

**What is the Receptivity of Teachers and Parents to the Implementation of Restorative Action Practices in the Early Primary Years?**

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Electronic copies of a short article on the study and of the complete graduate paper are available from any of the authors.

## **Abstract**

The Langley School District, like many others, is looking for creative ways to make schools safe. Believing that the punitive retributive approach to discipline is not the most productive method of teaching students to deal with conflict, a program known as Restorative Action has been introduced in some intermediate and secondary classrooms. Based on the principles of Restorative Justice, Restorative Action is a co-operative approach to discipline focused on the restoration of broken relationships. As of yet, however, Restorative Action has not been introduced into the primary grades.

This paper reports the results of a three-month study conducted in Langley, the purpose of which was to first see what the literature says about early intervention programs and parent and teacher involvement in educational reform. It then examined the receptivity of Langley teachers and parents to the implementation of Restorative Action in the early primary years. A survey was distributed and 34 parents and 7 teachers in 2 elementary schools responded. Follow-up interviews were conducted with 8 parents and 3 teachers.

Analysis of the literature review shows that while early intervention programs affect student behaviour in a positive manner, there are factors affecting parent and teacher participation in such programs. Data collected through the surveys and interviews revealed that parent and teacher receptivity to the implementation of Restorative Action in the primary years was strong. Factors perceived to affect the successful implementation of this program included: 1) for parents, readily available and easily accessible resources, workshops and opportunities to dialogue with school staff about Restorative Action in their children's school and 2) for teachers, prepared resources and the time to learn, collaborate and plan for the implementation of Restorative Action. Based on the foregoing, the following recommendations were proposed: that educational leaders plan and sponsor information meetings and workshops and hire people trained in Restorative Action to develop resources for parents and teachers and that district leaders and school administrators find innovative ways to support teachers during the implementation phase.