



# RJ Principles, Practices, Data

**Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth  
(RJOY)**

# Webinar Housekeeping

- Everyone is in “listen-only” mode.
- Two listen options: phone or web (phone tends to be better!)
- Call in #: 415-655-0003, Access Code: 663 571 249
- Type questions in the sidebar to the right and there will be time for questions at the end.
- The webinar is being recorded.
- Supporting materials will be emailed to you and available on our website.



## About California School-Based Health Alliance

- The California School-Based Health Alliance is the statewide non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health and academic success of children and youth by advancing health services in schools.
  
- Our work is based on two basic concepts:
  - Health care should be accessible and *where kids are*, and
  - Schools should have the services needed to ensure that poor health is not a barrier to learning



# Presentation Objectives

Review:

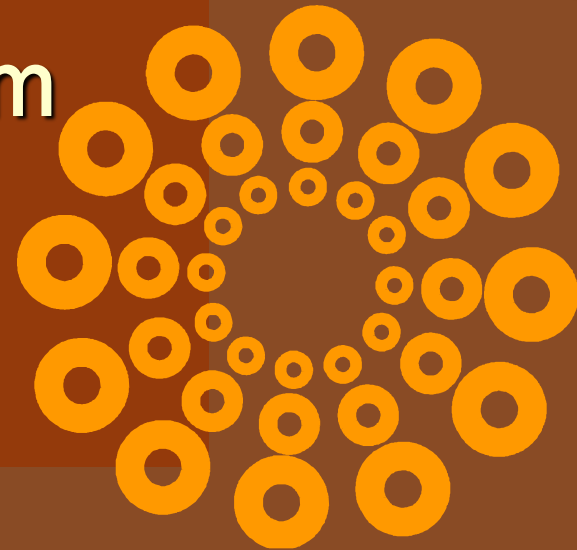
- RJ Principles
- RJ Practices or Models (with focus on Circle Model)
- RJ Data
- Applications in Oakland



# RJ Principles

# What is Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice is a philosophy *and* theory of justice that emphasizes bringing together *everyone* affected by wrongdoing to address their *needs* and *obligations* and to *heal* the harm as much as possible.



# Paradigm Shift RJ Invites

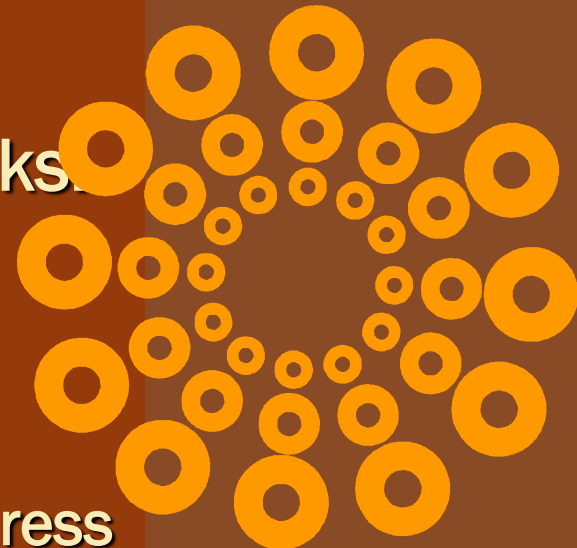
From a harming justice to a healing justice,  
from a retributive to a restorative justice

## ○ Three Questions Retributive Justice asks:

1. What law/rule was broken?
2. Who broke it?
3. What punishment deserved?

## ○ Three Questions Restorative Justice Asks:

1. Who was harmed?
2. What are needs and responsibilities of everyone impacted?
3. How do all impacted come together to address needs and responsibilities and heal harm?





# History and Origins of Restorative Justice

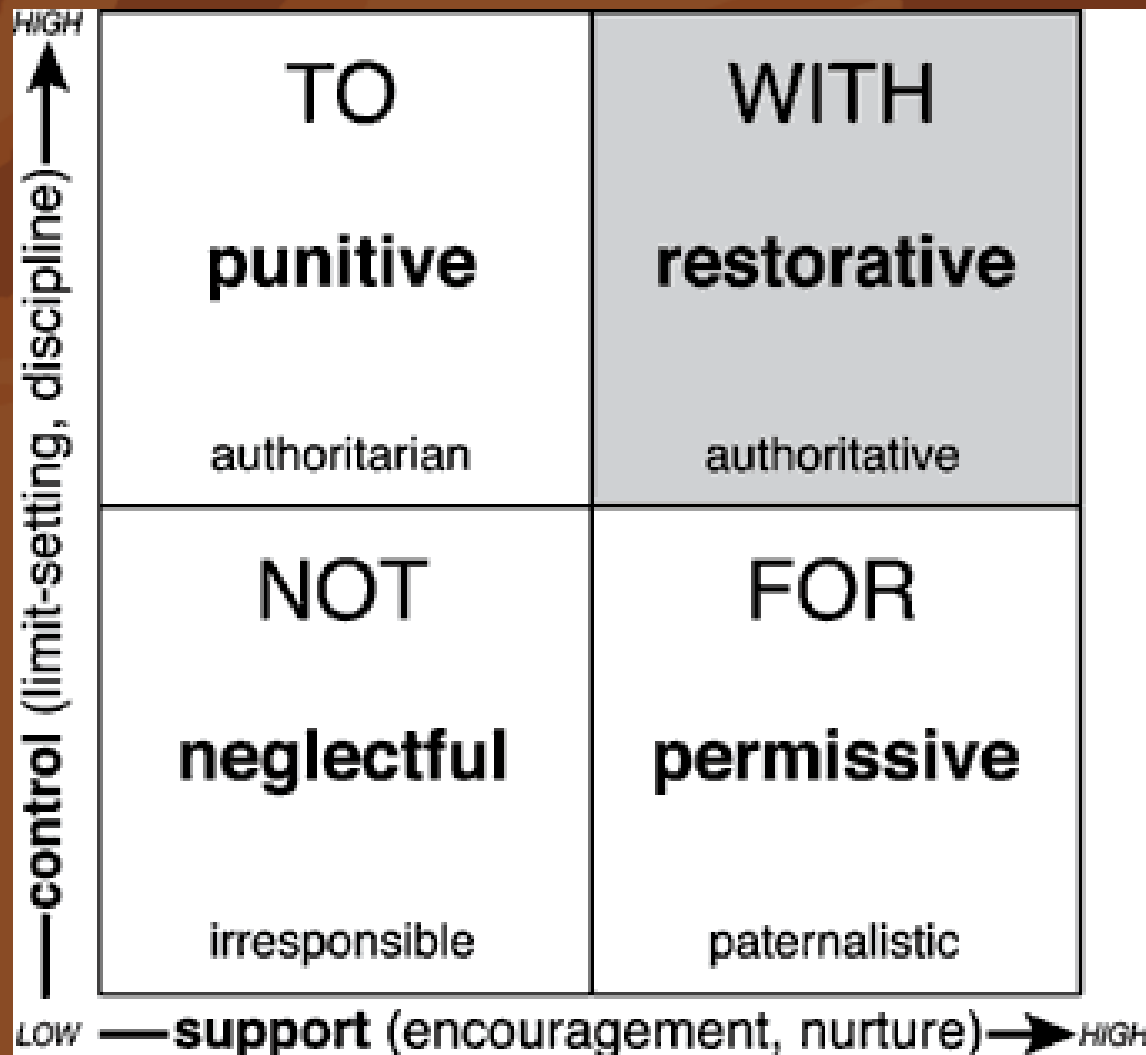


- Contemporary RJ arose in Ontario, Canada, about 40 years ago out of frustrations with dysfunctions of justice system

- Though RJ Movement only about four decades old, RJ is a contemporary expression of ancient reconciliation and conflict resolution processes, once universal to most societies



# 4 Different Ways We Respond to Conflict



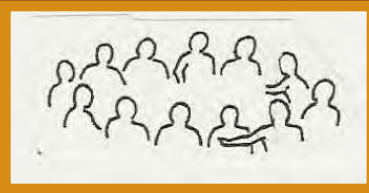


# Restorative Justice Models

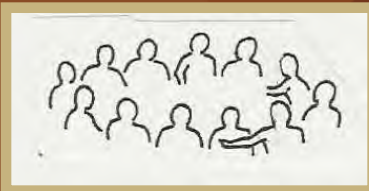
## Three Basic Conferencing Models:



Victim Offender Dialogue



Family Group Conferencing



Peacemaking Circles

ADDITIONAL MODELS (VOEG, TRC, others)

A close-up photograph of several hands of different skin tones stacked on top of each other in a circular arrangement, symbolizing unity and support. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

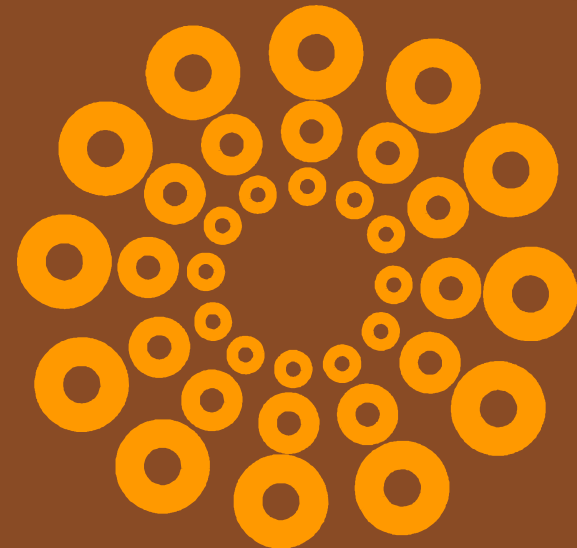
# Our Focus: Peacemaking Circle Model

- Community-Building
- Re Entry
- Conflict
- Healing
- Talking
- Learning
- Celebration
- Sentencing
- Alternative School Discipline



# The 5 Structural Elements of Circles

- (1) Circle Keeper
- (2) Talking Piece and Center piece
- (3) Ceremony
- (4) Consensus
- (5) Values/Guidelines



# The 4 Relational Elements of Circles

- Meeting, getting acquainted
- Trust-Building
- Issues
- Solutions



# Circles Assume We Are Connected and Interdependent



- The ancients know this. Speak of our interrelatedness with all of Creation - Prana, chi, ashe, mitake oyasin, all my relations
- Modern neuroscience, astrophysics, quantum physics, psychology are learning we are profoundly connected, coded to be in relationship
- We know this - in everyone of us there is a deep desire to connect to others in a good way.

# How is a Circle Different from Similar Processes?

- **Circles and Groups**

Facilitator lectures, gives advice vs. sharing stories

- Facilitator dominates

- **Circles and Therapy**

- Clinical training/experience is not primary resource for understanding issues
- Circle facilitator does not control or run the group as in therapy

- **Classroom Circles - *Teacher Dominated***



# Senior Stress Circle





# Zehr's Continuum of Restorative Practices



Pseudo or Non-Restorative

Fully Restorative

1. Are harms, needs, and causes addressed?
2. Adequately victim-oriented?
3. Are persons causing harm encouraged to develop empathy and take responsibility?
4. Are all relevant stakeholders involved?
5. Is there an opportunity for dialogue and participatory decision-making?
6. Is the model respectful to all?



# Diverse Applications

**RJ being used in justice system  
(juvenile and adult) as a  
diversion from incarceration, for  
in-custody education, and for re-  
entry**





By faith based organizations as  
a ministry to their communities





By schools for behavior  
intervention and to  
create a more caring  
community



# Harm Circle Example

- Ms. Rover's Health Education class
- Mostly 9<sup>th</sup> graders, some upperclassmen
- Issues around classroom management, respect, work completion, classroom disruption, office referrals
- Wellness Center staff requested to observe class and conduct harm circle
- Student leaders engaged and participated in circle
- Follow up circle planned in one week

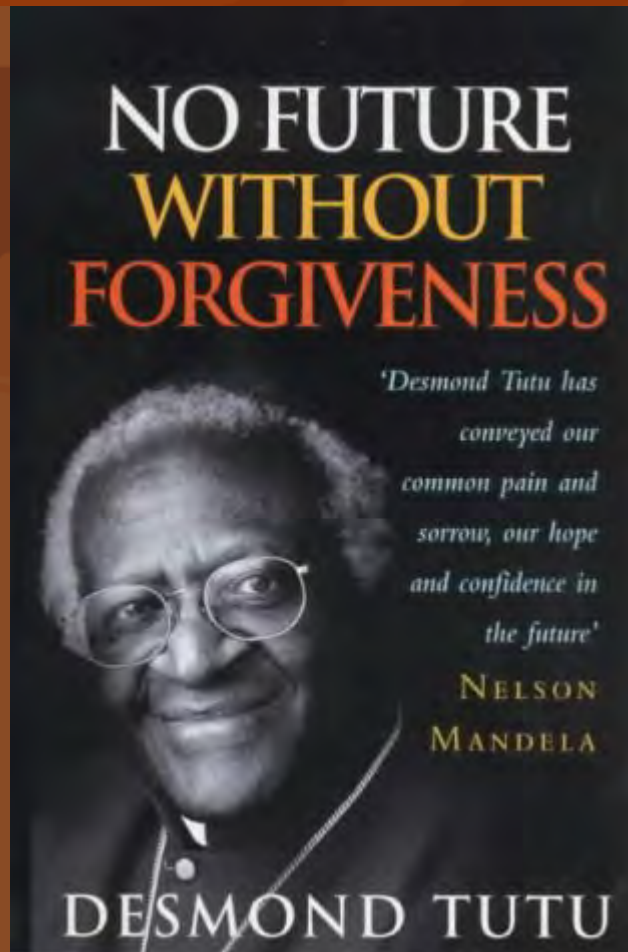




# By police departments to further community policing and community building



# To Heal Wounds of Mass Social Conflict



# RJ is a Worldwide Movement





Data



A photograph of a classroom where several students are raising their hands, indicating an interactive lesson. A teacher is visible at the front of the room near a chalkboard. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent brown banner containing the title.

# Positive School Outcomes

- 2009 study of RJ in 6 Pennsylvania schools shows reduced violence, suspensions, and disruptive behavior
- 50-87% drops in suspension rates not uncommon
- Significant reductions/elimination of violence, racial disparities (Completely eliminated at some schools in Oakland)
- Will review latest study from OUSD in a moment

# Restorative Conference example

- Conflict between student and teacher
- Teacher requested conference
- Facilitated by 2 Wellness Center staff
- Followed restorative questions protocol
- Did not require disciplinary action or intervention by administrator



# Restorative Questions

To respond to challenging behavior...

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

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

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





# Reduced Recidivism

(Criminal/Juvenile Justice Programs)

**20%**

**San Francisco County**

**Sonoma County**

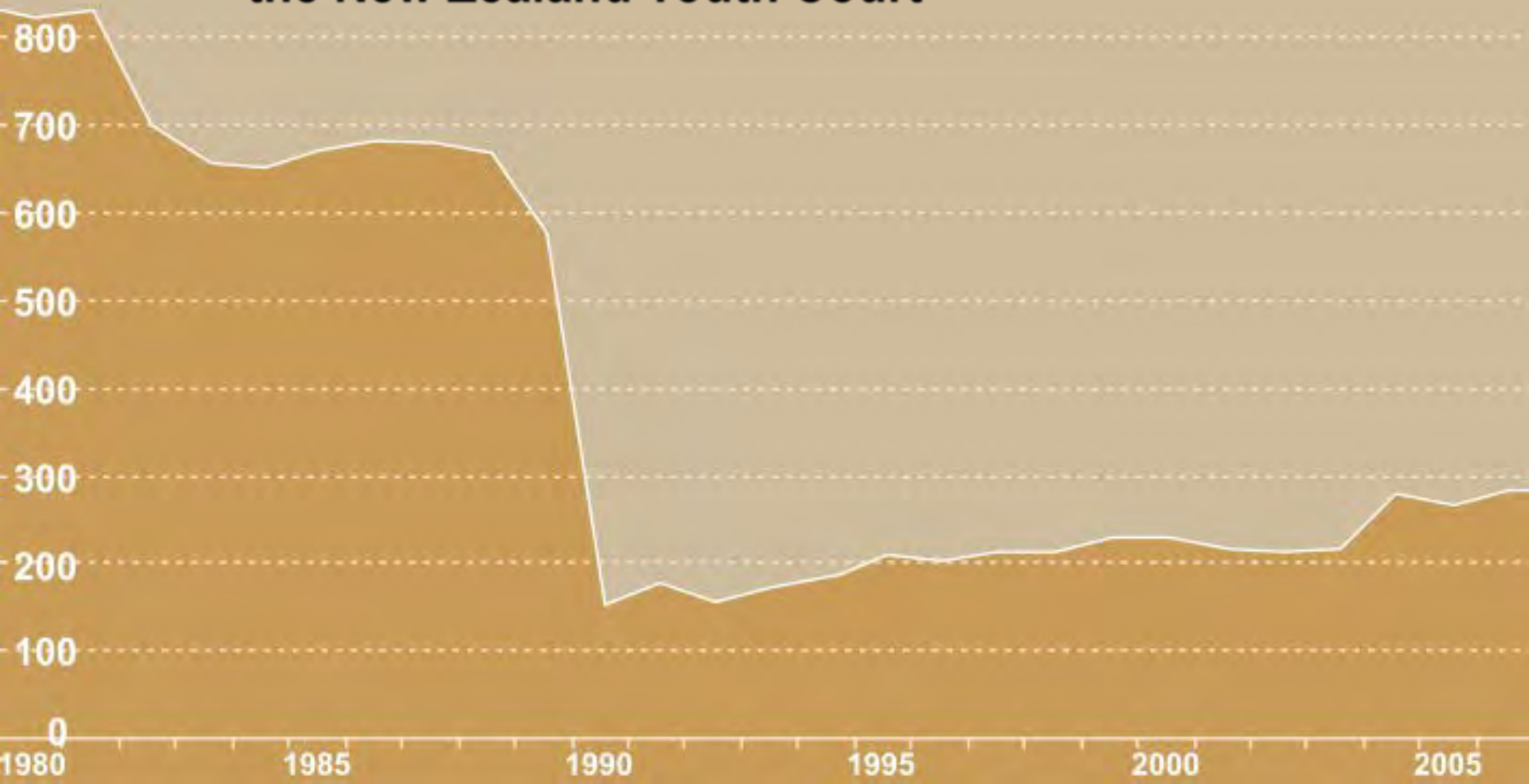
**10%**

**30%**

**New Zealand**

# Reduced Incarceration

Rate per 10,000 14 to 16 year-olds appearing in  
the New Zealand Youth Court



# Satisfaction of Persons Harmed



Over 90% victim satisfaction  
(Sonoma County Restorative Conferencing  
Program)



Victims have a voice



Victims show reduced fear after meeting  
with the person who caused them harm  
(Restorative Justice: The Evidence, Sherman & Strang, 2007)

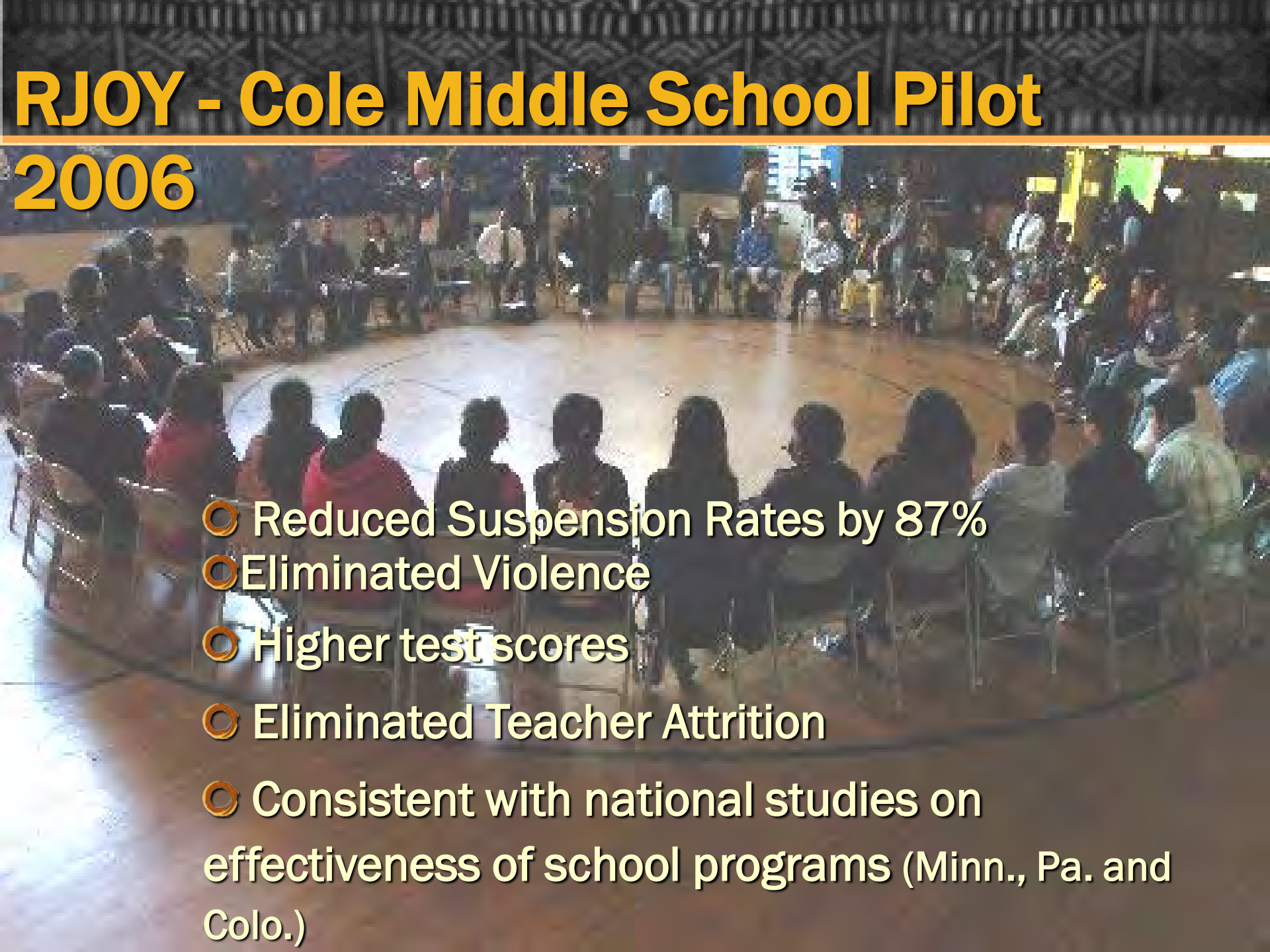
# Fiscal Benefits



- Reduction in Average Daily Attendance funding loss when suspensions decrease
- \$1 spent on restorative justice may save \$8 in the criminal-justice system
- Housing 1 juvenile with an average sentence in Alameda County will cost \$55,000. (Recidivism 75%)
- Diverting 1 youth through an restorative Conference will cost only about \$5000, including staff salary and benefits. (Recidivism 15%)



# RJOY - Cole Middle School Pilot 2006

- 
- Reduced Suspension Rates by 87%
  - Eliminated Violence
  - Higher test scores
  - Eliminated Teacher Attrition
  - Consistent with national studies on effectiveness of school programs (Minn., Pa. and Colo.)



# Oakland School Resolution - 2010



OAKLAND UNIFIED  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

expect Success

RESOLUTION  
OF THE  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
OF THE  
OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
RESOLUTION No. 0910-0128

District's Restorative Justice Initiative

WHEREAS, the Board of Education endorses the belief that "Restorative Justice Practices" among children and youth, will positively impact the District's School Climate, Discipline Policies and Procedures; and

WHEREAS, the Safety Committee of the Board is recommending re-alignment of District resources to promote a framework of fair and equitable discipline practices which are restorative; and

WHEREAS, such framework will support and hold accountable students, teachers, administrators, parents, and district leadership to reduce racial, ethnic, and any other protected class disparities in school discipline, especially suspension and expulsion; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education is committed to creating and supporting a culture shift in the way the district systematically responds to student discipline problems in District schools by moving toward restorative approaches, not inconsistent with law, which re-integrate rather than exclude; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the implementation of other school climate interventions, and violence prevention programs, and other existing strategies designed to offer alternatives to suspension/expulsion, there exists a need for reform to address the alarming rate of disproportionate minority contact; and

WHEREAS, a framework of restorative justice practices recognizes that misconduct damages relationships for reform to address the alarming rate of disproportionate minority contact; and

WHEREAS, restorative justice practices subscribe to six key areas of practice including accountability and between the victim, offender, and the community; and promotes the opportunity to repair harm, and restore the relationships; and

WHEREAS, restorative justice practices support the use of a repertoire of strategies, or multiple strategies continuous improvement, relationships and community building, defining and teaching expectations, facilitating communication between families and schools, interventions for misconduct, and use of data and problem solving; and

WHEREAS, restorative justice practices support the use of a repertoire of strategies, or multiple strategies simultaneous, to deal with misconduct, especially for non-mandatory expulsions, including administrative, restorative, and skill-building/therapeutic interventions; and

WHEREAS, schools are free to implement their own student discipline protocols consistent with Board Policy so long as those protocols are not in conflict with restorative justice practices; and

WHEREAS, restorative justice promotes teaching and learning which incorporates both academic and social-emotional development, and facilitates the development of social and human capital for students and families; and

WHEREAS, restorative justice practices increase classroom learning and teaching by minimizing misconduct and to be built on consistent and effective classroom management supported by a positive school climate; and



# Latest Data from OUSD

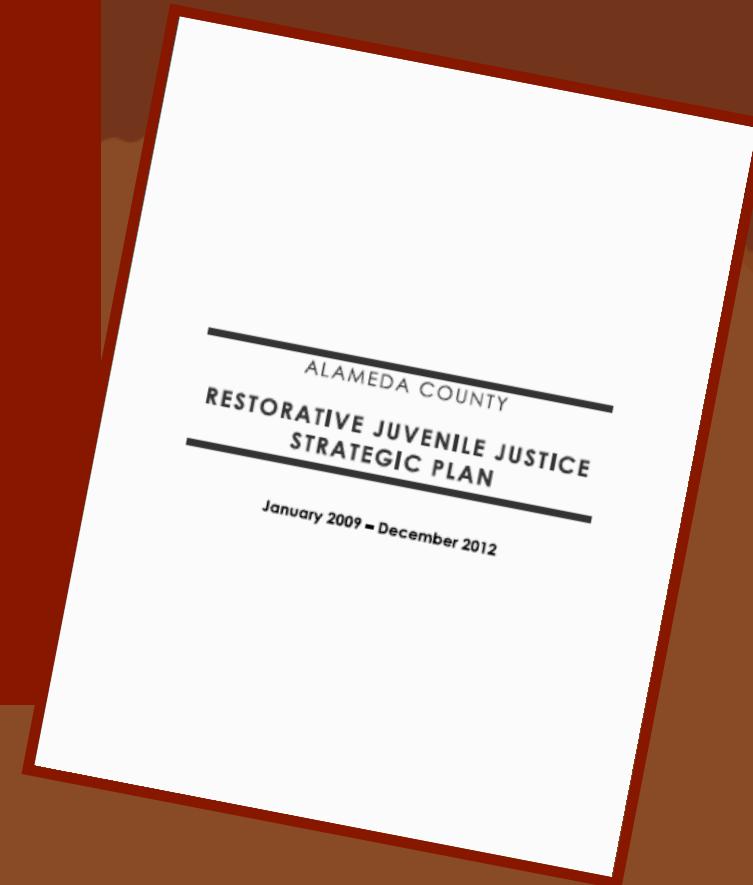
## (Study of RJ v. non-RJ schools 2011-2014)

- 76% of Circles Successfully Resolved Conflict
- Racial disparities reduced and eliminated in some schools (e.g. eliminated Ralph Bunche)
- Increased Youth Capacity to Navigate Conflict (Doing Circles at Home)
- Dramatically Higher Academic Outcomes RJ schools v. non-RJ schools
  - 60% increase in graduation rates v. 7% increase
  - 128% increase in reading levels v. 11% increase
  - 62% reduction in chronic absence v. 24% increase
  - 56% reduction in drop out v. 17% reduction



# Alameda County Restorative Juvenile Justice Strategic Plan - 2009

- Institutionalize evidence based RJ practices in Alameda County's juvenile justice system, schools, community based youth serving organizations
- More effectively address youthful wrongdoing and associated mental health and behavioral issues





# Restorative Juvenile Justice in Alameda County

- Pilot Programs 2008-2009
- Work Today – Community Works, RJOY, Insight Prison Project



# RJ, MLK and Gandhi



## Gandhi's Justice:

That act alone is just which does no harm to either party to a dispute.



## MLK's Justice:

Justice is love correcting that which revolts against love. Wherever justice stands, you find love stands beside it.



# THANK YOU

Supporters of RJOY include The California Endowment, Measure Y, The San Francisco Foundation, Oakland Unified School District, The Van Loben Sels Foundation and Individual Donors