-structured interviews with secondary students derived from already well-known themes in restorative justice literature and practice (e.g., previous experiences, seminars, readings, conversations, restorative justice theory). The constant comparative method is a figure-ground cyclical process that began with generating insights (i.e., themes) from the

interview experiences and immersion in the transcript data, followed by continual checking to ensure correspondence between developing themes and transcript data. Many hours over several months were spent refining definitions of themes based on continual checking for fit between the themes and what students actually said in the interviews.

While research participants were asked specifically about their suspension experiences, results generated from this research were always intended to guide a range of school discipline interventions beyond simply suspending students. The research methodology aimed to generate core processes, behaviours, and value-orientations present in effective and restorative school discipline. School discipline is defined here as effective when it both maintains and promotes school connectedness (the relational attachment of students with the school), and when it responds to well-established notions of justice such as reparation to the victim (Brunk, 2001).

Participants

Seven students from an Interior British Columbia school district completed a semi-structured interview (see Appendix A). Six participants were junior secondary school-age, and one participant was a recent graduate who had been suspended two years prior. Four of seven interviewees were male. Five students had been previously suspended several times. Students with multiple suspension experiences focussed primarily on their most recent suspension experience during the interview; however, they also drew upon the totality of their suspension history in some responses to interview items. Table 2 summarizes participant information.

Table 2

Participant Information

Jane	- grade 10 student at time of interview
	- changed schools soon after her 5-day out-of-school suspension for smoking pot in grade 9
	- only student-participant to be somewhat disengaged during the interview
	- one suspension, said she would not do drugs again at school only because she did not want to be suspended, but not because she thought there was anything wrong with it
	- projected a sense of passive acquiescence to her suspension and punishment, but not respectful of the process or exhibiting any real sense of remorse or obligation
Mary	- only student-participant not currently attending school; former student-leader in her school
	- 5-day out-of-school suspension for swearing and gross insubordination; thought suspension was helpful to her
	- had graduated and was out of the school system for one year at the time of the interview
	- one suspension, and had the only "restorative" suspension experience out of all participants

Table 2 (cont.)

Participant Information

Bill
- grade 10 at time of interview, no longer attending school where last suspension occurred
- out-of-school "suspension" several weeks in length during grade 9 for violent fight in a class with another student; required to change schools after lengthy period out of school; co-combatant in fight was not required to change schools, was not suspended and later threatened Bill with violence
- strong sense of having been treated unjustly by school and administrators vis-à-vis suspension/expulsion
- suspended multiple times previously (i.e., ~5 times in grades 8 - 10)
- reported having very strict parents, but that he often intercepted notices (e.g., phone messages and letters) regarding his suspensions, so in some cases his parents never found out that he had even been suspended

Sam
- grade 9 at time of interview, no longer attending school where last suspension occurred
- one-day in-school suspension in grade 8 for standing with students who were smoking pot; suspension was never served by Sam because he left the office and went home, and simply returned to his regular classes the following day
- several previous suspensions in elementary school, mostly for fighting and defiance
- reported fewer behaviour problems and suspensions in secondary school than elementary school

Table 2 (cont.)

Participant Information

Jim - grade 10 at time of interview, no longer attending school where last suspension occurred

- violently attacked another student who had been verbally harassing and threatening him for several months; Jim had reported the harassment to the school counsellor and when the harassment did not stop he decided to settle the matter himself by physically attacking the other student
- one previous suspension
- strong sense of antipathy toward his former school, the school administration, the other boy and the boy's mother; no sense of moral obligation; lingering hatred for the student and the administration and desire to further harm the other student

Bev - grade 9 at time of interview, no longer attending school where last suspension/expulsion occurred

- in grade 8, one 7-day out-of-school suspension for fighting, two in-school suspensions for pot-smoking; finally expelled for pot-smoking and chronic truancy; after expulsion the school called police and had her arrested for being within close proximity to her former school after being ordered to stay off grounds by school administration
- little parental involvement in Bev's life, lived with peers, said her parents didn't really care

Table 2 (cont.)

Participant Information

Bev (cont.)

- at her previous school she attended a circle-type meeting for a previous fighting incident with a female student; administration, staff, police, and parents of the other girl attended, but not Bev's parent; Bev reported that she was publically humiliated in the meeting by her adversary's mother who brought up Bev's personal family history in a degrading way
- Bev strongly disliked the school administrator with whom she had most of her discipline dealings (e.g., she felt he was disrespectful and unfair in the way he dealt with her, and did not listen to her side of the story)

Joe

- grade 9 at time of interview, no longer attending school where last suspension occurred
- suspended 13 times in elementary school and seven times in grade 8; most suspensions were for fighting and violence
- at the suggestion of his parole officer, voluntarily participated in a restorative conference with the elderly couple whose house he had robbed; Joe said he learned a lot about how his actions negatively affected the couple and thought this was good
- did not think suspension was beneficial to him, and expressed antipathy toward the school administrator
- focussed on a suspension/expulsion (not his latest one) when he burned another student with a hot object

An initial recruitment drive over many months resulted in no interviews, and some ethical and practical considerations related to student-participant recruitment are discussed in a separate section below. One student, Jane, was recruited by a second recruitment drive that involved students receiving an informed consent letter from their teacher, whom the researcher had met via telephone, then in person. The teacher then personally met parents in parent-teacher interviews, where she described to them the intent and process of the semi-structured interview, and gave interested parents a copy of the informed consent letter. Interested parents provided a telephone number and gave the teacher verbal permission to allow the researcher to contact the student and parent at home. The researcher then contacted the homes of 13 students and their parents by telephone, from which six interview appointments were arranged. One of the six students came to her scheduled interview, and despite repeated attempts to further contact the other 10 students via telephone, Jane's was the only interview from the second recruitment drive.

One student who had recently graduated from secondary school, Mary, was an adult at the time of the interview and gave her own informed consent after reading and discussing the contents of the informed consent letter. The researcher made Mary's acquaintance through Mary's mother, a teaching colleague. This interview arose more via good fortune and happenstance than by a formally organized recruitment process, but ought rightly to represent a separate third recruitment drive.

In a fourth recruitment drive, five of seven participants first learned about the research project from their teachers, whom the researcher had initially contacted via telephone, then met personally. With teacher permission, the researcher made short,

classroom-based presentations to two groups of secondary students. After the presentations, interested students took home a detailed informed consent letter outlining the intent of the project, the time commitment for students, and issues related to personal safety, confidentiality, and informed consent. Students took home a copy of the informed consent letter to keep for themselves and their parents that encouraged students and parents to contact the researcher or the thesis supervisor for further information or clarification related to the research. Once the above five students and their parent/guardian had signed and returned the informed consent letter, the teacher contacted the researcher and together they set up a mutually agreeable time to conduct the interviews. Interviews were held over two teaching days, a week apart, and during instructional hours, since it would not have been possible to entice the students to give up personal time for an interview. All students were offered a $10.00 movie pass, both as an incentive and as a gesture of appreciation. Students gladly accepted refreshments and most opted to take a break part-way through the interview. Interviews lasted approximately 40 to 60 minutes.

Ethical Considerations in Recruitment and Information Sharing. An initial recruitment attempt in five secondary schools involved sending over 50 informed consent forms home along with a standard, formal suspension letter, yet not one student responded to the invitation to participate. This was the only recruitment method initially sanctioned by school district administration due to stated concerns related to privacy and workload. Administrative workload was raised as a concern, so the process was streamlined to minimize inconvenience for secretarial staff. However, since not a single participant contacted the researcher using this recruitment method, despite dozens of

informed consent/invitation letters being sent home over many months, this was obviously a very poor recruitment strategy.

A second recruitment drive acquired informed consent from 13 students via direct teacher contact with interested parents, and resulted in six interview appointments, yet only a single interview. A third recruitment resulted in the interview with Mary, a secondary school graduate. In the fourth and final recruitment phase, the researcher gave classroom presentations to groups of students, many of whom had previously been suspended. The five interviews resulting from that relatively non-time-intensive process demonstrated that direct researcher contact with students was definitely the most effective recruitment strategy, much more effective than a letter or a telephone call. It is likely that students needed a personal contact with the researcher to assess how *safe* it would be to participate. Interviews were held at the school during instructional time, which was another critical component in motivating students to give up their time for an interview.

Future recruitment efforts attempting to access suspended students would benefit from more coordinated assistance from school personnel. In particular, recruitment efficiency would improve dramatically by allowing researchers access to students to engage them in conversation (e.g., in the hallways and on the grounds during break times). I strongly suspect that more students could have been more readily recruited had the school district allowed the researcher to speak directly to students at break times during the school day. One reviewer of this thesis commented that students might not have wanted to come forward because of a lack of feeling of safety, especially since suspension can be such a negative experience for many students (L. Elliott, personal

communication, March 17, 2008). The recruitment experiences described above suggest that that a warm, caring, and sensitive personal contact with the researcher is essential to break down barriers to student participation (e.g., students who experienced shame and anger in the suspension experience and who would not want to re-live that painful experience). I have chosen to include this reflection at this point in the thesis document for two reasons, one methodological, one related to congruence with restorative justice principles. While discussion of failed recruitment attempts does not help the reader understand the experiences of suspended students, it does reflect that recruitment needs to be congruent with restorative practices (i.e., direct and personal, relational interaction among community members).

Another ethical consideration related to the amount of personal and demographic information provided about student-participants. Given that student-participants had generally very negative suspension experiences, it was not in keeping with the required safety element of the interview process to probe them for a lot of personal demographic information in a 40 - 60 minute semi-structured interview. I have included information on a case by case basis to respect the identity and experiences of participants.

Procedures

This thesis was approved by the Research Ethics Board of Trinity Western University on December 9, 2004 (see Appendix C). A detailed semi-structured interview questionnaire (Appendix A) asked students about their suspensions in regard to topics like the perceived purpose and effectiveness of suspensions. Interviews also invited students to reflect on issues related to suspension such as respect, fairness, feelings, helpfulness, shame and remorse, accountability, academic success, and school

connectedness. Interview questions drew upon numerous professional and personal experiences, and coalesced into relaxed, semi-structured, student-friendly interviews. While restorative justice attends to needs of victims, offenders, and communities alike, the current research focused more narrowly on the experiences of students who had been suspended.

Data Collection: Interview Development and Implementation. The researcher approached the project as a reflective practitioner. Numerous theoretical influences and my personal background in restorative justice determined the selection of questions, the interview process, and the data analysis. For example, reintegrative shaming theory (Braithwaite, 1989; 2002) and Nathanson's (1992) theory of emotion informed questions related to the possible role of shame in student discipline and censure. Several items were adapted from the work of Harris (2001) and Ahmed (2001), whose work on shame-related emotions and shame management appeared in the same book, "Shame Management through Reintegration." A two-dimensional model of school discipline reminiscent of parenting literature (nurturing and support versus limit-setting and control) was adapted from McCold and Wachtel (2003) to determine which discipline models students endorsed. The researcher's Community Justice Forum facilitator training and participation in various restorative conferences and in-service training also influenced item selection. Information regarding the origin of specific questionnaire items is detailed in the index to Appendix A.

A challenge in designing the interview was to include items that enabled students to reflect in detail on their suspension in a way that generated dialogue about important topics like justice, harm, healing, anger, shame, fairness, connection, and many others.

The language used had to be accessible to adolescents, and draw out from students how they were personally affected by their suspension. Item content was influenced by a number of sources from the restorative justice literature. Sharpe's (1998) work on restorative justice values and processes broadly guided the selection of interview items because her work oriented the researcher to concerns of healing harm to victims, direct accountability, and community responsibility. Interview items were selected primarily to highlight important considerations in school interventions, such as cultivating obligation to heal harm, mutual respect, fair process, direct accountability, student development, and student connectedness to school.

The quality of the relationship between the researcher and the student participant was critically important. For students to open up, they needed to feel safe throughout the interview. There was good fit between the respectful, relaxed, horizontal dialogue of interview conversations, and the respectful, egalitarian dialogue characteristic of restorative justice. A reflective practice approach ensured good correspondence between the qualitative methodology (i.e., data collection and analysis) and the question being investigated (Henwood & Pidgeon, 2003). Graduate training in counselling psychology and experience as a school counsellor also provided the researcher a repertoire of skills for establishing a safe space for students to share personal stories and insights.

Students were reassured in the initial recruitment contact and at the start of the interviews that the researcher's interest was not primarily in the details and nature of the offence that led to their suspension. Students understood, rather, that the researcher was interested in the school's reactions to the student, and how these school interventions affected student perceptions, emotions, and connectedness to school. Deliberately shifting

the interview focus away from the student's actions, and onto the school's actions, put students more at ease and encouraged them to speak openly about their suspension experiences. The interview itself was a validating experience for students because the researcher listened intently, respectfully, and non-judgmentally.

Emphasis on the school's actions enabled students to speak comfortably and often critically about actions of administrators and teachers, suspension processes, and how these experiences affected students. A number of factors contributed to a sense of respect and trust shared between the researcher and students, such as meeting at the school, offering students a beverage, taking breaks, adopting a modified adolescent speech register, generating humour and levity, and crafting an informal, relaxed atmosphere with horizontally-oriented dialogue in the interview. Students were generally relaxed and conversant, and typically offered detailed, thoughtful answers to most questions with minimal prompting.

Students were also reassured that there were no "right or wrong" answers, and that, in fact, any answers that reflected their perceptions and feelings were *a priori* correct, simply by virtue of the fact that personal experiences are not subject to the value judgments of others. They were directly encouraged to give genuine responses, and to not give responses influenced by social conformity, or a desire to say something ostensibly acceptable to the interviewer. The seven student interviews provided a rich set of personal narratives about how the suspension process worked, what usefulness (or the reverse) it had, and how it personally affected each student. The fact that the researcher was genuinely interested in their stories seemed to embolden students to talk openly about their often negative suspension experiences. Student interviews were tape recorded,

then carefully transcribed with appended notes to provide nuances in meaning related to paralinguistic speech elements, gestures and expressions, and context.

School connectedness measures. School connectedness was operationalized in this research as a Likert-style score out of 25 points on five interview questions about a student's relationship to school, as pertaining to student feelings of safety, fairness, happiness, being a part of things, and feeling connected. The five questions are listed in Appendix A as questions 43 - 47. The school connectedness construct was borrowed from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (1994-1995) which surveyed over 90,000 adolescents in grades 7 - 12 in over 80 U.S. communities (Blum, McNeely, & Rinehart, 2002; McNeely, Nonnemaker, & Blum, 2002). School connectedness was strongly associated with healthy adolescent behaviours, and negatively associated with behaviours that put adolescent health at risk. Students who felt connected to school were less likely to use substances (cigarettes, marijuana, alcohol), experienced less emotional distress, engaged in less violent and deviant behaviour, and were less likely to become pregnant.

The McCreary Centre Society studied both school connectedness and family connectedness in their study of adolescent health in British Columbia (Tonkin, 2005). School and family connectedness build resilience, and therefore, act as protective factors against multiple risks. Both forms of connectedness were associated with lower likelihood of fighting, being sexually active, attempting suicide, and using marijuana. School and family connectedness is notably lacking in multiple risk-takers, defined as youth that have tried illegal drugs, skipped school in the past month, been in a physical fight in the past year, and seriously considered suicide. This group of youth is also more

likely to be a late adolescent, to have run away from home, to have emotional and health concerns, and to have experienced abuse.

Two related studies considered nine school factors that might affect school connectedness (Blum et al., 2002). Several factors corresponded to high school connectedness: good classroom management (i.e., students and teachers getting along, students completing work and paying attention); racially integrated friendship groups; smaller schools (i.e., < 600 students); schools without harsh and punitive discipline policies; and student participation in extracurricular activities during or after school. Students most connected to school have the most friends and have friends from an array of social groups, while the least connected students are socially isolated with few or no friends at school.

School connectedness was selected for its conceptual congruence with values of restorative justice, democratic institutions, and public schools - values such as respect, caring, fairness, egalitarianism, and community-building. It is intuitively and inherently worthwhile for students to be relationally connected to caring, respectful school communities. Student-participants answered the school connectedness questionnaire items two times, once based on recollection of their feelings before their latest suspension, and once based on their feelings post-suspension. In addition to the five school connectedness items, the researcher also discussed the concept of school connectedness with each student, and directly asked each student to respond in a global way as to whether they felt more or less connected to school as a result of their suspension. Change in school connectedness was used to reflect the restorative quality of the suspension processes experienced by participating students.

Data analysis. Hand-written notes were jotted during transcription and diagrams were routinely scribbled to reflect the researcher's perceptions of developing themes and possible relationships between themes. Early insights coalesced into core themes representing restorative values, processes, and behaviours. Numerous scribbles, revisions, and successive editions led to identification and definition of eleven themes. Themes first coalesced during the interview and transcription process due to the amount and quality of dialogue generated by certain questions and topics, by similarities and differences expressed by students about various aspects of suspension, and by confirmation of abductive hunches grounded in restorative thinking. The process of generating themes resembled a figure-ground process, a cyclical shifting of attention between immersion in the raw data and documentation of new insights as they arose.

By the time all interviews were transcribed, 11 themes had emerged from reflection and note-taking. Scribbled notes represented first editions of thematic definitions. Codes were assigned to each theme and dialogue was thematically coded and annotated in a right hand column. Annotations interpreted meaning and significance of student comments, and hypothesized thematic interactions. A second stage of data treatment analyzed each of the 11 themes in a three-column format. The first column held selective raw interview dialogue pertaining to the theme, along with italicized annotations to provide context and clarity where necessary (e.g., partial words, slang, tone of voice and expression). During the transcription and annotation process, themes were jotted as hand-written notes, then typed and revised into successive drafts after detailed reading, coding, and annotating of transcripts.

The second-column analysis consisted of coding relevant portions of the transcripts that corresponded to each theme. Important quotes were highlighted and then paraphrased to condense the meaning. Groupings of themes at certain points in the interview data suggested associations between themes. The second column analysis was then used to refine thematic definitions, while also taking care to ensure correspondence with the raw transcript data (i.e., the figure-ground process). After detailed coding of transcripts, second-column revision sessions provided enough refinement of themes to facilitate a second-draft of definitions. Each theme was then defined in terms of (1) how the school acted, and (2) how the student perceived and reacted to the experience.

A third-column analysis consisted of coding portions of the transcripts to highlight possible relationships between codes, and to provide further abstractions and condensation of key ideas into the most concise possible format. A graphic template was developed to concisely convey themes on a single page. Relationships between thematic abstractions led to graphic abstractions of themes in cycles of connectedness. Figures representing thematic cycles went through numerous revisions that explored different formatting options and different orders for themes in the cycles. This was not a linear process, and arrows in the diagrams are not intended to represent direct causation between adjacent themes (e.g., that is why the word 'encourages' is used between themes the figures). The main rationale for the order of themes relates primarily to the temporal flow of events in suspension processes described by students, and certain themes represent preconditions for actualization of subsequent themes in the restorative cycle. Arrows that cut across the diagram were included to reflect strong association between

certain themes (e.g., stigmatizing disapproval by the school was likely to induce a maladaptive shame response in the student).

It is important to note that this process of extracting and defining themes and their relationship occurred over a considerable time span (i.e., two years), and that the early findings were field tested in my work as a school counsellor, both in daily minor conflict resolution, and in more serious and formal circle-type meetings. The themes provided an intervention framework in my daily interaction with students. Early drafts of thematic templates and definitions were useful resources in my work and were revised over this time thanks to a developing reflexive sense of knowing-as-doing (Kinsella, 2007), and from feedback from colleagues, restorative practitioners, and students.

Once thematic definitions (Table 3) were well refined over several months, a restorative template was organized in graphical form to represent the action-reaction association between school discipline interventions and student perceptions and responses. An idealized restorative template was crafted to condense themes into a useful format, a form of concept mapping (Goodyear, Tracey, Claiborn, Lichtenberg & Wampold, 2005). Student interviews were re-analysed with the template to highlight relationships between school suspension practices and resultant student perceptions for each of the eleven themes. This provided a concise way to summarize and analyse student suspension experiences around core restorative themes from the research (Appendix B).

Table 3

Definitions and Abbreviations for Restorative Themes

School Actions	*Student Reactions*
SUS - Suspensions: Processes, purposes, effects, context.	
* Processes and behaviours of school staff/adult participants.	* Perceptions and responses arising from suspension.
LICARE - Listening, Caring, and Respecting	
LI - Listening-Dialogue	
* Active listening, interactive dialogue.	* Student willingness to listen and internalize message.
CA - Caring-Empathy	
* Students treated with caring and empathy. Empathy and caring modelled by staff.	* Students receive and demonstrate caring and empathy. Reciprocation of caring and empathy.
RE - Respect	
* Respectful treatment of the student.	* Perceived respect from person of authority and respect for persons in authority in the suspension.

Table 3 (cont.)

Definitions and Abbreviations for Restorative Themes	
School Actions	*Student Reactions*
DIS - Disapproval	
* Processes and behaviours that communicate disapproval.	* Perceived nature, degree, and effectiveness of disapproval.
EM - Emotions	
* Emotions demonstrated by school staff/adult participants.	* Emotions related to suspension experienced by students.
FJ - Fairness-Justice	
* School actions to heal harm and prevent reoccurrence.	* Perceptions of fairness of the suspension.
ASMS - Adaptive Shame (e.g., remorse, conscience, resolution) and Maladaptive Shame (e.g., humiliation, alienation, blaming). Analysis via the 'compass of shame' (Nathanson, 1992) and shame-related emotions factors (Harris, 2001; Ahmed, 2001).	
* Processes and behaviours that evoke shame reactions.	

Table 3 (cont.)

Definitions and Abbreviations for Restorative Themes	
School Actions	*Student Reactions*
ASMS - Adaptive Shame (cont.)	
* Adaptive shame enables resolution-restoration: acknowledgement of harm, demonstration of remorse, acceptance and fulfilment of responsibility to repair harm (with support), closure, forgiveness and reintegration. It associates with connectedness.	* Maladaptive shame represents feelings of alienation, humiliation, ridicule, degradation, powerlessness, etc. It is associated with decreasing the social and emotional attachment of students with school via withdrawal, denial, aggression, or self harm.
HH - Cultivating Obligation and Acknowledging Hurt-Harm	
* Moral dialogue and instruction related to healing and redress of harm done to the victim and community.	* Acknowledgement of obligation, legitimacy of school authority and the rights of others, remorse, empathy.
AC - Accountability, Ownership, and Restitution	
* Obligations for which the student is accountable (e.g., restitution agreements).	* Fulfilment of obligations. (e.g., apologize, give service, follow rules).

Table 3 (cont.)

Definitions and Abbreviations for Restorative Themes	
School Actions	*Student Reactions*
CF - Closure, Forgiveness, and Labelling	
* Closure and/or forgiveness in the suspension process for the offending student. Negative labelling represents lack of closure.	* Perceptions of closure and forgiveness by the student, and perceptions of labelling (e.g., a trouble-maker, a good student).
CX - School Connectedness	
* Processes and behaviours that promote connectedness (e.g., LICARE behaviours, fair treatment, academic support, and shame management).	* Student connectedness to school (close to people, part of things, safe and happy, teachers fair).
HECO - Help-Support and Controls-Limits	
* Help and support offered; controls and limits imposed. Discipline model adopted by the school.	* Discipline models endorsed by students: (i.e., Uninvolved, Permissive, Authoritarian, Restorative).

Summary of Data Analysis

Interview dialogue was carefully transcribed and annotated, and during that time nascent themes were described and assigned codes. Transcripts were read numerous times and thematically coded while intentionally looking for coherence of themes across the interviews. Detailed notes on each theme were taken in a three-column format: the first column for representative quotations; the second for coding, paraphrasing and grouping themes; and the third for higher level abstraction and formation of hypotheses about thematic interactions. Themes were defined, then refined several times, and were organized around the idea of action and re-action: the school reacted to student misconduct, and then the student reacted to the school's interventions. Quotations from interviews and their conceptual paraphrases were recorded separately for each of the eleven themes. Finally, themes were organized into two separate and concise graphical formats: (1) an action-reaction template; and (2) an integrated cyclical template showing thematic interactions.

Validity

Numerous readings of interview transcripts, frequent note-taking as themes developed, and continual reference to the raw data acted as a validity check regarding fit of themes to data. Student comments relating to suspension were compared and contrasted, emergent concepts coalesced, and then were more precisely defined over time by relating the concepts back to interview data. Themes came more into focus through a cyclical figure-ground process of immersion, reflection, note-taking, and revision. Further immersion in the layers of data and their abstractions oriented themes around core themes from which tentative hypotheses were formed regarding thematic

interactions. Continual comparison of themes against actual student reflections provided a check by asking questions about fit, relevance, workability, and flexibility of application (cf. Glaser and Holton, 2004).

Many previous experiences as a teacher, counsellor, and restorative justice practitioner informed the interview questions, but did not predetermine outcomes in the data analysis. Immersion in the transcripts identified patterns of responses and themes were defined in an action-reaction pattern. The desired result was to distil a model of restorative discipline and censure in school, an intervention template centred around core restorative practice themes. Data collection and analysis were grounded in restorative justice values, guided by reflective practice, and realized via qualitative coding and revision strategies. The researcher's intent was to develop a restorative practices intervention model that might respond justly to student misconduct, heal harm, help students learn from mistakes, and keep students relationally connected to school.

The research was rooted in restorative thinking and practice through my exposure to restorative justice conferences, literature, training, and practice prior to and over the course of the research. These experiences helped frame the research methodology in a way congruent with restorative justice values and processes. Framing of interview questions related to suspension grew originally from my observations as a secondary teacher that suspensions seemed mostly useless or harmful. The same problems were apparent with retributive discipline reactions in my work as an elementary school counsellor - suspensions and other punitive practices were rarely effective and could make the situation worse. I have discovered as a parent that restorative discipline is far

more effective and loving with my own children. It was also congruent with my Christian spiritual traditions that emphasized values like love, truth, mercy, and justice.

The grounding metaphor also describes democratic and egalitarian processes inherent in restorative justice that went into each step of the project (e.g., content selection, item crafting, recruitment procedures, interviews, consultations). The research findings described below were also grounded in my daily work as a counsellor, where the ideas that cohered into a restorative intervention template were tested routinely in my elementary school. The integration of my counselling and restorative justice backgrounds acted as a daily check for relevance, adaptability, and workability of the restorative template themes. Adherence to these restorative themes has proved effective for resolving daily low-level conflicts, as well as more serious school issues such as harassment, bullying, and drugs.

During the period of the research I facilitated two large restorative justice circles (i.e., >12 participants) in different elementary schools, one related to aggressive harassment, the other related to drug use at school. Both circles capitalized on the application of template themes and resulted in peaceful, consensus-based resolutions, healing, and closure. A debriefing session with the principal and vice-principal following one session showed that both administrators had a good understanding of restorative justice, including its practical uses and limitations. Both administrators enthusiastically endorsed restorative thinking and interventions following the circle meeting, despite reservations beforehand, and both were pleasantly relieved at the effective outcome of the formal restorative circle.

A further credibility check consisted of a presentation of the research (e.g., explanation of questionnaire items, methodology, constructs such as connectedness and shame management, and the resulting thematic templates) to a local community justice forum (CJF) committee. The committee is a joint project between the Boys and Girls Club, the local school district, and the R.C.M.P. Committee members receive training, experience, and support for facilitating restorative justice meetings. All but the committee chair are lay-persons from the community who represent a diversity of vocations and a range of experiences with restorative justice. After a 20-minute presentation of my research results, committee members gave feedback in an informal question and answer session. Committee members also provided anonymous written feedback on a survey form asking them to describe what they thought the thesis was about, the relevance of the themes in the template, the template's usefulness in school settings and its adaptability to other settings.

All 12 committee members present gave written feedback, and many also provided further comments, critiques and reflections. Committee members gave the following reflections on what they thought the research was about: maintaining student self-respect, keeping kids connected to school and the community, restoring the situation in respectful ways, building relationships between the offender and the community, a constructive approach that looks at the workability of such an approach and how it positively affects students, moving away from punishment, and an alternative approach to problem-solving. All of the preceding reflections partially describe the research focus. Ten of 12 committee members wrote that they found the themes "very" relevant. One

respondent noted that themes were "very relevant because they hit at the core of self-worth generally, i.e., the grooming of a full-functioning individual."

On the question of the template's usefulness and adaptability, most respondents thought the template was useful and adaptable to diverse settings. Some committee members noted things like: a paradigm shift is needed; transition will be gradual; training would be required for the template to be useful; it can be transferred to multiple settings such as youth clubs, summer camps, youth projects, and adult settings; it is very adaptable to other settings if proper staff involvement is achieved. One person wrote, "Definitely worth trying as other methods have proven unsuccessful." Another respondent uses similar restorative approaches in her work with special needs children. Some critical comments were that it is too wordy, that fewer words would make it more adaptable to other settings, and those adaptations would have to accommodate different developmental levels of participants.

Validity of the data analysis methodology adapted for this research can be evaluated against the credibility checks used in counselling psychology research (Butterfield, Borgen, Amundsen, & Maglio, 2005), and adapted from critical incident technique for the present research on restorative themes. Saturation of all possible categories hardly seems possible with only seven student-participants in the present research. However, all 11 themes were identified before transcriptions were complete, suggesting that themes were obvious and easy to find. Ongoing revisions of themes involved honing language precision to maintain close correspondence between raw data and thematic constructs. More interviews with larger numbers of suspended students might well uncover novel themes not developed here.

Submission of research results to critical review from experts in the field is another credibility check (Butterfield et al., 2005). Template themes were presented to administrators and teachers at my elementary school as part of a staff development workshop on developing school climate and teaching virtuous and socially responsible behaviour. Teachers received the information positively, and noted that restorative practices are a good fit for schools because they respond appropriately and non-punitively to the developmental needs of children. There was a sense that these ideas fit closely with the modus operandi of most elementary school teachers. Furthermore, the community justice forum committee, consisting of lay persons and restorative practitioners, gave overwhelmingly positive reviews of the relevance, usefulness, and flexibility of application of the restorative template.

In critical incident technique (Butterfield et al., 2005), participation rate is based on the number of participants who report the same sort of incident. In the present research, most themes were selected on the basis of substantial amounts of interview dialogue with students in response to certain questions. Some questions generated more dialogue and more intensity than others. When students talked a lot about the same topics, and when there were patterns of experience and perception in their stories, generation of themes was intuitive - themes emerged without effort, they were apparent and obvious.

In regards to theoretical validity, the academic community will decide whether template results correspond with accepted understandings of constructs such as restorative justice, suspension, emotion, shame, and connectedness (Butterfield et al., 2005). Considerable theoretical support exists in the literature for these important

constructs. Restorative justice literature has grounded this project on the basis of readings of restorative justice theorists, proponents, and activists such as Zehr (1995), Sharpe (1998), Hopkins (2002; 2004), Braithwaite (1989, 2002), Morrison (2005; 2007), and others. Nathanson's (1992) theories of emotion and shame are well-documented; they provided interpretive explanation for the inclusion of themes related to emotion, and specifically, shame-related emotions. Braithwaite's (1989) work on reintegrative shaming theory integrated closely with the restorative template.

The work by McCold and Wachtel (2002) framed discipline issues globally in terms of two dimensions: help, nurturing, and support versus control, discipline, and limit-setting. The strength of the two-dimensional model is that it integrates and expands a similar framework developed in the parenting literature (Baumrind, 1991); specifically, children who receive a high degree of loving support (responsiveness) along with parental supervision and control (demandingness) will develop more pro-social behaviours than children who experience other parenting styles such as permissive, authoritarian, or neglectful.

Descriptive validity was maintained in this research by tape recording the interviews and carefully transcribing the dialogue. Transcripts were annotated to reflect context and meaning based on the para-verbal and non-verbal conversational elements like idiom, emotional engagement and intensity, and so on. Interviewees were assured that the sessions were confidential and that the purpose of the research was to teach schools how to do discipline better, so problems get resolved and kids stay connected to school. They were reassured that no negative attributions could be associated to them based on their feedback. The relaxed and informal nature of the interviews, and the

opportunity to be critical of the school's actions in the suspension process, gave students a certain boldness to tell their suspension stories and openly express their feelings and perceptions, which they did. These two points taken together, the careful transcription and the open demeanour of the interview, provide a high degree of assurance that the raw data accounts are true reflections of student experiences. Themes emerged on the basis of sufficient understanding of issues discussed in the interviews.

The interviews corresponded with value- and process-orientations of restorative justice. There was an egalitarian, non-judgmental and open atmosphere. The process was respectful and interactive, dialogue was horizontal and not dominated, and the semi-structured format facilitated emergence of important ideas without rigidly directing conversation. Students appreciated the movie gift certificate and the beverage.

Face validity of thematic constructs was evidenced in numerous conversations with students, colleagues, and parents when I wove thematic content into my conflict resolution work (over many months) as an elementary school counsellor. Themes are readily understood by very young children - ideas like embarrassment, fairness, anger, healing hurt, forgiveness, and closeness in relationships. Teachers and restorative practitioners expressed intuitive grasp of these themes. Themes were understood and accepted as relevant to resolving hurt and harm issues, even though these concepts are not always consciously conceived or expressed. The template made themes explicit and the ideas in the themes made sense to people. People 'got it,' and once they did they generally supported restorative thinking and practices.

Numerous credibility checks were not considered in this project. For example, independent transcript review for emergent themes, independent category sorting, and

second interviews to check participant concordance with themes would all enhance credibility of the findings. Participant checks of categories would be a feasible improvement. That way, participants could review the themes and reflect on validity issues such as relevance, usefulness, and flexibility. Better recruitment procedures and more interviews would reflect a wider diversity of experiences, and that would enhance likelihood of saturation and comprehensiveness - the minimum number of categories within which all possible incidents might be sorted.

Finally, it is worthwhile to comment on the reflective practitioner skills necessary for restorative interventions to work effectively. My own restorative facilitation of conflicts and interviews relied heavily on skills developed from my training in counselling psychology. A critical part of the data gathering involved establishing warmth and trust with student interview participants. The most important validity check came in the form of the interviews themselves - they were built on positive trusting relationships that empowered students to "tell their side of the story."

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Summary analyses of participant interviews are presented below in textual and graphical format. Textual descriptions highlight important trends, generalities, and exceptions, and propose important relationships between themes. Results are summarized following the general flow of the original interview questions. The eleven themes described in the methods section are explored in the text with reference to graphic summaries of each interview (Appendix B). An idealized restorative process is graphically represented in Figure 1. The graphic identifies school suspension processes and behaviours most likely to promote positive outcomes such as perceiving procedures as fair, taking responsibility for actions, feeling respected, and feeling connected to the school.

The latter portion of the results section outlines some of the more important relationships between thematic elements in two figures. Arrows do not denote causation between themes, though they do represent interaction and overall directional flow. Each theme contributes a kind of inertia to the overall cycle, keeping the wheel spinning, so to speak, in a given direction. Some themes represent preconditions for other themes (e.g., acknowledgement of obligation precedes restitution). Restorative and alienating thematic descriptions suggest interactions between themes that reinforce either a sense of connectedness, or alternatively, a sense of disconnectedness. Results imply that suspension processes and behaviours of school staff affect future perceptions, emotions and behaviours of suspended students in predictable ways. Each theme is expanded below and inter-related with other themes to demonstrate the relationship between school actions and student reactions.

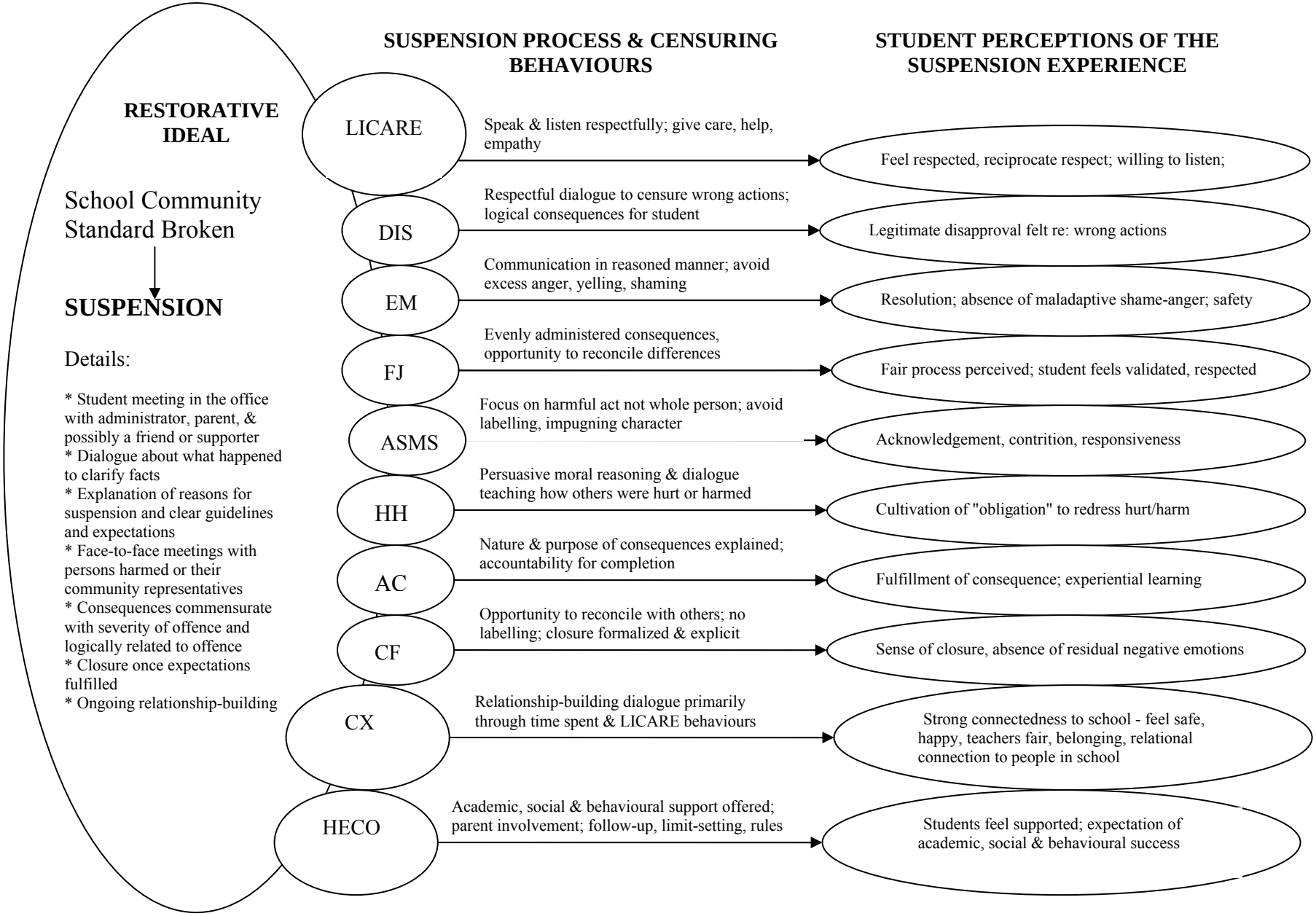

RESTORATIVE IDEAL
School Community Standard Broken
SUSPENSION
Details:
* Student meeting in the office with administrator, parent, & possibly a friend or supporter
* Dialogue about what happened to clarify facts
* Explanation of reasons for suspension and clear guidelines and expectations
* Face-to-face meetings with persons harmed or their community representatives
* Consequences commensurate with severity of offence and logically related to offence
* Closure once expectations fulfilled
* Ongoing relationship-building
SUSPENSION PROCESS & CENSURING BEHAVIOURS
STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE SUSPENSION EXPERIENCE
LICARE
Speak & listen respectfully; give care, help, empathy
Feel respected, reciprocate respect; willing to listen;
DIS
Respectful dialogue to censure wrong actions; logical consequences for student
Legitimate disapproval felt re: wrong actions
EM
Communication in reasoned manner; avoid excess anger, yelling, shaming
Resolution; absence of maladaptive shame-anger; safety
FJ
Evenly administered consequences, opportunity to reconcile differences
Fair process perceived; student feels validated, respected
ASMS
Focus on harmful act not whole person; avoid labelling, impugning character
Acknowledgement, contrition, responsiveness
HH
Persuasive moral reasoning & dialogue teaching how others were hurt or harmed
Cultivation of "obligation" to redress hurt/harm
AC
Nature & purpose of consequences explained; accountability for completion
Fulfillment of consequence; experiential learning
CF
Opportunity to reconcile with others; no labelling; closure formalized & explicit
Sense of closure, absence of residual negative emotions
CX
Relationship-building dialogue primarily through time spent & LICARE behaviours
Strong connectedness to school - feel safe, happy, teachers fair, belonging, relational connection to people in school
HECO
Academic, social & behavioural support offered; parent involvement; follow-up, limit-setting, rules
Students feel supported; expectation of academic, social & behavioural success

Figure 1: Ideally Restorative School Censuring Processes and Behaviours

Legend for Thematic Acronyms	
SUS	Suspensions
LICARE	Listening, Caring, Respecting
DIS	Disapproval
EM	Emotions
FJ	Fairness-Justice
ASMS	Adaptive Shame & Maladaptive Shame
HH	Cultivating Obligation & Acknowledging Hurt-Harm
AC	Accountability, Ownership, Restitution
CF	Closure-Forgiveness
CX	School Connectedness
HECO	Help-Support & Controls-Limits

Suspension Procedures and Student Perceptions of Suspension (SUS)

Student participants generally had a negative impression of suspensions as a school intervention. The overall impression came from student descriptions of their personal suspension experiences and their analysis of school discipline models (Appendix A - School Discipline Styles; adapted from McCold & Wachtel, 2003). Six of seven participants described their own suspension process as Authoritarian, signifying a high degree of control and limit-setting and a low degree of help and support. Only one student reported the suspension experience as Restorative, high in both control and limit-setting and in help and support. All seven students expressed the belief that a restorative model would have been the best intervention in the case of their own suspension. Some of the negative comments expressed by students were that: administrators treated and spoke to students disrespectfully; students felt like they were not listened to; the process was unfair; there was a lack of clarity and communication around the reasons for and parameters of the suspension; students fell behind in their academic work; and the suspension did not help them.

Five students said being suspended did not help them. The one student with a restorative process, Mary, found the suspension helpful because it encouraged her to explore her anger in a supportive counselling relationship, which led to better control over her anger. However, positive comments about suspension were much less frequent than negative comments. Most positive comments came from Mary because of her restorative suspension process. Three of seven students thought the suspension process was fair, and answers ranged from "extremely fair" to "extremely unfair." Suspension was most commonly perceived as a punishment. Other perceptions about the official

purposes of suspensions included: a deterrent to other students, a consequence, a way to not have to deal with the problem, a safety concern, a cool-down period, a lesson to be learned. It became clear from the interviews that the purpose of suspension was not clearly articulated to the student. It was not clear why suspension was required, what was meant to be learned from it, and what needed to happen to remedy the problem. Reasoned moral-educational dialogue about the meaning and purpose of suspension did not consistently occur. The wide range of participant perceptions regarding the intended purpose of suspensions demonstrated the need to deliberately teach students about how and what we intend them to learn from behaviour interventions (e.g., suspension). No student thought that suspensions work well to achieve their presumed objective of correcting student behaviour.

Two students, Bev and Bill, described how their parents were frequently not informed about their suspension for various reasons: student telephone number was out-of-date; parent couldn't be reached at work; student intercepted letters and voicemail before parent got home. Bill said he had erased messages about 30 times. Bev had no parental supervision or guidance, and said her parents didn't really care what she did. Understandably, she perceived low disapproval in the suspension since she was free to hang out with friends outside of school. Bill thought a suspension was sometimes not a punishment at all, since there is often no supervision of students during out-of-school suspensions.

Three suspensions were drug-related, three were for violence and/or fighting, and one was for swearing at staff members. Administrators suspended students and were responsible for overseeing the suspension process. Drug offences and suspensions over

five days, as per school district policy, also required a meeting with the assistant superintendent. Meetings between a student and administrator happened in the office on the day of the suspension itself, and tended to be brief, without a lot of reciprocal dialogue. In some cases an attempt was made to access a student's teachers and to obtain learning materials required for the student to keep up scholastically at home during an out-of-school suspension, but generally students fell behind significantly in coursework once suspended.

Bill said he was out of school with no course work for one to two months. Jim was able to get some work but not all of it. Bev did all the work assigned to her during her out-of-school suspension but still fell behind. Joe did not get any work and fell so far behind in math that he dropped the course. Some friends helped him keep up in German. Joe described the lack of academic support as unfair, but said he enjoyed going to the skateboard park to do drugs during his suspension.

For a variety of reasons, it can be impractical in a secondary school setting to tailor-make home plans for longer suspension periods (i.e., >2 days). Student work packages did not enable students to adequately keep up with school work during suspension, so students fell behind or dropped courses. Learning and performance expectations in school are experiential and tied to direct social and sensory experience of the lesson in class, and some teachers plan day-to-day so don't have ready-made work packages. Administrators did not take the time to supervise the creation of an out-of-school plan to enable students to learn course material and keep up with course demands.

Typically, students were given the opportunity to access their locker and one or more teachers, but all participants reported that suspended students are unable to keep up

with course work during an out-of-school suspension. This raised an ethical dilemma for students regarding the school's use of a consequence known to cause academic delay, since academic achievement is a central purpose of school. This seemed to indicate that the needs of the institutional school were considered more important than the needs of offending students. Student accounts of the academic consequences of suspensions showed that students fell behind in their work, and that failure and drop-out were possible negative outcomes of suspensions. Effects were possibly magnified for schools on a quarter system, since curricular material is condensed in a short time-frame.

Empathic Listening, Caring and Support, Respectful Treatment (LICARE)

The clusters of behaviours that described the LICARE theme were relational orientations that tended to beget reciprocal behaviours in others. Kindness begets kindness, disrespect engenders disrespect. Students described a few incidents where administrators expressed censure with caring, respect, and a willingness to listen. In two cases, students expressed respect for and from one administrator at a school, but disrespect for and from another administrator - they least respected the one with whom they had most commonly dealt. Students who perceived a lack of LICARE behaviours from adult censurers had low connectedness to school. Four students had little or no respect for the administrator overseeing the suspension process; two had a high degree of respect for the administrator. Six students felt administrators gave them little to no respect.

Mary, who had the one restorative suspension, felt respected by the administrator. However, even she could not listen well initially, she said, due to shock at being confronted and feeling humiliated. And she felt less respected because of the disapproval

shown to her. Suspension was a shock for Mary because she was generally a very involved, "good student." That was her self-image and the image she projected at school. Two students, Jane and Sam, said they listened purely out of habit to ensure they understood what was happening to them regarding the suspension, but did not listen out of respect for the administrator. Four students who committed serious offences, and who received long suspensions or expulsions, all expressed a lack of respect for and from an administrator, and an unwillingness to listen to that administrator. Disrespect begat disrespect, which promoted disinterest in listening. Conversely, empathic listening, caring, and respectful support for the student were more likely to enhance a student's desire to listen and learn.

Perceived Degree of Disapproval in the Suspension Process (DIS)

The degree of disapproval shown by administrators, teachers and parents varied with the severity of the offence. Students involved in the more serious cases involving drugs and violence (all of these students had been previously suspended) perceived higher disapproval from censuring adults (most often administrators, but sometimes teachers or parents). These students also received more lengthy suspensions (≥5 days), or an expulsion and relocation to a new school. High perception of disapproval by students tended to be associated with longer suspensions, greater anger and emotional intensity expressed by administrators, and a general lack of LICARE behaviours (empathic listening, caring and helping, respect) demonstrated by the censuring adults.

Mary thought that there wasn't much disapproval shown to her, and that this "low key" approach was best. She said she felt less disapproval from the censuring administrator because they shared a pre-existing good relationship. This shifted the focus

away from humiliation of her as a person (i.e., because she had a secure attachment to the administrator), and focussed attention on the wrongfulness of her actions. Mary would have felt a greater sense of disapproval had the school's other administrator directed the suspension process because they had a more formal relationship and less shared personal history. And since Mary felt a strong internal sense of personal remorse and humiliation when she was confronted about her behaviour, more overt and intense expression of disapproval, she said, would likely have only publicly shamed her, possibly hindered her "ownership" of the wrong behaviour (i.e., maladaptive deflection of responsibility as a face-saving reflex), kept her angry longer, and weakened her sense of connection to the school. She speculated that a more humiliating process might have caused her to quit school, since she already had enough credits to graduate at that point. And even though a restorative suspension process kept Mary in school, her connectedness to the school diminished as a result of suspension.

Another student, Bev, reported low perception of disapproval due to a lack of discussion about why she was suspended. Bev did not understand why she was suspended, and said she was left alone in the administrator's office for over two hours before he told her to leave the school property immediately, and to not return, under threat of a call to the police for trespassing. Low perception of disapproval related to how the suspension affected her personally. She hated her classes, hated the administrator, had unresolved conflict with another student, and now had a chance to hang out with friends for a week, since she lived on her own and her parents were uninvolved in her daily living and care. Bev's words were, "I thought it was nothing bad. I was, like, okay sure. I'll be seeing ya'. I got a couple days off school." She explained how the school could

send a more disapproving message by talking about and explaining the suspension. She recalled administrators not discussing what was wrong about her behaviour, but simply asking why she did it. While she reported an Authoritarian process, in effect the process is closer to Uninvolved, since the school exercised very little effective control or limit-setting during her suspension period, both in terms of monitoring academic progress and promoting pro-social behaviour.

Student interpretation around the question of "disapproval" varied widely. Overall, students seemed to interpret disapproval more in the sense of emotionally charged face-to-face censure than with the assignment of a consequence *per se* (i.e., the suspension itself). The downside of overt face-to-face disapproval (versus disapproval communicated by a severe consequence) was that it appeared more likely to induce internalized shame experiences like stigmatization and humiliation. High disapproval clustered with low LICARE and shame or anger in the student. Participant perceptions of disapproval showed that censuring persons (i.e., mainly administrators) should demonstrate the cluster of behaviours described by the LICARE acronym, while also communicating disapproval for the behaviour by means of a meaningful consequence, and reasoned moral dialogue to teach how and why the behaviour was wrong (i.e., it harms a person and/or the community), and how the consequence is intended to help the student learn and take responsibility for the behaviour.

Emotions (EM)

Nine cartoon faces based on Nathanson's (1992) affect theory helped generate ideas and language during the interviews to enable participants to convey feelings they experienced related to the suspension process. Six students reported being angry during

the suspension. In one case, the anger changed to acceptance (restorative model), while in three other cases anger morphed into a cynical detachment, a sense of not caring anymore. Jim's reaction to suspension was, "I didn't really feel nothing. I got into a fight and I got suspended. I didn't really care." Jane said she felt "happy" and "funny" (the label she gave the distressed-anguished face). Jane, however, was the only student that acted socially and emotionally detached during her interview, and tended to give curt, offbeat answers. She projected passive acquiesce and cynicism, as opposed to anger, about her suspension for pot-smoking.

Reasons for student feelings of anger were varied: administrators had yelled angrily at them; they were treated with more suspicion by teachers after the suspension (e.g., "they don't treat you the same ever again, they'll always pick on you or something like that"); they perceived a lack of equity of justice in terms of consequences like suspension; Jim reported repeated harassment to the school counsellor but the problem was never adequately addressed, which led to further serious conflict and violence; Bev was publicly maligned and humiliated in a circle-type meeting with students, professional school staff, parents and police (which highlights the need to understand restorative justice as values-based, not merely a process model); students felt disrespected by an administrator; students lacked a venue to resolve conflicts and bring closure. A consistent pattern was that students who remained angry were not provided an opportunity to achieve peace or conflict resolution, and there was no sense of closure, either with a student with whom they were in conflict or with the school itself.

One student, Jim, expressed ongoing rage and disgust at both the school and at his adversary and his adversary's parent. Although he expressed a certain detachment, he was

still enraged about the incident. He said that the student he fought was older and had been harassing him for months, having made threats to Jim such as saying he was going to harm Jim's family members. Jim repeatedly told the older student to stop bothering him and even went to see the counsellor about it. The harassment continued so he took matters in his own hands by starting a fight and beating up the older kid after school. There is understandable indignation on Jim's part, since he was repeatedly and seriously harassed in the first instance by an older student, and made appropriate gestures to stop the harassment before the fight. But Jim expressed seething anger that only he was suspended, and that there was no apparent consequence for the older boy's serious verbal harassment. Jim said that the harassment went on for so long that he could not see reaching resolution with that person anymore. The school failed to intervene and mediate the conflict peacefully to prevent further violence.

One student, Bill, remained fearful because he received violent threats from the student he had fought that led to Bill's suspension and expulsion. Although the Bill was suspended and eventually moved to a different school, his co-combatant threatened him with serious violence afterwards. Bill also mentioned fearing expulsion, feeling shame and embarrassment (e.g., he got teased about it by peers), and feeling stigmatized. His anger interfered with his ability to feel a sense of obligation and responsibility for his actions. Getting suspended just made him angrier and less likely to follow school rules - he said he wanted to get back at the administrator. Students who were angry at an administrator tended to: dislike and disrespect him, have a low willingness to listen, have a low degree of obligation and accountability, make poor academic progress, and have low levels of connectedness to the school.

Fairness and Justice (FJ)

Three of the four students who committed serious offences thought the suspension process was quite unfair. One of the four, Joe, said it was fair because he knew he had done something wrong, but he still thought it was unfair that he fell behind in school because of suspension. Another student, Jane, said the process was fair because she knew she would get suspended if she got caught with drugs, but also said she had done nothing wrong, didn't feel sorry at all, and didn't think anyone or the community was hurt or affected. Sam said the process was unfair in that he felt guilty by association (i.e., he was with others who were smoking pot, he wasn't smoking it), and that he should not have been suspended. However, Sam did not actually serve his in-school suspension because he left the office and went home the same day; the following day his only consequence was a conversation outside his classroom with an administrator. Mary was the only student with a high perception of fairness, and was the only student with a restorative suspension process. Complaints about unfairness included perceived unequal treatment of students involved in a conflict (e.g., three cases of fights where equal sanctions were not applied), lack of being listened to, inability to keep up with school work due to being out of school, and ineffective action by a school counsellor to mediate a peer dispute and avert a violent crisis.

Adaptive Shame Reactions and Maladaptive Shame Reactions (ASMS)

Jane denied having done anything wrong or feeling sorry despite being suspended for a drug offence. She thought that pot is not that big of a deal, although her statement about "crackheads" suggests she thinks violent crime associated with harder drugs is a problem: "The government is making a big huge fuss about kids doing nothing getting

high, while the crackheads on the street are stabbing each other." Her responses were terse, edgy, and she identified her emotions as "happy" and "funny," all of which together suggested an anarchistic, disconnected attitude toward the institutional school and its values. She said, "It was kind of funny because everybody made a big deal about it." Jane also implied that because her parents already knew she smoked pot her pot-selling at school wasn't so serious. She didn't talk much about peers, though her pot-selling at school would require some connection to a drug culture. Her complete absence of any sense of shame or recognition of wrongdoing was characteristic of unacknowledged by-passed shame: pot-selling at school is obviously a shameful behaviour based on the school's severe reaction, but the student continued to deny the shamefulness of it. Her response falls into Nathanson's avoidance pole of the compass of shame. Her disavowal, substance use, and lack of modesty characterize avoidance scripts, something seen in other participants. It is not surprising then, that disavowal of wrongdoing by suspended students placed them in contradiction to school community values, and limited their sense of connectedness to the school. Low connectedness scores for students disavowing wrongdoing suggested this relationship.

Sharply contrasting Jane's disavowal of a shame experience, Mary was talkative, and used a variety of words to describe her shame-related emotions. When she was first confronted in the office following her episode of angry swearing at staff, she was "upset" and "emotional," and still felt angry, although her anger evolved to acceptance over time. She said, "I was just humiliated," and she was relieved to be able to hide away at home. But she also expressed a need to "fix" the situation and had feelings of obligation, guilt, and a desire to make amends. Had the censuring administrator, parent, and teacher ranted

at her, lectured her, and given her an in-school suspension where other students would have seen her sitting and working, she would have been considerably more humiliated and alienated, and said she would likely have dropped out of school. She admitted that it was only the positive, caring intervention of the administrator and her parent (with both of whom she already had a supportive connection) that kept her from dropping out. It appeared that school connectedness supported a restorative reinforcing cycle with characteristic associated themes, whereas low connectedness was a link in a contrasting alienating reinforcing cycle (Figure 2, p. 106; Figure 3, p. 108). These figures are situated at the end of the results section so the reader will be familiar with all restorative themes when interpreting the diagrams. Arrows in the diagrams suggest causation only in the limited sense that each thematic element contributes to a chain of events in the suspension process that affects quality and degree of student connection to school. Where arrows cut across the diagram, interview content suggested a distinctive influence of one theme on another (e.g., disapproval of the act without stigmatization of the person was more likely to engender adaptive reactions like admission of wrong, remorse, and obligation).

The restorative pro-connectedness cycle in Figure 2 shows LICARE behaviours in association with disapproval that focuses on the act as harm to people and the community, and upholds the inherent virtue and positive qualities of the student. In the face of the shame experienced by students when confronted about their wrong behaviour, students reflections supported the idea that school administrators and other staff need to offer empathic listening, caring and support, and convey respect as antidotes to reflexive shame responses that tend to move students away from truth-telling, admission of wrong,

ownership of obligation, and fulfillment of responsibility. My direct experience working with students suggests that some students need assurance that truth-telling is their best option, and that lying or misleading will ultimately reflect poorly on the student and create more conflict - a simultaneous encouragement to tell the truth and warning that lying is a poor strategy.

Contrast the restorative pro-connectedness cycle with the alienation cycle in Figure 3. Suspended students, especially those suspended multiple times, had a pre-existing disconnection from the institutional school community despite social ties to peers. These students were more likely to share features of an alienated class of students characterized by low school connectedness, low sense of obligation to uphold normative community standards, negative reactivity to punitively-perceived discipline processes (especially where there has been a lack of LICARE), angry expression of judgment that overtly shames the student, and a lack procedural fairness and effective communication.

A restorative process enabled Mary to tell her side of the story, gave her a chance to dialogue about the details, and distilled a consensus account of the events. Her experience and the contrasting experiences of students who experienced alienating suspensions showed that there must be clear, explicit explanation of the parameters and purposes of school interventions. It must be clearly explained why the intervention is appropriate for the situation, how it is supposed to instruct and prevent similar behaviours, and how it will heal and restore people and the wider school community. Student reflections suggested that there should also be clear explanation of the appeal process should the student remain unsatisfied with the school's intervention. Restorative process requires high ethical standards around the use of power in the suspension process

and associated staff behaviours. Presence or absence of LICARE, nature of the disapproval, and perception of fairness appeared to be significant determinants of the nature and intensity of the shame-related emotions experienced by suspended students. Where there must be a greater degree of formal disapproval for more serious offences, student reflections suggested it was even more important for the school to ensure respectful dialogue and censure, and to resolve shame via face-to-face encounters between those in conflict (e.g., such as after a fight). The presence of personal supports and advocates might be especially important for an offender when the offence is serious in nature; where parental and teacher support is lacking, such as in Bev's case and Joe's case, peers can provide necessary social and academic supports. These interventions are a form of shame management as detailed by Ahmed (2001). Shame is inevitable, so maladaptive forms of shame must be minimized by LICARE behaviours that promote connection, a sense of fairness, and censure that shames the act for the way it harms others without stigmatizing and alienating the offending student.

Cultivation of Obligation (HH)

In my work resolving conflicts as a school counsellor, a resolution process is simple and looks like this: individuals have the opportunity to speak uninterrupted, the group accepts a consensus understanding of the events precipitating the conflict, solutions to the problem are suggested and evaluated (must be safe and fair, sensitive to feelings, and workable), a solution is chosen by mutual consent to resolve the present situation and prevent future problems, people agree to the terms of an agreement, and there is a follow-up to ensure compliance and evaluate progress. Written agreements with student and staff signatures can add a degree of formality, solemnity of commitment, and accountability.

Participants who experienced top-down lecturing, angry tirades, and an authoritarian style uniformly did not internalize the message from the censuring administrator. The message got lost in the delivery. For a student to comprehend and internalize the message, admit wrongdoing, and take responsibility to make amends, they needed a safe environment to overcome the shame of confrontation and censure for wrong behaviour. In Mary's case, it was her previous relational connectedness of the administrator, teacher, and her parent, and the LICARE behaviours of the administrator that created an environment for the student to acknowledge harm to others and take action to redress it (e.g., she wrote and delivered apology letters to staff members she swore at). LICARE behaviours, where they existed in the suspension processes, seemed to build relational social capital (Morrison et al., 2005) between the interacting parties that buffered the noxious reality of the censuring ritual for the offending student, and enabled the student to be contrite and learn a lesson. Social capital is like 'social glue' that maintains civil society through interdependent and mutually supportive relationships. Where disapproval was communicated disrespectfully, or where there was a strong perception of unfairness, there was little meaningful internalization of obligation (one exception to this happened when Bev spontaneously apologized to a girl she had beat up, but she still had a low sense of obligation to the institutional school). LICARE behaviours, in both proactive and reactive settings, promote growth of social capital among members of school communities.

All but two students admitted that what they did was wrong, although overall, acknowledgement by participants of hurt and harm caused by them was low. Jane was not sorry at all and said the suspension had no effect on her conscience. But she was

generally a high-achieving student and said she stopped doing pot at school after her suspension. Her decision was not based on moral reasoning but was simply a utilitarian way for her to avoid future expulsion for drugs. The other student who admitted no wrongdoing, Jim, had attacked and beat up a student, but felt justified because the school had failed to prevent him from being harassed. Not only did he not accept his physical assault as wrong, but he said it was the right thing to do because it taught the other kid a lesson. However, he did say that the school should have facilitated a face-to-face meeting to resolve the conflict before violence erupted.

In the five cases where student-participants admitted their actions were wrong, only one was given the opportunity to fully process a mistake in a respectful, interactive dialogue, and in a way that helped resolve feelings like shame, anger, and resentment. In the other cases, there was lingering emotional baggage, despite admission of wrongdoing by them. What their expression of remorse seemed to convey is that there was fertile ground for meaningful and lasting resolution and reintegration of relationships in the school community, but that the ground was not tilled, seeded, and tended. Tilling, seeding, and tending mean that school staff members skilled in conflict resolution provide a safe milieu for people to come together to resolve differences in meaningful and lasting way. This sort of school intervention is consistent with the fact that all seven participants endorsed a restorative discipline model. Properly structured restorative meetings (including preparatory pre-meetings with participants) are simultaneous exercises in both in control/limit-setting and in help/support (McCold & Wachtel, 2003).

Joe told a personal story of having been on probation for a crime that harmed a married couple in their home, and then having attended a restorative circle with them. Joe

said that sitting across from his victims made him realize that he had harmed them. He discovered that he was particularly sorry for having harmed them emotionally. His restitution consisted of voluntarily attending the meeting, taking responsibility and apologizing, and writing and delivering an apology letter to the couple after the meeting. The couple was able to express forgiveness and didn't need to fear the student anymore. The student had a sense of closure and felt he had done the right thing. He said the experience was much more powerful and helpful for him than any form of punishment could have been.

Mary was the only student with a strong sense of remorse and obligation related to school misbehaviour, due in part to her restorative suspension process. Across the other participants, there was a weak expression of obligation and accountability. The suspension experience seemed more of a hindrance to developing remorse, especially when there was a lack of effective limit-setting and controls (suspension is often not an effective control, either behaviourally or academically), and a lack of help and support for students to keep up with school work and learn and adopt new behaviours.

Accountability, Ownership, and Restitution (AC)

Mary was the only student to report that the suspension helped her take responsibility; the other six said it didn't help. This could be due to a lack of ethical dialogue and moral education in the suspension process, and specifically, due to a lack of clarity about how discipline interventions and consequences are intended to instruct the student and support them to change behaviours. The suspension itself seemed largely to be a symbolic and political form of limit-setting (i.e., the appearance of consequential

action taken by the school), since the school had very little effective control during an out-of-school suspension.

The degree of control and limit-setting the school exerts varies significantly between an in-school and an out-of-school suspension. An in-school suspension allows the school to constrain and influence behaviour and to support the student emotionally and academically. The inherent disadvantage of the out-of-school suspension is that there is very little effective control of students once they are escorted off school property, and their academic progress usually stalls. Mary's restorative suspension was an out-of-school suspension, but she did not fall behind other than missing a field trip, and was thankful it was an out-of-school suspension because that was far less humiliating for her. She said that students in her school on in-school suspensions sit in an area visible to other students, something she would have found humiliating. In-school suspensions should be managed so the student does not receive unhelpful peer attention during the suspension.

Sam was supposed to have an in-school suspension for being around other students who were smoking pot, but he left the office and went home when nobody was looking as a way of avoiding the conflict. His only consequence was a visit to his class the following day by the administrator, where he was told that he shouldn't have gone home like he did and to not do it again. He had no effective consequence or accountability, nor did he think he should have been suspended in the first place. However, the administrator probably acted wisely by not adding a further consequence the following day because he would have simply alienated and angered the student. With time and maturity the student came to accept his behaviour as wrong, but he said this change in outlook was not a function of the suspension.

Jane, the defiant girl who thought she had done nothing wrong by selling pot, was acquiescent to the suspension process (describing it as "very fair," even though she said what she did "wasn't wrong"). She attended meetings with administrators and the assistant superintendent and even transferred schools, but there was no sense of contrition or remorseful compliance in anything she said. Apparently, little moral learning or acceptance of moral responsibility occurred for this student.

Suspension appeared to be a hollow gesture in terms of imposing controls on students. Some students were free and unsupervised during out-of-school suspensions, and parents were sometimes not even aware that their child had been suspended. Four students, all of whom had serious drug- or violence-related suspensions, had an "I don't care" attitude about being suspended, had unsupervised time away from school, and fell behind in their school work. Bill described the suspension cynically as a way for the school to get rid of a problem without really dealing with it. Only Mary felt that the suspension helped her take responsibility.

Suspension was generally perceived as punitive, though it might not be clear to students how being out of school for a few days is supposed to punish, instruct, or correct them. Since the mandate of public schools is to educate the citizenry, the suspension cannot have a purely retributive intent (i.e., someone getting their just deserts, punishment as an end in itself), for that would amount to saying students should and deserve to suffer pain when they err. If participant suspensions were intended as punishment (as the participants conceived of suspensions), and if students were intended to learn from them (as one would expect in a school), then it is not clear how suspending student-participants educated them to correct the problem they created by their behaviour.

Two students thought there was a deterrent effect (these students cared more about getting suspended than the others), but the other five participants did not even interpret the suspension as a big deal.

Perhaps because students implicitly knew the suspension was punitive, and not instructive or helpful, a backlash effect occurred that disconnected them from the school and encouraged them to connect with similarly disaffected youth. Perhaps they dealt with the shame of academic failure and rejection from the school community by seeking social status and attachment in an outcast group (e.g., multiply-suspended, counter-culture youth with similarly low levels of connectedness to school).

The accountability level for students appeared to depend largely on conditions outside the school's control, things like parental work routines and parenting styles. Students are generally more accountable when parents communicate well with the school, supervise their children on suspension, and reinforce the school's message of disapproval and obligation regarding the student's behaviour. Based on participant interviews and my 15 years as a teacher, suspensions often demand an effectively low level of accountability because suspended students have many hours of unsupervised free-time away from school and sometimes little to no accountability to parents.

Closure & Forgiveness (CF)

Closure mattered more than forgiveness to students, although all students thought closure would be a good idea. Forgiveness mattered more between students who fought, or where someone was obviously harmed, since there was a clearer victim, and therefore, a clearer target for moral obligation and responsibility. The school's role here can be to broker peaceful solutions to the conflict with safe, respectful, fair dialogue. Two students

described situations like that, where there was clear closure upon fulfillment of the obligation. Joe's restorative justice conference arranged through his probation officer allowed his victims to communicate their hurt, have it received and responded to respectfully with remorseful apology, and to subsequently forgive the young offender and release him from any lingering shame or guilt. Closure was healthy for both victim and offender: it lessened fear and grief for the victims and resolved unacknowledged shame for the offender. Respectful treatment and closure mitigated the negative shame experience for Mary, and enabled her to keep a healthy (although lower) level of connectedness to the school.

Lack of any sense of formal closure was most obvious in the violence-related suspensions since those cases involved no organized dialogue between antagonists. Closure for the two drug-related suspensions involved eventual expulsion and relocation to different schools, but there was no closure with the school community in terms of relationships, obligations, and interrupted coursework. Sam, the boy who skipped his in-school suspension, had a sense of closure because the administrator at least followed up the next day, and released him from further obligation after an admonition to not repeat the offensive behaviours. Mary was clear when her obligations were complete and had follow-up dialogue for personal support, although her connectedness score dropped from 21/25 to 15/25 because she felt less happy, less a part of things, and less close to people at the school. Without closure, the drop would have been more extreme, and by Mary's own admission she might have dropped out of school.

In all but one case where there was a lack of closure; and there was either low connectedness at the former school, or a drop in connectedness post-suspension. The

question of connection to school was referenced in some cases with the same school pre- and post-suspension, and in other cases as a comparison between the former school (i.e., where expulsion occurred) and the subsequent school placement:

before → after (same school)	former school → new school
21/25 → 15/25	6/25 → 20/25
11/25 → 1/25	21/25 → 14/25
20/25 → 3/25	12/25 → 10/25
6/25 → 6/25	

Students had lower connectedness post-suspension, based both on school connectedness scores and on interview responses to a direct question about whether participants felt more or less connected to school post-suspension.

Bill's score dropped from 21 (former school) to 14 (new school) and he didn't feel as safe or feel that people treated him as fairly in his new school. He described the suspension process as unfair and having "no point," because there was no opportunity to attempt reconciliation between the students who fought. He thought closure would be important for most kids, although he said he didn't get any and didn't really care. Furthermore, with respect to closure Bill said, "Teachers brought it up a lot too. Like, whenever I got kicked out." When asked if he felt more or less connected as a result of suspension, he said he felt "more" because it drew him closer to his peer group for support: "About the school, you really don't care. You just, it's just like another house basically, it's like another home. Uh, I'd have to say if my friends weren't there I couldn't stand school." He interpreted "connectedness" in terms of relationship with his peer group and not "school connectedness" as intended by the question.

Jim, who was suspended for fighting, had a drop in score from 11/25 to 1/25, and projected a lot of anger about the absence of closure in his case: "The teachers, and like the princ[ipal], like, my counsellor, and Mr. B (administrator), they were just pricks to me after that. Like, what do you expect?" He said they treated him with less respect after the suspension and "told me it was the last straw and they were always on my case." He felt labelled and stigmatized, and would have liked closure in his case.

Mary experienced closure, but the suspension didn't make her more or less connected. She did feel less connected due to the nature of her wrongful behaviour (swearing at staff) and the reaction of her own conscience, but not due to the suspension as an intervention. As mentioned, Bill lacked closure, but the suspension made him more connected to friends. However, all connection with the school was terminated via his expulsion - this fact and his lack of caring indicate a lower connection to school. Sam was another student who experienced some closure, and he indicated a greater connection with friends as a result of a certain "coolness factor" derived from suspension that positively influenced peer relationships, and which suggested formation of a negative school sub-culture of disaffection with the institutional school. The remaining four students had no formal closure and felt less connected to school because of their suspension.

All seven students indicated that closure is important. It influenced perception of fairness, retention of negative shame emotions and anger, and connectedness to school and peers. A lack of closure or smooth transitioning after expulsion accompanied a lack of LICARE behaviours and a lower sense of connectedness to school. Closure was a specific process element that seemed to require demonstration of LICARE behaviours by

school staff to be effectively achieved. Formal closure might also have enhanced the positive influence of LICARE on promoting school connectedness.

School Connectedness (CX)

School connectedness scores were described above in relation to closure and forgiveness. There is a trend in the small sample to suggest that these suspensions were all detrimental to student connectedness, defined by the five connectedness questions that ask about school safety, fairness of teachers, happiness, connection to people, and feeling a part of things. The school connectedness construct as defined in this research was qualitatively different than some student interpretations of connectedness (recall that students both completed the Likert-scored school connectedness scale and responded to a direct question about feeling more or less connected to school after suspension). In cases where students interpreted school connectedness in a novel way, alienation from the institutional school provoked a greater sense of attachment to and reliance upon peers for support. In some cases, students became more connected with other disaffected peers who were not modeling or valuing connection to school.

There was some awkwardness in making meaning of the scores because of the different ways the question was asked and interpreted. In all cases, the student-participants no longer attended the school from which they were suspended. In four cases the scores represent how they felt toward their old school before and after suspension, in the other three cases the scores represent an old school to new school comparison. However, integrating the scores with interview discussion about pre- and post-suspension feelings of school connection clearly indicated that suspension tended to decrease connection to school. The overall decrease in connectedness represents a sense

of decreased relational attachment to school, a decrease in respect for it, fealty to it, reliance upon it, and emotional investment in it. Even in the case of the restorative suspension, Mary's connectedness dropped due to the alienating emotional experience of the suspension itself; and this despite her numerous resilience characteristics such as student efficacy, pre-existing good relationships with administration, and administrator competence in restorative practices.

The decrease in connectedness related closely to student feedback about lack of respect for administration. In several cases the student had little to no good will or respect for the administrator who did the censuring. Comments by a couple of students indicated they distinguished between administrators based on perceptions that one administrator acted respectfully and the other did not. The disrespected administrator was much less likely to dispose the suspended student to listening and internalizing a message of disapproval. In fact, the lack of LICARE behaviours was associated in these cases with low perceptions of fairness, low internalized sense of obligation or accountability, externalized anger, lack of closure, and low connectedness. The decrease in connectedness represented a cascade of effects in the suspension process, starting with a lack of LICARE behaviours, followed by stigmatizing disapproval, lack of procedural fairness, physical and psychological alienation inherent in the suspension, academic failure, and lack of closure.

Help-Support and Controls-Limits (HECO)

This thematic element represents a global discipline model based on a bipolar model (Appendix A) adapted from McCold and Wachtel (2003). Their model corresponds to research on parenting styles (Baumrind, 1991). The most effective

parenting models are high in nurturing support, while simultaneously providing consistent and reasonable limits. Quadrants of the model represented four discipline styles: Uninvolved, Permissive, Authoritarian, and Restorative. Students used the model to analyze and summarize their suspension experiences and their needs arising from suspensions. Students expressed unanimous support for the restorative model (high in both support and limits) as the most effective discipline model. This contrasted with their own suspension experiences: six of seven students reported their own suspension matched a different discipline style (i.e., Permissive, Uninvolved, or Punitive). There was some overlap in the conceptions of LICARE and the HECO model. Both themes involved respectful, caring support and empathic understanding that is foundational to relational attachment, school connectedness, and community-building.

However, while LICARE behaviours operated at a micro-level of individual interactions that contribute to connectedness, the HECO discipline model occurred at a macro-level. The latter provided a global snapshot of the overall censure process from beginning to end. The HECO model provided a conceptualizing function for designing discipline interventions and behaviour plans around the two basic concerns of help and support versus controls and limit-setting. As one of the restorative themes derived in this research and represented in the restorative template, the HECO theme also functioned to provide a global model of evaluation regarding the restorativeness of interventions. Finally, the HECO theme acted as a post-suspension tool for evaluating restorative outcomes. This theme provided a useful conceptual tool, a global snapshot of restorative interventions and outcomes that focused on building student resilience by attending to their diverse developmental needs.

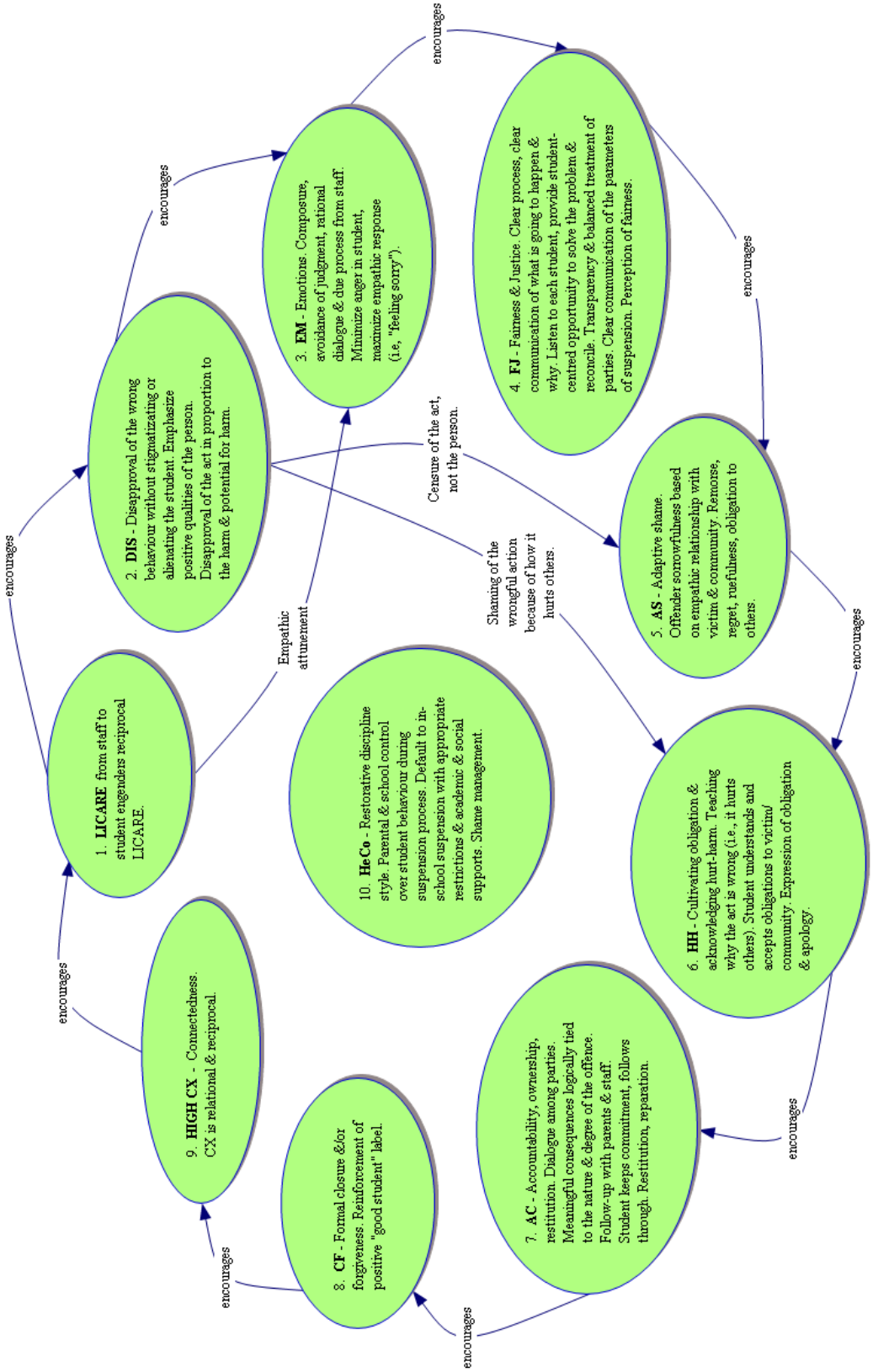

1. LICARE from staff to student engenders reciprocal LICARE.
2. DIS - Disapproval of the wrong behaviour without stigmatizing or alienating the student. Emphasize positive qualities of the person. Disapproval of the act in proportion to the harm & potential for harm.
3. EM - Emotions. Composure, avoidance of judgment, rational dialogue & due process from staff. Minimize anger in student, maximize empathic response (i.e., "feeling sorry").
4. FJ - Fairness & Justice. Clear process, clear communication of what is going to happen & why. Listen to each student, provide student-centred opportunity to solve the problem & reconcile. Transparency & balanced treatment of parties. Clear communication of the parameters of suspension. Perception of fairness.
5. AS - Adaptive shame. Offender sorrowfulness based on empathic relationship with victim & community. Remorse, regret, ruefulness, obligation to others.
6. HH - Cultivating obligation & acknowledging hurt-harm. Teaching why the act is wrong (i.e., it hurts others). Student understands and accepts obligations to victim/ community. Expression of obligation & apology.
7. AC - Accountability, ownership, restitution. Dialogue among parties. Meaningful consequences logically tied to the nature & degree of the offence. Follow-up with parents & staff. Student keeps commitment, follows through. Restitution, reparation.
8. CF - Formal closure &/or forgiveness. Reinforcement of positive "good student" label.
9. HIGH CX - Connectedness. CX is relational & reciprocal.
10. HeCo - Restorative discipline style. Parental & school control over student behaviour during suspension process. Default to in-school suspension with appropriate restrictions & academic & social supports. Shame management.
encourages
Empathic attunement
Censure of the act, not the person.
Shaming of the wrongful action because of how it hurts others.

Figure 2: Restorative Pro-Connectedness Cycle

Legend for Thematic Acronyms	
SUS	Suspensions
LICARE	Listening, Caring, Respecting
DIS	Disapproval
EM	Emotions
FJ	Fairness-Justice
ASMS	Adaptive Shame & Maladaptive Shame
HH	Cultivating Obligation & Acknowledging Hurt-Harm
AC	Accountability, Ownership, Restitution
CF	Closure-Forgiveness
CX	School Connectedness
HECO	Help-Support & Controls-Limits

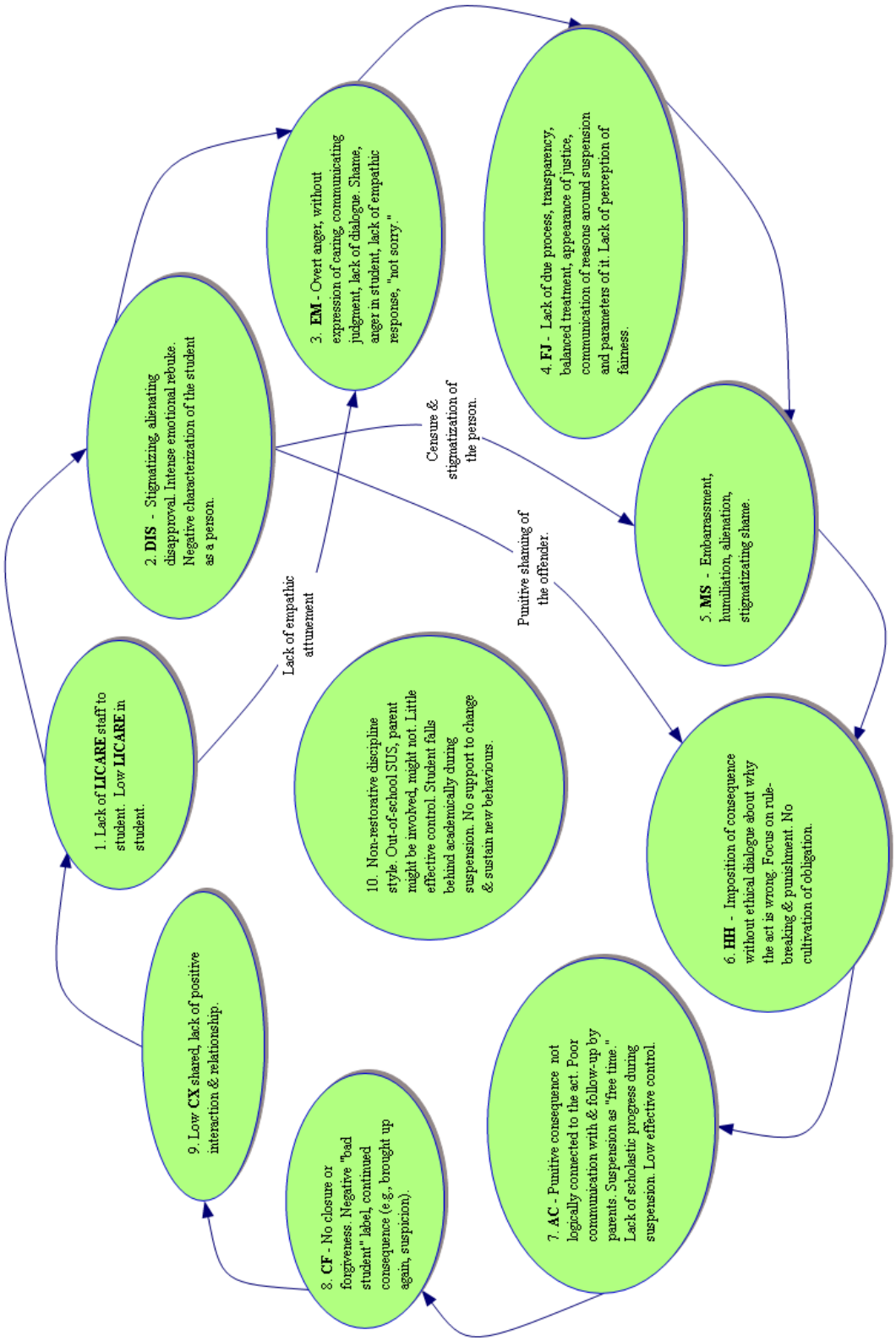

1. Lack of LICARE staff to student. Low LICARE in student.
2. DIS - Stigmatizing, alienating disapproval. Intense emotional rebuke. Negative characterization of the student as a person.
3. EM - Overt anger, without expression of caring, communicating judgment, lack of dialogue. Shame, anger in student, lack of empathic response, "not sorry."
4. FJ - Lack of due process, transparency, balanced treatment, appearance of justice, communication of reasons around suspension and parameters of it. Lack of perception of fairness.
5. MS - Embarassment, humiliation, alienation, stigmatizating shame.
6. HH - Imposition of consequence without ethical dialogue about why the act is wrong. Focus on rule-breaking & punishment. No cultivation of obligation.
7. AC - Punitive consequence not logically connected to the act. Poor communication with & follow-up by parents. Suspension as "free time." Lack of scholastic progress during suspension. Low effective control.
8. CF - No closure or forgiveness. Negative "bad student" label, continued consequence (e.g., brought up again, suspicion).
9. Low CX shared, lack of positive interaction & relationship.
10. Non-restorative discipline style. Out-of-school SUS, parent might be involved, might not. Little effective control. Student falls behind academically during suspension. No support to change & sustain new behaviours.
Lack of empathic attunement
Censure & stigmatization of the person.
Punitive shaming of the offender.

Figure 3: Alienation-Reinforcing Cycle

Legend for Thematic Acronyms	
SUS	Suspensions
LICARE	Listening, Caring, Respecting
DIS	Disapproval
EM	Emotions
FJ	Fairness-Justice
ASMS	Adaptive Shame & Maladaptive Shame
HH	Cultivating Obligation & Acknowledging Hurt-Harm
AC	Accountability, Ownership, Restitution
CF	Closure-Forgiveness
CX	School Connectedness
HECO	Help-Support & Controls-Limits

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Research Questions and Outcomes: Meaning and Validity

This research investigated the way suspensions affected student perceptions and emotions, what role shame and other emotions played in the suspension experience, and how these experiences affected student connection to school. The course of this research, from conception to presentation here, embodied a reflective practitioner methodology grounded in restorative justice values, processes, and behaviours. This research is part of an ongoing professional development process, and is built on consultation with students, educators, restorative practitioners, and literature. Student interviews provided understanding of student suspension experiences, which then guided development of a restorative practices template for crafting interventions that heal harm, mediate student learning, and promote student connectedness to school. Students reflected on their suspensions in a relaxed interview format and analysed their experiences through a restorative "lens" (Zehr, 1995). Students gave the impression that suspensions were generally negative, unhelpful, and disconnecting experiences. These results corroborate a growing body of evidence in the educational literature that common school discipline practices that rely on punishment and external control may actually exacerbate problem behaviour and psychosocial problems in children (Cameron, 2006). Student reflections also provided valuable insights about ways that restorative practices can achieve justice for victims, while supporting learning and keeping students connected to school.

Students reflected and elaborated on their rich and diverse suspension experiences in relaxed and respectful dialogues. Experience of the interview and immersion in transcriptions led to insights, emergent conceptual abstractions, and core themes. Themes

represented value orientations, processes, and interpersonal behaviours and skills central to restorative school discipline practices. The data treatment methodology was a figure-ground process of comparison and revision to ensure fidelity between the raw data and the abstracted themes. Themes were defined in an action-reaction format (i.e., the school's actions followed by the student's reaction). Transcripts were coded for instances of themes, then analysed in a three-column format representing selected dialogue, paraphrasing, condensed abstractions, and hypotheses about thematic interactions. A process of reflective revision crafted themes into hypotheses represented by the model templates (Figures 1, 2 and 3). The result of data analysis was a distillation and integration of themes in a restorative practices template for designing, implementing, and evaluating restorative discipline interventions. The methodology produced results with fit and relevance between the data set and the thematic conceptions comprising the template. The template is flexible and readily applicable to diverse school discipline contexts.

Restorative template in context: Correspondence with literature. A consensus in the educational literature is that intentional, proactive, school-wide approaches most effectively promote desired outcomes in academic, behavioural, and social-emotional domains (Vincent, Horner, & Sugai, 2002; Greenberg et al., 2003). Best practices build integrated and inclusive school cultures that provide a continuum of supports for students that match intensity of intervention to individual student needs (Freeman et al., 2006). This consensus of practice informed the three-tiered model proposed here, comprised of professional competencies for restorative practitioners, a restorative practices template, and a whole-school strategy for mediating social, emotional, and behavioural learning. Any novelty here is with the template itself, not the three-tiered model; however, the

template functions optimally in a healthy, communitarian school culture with competent restorative practitioners. The template provides a viable alternative to punitive interventions in schools by facilitating a holistic integration of restorative practices in a workable framework (Varnham, 2005). Restorative practices are now widely used in school settings with good results (Boulton & Mirsky, 2006; Cameron & Thorsborne, 1999; Morrison, 2002; McCold & Wachtel, 2002; Kane et al., 2007; Wilcox & Hoyle, 2004). The objectives of template are a good fit with the citizen development vision of liberal democratic education (Yagos, 2005; Hébert, 2002), it accommodates the diverse developmental needs of students (Kozulin & Presseisen, 1995; Wertsch & Tulviste, 1992), and it represents a novel extension of restorative practices - a flexible and adaptable restorative intervention template to help schools overcome challenges of, and resistance to, implementation (Varnham, 2005).

Effect of suspension experiences on school connectedness. Negative student emotions and perceptions arising from suspension experiences appeared to mediate decreased student connectedness to the institutional school, although in some cases suspension encouraged attachment to peers, a kind of solidarity of shared disaffection from the institutional school. Suspension experiences of interview participants mirror Cameron's (2006) review of the suspension literature: students are often suspended repeatedly, suspension exacerbates problem behaviour not related to suspension, high absenteeism follows suspension, suspension leads to distancing in relationships from school staff, suspension is linked to involvement with peers with behaviour problems, and suspension is associated with academic failure and school dropout. All of these

suspension related outcomes were reflected in suspension experiences related by seven student-participants in separate semi-structured interviews.

Student-participants unanimously supported the use of restorative discipline practices as alternatives to punitive discipline because of their potential to heal harm, meet student needs, and keep students connected to school. Students described suspension as far more alienating and harmful to the social, moral, emotional, and academic development of suspended students than it was helpful and connection-building. Alienating suspension experiences were associated with student perceptions of unfair process and treatment, lack of care and concern by school staff, low student contrition and obligation, low direct accountability to redress harm, academic failure, lack of closure, and feeling negatively labelled. Reasons students gave for their low perception of fairness corresponded to studies that document consequences of suspension, such as missed instruction, academic stagnation, negative student labelling, and failure to treat misbehaviour as a manifestation of other problems (Mendez, 2003).

Student-participants also related perceptions of unfairness to unequal treatment of students, lack of opportunity for direct dialogue and resolution between persons in conflict, and an absence of caring, respectful dialogue between students and administrators. Respectful, open, egalitarian, and consensus-driven dialogue is described in the literature as a core restorative justice process that draws on knowledge of group processes and facilitation, mediation, and counselling to facilitate a psychological process of development of remorse, empathy, and the capacity to make amends (Drewery, 2004; Braithwaite, 1989, 2002). The present research focused on cognitive and emotional transformation in the offending student, and how restorative dialogues can mediate a

student's acceptance of responsibility for causing harm to others, and keep him or her connected to school. A restorative mediation process ought to enable offenders to acknowledge the shamefulness of their actions, and frame the incident so that a person's basic goodness is distanced from the wrongfulness of their actions.

Opportunities for expression of remorse and gestures of apology and restitution validate the law-abiding, responsible, caring identity of the offender and facilitate his re-integration in the community (Johnstone, 2002). My own experiences as a restorative conference facilitator for two serious cases (e.g., one related to drug use at school, the other related to bullying) followed restorative processes and generated restorative outcomes. These experiences corroborate the transformative nature of restorative practice that can occur in safe, respectful settings. It is significant then, that student-participants associated unfairness of the suspensions with a lack of opportunity to resolve the issue directly, respectfully, peacefully, and equitably between the two parties. When there was no LICARE perceived by students from staff, students did not feel the process was fair and did not demonstrate LICARE attitudes and behaviours (i.e., listening, caring, respectful).

The Fairness-Justice (FJ) theme described fair processes in terms of equitable consequences among the persons in conflict and opportunity to reconcile differences. In contrast to the restorative suspension model in Figure 1, the experience for some students lacked an inclusive administration of justice where the student played an active role. Students described hierarchically-imposed justice where students were mostly passive recipients of a consequence, a process reminiscent of adversarial criminal justice. Student feedback suggests that perceptions of fairness, feelings of validation, and respect for

censuring adults would be more likely in inclusive and dialogical justice processes compared to processes that impose consequences on a passive offender. Michele Borba (2001) considers fairness to be one of seven essential virtues; it is one of several of Borba's virtues identified in the restorative template themes, along with empathy, respect, and conscience. Perception of fairness is also one of five items that comprise the school connectedness construct, so student perceptions of lack of fairness and justice in suspension would likely predict decreased school connectedness.

Student accounts of their suspension experiences confirm educational literature that demonstrates suspensions and other punitive and exclusionary discipline interventions are counter-productive and may contribute to delinquency. Important influences in a "school to prison pipeline," especially for disabled and minority students, include academic failure, exclusionary discipline practices, and dropout (Lerner & Galambos, 1998; Skiba et al., 2002; Wald & Losen, 2003; Christle, Jolivette, & Nelson, 2005). Exclusionary discipline practices contribute to a cycle of failure by interfering with academic progress and decreasing opportunities for development of academic and social behaviour skills (Costenbader & Markson, 1998). Students in this research explained how their negative suspension experiences generated antipathy to school and some staff, and disconnection from school.

One of seven participants, Mary, had a restorative suspension, which served as a prototype for both the restorative template presented in Figure 1, and the three-tiered whole-school model. The three-tiered model incorporates (1) proficiency in restorative skills for individual practitioners, (2) a practical and flexible template for restorative interventions, and (3) a supportive, whole-school community-building approach that

teaches, models, and encourages pro-social behaviour and healthy relationships. Mary's restorative suspension experience had elements that support connectedness: the administrator had a good previous relationship with the student (Blum, 2005; e.g., Morrison, 2007), implemented a restorative process (Morrison, 2005), and built a respectful alliance with the student (Wampold & Bhati, 2004) that helped manage troubling emotions in the conflict. Prior social capital between administrator and student facilitated censure that mitigated potential maladaptive shame reactions like humiliation, decrease to self-esteem, alienation, and dropout. Social capital refers to relationship ties binding individuals and groups, and the resultant advantages that accrue for individuals and groups because of those relationships (Nooteboom, 2007; Morrison et al., 2005; Morrison, 2007). Social capital supports civic and social engagement, and academic achievement.

Integrating Themes in Context

The focus of the present discussion is on the restorative thematic template and how it integrates into a three-tiered model: (1) a skill set of core restorative behaviours for educators, akin to basic counselling skills, that build trust and alliance; (2) a community-building, whole-school approach to mediating social, emotional, cognitive and behavioural learning; and (3) a thematic template for designing, implementing, and evaluating restorative interventions. Of the eleven themes that emerged from the interviews, one theme described the suspension process *per se* as described by students, while the remaining ten themes described important elements of restorative interventions related but not limited to suspension. Themes represent values, processes, and interpersonal skills foundational to a holistic model of restorative discipline intervention

practices. Holistic application of the restorative themes in discipline processes encourages outcomes that contribute to school connectedness. The totality of the themes in context suggested opposing cyclic processes representing student trajectories, wherein a student's connectedness to the school was positively or negatively affected depending on suspension processes and behaviours. These cyclic trends are proposed in Figure 2 (restorative) and Figure 3 (alienating).

Listening, respecting, and caring. LICARE attitudes and behaviours from teachers and administrators engendered reciprocal responses in students. If students felt respected they were more likely to reciprocate respect. Students who reported feeling a lack of LICARE from administrators had low connectedness to school and experienced a drop in connectedness due to suspension. LICARE behaviours are relational and seem to have a cumulative quality in terms of building relationships and social capital. Where LICARE behaviours were present, they created a secure social space and encouraged reciprocal behaviours from students. Absence of LICARE in the suspension process related to lower connectedness for students.

Respectful listening and caring looked like a resilience characteristic enabling students to avoid maladaptive shame reactions and preserve connection to school. LICARE behaviours from staff might encourage students to face facts, tell the truth, be vulnerable, and accept responsibility by buffering them from social threat by the security of their attachments. This implies caring, empathic, respectful listeners - school staff familiar with student names and faces, and who interact with students in formal and informal activities throughout school. Proactive, informal student-staff interactions are relationship-building opportunities where LICARE translates to student relational

attachment to school. The emphasis on the importance and nature of LICARE is supported by research on school and classroom environments, showing that respect needs to be modeled and taught, that respect toward others is reciprocated, and that empathic, respectful behaviour improves communication, motivation, safety, and achievement (Miller & Pedro, 2006). LICARE is analogous to the "emotional attunement" characterized by Nathanson (1997) as the "mutative force" that transcends the painful shame of the confrontation over a wrongdoing and promotes pro-social reactions to the events, resolution of conflict, and healing of harm. LICARE behaviour is also foundational in any whole-school cultural approach to human and social development.

Disapproval, emotions, and fairness. The disapproval theme (DIS) described the important function of censuring wrong actions without impugning the personhood of the offender. Disapproval was conceived by students in two ways: partly as the consequence imposed, and partly as the personal face-to-face communication of disapproval. Respectful dialogue that focuses on the wrong act, not the person, and that logically ties consequences to the harmful act, conveys a psychological and moral meaning to the student regarding the wrongfulness of the act, without lowering self-esteem (Braithwaite, 1989; Ahmed, 2001). Some students equated expression of disapproval with angry, intense verbal disapproval by an administrator. Students perceived low disapproval in the suspension process because they didn't perceive removal from school as a serious punishment. Bev and Joe liked the unstructured leisure time because they could do drugs and hang out with peers. Some students didn't have much respect for the censuring administrator and were not interested in listening. These results imply that suspensions had a low deterrent effect on misbehaviour.

Formal disapproval involved little interactive moral dialogue about the meaning of the harm done from the victim's perspective, and there was little perceived moral disapproval or deterrent in the form of a logical, effective consequence. A lack of both reasoned moral dialogue and helpful, fair consequences appeared to stigmatize students and lower their connectedness to school.

Ahmed's (2001) integration of child-rearing literature with her research on shame management indicates that non-stigmatizing disapproval conveys to students that they can control their behaviour and they are responsible for it. Shame management enables communication of disapproval of the act while upholding respect for the competence and integrity of the offending person. Reading, understanding, and adjusting to student emotional reactions are important when communicating disapproval because student emotions affect future attitudes and behaviours. Emotional awareness and sensitivity are particularly important in communication of disapproval because of the threat of stigmatization and its tendency to disable the offender from acknowledging harm and moving toward reintegration (Stutzman Amstutz and Mullet, 2005). Finally, the data obviated a need for emotional awareness generally, in terms of connecting in a relevant way with students, but specifically, for avoiding excessive displays of angry disapproval perceived by students as disrespectful and alienating.

Students offered many reasons why they thought the suspension process was unfair, and the only student who perceived a high degree of fairness also had the only restorative suspension process. Lack of perceived fairness in the process really alienated students from school and made them less likely to listen to administration and follow rules in the future. Punitive suspensions with poorly communicated expectations, low

direct accountability and participation, and low levels of respectful listening and caring were recipes for student disconnection from school. Students found it unfair that suspensions actually harmed their ability to succeed at school. Lack of fair process was tied to student perceptions of low validity of the process and lack of a sense of obligation to heal or correct something.

Adaptive shame and maladaptive shame. Disapproval with respectful, empathic listening is more likely to induce adaptive shame (AS) (i.e., remorse, contrition, obligation - forms of acknowledged shame), whereas harsh and punitive reproach is likely to generate maladaptive forms of shame (MS) (i.e., humiliation and alienation, leading to pervasive shame, by-passed shame, or denied/by-passed shame) (Harris, 2001). Each student's experience of shame related closely to presence or absence of LICARE behaviours. Adaptive shame was likely only where LICARE behaviours were modelled by the censuring authority figures, whereas an absence of LICARE predicted some form of maladaptive, unacknowledged shame reaction.

Student-participants showed an overall low level of remorseful acknowledgment of their wrongful behaviour. Although in some cases students acknowledged their wrongdoing, they still were reluctant to admit it to the institutional school because of the ill will they had developed toward certain staff or students. Some students felt humiliated and angry by the experience, felt stigmatized and labelled by adults and peers, had no sense of closure, and a loss of connectedness. Of the seven student-participants, Mary was the only student who experienced a restorative process and articulated an adaptive shame reaction that enabled reconciliation, healing, and closure. By contrast, angry censure, a lack of procedural fairness, and punishment by suspension were associated

with student shame displacement or externalized blame and anger. Students with these negative shame experiences and their maladaptive shame reactions did not cultivate a sense of moral obligation, even though they passively acquiesced to completing a suspension. The ASMS theme is a useful aspect of the template because shame emotions seem to affect student perceptions of legitimacy of the censure and mediate changes in student connectedness to school. Restorative practitioners must be aware of ways that censure can induce shame, and practice ways to mitigate maladaptive shame reactions that inhibit ability to tell the truth, admit fault, and complete a resolution-restoration sequence (Ahmed, 2001; Braithwaite, 1989; 2002; Harris, 2001).

All but one student expressed feeling angry about their suspension. Suspension as a perceived punishment engendered resentment in students and made them more likely to question the validity of the intervention, externalize blame, continue to act out, and fall behind academically, similar to observations of Stutzman Amstutz and Mullet (2005). Student accounts of angry resentment align with shame literature that establishes a connection between hidden, undischarged shame leading to anger (Braithwaite, 2002). Shame plays a central role in regulating social interactions and engendering violence (Poulson, 2000; 2001) - it is the 'master emotion' because of its extraordinarily powerful psychological and social functions. Retzinger and Scheff (2000) draw on the work of Lewis (1971) and others in describing common words and gestures that hide shame in anger. They describe a feeling trap, a shame-anger spiral, a humiliated fury where the person is angry at being ashamed, and ashamed at being angry. Since shame is the most common underlying source of anger, and people go to great lengths to hide their shame in Western societies, the source of anger is often not explicit or apparent. Various contexts

will determine the degree of awareness one has of their own shame and anger, and other variants like insult and embarrassment. Sensitivity to managing emotional reactions such as anger and shame that arise in restorative justice conference participants is crucially important for the restorative practitioner (Morrison, 2007).

Student-participants thought that schools adhering to restorative values, processes, and behaviours would best manage shame and encourage student attachment to school. Braithwaite's theories of reintegrative shaming (1989) and responsive regulation (2002) have provided a framework for Morrison (2001; 2002; 2005; 2007) to develop understanding of how restorative practices can be applied both proactively and reactively to the important problem of bullying. Morrison's (2002) framework interprets Ahmed's (2001) bullying research in Australian schools and explains how individuals manage shame over a wrongdoing. Shame can be maladaptive when a person's internal sanctioning mechanism is not working and shame is not effectively discharged (Harris, 2001). Undischarged shame can linger as internalization of others' rejection, externalization of blame and anger, or vacillation about blame (Harris, 2001). Conversely, shame can be discharged when the internal sanctioning mechanism is working, and mechanisms exist to restore social relationships. Acknowledgement of shame in a safe, supportive milieu helps prevent rejection of self and others and externalization of blame and anger.

Cultivating obligation. The hurt and harm acknowledgement theme relates to how actions of school discipline practitioners either induce or impede student acceptance of obligation to repair a harm. A lack of moral instruction about how a wrongful act hurt people was relevant for student-participants' suspensions, given that they generally

communicated low obligation for their offences. Delivery of this instruction needs to mediate student learning by tailoring the process to the developmental needs of each student (Kozulin & Presseisen, 1995; Daniels, 2001; Stutzman Amstutz and Mullet, 2005). The school needs to help students understand harmful consequences of wrongful actions and moral obligations arising from them. This step will be difficult when students are deeply angry, or where longstanding conflicts have occurred. School staff need to routinely model peaceable behaviours and conflict resolution strategies throughout the school day to normalize them and to build relationship credibility with students.

Time needs to be set aside for persuasive moral dialogue to bring the offender to a place of empathy for the victim and community. Pre-conference meetings are sometimes necessary to create parameters for restorative meetings between parties in conflict. Pre-coaching prepares restorative conference participants to understand and accept restorative values and processes (e.g., confidential, offender tells truth and admits fault, takes responsibility, attempts repair of harm, and accepts mediated consequences and restoration with support of the community). A prior relationship and respect between the student whose actions are censured and community figures mediating moral dialogue will contribute to the student's ability to accept and integrate community values (Braithwaite, 1989; 2002). The Restorative Justice Consortium (2005) has identified elements of restorative processes and outcomes in its Statement of Restorative Justice Principles that contribute to offender willingness to accept obligation, show remorse, apologize, and take reparative action. Stutzman Amstutz and Mullet (2005) have condensed many essential elements of restorative school practice in their useful and accessible book.

Where an offender fails to adequately grasp and communicate moral obligation, the school needs to explain how the response is less than satisfactory, and that the offender's participation in restitution planning will be constrained to the degree that the offender fails to cultivate obligation for reparation. More the offender takes ownership, more the offender is an active participant in the justice process. Inadequate admission of fault and acknowledgement of harm, or disengagement from other aspects of the restorative sequence, would mean a more passive offender role in the justice process. Failure of participants to respect a restorative process would shift the discipline intervention from a participatory process to a more typically authoritarian process where the offender is more passively recipient of a consequence. This is a much less ideal option; however, some offenders will opt for a more adversarial and less restorative process. A model of varying intensities of intervention is reflected in the continuum of restorative responses from highly restorative to non-restorative (Restorative Justice Consortium, 2005; McCold & Wachtel, 2003). This corresponds to a school discipline continuum (Stutzman Amstutz and Mullet, 2005) ranging from low to high student engagement: from punishment, through consequences, solutions, and finally to restoration. A continuum also corresponds with Braithwaite's (2001) responsive regulation pyramid, where a majority of early interventions at the triangle base (i.e., for the vast majority of persons) are least intrusive and most dialogic, moving to deterrence, and finally incapacitation. Morrison (2007) adapted the regulatory pyramid for school environments to convey the idea of moving from universal to intensively targeted interventions.

Moral education in a supportive environment is likely to enhance an offending student's ability to appropriately demonstrate empathy and obligation (Borba, 2001). Social capital built over time in relationship-building interactions (Morrison, 2007) will buffer psychological obstacles to acceptance, like maladaptive shame reactions Nathanson, 1992). Ideally, educational interventions build emotional, social, and moral capacities in pre-school and continue through elementary and secondary grades. Student feedback showed that schools need to teach why students are suspended, and why certain behaviours are wrong because of how they harm people and the community. Restorative practitioners need to cultivate empathy through respectful empathic listening and moral dialogue that mediates third-party perspective-taking, understanding, and appreciation of the experiences of others, especially harm they might have endured. Of course, if these skills work for restorative practitioners, then they are skills to develop in our youngest students. That is why in my counselling work in an elementary school I teach primary students active listening, emotional attunement, friendly behaviours, problem-solving, and so on. Teaching and learning restorative values, processes, and behaviours are part of building a restorative school culture and community. Professional and staff development time needs to be set aside so educators can integrate restorative thinking into their teaching practices.

Accountability. The accountability theme relates to planning and fulfilling restitution plans and addressing consequences. Schools need to explain the details of the consequences for persons harmed, so they are clearly understood by the harming student and the parents. The communicated purpose of the suspension is important: the student needs to know the rational and explicit connection between the action and the

consequence, and what he/she is supposed to learn from the consequences. Student-participant perceptions were that suspensions were intended as punishment, although that was not directly communicated. Based on students' diverse perceptions about the purpose of suspensions, schools needed to make lessons explicit and relevant for students. Students will be more likely to accept responsibility and complete restitution agreements when it is clear what the student is supposed to learn from the intervention. The best plans are cooperative initiatives among students, their family, and staff. Students and their parents can often come up with great ideas for keeping the student accountable. But where the consequences and lessons are poorly understood, or are irrelevant to the context of the harm, there will be poor internalization of the moral lesson and inadequate behaviour change. Schools also need to be vigilant to ensure a personal, telephone or other direct communication between parent and school, considering that some student-participants easily blocked discipline-related information from getting to parents. Some students were unsupervised, unaccountable, and drug-using during the actual suspension.

Help and support with controls and limit-setting. A restorative censuring model, akin to authoritative parenting (Baumrind, 1991), is high in limit-setting and behavioural controls, and high in support and nurture (McCold & Wachtel, 2003). The HECO theme is macro-scale conception of restorative censure that facilitates both limit-setting themes like disapproval, moral obligation, and accountability, and support themes like empathic listening, fairness, shame management, closure, and connectedness. It necessitates school, student, and parent participation in the censuring process, and cooperative planning for academic, behavioural, emotional and social development. Workable plans support the student to fulfill obligations and restitution. Accountability planning actively

engages a student in some form of meaningful, pro-social, community-building activity that is logically (or at least metaphorically) related to healing harm. Students are not passive recipients of consequence or punishment. Students who participate in building fair, relevant behaviour and learning plans are more likely to be motivated and compliant. Plans need sensitivity to developmental stages and cultural contexts, targeted at each student's zone of proximal development (Daniels, 2001).

A contextual, restorative approach to conflict resolution precludes zero tolerance policies that prescribe predetermined punishments for specified offences. Zero tolerance policies represent a kind of regulatory formalism challenged by restorative justice theory. Of course, for safety reasons, there should be no tolerance for *not* investigating and responding to violence and threats of violence. However, persuasive conversation that leads to change is preferential to coercion and punishment because dialogue is more respectful of democratic values of liberty and autonomy (Braithwaite, 2002). However, once persuasive and dialogic efforts fail, an offender moves up the regulatory pyramid through successively more intrusive interventions, where he or she becomes more passively recipient of imposed consequences toward the top of the pyramid. It is sword of Damocles effect, a spectre of inevitable retribution that lingers in the background to encourage participants in conflict toward a peaceful resolution (Braithwaite, 2001). Threat of punishment is never in the foreground where it would incite psychological reactivity in the offender; however, the inevitability of accountability provides motivation to repair harm through peaceful dialogue (Braithwaite, 2001).

It is important here to consider how punishment and restorative practice are relevant to the field of threat assessment, in light of severe school violence and what we

have learned from tragedies like Columbine, Colorado and Taber, Alberta. Modern standards of threat assessment are multidimensional and bring together diverse aspects of a community to prevent, identify, and mitigate risk (Cameron, 2004). Cooperative and open relationships and information flow characteristic of restorative schools are more likely to keep students connected, and these schools are less likely to experience serious violence. Lack of connection to a significant adult has been characteristic of many student shooters in schools (K. Cameron, personal communication, August 20, 2008). Time invested in developing restorative practices and school connectedness plays an important role in lowering risk of serious violence.

Morrison (2005; 2007) adopted Braithwaite's (2001) responsive regulation in her whole-school model of restorative justice. Universal strategies for promoting restorative communities form the base of the pyramid, the many and varied opportunities to build social, emotional, behavioural, and moral competencies through curricular and extra-curricular life. The bottom of the pyramid represents proactive and universal actions to promote community-building values like fairness, respect, and relationships, but also represents informal, day-to-day reactive responses to student misbehaviours. The middle of the pyramid represents targeted approaches, like problem-solving circles, to repair relationships in more serious cases of harm. At the top of the pyramid, the smallest number of cases (1-5%) requires the most intensive interventions like restorative conferencing to rebuild broken relationships. This restorative school model of responsive regulation mirrors the pyramidal design of PBS-style school-wide behavioural support systems (Positive Behavior Supports, PBS: Freeman et al., 2006) that focus primarily on pro-active behavioural interventions (e.g., explicit teaching and modeling of expectations

by staff), and rely secondarily on reactive interventions. Both approaches target more intensive interventions for the relatively few students that need them. My current elementary school integrates a PBS whole-school model with intentional moral education (i.e., The Virtues Project, Kavelin-Popov, 2000), social instruction, and restorative discipline practices. Unlike purely behaviouristic approaches, the model advocated in this thesis emphasizes contextual integration of thoughts, feelings and behaviours in resolving conflicts, and active involvement of students in crafting culture and interventions.

The contextual and communitarian value-orientation of restorative thinking coheres well with Vygotsky's ideas that knowledge is primarily socially constructed using cultural symbols, and secondarily by internal psychological constructions residing within the individual (Daniel, 2001). The notion of knowledge structures derived from their social function emphasizes a need to teach students, in context and as opportunity presents, how their behaviour affects or harms others, how persons might be healed, what it means for them, and how to prevent reoccurrence. A high degree of accountability with caring support promotes acceptance of moral obligations, high completion rates, low recidivism, and connectedness to community. The HECO theme is a flexible framework, supportive of developmental needs and sensitive to a range of restorative responses depending on contextual factors of individual cases of harm to others.

Strengths and Limitations of the Findings

The content of interview items was influenced by restorative justice literature and my personal experiences as a counsellor and restorative school practitioner. Selection of interview items influenced distillation of restorative themes, via a process of abductive thinking (i.e., exploring educated hunches about what makes restorative justice work). A

data analysis methodology of immersion in the interview data identified themes via a figure-ground process of sifting, sorting, reflection, abstraction, note-taking, testing, and constant revision. The ongoing comparison and revision process provided a validity check for fit, relevance, workability, and flexibility.

The insights in this project were generated primarily from participation in the interviews and immersion in the transcripts. However, the reflective practitioner framework methodology integrated numerous sources into the resulting model: restorative justice literature, interviews with teachers and administrators, restorative conference facilitator training and leadership, and experience in restorative practices as a school counsellor. The thesis process, from conception to completion, was guided by experiences working within a restorative justice paradigm in school counselling, and by interactions with students, teaching colleagues, administrators, and restorative practitioners. The totality of these experiences provided coherence between interview items, data set, thematic abstractions, practical application, and formative feedback from colleagues. Presentation of early findings to my teaching colleagues and to a local restorative justice group provided strong confirmation of the intuitive logic in the themes comprising the restorative template.

The data set represents interactive dialogue from seven richly detailed semi-structured interviews. Transcribed interviews provided rich textual description of diverse suspension experiences. The interview experience itself also created distinct subjective impressions for the researcher about how students were affected by suspension, and how that affected their connection to the school. The dialogue was meaningful, interactive, relational, and egalitarian and the researcher played an important role in drawing out

ideas from students. Validity of interview item content and format is suggested by observations that all students were engaged in and completed the interview, no student scoffed or balked at a question, and all questions appeared to matter to students.

The three-tiered model proposed here is a holistic approach supported by educational literature: mediation of social, emotional and behavioural competencies in a community-building school culture; design, implementation and evaluation of discipline interventions using a restorative practices template; and development of restorative practitioner competencies for mediating healing and restoration. Development of restorative justice programs can be guided by principles identified by Sharpe (1998): participation and consensus, healing, accountability, reuniting, and strengthening community. In the K - 12 school system, learning should start in kindergarten and continue through graduation, and all professional staff should develop restorative skills as part of teacher training and professional development.

The Restorative Justice Consortium (2005) in the United Kingdom has developed a detailed statement of restorative principles for application in school settings. Many of the principles espoused are really very practical process elements of restorative interventions, guided by restorative values, that complement the restorative template derived in this research. The Consortium has analysed interventions along various continuums according to their degree of restorativeness related to four factors: the type of meeting, type of amends, degree of reintegration, and degree of school involvement. Intervention can be categorized as fully restorative, moderately restorative, or minimally restorative based on the combined restorativeness of the factors. Fully restorative interventions are characterized as follows: face-to-face meetings with communication and

agreement; reparation, apology, and change; respect and assistance to parties in the conflict; and invitation of students to participate in a flexible, participatory approach to resolving conflict. The results of the present research, the thematic template and the restorative pro-connectedness cycle, resemble the Consortium's principles for application in a school setting.

The present research would have been strengthened by more interviews with a wider diversity of students representing students of different ages and cultural backgrounds, from diverse schools, and from different school districts. Concurrent analysis of interview transcripts by different researchers would have provided a validity check by verifying the substantive fit of emergent ideas. Given that modern application of restorative interventions often draw upon aboriginal justice traditions, feedback from aboriginal students likely would have produced insights particularly useful for working with aboriginal students and their families.

A useful next step in refinement of the template would be a research program to implement and evaluate the template in a variety of school settings such as elementary, middle, and secondary schools, based on outcome criteria like discipline referrals, academic achievement, and school connectedness. The researcher has developed a detailed online survey to apply statistical methodologies to large samples of student reflections on their suspensions based on items similar to those used in this research.

Integrative Summary of the Research Findings

The restorative template forms one part of a tripartite model for building a school community with socially responsible children; a whole-school approach to creating positive school culture and restorative practitioner skills complete the trio. The template

itself can be used in a variety of ways: a psycho-educational outline; a guide for pre-meetings; a restorative intervention design template; a process guide for restorative facilitators; and an evaluative tool for restorative processes. The template contributes to the restorative justice literature by proposing a flexible and relevant model of restorative justice that can be used in novel ways in school settings. The themes reflect values, guide process and behaviour, and shape restorative outcomes. The application of these themes in school settings provides a way to practice restorative interventions that has potential to benefit students and other members of the school and broader community.

Motivation for this research arose from my observations as a teacher that suspensions were generally counter-productive because they removed students from a community of care and a system of support for their academic, behavioural, and social-emotional needs. Removing students from school is conceptually incongruent with the mandate of schools to educate democratic citizens in culturally and developmentally appropriate ways. Schools are a microcosm of society and nurture our young citizens over many months and years, so they are well situated to develop restorative thinking and problem-solving capacities in students (Morrison, 2007).

Student-participants who reflected on their own suspension experiences described suspension as unhelpful, unfair, disrespectful, alienating, and disruptive of academic progress. These results mirror current educational research regarding the ineffectiveness, harmfulness, and injustice of punitive school discipline interventions (Skiba & Peterson, 2003), and out-of-school suspensions (Skiba & Peterson, 2003; Skiba et al., 1997; Ekstrom et al., 1987; Skiba et al., 2002; Morrison & D'Incau, 1997; Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Students also identified restorative discipline as the most effective form of

intervention because of its capacity to heal, solve conflict, and keep students connected to school. A data analysis strategy using thematic coding and abstraction produced a restorative intervention template for designing, implementing, and evaluating restorative interventions. The template identifies core values, processes, and outcomes detailed in restorative justice literature (Roche, 2001; Braithwaite, 2002; Zehr, 1995; Sharpe, 1998). Template themes align closely with restorative justice theory and philosophy, as previously discussed (Latimer et al., 2001; Zehr, 1995; Van Ness & Strong, 1997). Student-participant reflections and the resultant themes also correspond with literature that supported the effectiveness of restorative practices in criminal settings (Bradshaw et al., 2001; Luke & Lind, 2002; Sherman et al., 2000), and school settings (Wilcox & Hoyle, 2004; Kane et al., 2007; Hopkins, 2004; Morrison, 2007; Stutzman Amstutz and Mullet, 2005; Fraser Region Community Justice Initiatives and Langley School District No. 35, 2006).

The research findings presented in this thesis integrated with theories of shame and emotion to provide explanatory power as to how restorative interventions actually work on a psychological level (Braithwaite, 1989; 2002; Nathanson, 1992; 1997). Theoretical integration provides insight into the psycho-social transformation characteristic of a resolution-restoration sequence (i.e., acknowledgement of harm; demonstration of remorse; acceptance and fulfilment of responsibility to repair harm; closure, forgiveness, and reintegration). Central importance of the LICARE theme in engendering the resolution-restoration sequence in individuals confirms Nathanson's (1997) view that empathic attunement of the community is the mutative force that enables offenders to overcome the excruciatingly painful shame emotions associated with

censure, and to transform it into a healing and growth experience. Embodiment of LICARE (i.e., listening and dialogue, caring empathy, and mutualised respect) in school culture also has a potential prophylactic effect against future offences and wrongdoings that might otherwise occur. Daily modelling of LICARE in school life is essential.

Student reflections on appropriate school discipline interventions mirrored the following lessons learned from previous decades of restorative justice practice: students need close relational supports (e.g., peers, parents, teachers) built into censuring structures; the wrongful action and its harm to others needs to be censured, but not the person globally; symbolic reparation mediated by honest dialogue about the effects of the wrongdoing is a powerful transformative agent in the healing process; active responsibility (characteristic of restorative practice) is much more effective than passive responsibility (characteristic of punitive discipline, such as out-of-school suspension); restorative practices teach pro-social, non-violent problem-solving; and, restorative practices teach us how to be responsible citizens in a communitarian society that upholds democratic values (Braithwaite, 1999). Student-participants' unanimous preference for restorative practices in school, and their endorsement of them, corroborated research cited in the literature review; namely, that restorative interventions educate students about appropriate and acceptable behaviour (Braithwaite & Braithwaite, 2001), promote human rights and communitarian values (Greene, 2006), encourage moral understanding and internalization of virtue (Glasser, 1998), and reflect the growing endorsement of restorative practices in many jurisdictions (Bargen, 2003; Buckley & Maxwell, 2007; Hopkins, 2002, 2004; MacGregor, 2003; Morrison, 2007; Morrison et al., 2005).

Student-participant reflections on their relationships in school highlighted the importance of the school connectedness construct in promoting the health, well-being, and academic success of students (Blum et al., 2002; McNeely et al., 2002; Tonkin, 2005). Concern for school connectedness represents a communitarian value orientation and appreciates the importance of healthy relationships. School connectedness is also a resilience factor that protects against multiple risks for adolescents (Tonkin, 2005). Student-participant comments mirrored what previous studies have said about factors that promote school connectedness, such as classroom management based on good student-teacher relationships, and dialogue-centred, non-punitive school discipline (Blum et al., 2002).

This research confirms previous work on restorative practices in schools, and makes a contribution to the literature by extending the application of restorative practices in a flexible format that can be applied across diverse schools and school settings. The restorative practices thematic template guides pro-social, future-oriented, problem-solving discipline interventions that can contribute to healing of harm and greater school connectedness for students.

REFERENCES

Ahmed, E. (2001). Shame management: Regulating bullying. In: *Shame management through reintegration* (pp. 211-301). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bargen, C. (2003). *Safe schools: Strategies for a changing culture*. Paper presented at the 6th International Conference on Restorative Justice, Vancouver, BC. Retrieved August 10, 2007, from http://www.sfu.ca/cfrj/fulltext/bargen.pdf

Baumrind, D. (1991). The influence of parenting style on adolescent competence and substance use. *Journal of Early Adolescence, 11*(1), 56-95.

Blum, R. W. (2005). A case for school connectedness. *Educational Leadership, 62*(7), 16-20.

Blum, R. W., McNeely, C. A., & Rinehart, P. M. (2002). *Improving the odds: The untapped power of schools to improve the health of teens*. Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Health, Department of Pediatrics, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN. Retrieved August 14, 2007, from http://www.sfu.ca/cfrj/fulltext/blum.pdf

Borba, M. (2001). *Building moral intelligence: The seven essential virtues that teach kids to do the right thing*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Boulton, J., & Mirsky, L. (2006). *Restorative practices as a tool for organizational change: The Bessels Leigh School*. Retrieved August 13, 2007, from Restorative Practices E-Forum http://fp.enter.net/restorativepractices/besselsleigh.pdf

Bradshaw, W., Roseborough, D., & Umbreit, M. (2006). The effect of victim offender mediation on juvenile offender recidivism: A meta-analysis. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, *24*(1), 87-98.

Braithwaite, J. (1989). *Crime, shame and reintegration*. Cambridge: Cambridge Press.

Braithwaite, J. (1999). *Democracy, community, and problem solving*. Paper presented at the Building Strong Partnerships for Restorative Practices conference, Burlington, Vermont, August 5-7. Retrieved May 7, 2008, from http://www.iirp.org/library/vt/vt_brai.html

Braithwaite, J. (2000a). Repentance rituals and restorative justice. *Journal of Political Philosophy, 8*(1), 115-131.

Braithwaite, J. (2000b). Shame and criminal justice. *Canadian Journal of Criminology*, *42*, 281-299.

Braithwaite, J. (2002). *Restorative justice and responsive regulation*. Oxford University Press: New York.

Braithwaite, J., & Braithwaite, V. (2001). Shame, shame management, and regulation. In: *Shame management through reintegration*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brookfield, S.D. (1995). *Becoming a critically reflective teacher*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Brunk, C. G. (2001). Restorative justice and the philosophical theories of criminal punishment. In M. L. Hadley (Ed.), *The spiritual roots of restorative justice*. New York: State University of New York.

Buckley, S., & Maxwell, G. M. (2007). *Respectful schools: Restorative practices in education*. Wellington, New Zealand: Institute of Policy Studies and the Office of the Children's Commissioner. Retrieved July 20, 2008, from http://www.occ.org.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/3314/OCC_Respectful_Schools_Report.pdf

Butterfield, L. D., Borgen, W. A., Amundsen, N. E., & Maglio, A. T. (2005). Fifty years of critical incident technique: 1954-2004 and beyond. *Qualitative Research*, *5*, 475-497.

Cameron, J. K. (2004). *Violence threat risk assessment training guide* (2nd ed.). Lethbridge, AB: Lethbridge Community College.

Cameron, J. K. (2008). *Assessing violent potential: Protocol for dealing with high-risk student behaviours*. School District No. 23 workshop at Kelowna, BC, August 19-20. http://www.cctatr.com/Protocol.pdf

Cameron, L., & Thorsborne, M. (1999). *Restorative justice and school discipline: Mutually exclusive? A practitioner's view of the impact of community conferencing in Queensland schools*. International Institute for Restorative Practices, Australian National University, Canberra, February 1999. Retrieved August 13, 2007, from http://www.hopehealing.org/PDF%20files/Restorative%20Justice%20and%20School%20Discipline.pdf

Cameron, M. (2006). Managing school discipline and implications for school social workers: A review of the literature. *Children & Schools*, *28*(4), 219-227.

Center for Support of Teaching and Learning. (2005). *Reflective practice*. Retrieved August 9, 2008, from http://cstl.syr.edu/cstl2/home/Teaching%20Support/Teaching%20Practice/141000.htm

Christle, C. A., Jolivette, K., & Nelson, C. M. (2005). Breaking the school to prison pipeline: Identifying school risk and protective factors for youth delinquency. *Exceptionality*, *13*(2), 69-88.

Costenbader, V. K., & Markson, S. (1994). School suspension: A survey of current policies and practices. *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin*, *78*(564), 103-107.

Costenbader, V. K., & Markson, S. (1998). School suspension: A study with secondary students. *Journal of School Psychology*, *36*(1), 59–82.

Daniels, H. (2001). *Vygotsky and pedagogy*. New York: Routledge Falmer.

Drewery, W. (2004). Conferencing in schools: Punishment, restorative justice, and the productive importance of the process of conversation. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *14*, 332-344.

Duffy, A. (2007). A concept analysis of reflective practice: Determining its value to nursing. *British Journal of Nursing, 16*(22), 1400-1407.

Ekstrom, R. B., Goertz, M. E., Pollack, J. M., & Rock, D. A. (1987). Who drops out of high school and why? Findings from a national study. In G. Natriello (Ed.), *School dropouts: Patterns and Policies* (pp. 52-69). New York: Teachers College Press.

Fraser Region Community Justice Initiatives & Langley School District No. 35(2004). *Conversation peace: Restorative action in secondary schools*. British Columbia: Queen's Printer.

Fraser Region Community Justice Initiatives & Langley School District No. 35 (2006). *Talking peace: Restorative action in elementary schools*. British Columbia: Queen's Printer.

Freeman, R., Eber, L., Anderson, C., Irvin, L., Horner, R., Bounds, M., et al. (2006). Building inclusive school cultures using school-wide positive behavior support: Designing effective individual support systems for students with significant disabilities. *Research & Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, *31*(1), 4-17.

Glaser, B. G., & Holton, J. (2004). Remodelling grounded theory. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 5*(2). Retrieved October 25, 2007, from http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/2-04/2-04glaser-e.pdf

Glasser, W. (1998). *Choice theory: A new psychology of personal freedom*. New York: HarperCollins.

Goodyear, R. K., Tracey, T. J. G., Claiborn, C. D., Lichtenberg, J. W., & Wampold, B. E. (2005). Ideographic concept mapping in counselling psychology research: Conceptual overview, methodology, and an illustration. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *52*(2), 236-242.

Greenberg, M. T., Weissberg, R. P., O'Brien, M. U., Zins, J. E., Fredericks, L., Resnick, H., et al. (2003). Enhancing school-based prevention and youth development through coordinated social, emotional, and academic learning. *American Psychologist*, *58*(6/7), 466-474.

Greene, B. G. (2006). Bullying in schools: A plea for measure of human rights. *Journal of Social Issues*, *62*(1), 63-79.

Halpern, D. F., Smothergill, D. W., Allen, M., Baker, S., Baum, C., Best, D., et al. (1998). Scholarship in psychology: A paradigm for the Twenty-first century. *American Psychologist*, *53*(12), 1292-1297.

Harris, N. (2001). Shaming and shame: Regulating drink-driving. Part II. In *Shame management through reintegration*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Harris, N. (2003). Reassessing the dimensionality of the moral emotions. *British Journal of Psychology*, *94*, 457-473.

Hawkins, J. D., & Lischner, D. M. (Eds.). (1987). *Schooling and delinquency*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Hébert, Y. M. (2002). Evolution report. *Citizen Education Research Network: CERN*. Report prepared for the Department of Canadian Heritage. Retrieved August 15, 2008, from http://pcerii.metropolis.net/CERNReport.pdf

Henwood, K., & Pidgeon, N. (2003). Grounded theory in psychological research. In P. M. Camic, J. E. Rhodes, & L. Yardley (Eds.), *Qualitative research in psychology: Expanding perspectives in methodology and design* (pp. 131-155). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Hopkins, B. (2002). Restorative justice in schools. *Support for Learning*, *17*(3), 144-149.

Hopkins, B. (2004). *Just schools: A whole school approach to restorative justice.* UK: Jessica Kingsley.

Horner, R. H., & Sugai, G. (2000). School-wide behavior support: An emerging initiative. *Journal of Positive Behavior Supports*, *2*(4), 231-232.

Hughes, P., & Mossman, M. J. (2001). *Re-thinking access to criminal justice in Canada: A critical review of needs and responses*. Ottawa: Research and Statistics Division, Department of Justice Canada. Retrieved August 15, 2008, from http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/rs/rep-rap/2003/rr03_2/rr03_2.pdf

Johnstone, G. (2002). *Restorative justice: Ideas, issues, debates*. Portland, OR: Willan.

Kane, J., Lloyd, G., McCluskey, G., Riddell, G., Stead, J., & Weedon, E. (2007). *Restorative practices in three Scottish councils: Final report on the evaluation of the first two years of the pilot projects, 2004-2006*. Retrieved July 20, 2008, from http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/196078/0052553.pdf

Kavelin-Popov, L. (2000). *The virtues project educator's guide: Simple ways to create a culture of character*. Austin, TX: Jalmar Press.

Kinsella. E.A. (2007). Embodied reflection and the epistemology of reflective practice. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, *41*(3), 395-409.

Kozulin, A., & Presseisen, B. Z. (1995). Mediated learning experience and psychological tools: Vygotsky's and Feuerstein's perspectives in a study of student learning. *Educational Psychologist*, *30*(2), 67-75.

Latimer, J., Dowden, C., & Muise, D. (2001). *The effectiveness of restorative justice practices: A meta-analysis*. Department of Justice Canada. Retrieved August 15, 2008 from http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/rs/rep-rap/2001/rp01_1-dr01_1/rp01_1.pdf

Lerner, R. M., & Galambos, N. L. (1998). Adolescent development: Challenges and opportunities for research, programs, and policies. *Annual Review of Psychology, 49,* 413–443.

Lewis, H. (1971). *Shame and guilt in neurosis*. New York, NY: International Universities Press.

Luke, G., & Lind, B. (2002). Reducing juvenile crime: Conferencing versus court. *Crime & Justice Bulletin*, *69*. New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. Retrieved August 11, 2007, from http://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/CJB69.pdf/$file/CJB69.pdf

MacGregor, P. (June 2003). *Restitution implemented in Saanich School District No. 63.* Paper presented at the 6th International Conference on Restorative Justice, Vancouver, BC. Retrieved August 10, 2007 from http://www.sfu.ca/cfrj/fulltext/macgregor.pdf

Marshall, T. F. (1999). *Restorative justice: An overview*. London: British Home Office, Research Development and Statistics Directorate. Retrieved August 11, 2007, from http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/occ-resjus.pdf

Maxwell, J. A. (2004). Using qualitative methods for causal explanation. *Field Methods*, *16*(3), 243-264.

McCold, P., & Wachtel, T. (2002). *The worst school I've ever been to: Empirical evaluations of a restorative school and treatment milieu*. International Institute for Restorative Practices.Retrieved August 13, 2007, from http://www.iirp.org/library/mn02/mn02_mccold.html

McCold, P., & Wachtel, T. (2003). *In pursuit of paradigm: A theory of restorative justice*. International institute for Restorative Practices. Paper presented at the XIII World Congress of Criminology, August 10-15, 2003, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Retrieved August 11, 2007, from http://fp.enter.net/restorativepractices/paradigm.pdf

McNeely, C. A., Nonnemaker, J. M., & Blum, R. W. (2002). Promoting school connectedness: Evidence from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. *Journal of School Health*, *72*(4), 138-146.

Mendez, L. M. R. (2003). Predictors of suspension and negative school outcomes: A longitudinal investigation. *New Directions for Youth Development*, *99*, 17-33.

Miller, R., & Pedro, J. (2006). Creating respectful classroom environments. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *33*(5), 293-299.

Morgan-D'Atrio, C., Northup, J., LaFleur, L., & Spera, S. (1996). Toward prescriptive alternatives to suspensions: A preliminary investigation. *Behavioral Disorders*, *21*(2), 190-200.

Morrison, B. (2002). Bullying and victimization in schools: A restorative justice approach. *Trends and Issues in Criminal Justice*, *219*. Australian Institute of Criminology. Retrieved August 13, 2007, from http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi/ti219.pdf

Morrison, B. (2005). *Building safe and healthy school communities: Restorative justice and responsive regulation*. Paper presented at "Building a Global Alliance for Restorative Practices and Family Empowerment, Part 3," the IIRP Sixth Annual Conference on Conferencing, Circles, and Other Restorative Practices, March 3-5, Penrith, New South Wales, Australia. Retrieved August 14, 2007, from http://fp.enter.net/restorativepractices/au05_morrison.pdf

Morrison, B. (2007). Restoring safe school communities: A whole school approach to bullying, violence and alienation. Sydney, Australia: The Federation Press.

Morrison, B., Blood, P., & Thorsborne, M. (2005). Practicing restorative justice in school communities: Addressing the challenge of culture change. *Public Organization Review: A Global Journal*, *5*, 335-357.

Morrison, G. M., Anthony, S., Storino, M., & Dillon, C. (2001). An examination of the disciplinary histories and the individual and educational characteristics of students who participate in an in-school suspension program. *Education & Treatment of Children*, *24*(3), 276-293.

Morrison, G. M., Brown, M., D'Incau, B., O'Farell, S. L., & Furlong, M. J. (2006). Understanding resilience in educational trajectories: Implications for protective possibilities. *Psychology in the Schools*, *43*(1), 19-31.

Morrison, G. M., & D'Incau, B. (1997). The web of zero tolerance: Characteristics of students who are recommended for suspension. *Education & Treatment of Children*, *20*(3), 316-335.

Morrison, G. M., & Skiba, R.J. (2001). Predicting violence from school misbehavior: Promises and perils. *Psychology in the Schools*, *38*(2), 173-184.

Nathanson, D. L. (1992). *Shame and pride: Affect, sex and the birth of the self.* New York: Norton.

Nathanson, D. L. (1997). From empathy to community. *The Annual of Psychoanalysis*, *25*, 125-143.

Nooteboom, B. (2007). Social capital, institutions, and trust. *Review of Social Economy*, *65*(1), 29-53.

Ottesen, E. (2007). Reflection in teacher education. *Reflective practice*, *8*(1), 31-46.

Poulson, C. (2000). *Shame: The master emotion?* University of Tasmania, School of Management Working Paper Series (20-03). Retrieved August 14, 2007, from http://www.utas.edu.au/mgmt/wps/wps_files/20_03pap.pdf

Poulson, C. (2001). *Shame: The root of violence*. Paper presented at The Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism: Organizations, Institutions, and Violence. Retrieved February 27, 2004, from http://www.csupomona.edu/~cfpoulson/Papers/Shame%20The%20root%20of%20violence.pdf

Pranis, K., Stuart, B., & Wedge, M. (2003). *Peacemaking circles: From crime to community.* St. Paul, MN: Living Justice Press.

Restorative action: A community approach to conflict in secondary schools. (2004). School District No.35, Langley, BC. Retrieved March 12, 2004, from www.sd35.bc.ca/links/resaction.htm

Restorative Justice Consortium. (2005). *Statement of restorative justice principles: As applied in a school setting*. Retrieved August 14, 2007, from http://www.yjb.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/76452A6D-39B5-45AE-8C14-CE267D37EDB2/0/Statementofrestorativejusticeprinciples.pdf

Retzinger, S., & Scheff, T. (2000). Emotion, alienation and narratives: Resolving intractable conflict. *Mediation Quarterly*, *18*(1), 71-85.

Roche, D. (2001). The evolving definition of restorative justice. *Contemporary Justice Review*, *4*, 341-353.

Schon, D.A. (1990). *The reflective practitioner*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Seligman, M. E. P., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology. *American Psychologist*, *55*(1), 5-14.

Sharpe, S. (1998). *Restorative justice: A vision for healing and change*. Edmonton: Mediation and Restorative Justice Centre.

Sherman, L, Strang, H., & Woods, D. (2000). *Recidivism patterns in the Canberra Reintegrative Shaming Experiments (RISE)*. Centre for Restorative Justice. Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University. Retrieved August 11, 2007, from http://www.aic.gov.au/rjustice/rise/recidivism/report.pdf

Skiba, R. J., Michael, R. S., Nardo, A. C., & Peterson, R. L. (2002). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment. *Urban Review*, *34*(4), 317–342.

Skiba, R. J., & Peterson, R. L. (1999). The dark side of zero tolerance. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *80*(5), 372-382.

Skiba, R. J., & Peterson R. L. (2003). Teaching the social curriculum, *Preventing School Failure*, *47*(2), 66-73.

Skiba, R. J., Peterson, R. L., & Williams, T. (1997). Office referrals and suspension: Disciplinary intervention in middle schools. *Education & Treatment of Children*, *20*(3), 295-315.

Smith, M.K. (2008). *Donald Schon (Schön): Learning, reflection and change*. Retrieved August 9, 2008, from http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-schon.htm

Stutzman Amstutz, L., & Mullet, J. (2005). *The Little Book of Restorative Discipline for Schools: Teaching responsibility; creating caring climates*. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.

Sugai, G., & Horner, R. (1999). Discipline and behavioral support: Practices, pitfalls, and promises. *Effective School Practices*, *17*, 10-22.

Sweeney, B., & Carruthers, W. L. (1996). Conflict resolution: History, philosophy, theory, and educational applications. *School Counselor*, *43*(5), 326-344.

The Civil Rights Project. (2000). *Opportunities suspended: The devastating consequences of zero tolerance and school suspension*. Report from a national conference on zero tolerance, June 15-16. Harvard University. Retrieved August 9, 2007, from http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/17/21/dd.pdf

Tonkin, R. S. (2005). *British Columbia youth health trends: A retrospective*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society. Retrieved July 22, 2008, from http://www.mcs.bc.ca/pdf/AHS-Trends-2005-report.pdf

Vaes, T. (2001). *The restorative justice model and its corruption: An outlook at the Canadian experience*. Unpublished undergraduate thesis. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium. Retrieved January 5, 2007, from http://www.sfu.ca/cfrj/fulltext/vaes.pdf

Van Ness, D., & Strong, K. H. (1997). *Restoring Justice*. Cincinnati, OH: Anderson.

Varnham, S. (2005). Seeing things differently: Restorative justice and school discipline. *Education & the Law*, *17*(3), 87-104.

Vincent, C. G., Horner, R. H., & Sugai, G. (2002). Developing social competencies for all students. *Eric/OSEP Digest*. (ED468580). Retrieved March 31, 2007, from http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/1a/63/b4.pdf

Wachtel, T., & McCold, P. (2001). Restorative justice in everyday life: Beyond the formal ritual. In H. Strang and J. Braithwaite (Eds.), *Restorative Justice and Civil Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wald, J., & Losen, D. J. (2003). Defining and redirecting a school-to-prison pipeline. *New Directions for Youth Developmen*t, *99*, 9–16.

Wampold, B. E., & Bhati, K. S. (2004). Attending to the omissions: A historical examination of evidence-based practice movements. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, *35*(6), 563-570.

Wertsch, J. V., & Tulviste, P. (1992). L. S. Vygotsky and contemporary developmental psychology. *Developmental Psychology*, *28*(4), 548-557.

Wilcox, A., & Hoyle, C. (2004). *National evaluation of the restorative justice in schools programme*. London: Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. Retrieved July 23, 2008, from http://www.yjb.gov.uk/Publications/Resources/Downloads/restorativejusticefull.pdf

Yagos, G. L. (2005). Educating for citizenship. *Education Canada*, *45*(4), 51.

Zehr, H. (1995). *Changing lenses: A new focus on crime and justice*. Waterloo, ON:.Herald Press:

Appendix A: Interview Materials

Index

Item #	Annotations related to sources and rationales for items
1 - 3, 11 - 15, 26 - 30	Various items related to suspension processes.
4 - 5	Braithwaite (1989; 2002); Harris (2001); Ahmed (2001). Reintegrative shaming theory.
6 - 7	Probing legitimacy of the suspension process to students, and relationship between listening and respecting.
8 - 10, 31	Fairness, justice, and helpfulness are essential to interventions in a caring democratic community.
16 - 17, 21, 26	Nathanson (1992). Theory of shame and emotions.
18 - 20	Braithwaite (1989); Harris (2001); Nathanson (1992).
22 - 25	Various restorative justice literature and experience (e.g., Zehr, 1995; Sharp, 1998).
32 - 34	Sharp (1998); Nathanson (1997). Empathy and closure.
35, 41 - 47	School connectedness: USA (Blum, McNeely, & Rinehart, 2002; McNeely, Nonnemaker, & Blum, 2002), and BC, Canada (Tonkin, 2005).
36 - 41	McCold and Wachtel (2003). Restorative justice theory adapted from parenting literature (Baumrind, 1991).

Semi-Structured Interview Outline for Students - TWU - Patrick Varley

[The wording, combinations, and sequencing of these questions will be varied as appropriate for each student, taking into account age, academic level, student's comfort, and so forth; any particular description from a student may well answer several questions; this outline will serve to guide the topic coverage for the interview & notes a few different wordings for some questions]

INSTRUCTIONS: (Start cassette recorder)

"Hello, my name is Patrick Varley and I am doing an interview with _____ (name of student), on this _____ (day), _____ (date), at _____ (location)."

"I am going to ask you a series of questions. The entire interview will take less than an hour, about 30 – 40 minutes I'm thinking. There are no right or wrong answers. You are free to stop the interview at any time. Feel free to elaborate on your answers also. Details are a good thing, and I encourage you to share any thoughts you might have. The tape will be transcribed, meaning the spoken words will be changed into written language, then it will be erased. All the data will be stored without your name attached, so your personal identity will not be revealed at any time in the research."

1. Please describe the events that led to your suspension from school. (Prompts: such as your behaviour that led to your suspension, other people involved in the incident, the school's response to what you did).

2. What were the steps in the suspension process? Start with what you did, followed by all the other steps after that. How did you know that the process was over?

3. Who was involved in the decision to suspend you? Who was involved in any meetings related to your suspension? How would you describe your overall reaction to the suspension process you went through?

4. How much did people show their disapproval for what you did? How strong was their disapproval? Please explain your reasons for your answer.

Extremely strong disapproval

Strong disapproval

Mild disapproval

Little to no disapproval

No Disapproval

OTHER

5. How much respect did you have for the people involved in the suspension process? (Please explain the reasons behind your answer). How much respect did they show you?

Extremely high respect

High Respect

Some respect

Little respect

Almost no respect

A total lack of respect

6. Indicate how willing you were to listen to the people in authority over you (parents, teachers, principal) in the suspension process:

Extremely high interest in listening

High interest in listening

Little interest in listening

Almost no interest in listening

No interest in listening

7. How did your respect for the other people involved in the suspension process affect how willing you were to listen? (How much does listening go with respect?)

8. How fair was the suspension process in your opinion?

Extremely fair

Very fair

Somewhat fair

A little unfair

Quite unfair

Extremely unfair

9. How fair was the suspension process? How could the suspension process be more fair for students? (Please explain why you chose that answer [above])

10. Sometimes justice is important to people…was the suspension process a just process, and how was justice done in the suspension process?

11. Have you been suspended before…how many times before? (If yes, to 11) Please give the reasons for the other suspension(s).

12. Has being suspended helped you in any way?

13. What is the official purpose of suspensions do you think? (I mean, what are the reasons that schools use suspensions, in your view?)

14. How well do you think suspensions work to achieve their purpose?

15. What would be your main alternatives to suspensions, if any?

FACES HANDOUT WITH 9 EMOTIONS (Based on Nathanson)

16. Please put a check by any faces that show feelings you had about being suspended. (GIVE PENCIL)

17. Describe any feelings or emotional reactions you had when you were first suspended. How do you feel about it now? How have your feelings changed? If your feelings have changed, what made them change?

18. Regarding what you did that led to your suspension, how right or wrong was it? (Please explain what makes you think this way) Did getting suspended affect your conscience in any way, your internal sense of right and wrong? Did any of these feelings change over time, or were they affected by the suspension process itself?

19. How sorry do you feel about what you did? What makes you feel this way?

20. How did people involved in the suspension process (such as school staff, parents, or other students) affect how you think and feel about what you did to get suspended?

21. Check off any of the following emotions you have felt about being suspended.

□ shame □ guilt □ anger

□ embarrassment □ humiliation □ conscience bothered

□ shyness □ remorse (sad regret)

(Please explain anything in particular that gave you these feelings)

22. Were people hurt by what you did, and if so, how were they hurt? How was the school community hurt or affected?

23. What was done to right a wrong, or heal and repair any hurt or harm that was done? (Such as, for example, addressing the needs and feelings of the victim of the offence, or the people affected by the offence). How were the needs of the school as a whole addressed?

24. How did your involvement in the suspension process help you to accept responsibility for your actions, if at all? (Please explain your answer.)

25. In what ways have you taken responsibility for your actions, would you say?

REFER TO SUSPENSION DIAGRAM

26. When you think about being suspended, which of the following choices in the diagram best describes where you are, or how you think about it?

27. What support were you given to help you be successful in school after the suspension?

28. Besides the suspension itself, what other consequences or expectations were placed on you?

29. What do you think of the idea of making up for what you did in some way, like restitution? (Restitution is a way to pay something back for harm done, such as, for example, fixing something, replacing something, providing a service, etc.).

30. How did the suspension affect how willing you are to follow school rules and be cooperative?

31. Describe anything about the entire suspension process that you think was NOT helpful or fair ?

DESCRIPTION AND DISCUSSION OF EMPATHY

32. To have empathy is to try to understand the feelings and needs of others, to see the world through their eyes, to walk in their shoes. How much feeling of empathy do you have for others affected by what you did to be suspended?

33. How did being suspended help you understand how people were affected? How the school as a whole was affected?

34. Was forgiveness offered to you at the end of the process? Do you feel forgiven for what you did? Does it matter to you? (… to feel forgiven about it) If not forgiveness, was there closure, some indication that the whole process was over and you could move on from there?

35. Did you feel more connected or less connected to the school after you went through the suspension process? (In the sense of belonging and wanting to be in school?) What has made you feel more or less connected?

PREFACE TO QUESTIONS # _36__ to _44__
(Give the diagram to the student and read the following to the student.)

"This diagram shows four different approaches to managing conflicts when an offence occurs (by offence, I mean, the person has done something wrong, like broken a school rule or something). I will briefly explain the four types and will ask you to give me your opinions on how effective you think each approach is.

"There are two axes (point). The vertical (up and down) scale shows high and low for how much control the school exercises. The word "control" is used in terms of strongly disapproving of and prohibiting offensive behaviours. It has to do with how much discipline there is in the school and the kinds of behaviour limits the school sets out for students.

"The horizontal, or sideways axis, shows the level of support that the student receives, from low to high. Think of this support in terms of caring for, helping, and encouraging the student. Each of the four approaches has a different combination of these two factors, control and support. (Point this out on the diagram)

"The permissive approach (on the lower right) is made up of low control and high support. There is a lot of help and caring, but very little limit-setting. Not much is asked of the student in return for a lot of caring support.

"The authoritarian approach (on the upper left) is high on control, and low on support. Students are punished, or have negative consequences for violations, but are not cared for or nurtured by the school.

"The neglectful approach (on the lower left) is an absence of both limit-setting and nurturing. The student has a lot of freedom and liberty, and very few restrictions on behaviour, but is not cared for or nurtured.

"The restorative approach (on the upper right) has both high control and high support. The restorative holds people accountable for their actions, and it supports the victim, the offender, and the school community.

School Discipline Styles

CONTROL & LIMITS			
	High	Authoritarian (limits enforced, low support)	Restorative (limits, supportive)
	Low	Uninvolved (few limits, low support)	Permissive (few limits, supportive)
		Low	High
	HELP & SUPPORT		

This diagram is adapted from the following source:

McCold, P., & Wachtel, T. (2003). In pursuit of paradigm: A theory of restorative justice. Restorative Practices Eforum, Aug.12, www.restorativepractices.org.

36. Which approach most represents the suspension process that you went through?

37. Which approach do you think would have been most effective in dealing with your particular discipline issue? Which approach would work best overall, most of the time, for most offences? What are your reasons for thinking this way?

38. In your view, which approach would be more satisfying to a student who was harmed? Which would be more satisfying for a student who committed an offence?

What about satisfaction of the school community? Please explain what you mean. What, if anything, do you find really unsatisfactory about any of the four approaches?

39. List the best approach to help students to learn from the experience, and to not re-offend? Please explain your reasons.

40. Think about what you did, and the suspension process that went with it…. Which approach would most generate feelings of remorse? (feeling like you did a bad thing, and that you want fix it)

41. Which approach would best help a student feel more connected to the school? (Feeling connected means feeling that school is safe, that teachers are fair, that you are happy to be at your school, feeling that you are close to people, and that you are a part of things in your school..) Please explain, in your case, anything in the suspension process that made you feel more connected to the school?

42. How can the school help offending students feel more connected to the school after going through the suspension process, or some alternate discipline process? What alternatives to suspensions would you find useful for helping students, like yourself, feel connected to the school?

Name: _____ Date: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Use the pen to mark your choice for how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

43. I feel close to people at this school.

( ) Agree strongly
( ) Agree
( ) Agree slightly
( ) Disagree slightly
( ) Disagree
( ) Disagree Strongly

44. I feel like I am part of this school.

( ) Agree strongly
( ) Agree
( ) Agree slightly
( ) Disagree slightly
( ) Disagree
( ) Disagree Strongly

45. I am happy to be at this school.

( ) Agree strongly
( ) Agree
( ) Agree slightly
( ) Disagree slightly
( ) Disagree
( ) Disagree Strongly

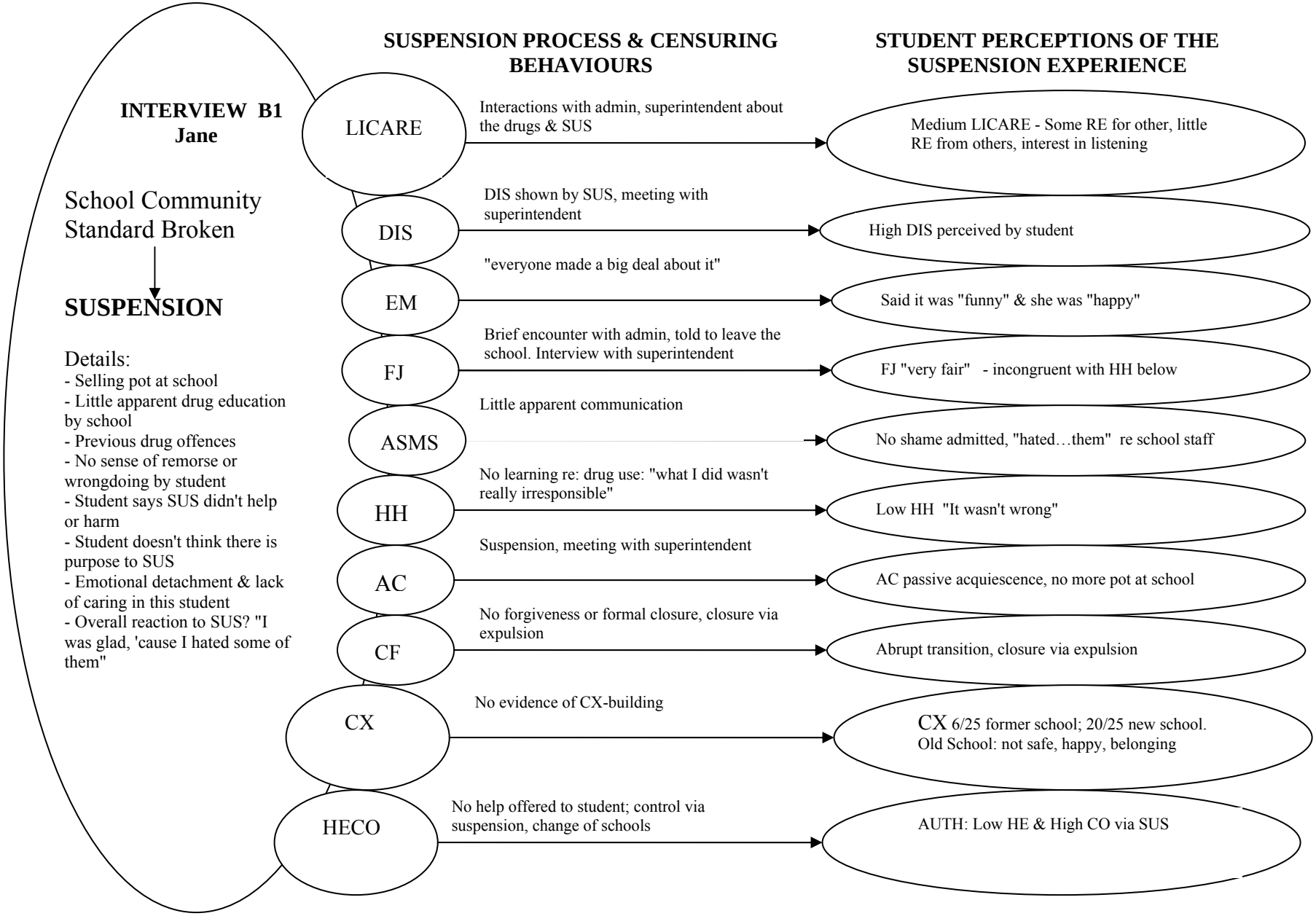
46. The teachers at this school treat students fairly.

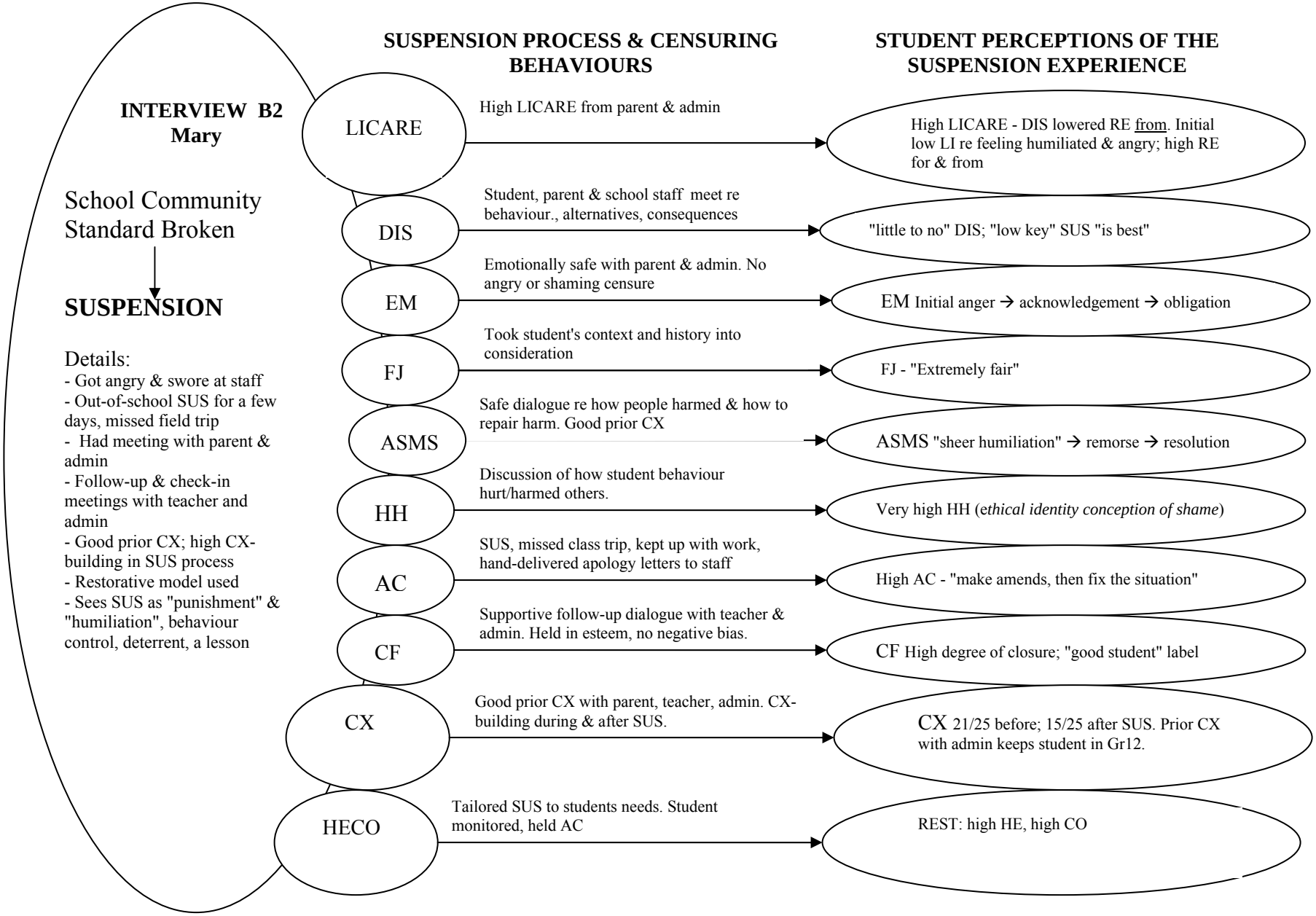
( ) Agree strongly
( ) Agree
( ) Agree slightly
( ) Disagree slightly
( ) Disagree
( ) Disagree Strongly

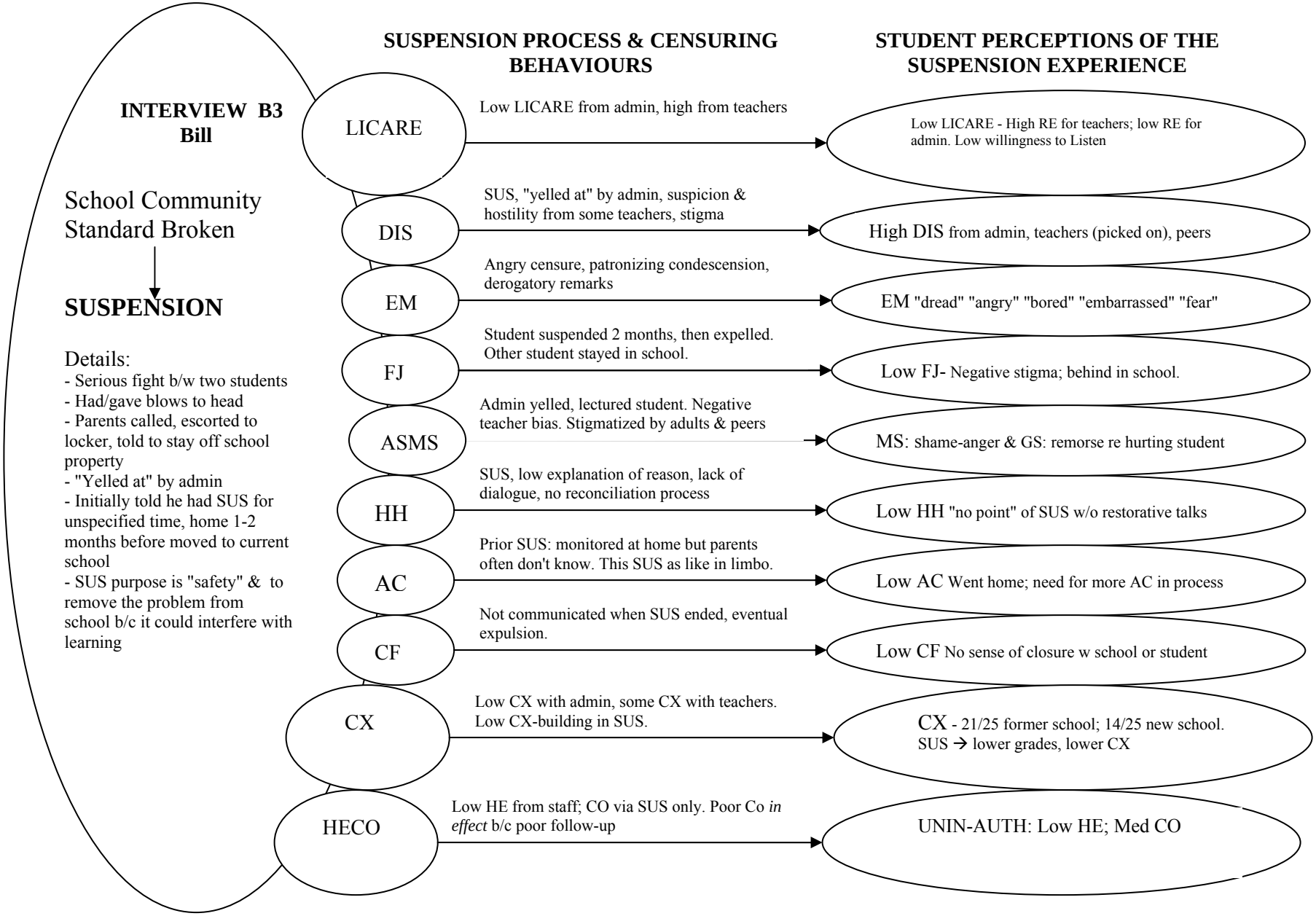
47. I feel safe in my school.

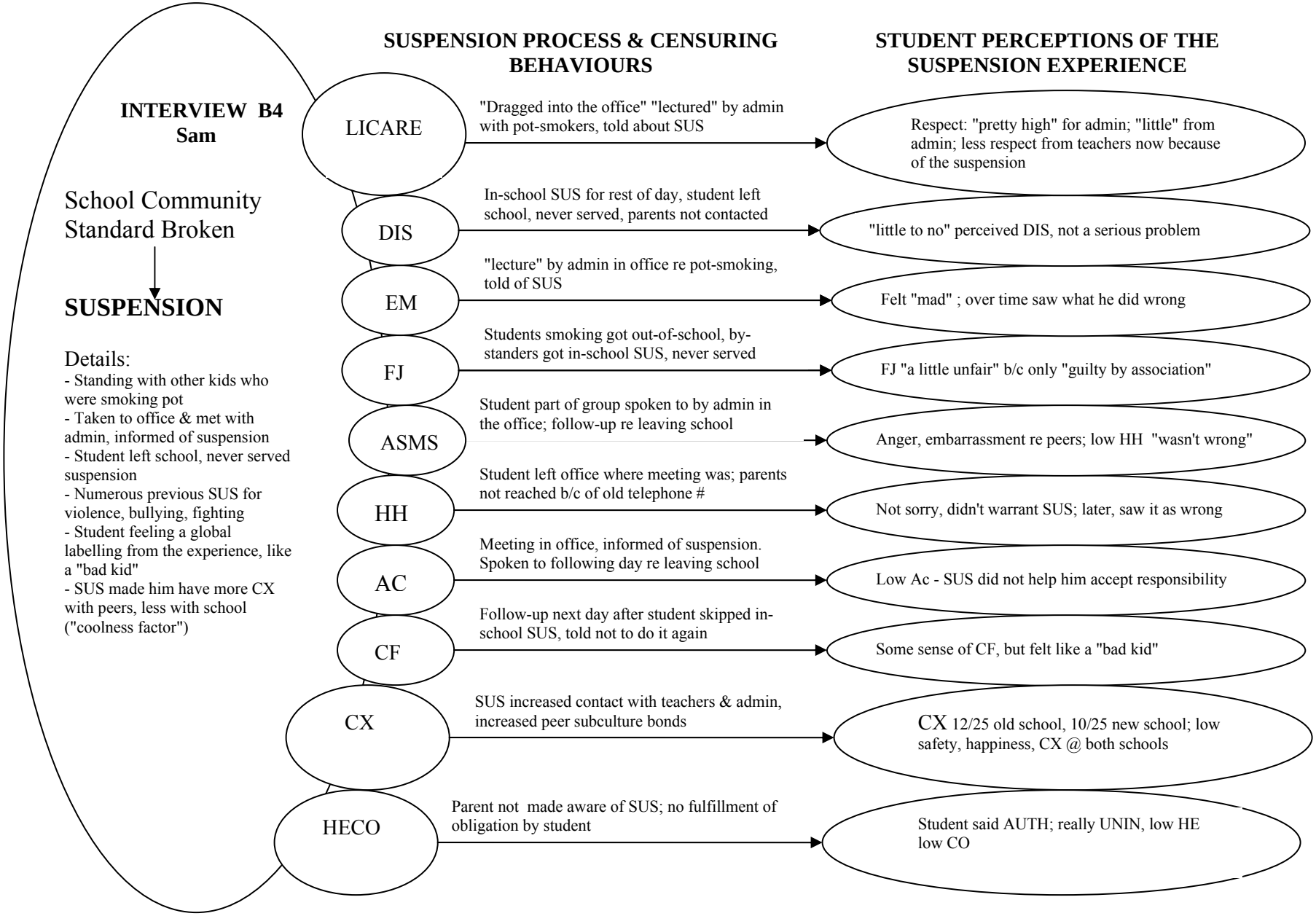
( ) Agree strongly
( ) Agree
( ) Agree slightly
( ) Disagree slightly
( ) Disagree
( ) Disagree Strongly

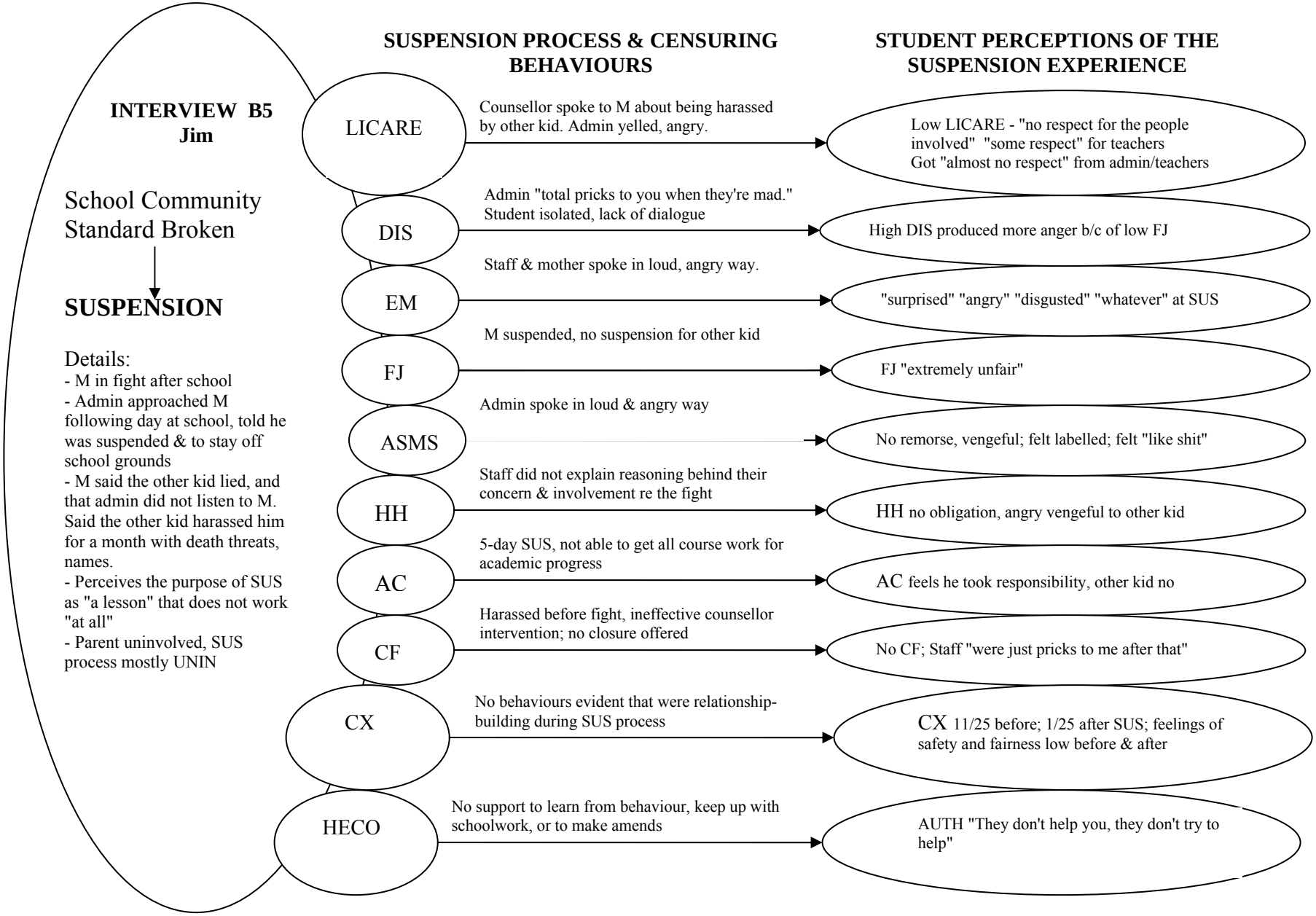
Appendix B: Individual Restorative Templates.

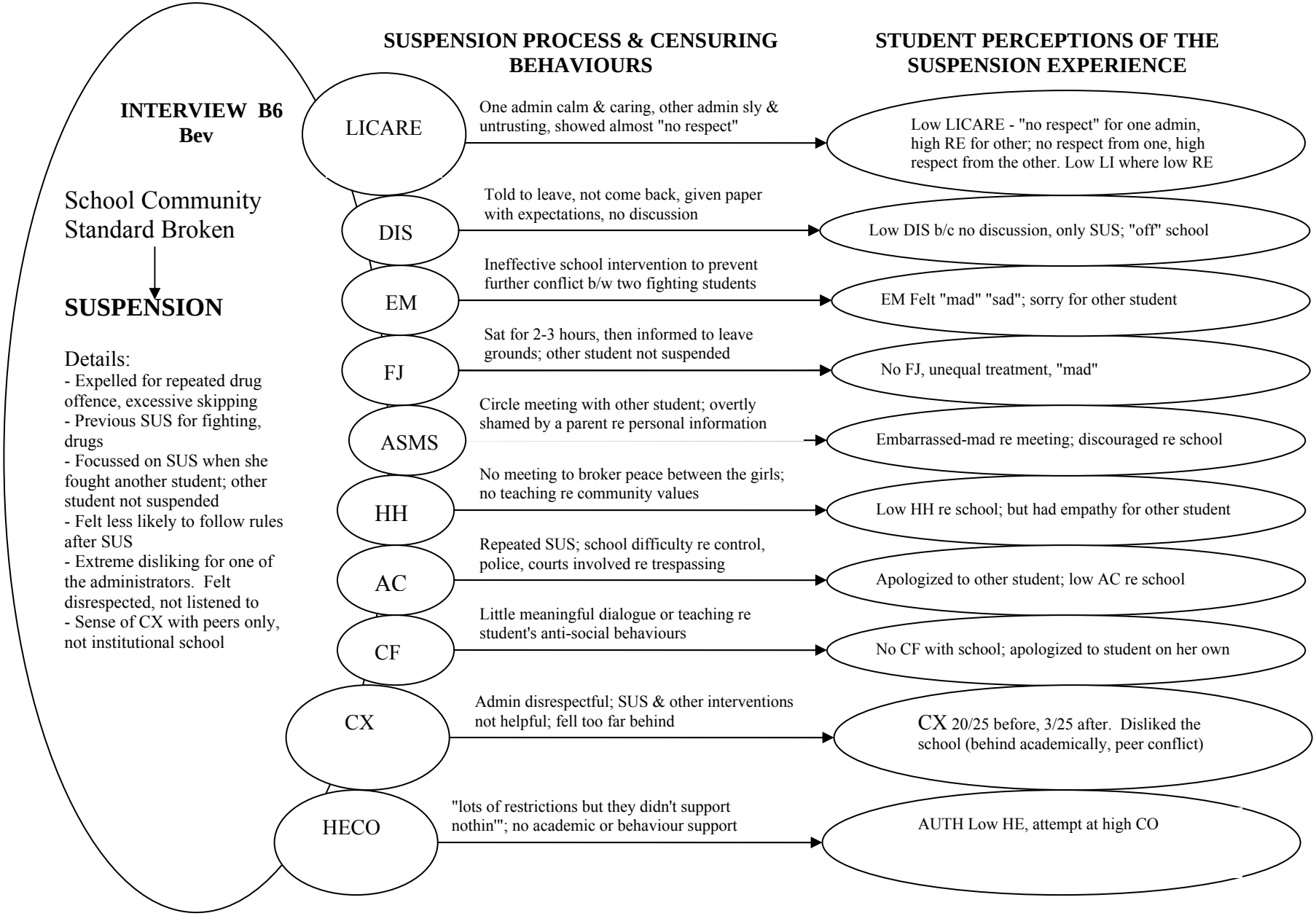

INTERVIEW B1
Jane
School Community Standard Broken
SUSPENSION
Details:
- Selling pot at school
- Little apparent drug education by school
- Previous drug offences
- No sense of remorse or wrongdoing by student
- Student says SUS didn't help or harm
- Student doesn't think there is purpose to SUS
- Emotional detachment & lack of caring in this student
- Overall reaction to SUS? "I was glad, 'cause I hated some of them"
SUSPENSION PROCESS & CENSURING BEHAVIOURS
STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE SUSPENSION EXPERIENCE
LICARE
Interactions with admin, superintendent about the drugs & SUS
Medium LICARE - Some RE for other, little RE from others, interest in listening
DIS
DIS shown by SUS, meeting with superintendent
High DIS perceived by student
EM
"everyone made a big deal about it"
Said it was "funny" & she was "happy"
FJ
Brief encounter with admin, told to leave the school. Interview with superintendent
FJ "very fair" - incongruent with HH below
ASMS
Little apparent communication
No shame admitted, "hated…them" re school staff
HH
No learning re: drug use: "what I did wasn't really irresponsible"
Low HH "It wasn't wrong"
AC
Suspension, meeting with superintendent
AC passive acquiescence, no more pot at school
CF
No forgiveness or formal closure, closure via expulsion
Abrupt transition, closure via expulsion
CX
No evidence of CX-building
CX 6/25 former school; 20/25 new school.
Old School: not safe, happy, belonging
HECO
No help offered to student; control via suspension, change of schools
AUTH: Low HE & High CO via SUS

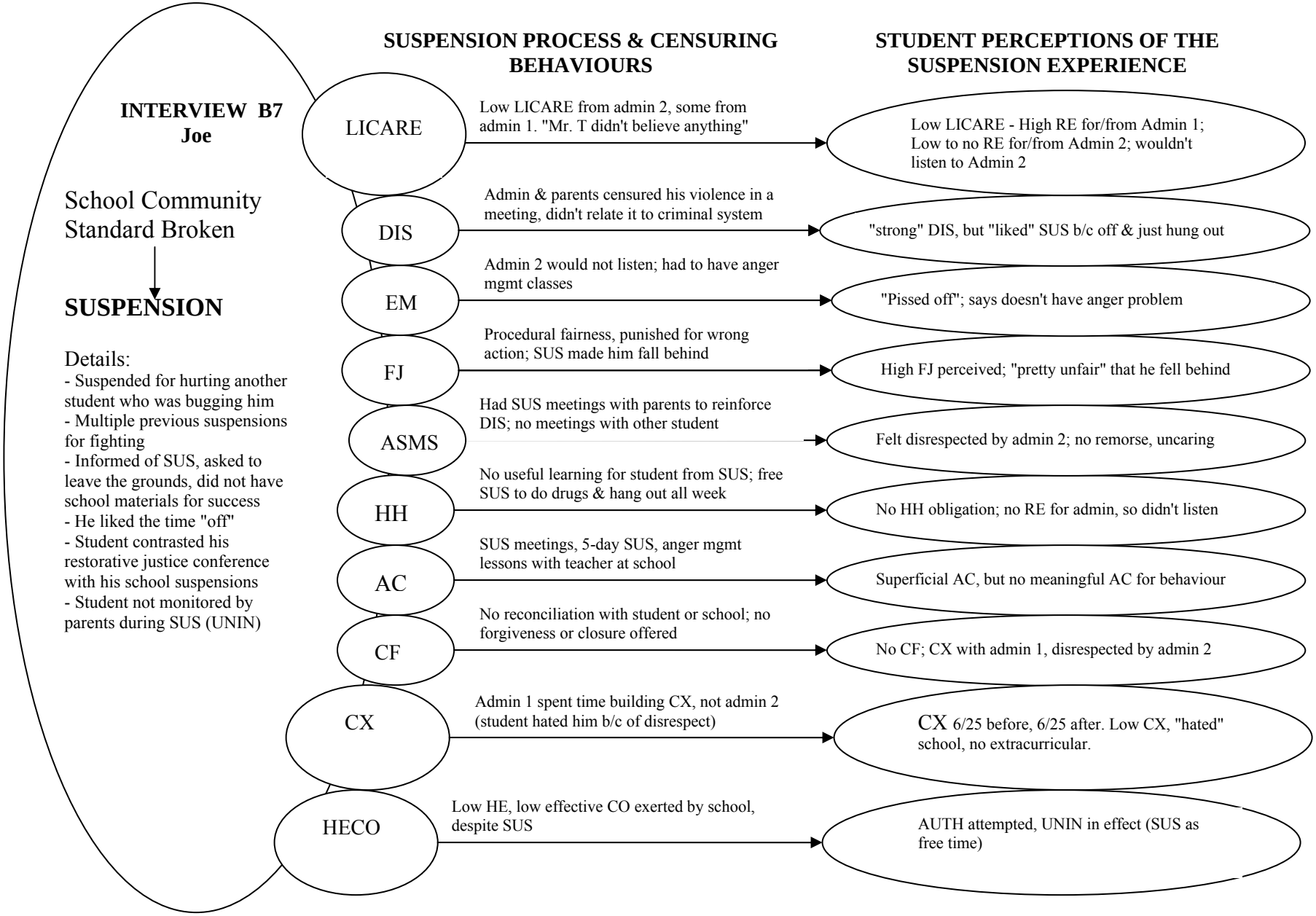

INTERVIEW B2
Mary
School Community Standard Broken
SUSPENSION
Details:
- Got angry & swore at staff
- Out-of-school SUS for a few days, missed field trip
- Had meeting with parent & admin
- Follow-up & check-in meetings with teacher and admin
- Good prior CX; high CX-building in SUS process
- Restorative model used
- Sees SUS as "punishment" & "humiliation", behaviour control, deterrent, a lesson
SUSPENSION PROCESS & CENSURING BEHAVIOURS
STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE SUSPENSION EXPERIENCE
LICARE
High LICARE from parent & admin
High LICARE - DIS lowered RE from. Initial low LI re feeling humiliated & angry; high RE for & from
DIS
Student, parent & school staff meet re behaviour., alternatives, consequences
"little to no" DIS; "low key" SUS "is best"
EM
Emotionally safe with parent & admin. No angry or shaming censure
EM Initial anger → acknowledgement → obligation
FJ
Took student's context and history into consideration
FJ - "Extremely fair"
ASMS
Safe dialogue re how people harmed & how to repair harm. Good prior CX
ASMS "sheer humiliation" → remorse → resolution
HH
Discussion of how student behaviour hurt/harmed others.
Very high HH (ethical identity conception of shame)
AC
SUS, missed class trip, kept up with work, hand-delivered apology letters to staff
High AC - "make amends, then fix the situation"
CF
Supportive follow-up dialogue with teacher & admin. Held in esteem, no negative bias.
CF High degree of closure; "good student" label
CX
Good prior CX with parent, teacher, admin. CX-building during & after SUS.
CX 21/25 before; 15/25 after SUS. Prior CX with admin keeps student in Gr12.
HECO
Tailored SUS to students needs. Student monitored, held AC
REST: high HE, high CO


INTERVIEW B3
Bill
School Community Standard Broken
SUSPENSION
Details:
- Serious fight b/w two students
- Had/gave blows to head
- Parents called, escorted to locker, told to stay off school property
- "Yelled at" by admin
- Initially told he had SUS for unspecified time, home 1-2 months before moved to current school
- SUS purpose is "safety" & to remove the problem from school b/c it could interfere with learning
SUSPENSION PROCESS & CENSURING BEHAVIOURS
STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE SUSPENSION EXPERIENCE
LICARE
Low LICARE from admin, high from teachers
Low LICARE - High RE for teachers; low RE for admin. Low willingness to Listen
DIS
SUS, "yelled at" by admin, suspicion & hostility from some teachers, stigma
High DIS from admin, teachers (picked on), peers
EM
Angry censure, patronizing condescension, derogatory remarks
EM "dread" "angry" "bored" "embarrassed" "fear"
FJ
Student suspended 2 months, then expelled. Other student stayed in school.
Low FJ- Negative stigma; behind in school.
ASMS
Admin yelled, lectured student. Negative teacher bias. Stigmatized by adults & peers
MS: shame-anger & GS: remorse re hurting student
HH
SUS, low explanation of reason, lack of dialogue, no reconciliation process
Low HH "no point" of SUS w/o restorative talks
AC
Prior SUS: monitored at home but parents often don't know. This SUS as like in limbo.
Low AC Went home; need for more AC in process
CF
Not communicated when SUS ended, eventual expulsion.
Low CF No sense of closure w school or student
CX
Low CX with admin, some CX with teachers. Low CX-building in SUS.
CX - 21/25 former school; 14/25 new school. SUS → lower grades, lower CX
HECO
Low HE from staff; CO via SUS only. Poor Co *in effect* b/c poor follow-up
UNIN-AUTH: Low HE; Med CO


INTERVIEW B4
Sam
School Community Standard Broken
SUSPENSION
Details:
- Standing with other kids who were smoking pot
- Taken to office & met with admin, informed of suspension
- Student left school, never served suspension
- Numerous previous SUS for violence, bullying, fighting
- Student feeling a global labelling from the experience, like a "bad kid"
- SUS made him have more CX with peers, less with school ("coolness factor")
SUSPENSION PROCESS & CENSURING BEHAVIOURS
STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE SUSPENSION EXPERIENCE
LICARE
"Dragged into the office" "lectured" by admin with pot-smokers, told about SUS
Respect: "pretty high" for admin; "little" from admin; less respect from teachers now because of the suspension
DIS
In-school SUS for rest of day, student left school, never served, parents not contacted
"little to no" perceived DIS, not a serious problem
EM
"lecture" by admin in office re pot-smoking, told of SUS
Felt "mad" ; over time saw what he did wrong
FJ
Students smoking got out-of-school, by-standers got in-school SUS, never served
FJ "a little unfair" b/c only "guilty by association"
ASMS
Student part of group spoken to by admin in the office; follow-up re leaving school
Anger, embarrassment re peers; low HH "wasn't wrong"
HH
Student left office where meeting was; parents not reached b/c of old telephone #
Not sorry, didn't warrant SUS; later, saw it as wrong
AC
Meeting in office, informed of suspension. Spoken to following day re leaving school
Low Ac - SUS did not help him accept responsibility
CF
Follow-up next day after student skipped in-school SUS, told not to do it again
Some sense of CF, but felt like a "bad kid"
CX
SUS increased contact with teachers & admin, increased peer subculture bonds
CX 12/25 old school, 10/25 new school; low safety, happiness, CX @ both schools
HECO
Parent not made aware of SUS; no fulfillment of obligation by student
Student said AUTH; really UNIN, low HE low CO


INTERVIEW B5
Jim
School Community Standard Broken
SUSPENSION
Details:
- M in fight after school
- Admin approached M following day at school, told he was suspended & to stay off school grounds
- M said the other kid lied, and that admin did not listen to M. Said the other kid harassed him for a month with death threats, names.
- Perceives the purpose of SUS as "a lesson" that does not work "at all"
- Parent uninvolved, SUS process mostly UNIN
SUSPENSION PROCESS & CENSURING BEHAVIOURS
STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE SUSPENSION EXPERIENCE
LICARE
Counsellor spoke to M about being harassed by other kid. Admin yelled, angry.
Low LICARE - "no respect for the people involved" "some respect" for teachers
Got "almost no respect" from admin/teachers
DIS
Admin "total pricks to you when they're mad."
Student isolated, lack of dialogue
High DIS produced more anger b/c of low FJ
EM
Staff & mother spoke in loud, angry way.
"surprised" "angry" "disgusted" "whatever" at SUS
FJ
M suspended, no suspension for other kid
FJ "extremely unfair"
ASMS
Admin spoke in loud & angry way
No remorse, vengeful; felt labelled; felt "like shit"
HH
Staff did not explain reasoning behind their concern & involvement re the fight
HH no obligation, angry vengeful to other kid
AC
5-day SUS, not able to get all course work for academic progress
AC feels he took responsibility, other kid no
CF
Harassed before fight, ineffective counsellor intervention; no closure offered
No CF; Staff "were just pricks to me after that"
CX
No behaviours evident that were relationship-building during SUS process
CX 11/25 before; 1/25 after SUS; feelings of safety and fairness low before & after
HECO
No support to learn from behaviour, keep up with schoolwork, or to make amends
AUTH "They don't help you, they don't try to help"


INTERVIEW B6
Bev
School Community Standard Broken
SUSPENSION
Details:
- Expelled for repeated drug offence, excessive skipping
- Previous SUS for fighting, drugs
- Focussed on SUS when she fought another student; other student not suspended
- Felt less likely to follow rules after SUS
- Extreme disliking for one of the administrators. Felt disrespected, not listened to
- Sense of CX with peers only, not institutional school
SUSPENSION PROCESS & CENSURING BEHAVIOURS
STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE SUSPENSION EXPERIENCE
LICARE
One admin calm & caring, other admin sly & untrusting, showed almost "no respect"
Low LICARE - "no respect" for one admin, high RE for other; no respect from one, high respect from the other. Low LI where low RE
DIS
Told to leave, not come back, given paper with expectations, no discussion
Low DIS b/c no discussion, only SUS; "off" school
EM
Ineffective school intervention to prevent further conflict b/w two fighting students
EM Felt "mad" "sad"; sorry for other student
FJ
Sat for 2-3 hours, then informed to leave grounds; other student not suspended
No FJ, unequal treatment, "mad"
ASMS
Circle meeting with other student; overtly shamed by a parent re personal information
Embarrassed-mad re meeting; discouraged re school
HH
No meeting to broker peace between the girls; no teaching re community values
Low HH re school; but had empathy for other student
AC
Repeated SUS; school difficulty re control, police, courts involved re trespassing
Apologized to other student; low AC re school
CF
Little meaningful dialogue or teaching re student's anti-social behaviours
No CF with school; apologized to student on her own
CX
Admin disrespectful; SUS & other interventions not helpful; fell too far behind
CX 20/25 before, 3/25 after. Disliked the school (behind academically, peer conflict)
HECO
"lots of restrictions but they didn't support nothin'"; no academic or behaviour support
AUTH Low HE, attempt at high CO


INTERVIEW B7
Joe
School Community Standard Broken
SUSPENSION
Details:
- Suspended for hurting another student who was bugging him
- Multiple previous suspensions for fighting
- Informed of SUS, asked to leave the grounds, did not have school materials for success
- He liked the time "off"
- Student contrasted his restorative justice conference with his school suspensions
- Student not monitored by parents during SUS (UNIN)
SUSPENSION PROCESS & CENSURING BEHAVIOURS
STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE SUSPENSION EXPERIENCE
LICARE
Low LICARE from admin 2, some from admin 1. "Mr. T didn't believe anything"
Low LICARE - High RE for/from Admin 1; Low to no RE for/from Admin 2; wouldn't listen to Admin 2
DIS
Admin & parents censured his violence in a meeting, didn't relate it to criminal system
"strong" DIS, but "liked" SUS b/c off & just hung out
EM
Admin 2 would not listen; had to have anger mgmt classes
"Pissed off"; says doesn't have anger problem
FJ
Procedural fairness, punished for wrong action; SUS made him fall behind
High FJ perceived; "pretty unfair" that he fell behind
ASMS
Had SUS meetings with parents to reinforce DIS; no meetings with other student
Felt disrespected by admin 2; no remorse, uncaring
HH
No useful learning for student from SUS; free SUS to do drugs & hang out all week
No HH obligation; no RE for admin, so didn't listen
AC
SUS meetings, 5-day SUS, anger mgmt lessons with teacher at school
Superficial AC, but no meaningful AC for behaviour
CF
No reconciliation with student or school; no forgiveness or closure offered
No CF; CX with admin 1, disrespected by admin 2
CX
Admin 1 spent time building CX, not admin 2 (student hated him b/c of disrespect)
CX 6/25 before, 6/25 after. Low CX, "hated" school, no extracurricular.
HECO
Low HE, low effective CO exerted by school, despite SUS
AUTH attempted, UNIN in effect (SUS as free time)

Appendix C: Research Ethics Board Approval of this Research

TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY

TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY
Research Ethics Board (REB)
CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

Principal Investigator: Patrick Varley

Department: Counselling Psychology

Supervisor (if student research): Dr. Marvin McDonald

Co-Investigators: None

Title: Favouring connectedness: Restorative processes in school discipline

REB File No.: 04G14

Start Date: January 31, 2005

End Date: June 30, 2005

Approval Date: December 9, 2004

Certification

This is to certify that Trinity Western University Research Ethics Board (REB) has examined the research proposal and concludes that, in all respects, the proposed research meets appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the "Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans".

Sue Funk for Judith Toronchuk, PhD.
Sue Funk, B.A. REB Coordinator
Judith Toronchuk, PhD. REB Chair

This Certificate of Approval is valid for one year and may be renewed.
The REB must be notified of *all* changes in protocol, procedures or consent forms.
A final project form must be submitted upon completion.

7600 Glover Rd., Langley, B. C., Canada V2Y 1Y1 Telephone (604) 888-7511, Fax (604) 513-2143