RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS

WORKSHOP 5 FACILITATOR GUIDE

Workshop 5: Leadership for a Rights Respecting School

unicef
canada

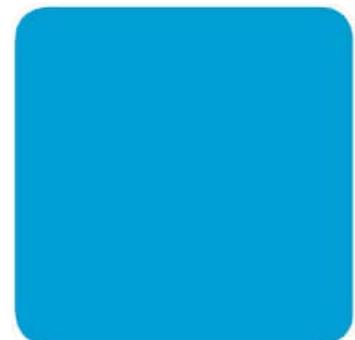rights respecting schools™

Every child.
Every opportunity.
No exceptions.

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Workshop 5: Leadership for a Rights Respecting School

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABOUT RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS

Rights Respecting Schools is a whole school initiative that uses the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as a basis for building an inclusive and respectful school culture. In these schools children's rights are adopted as guiding principles that inform a common set of values shared by all members of the school community. These common values create a sense of community and become the lens through which students, teachers, school administrators and parents make decisions, choose behaviour, and participate at their school.

Research on more than 1,600 UNICEF Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA) schools in the United Kingdom demonstrates that participating students have improved self-esteem and are more engaged in their learning. Students have been shown to become engaged by learning how to voice their opinions, participating in decision-making, resolving conflict peacefully, and understanding global social justice issues. They are also found to have a positive attitude towards diversity, which has led to a reduction in prejudice and bullying.

The Rights Respecting Schools initiative was developed by UNICEF Canada for Canadian schools and is implemented by a network of local and national organizations, known as the *Friends of Rights Respecting Schools.*

For more information about the Rights Respecting Schools initiative, visit **rightsrespectingschools.ca**.

ABOUT THE FRIENDS OF RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS

The Rights Respecting Schools initiative in Canada is facilitated by a network of local and national organizations with mandates and expertise in social justice and human rights, children's rights education, student-centred learning and global citizenship. The collaborative forum for RRS-trained facilitators from these organizations is the *Friends of Rights Respecting Schools (FRRS)*. The Friends of Rights Respecting Schools are responsible for the leadership and implementation of the Rights Respecting Schools initiative in their jurisdictions (regional or provincial/territorial).

To find out more about Rights Respecting Schools in your area, visit **rightsrespectingschools.ca**.

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WORKSHOP 5: LEADERSHIP FOR A RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL

OVERVIEW

Aim

This workshop explores what rights respecting leadership looks like and how school leadership can evolve to be more rights respecting. Participants learn to apply the 'best interests of the child' and the 'views of the child' to mitigate tension between rights of the child within educational settings. As well, participants identify changes that could be made to a school policy to make it more reflective of the Convention, and to identify pedagogical and institutional strategies for enacting these changes. Lastly the group examines good practice examples of how schools can meet the benchmarks of RRS Building Block: Leadership.

Guiding Questions

- What does rights respecting leadership look like in a school?
- How can we evolve our leadership to be more rights respecting?

Activities / Timing

Explore

- Activity 1: Introduction and Five-Minute Reflection   20 minutes
- Activity 2: Mediating Conflict Between Rights in Schools   30 minutes

Respond

- Activity 3: Restorative Conflict Resolution (Optional)   20 minutes
- Activity 4: Children's Rights-Friendly School Policies   30 minutes

Take Action

- Activity 5: Good Practices for Leadership in a Rights Respecting School   40 minutes

Total   **2 hours**
          (plus optional 20-minute activity)

CHECKLIST TO PREPARE FOR WORKSHOP 5

✓	ACTIVITY	RESOURCES
◯	**1. Send an email to the school with:** ❑ The ***Overview of Workshop 5*** and a request to forward it to all participants ❑ A request for a copy of a school policy (i.e. Code of Conduct) – *see Activity 4* ❑ A reminder to have workshop participants bring their binder to hold handouts ❑ A request for a flipchart and markers, multimedia projector, screen, laptop.	**All resources are available at:** **rightsrespectingschools.ca** ***Overview of Workshop 5***
◯	**2. Prepare the following handouts:** ❑ **Handout 1:** Five-Minute Reflection ❑ **Handout 2:** Tension between Rights ❑ **Handout 3:** Rights in Conflict Scenario ❑ **Handout 4:** Assessment of Options ❑ **Handout 5:** Using Restorative Practice ❑ **Handout 6:** Five Questions to Rebuild Relationships ❑ **Handout 7:** How Restorative Is Your School? ❑ **Handout 8:** Children's Rights Compliance Test on School Policy ❑ **Handout 9:** RRS Workshop Series Participant Evaluation ❑ **Building Block Chart:** Leadership	*Handout 1* Page 8 (one per participant) *Handout 2* Pages 11-12 (one per participant) *Handout 3* Page 13 (one per participant) *Handout 4* Page 14 (one per participant) *Handout 5* Page 17 (one per participant) *Handout 6* Page 18 (one per participant) *Handout 7* Page 19 (one per participant) *Handout 8* Pages 21-23 (one per participant) *Handout 9* Page 26 (one per participant) *Building Block Chart* (6 copies) – filled in
◯	**3. Prepare the following resources:** ❑ Download the **RRS Workshop 4 Presentation** ❑ **Copy of the school policy to be examined in Activity 4** ❑ **Good Practices for Leadership at a Rights Respecting School** ❑ **Take-Away Resource 1:** Restorative Conflict Resolution ❑ **Take-Away Resource 2:** Professional Development Activities for Educators	***RRS Workshop 5 Presentation*** Available at rightsrespectingschools.ca ***Copy of School Policy*** Receive from school – two copies per group ***Good Practices Guide*** At rightsrespectingschools.ca – One copy of guide and additional resources ***Take-Away Resource 1*** rightsrespectingschools.ca – one copy ***Take-Away Resource 2*** rightsrespectingschools.ca – one copy

ACTIVITY 1: INTRODUCTION AND FIVE-MINUTE REFLECTION

15 minutes

Objectives

- To reflect on the elements that make for successful leadership of a rights respecting school.

Materials

- Projector, screen, computer, chart paper, tape, markers
- **RRS Workshop 5 Presentation** – Microsoft PowerPoint® (at **rightsrespectingschools.ca**)
- **Handout 1: Five-Minute Reflection** (page 8) – 1 per participant
- Recreate the balloon diagram from the **Five-Minute Reflection** on a large piece of chart paper.

Activity

1. Before the participants arrive cue the ***RRS Workshop 5 Presentation*** to **slide 3**. Hang the large copy of the balloon drawing on the front board.

2. As participants arrive ask them to jot down their ideas on the ***Five-Minute Reflection*** handout using the instructions on the presentation slide.

3. When everyone has had a chance to reflect on the Five-Minute Reflection, welcome the participants and explain that this fifth and final workshop is focused on RRS Building Block 4: Leadership for a Rights Respecting School.

4. Briefly introduce the activities on the agenda using **slide 4**.

5. Show **slide 5**. Reinforce the importance of strong leadership for the successful and sustainable development of the Rights Respecting Schools initiative. Then ask the question: *What does leadership at a Rights Respecting School look like?* Encourage participants to share their ideas with the large group.

6. Use **slide 6** to review what **Leadership** in a Rights Respecting School focuses on: *Administrators are committed to promoting respect for children's rights. Children's rights are used as a lens for policies, program choices, program implementation, and other decision-making.*

7. Examine what the Rights Respecting Schools initiative recommends schools implement by reviewing the benchmarks of RRS Building Block 4: Leadership. Show **slides 7-12**. Use the notes on each slide to provide examples for each benchmark.

8. Show **slide 13**. Then open a discussion of the participants' thoughts on the questions from the ***Five-Minute Reflection***. Record their ideas on the large chart at the front of the room.

9. Ask the participants to consider that they have managed to develop successful leadership for RRS at their school and the initiative is off the ground and growing. Then ask them to consider what might unexpectedly blow the initiative off course. Show **slide 14**. Record their ideas to either side of the balloon.

10. Reinforce that it is important to think through needs, challenges and strengths like this exercise does so that everyone is working from the same page as they undertake new activities after the workshop series.

Source: This activity has been adapted from: *Hot Air Balloon* in Save the Children Fund and Dynamix Ltd., *Participation Spice it Up!*, Cardiff, UK (2002).

For successful leadership of this Rights Respecting School…
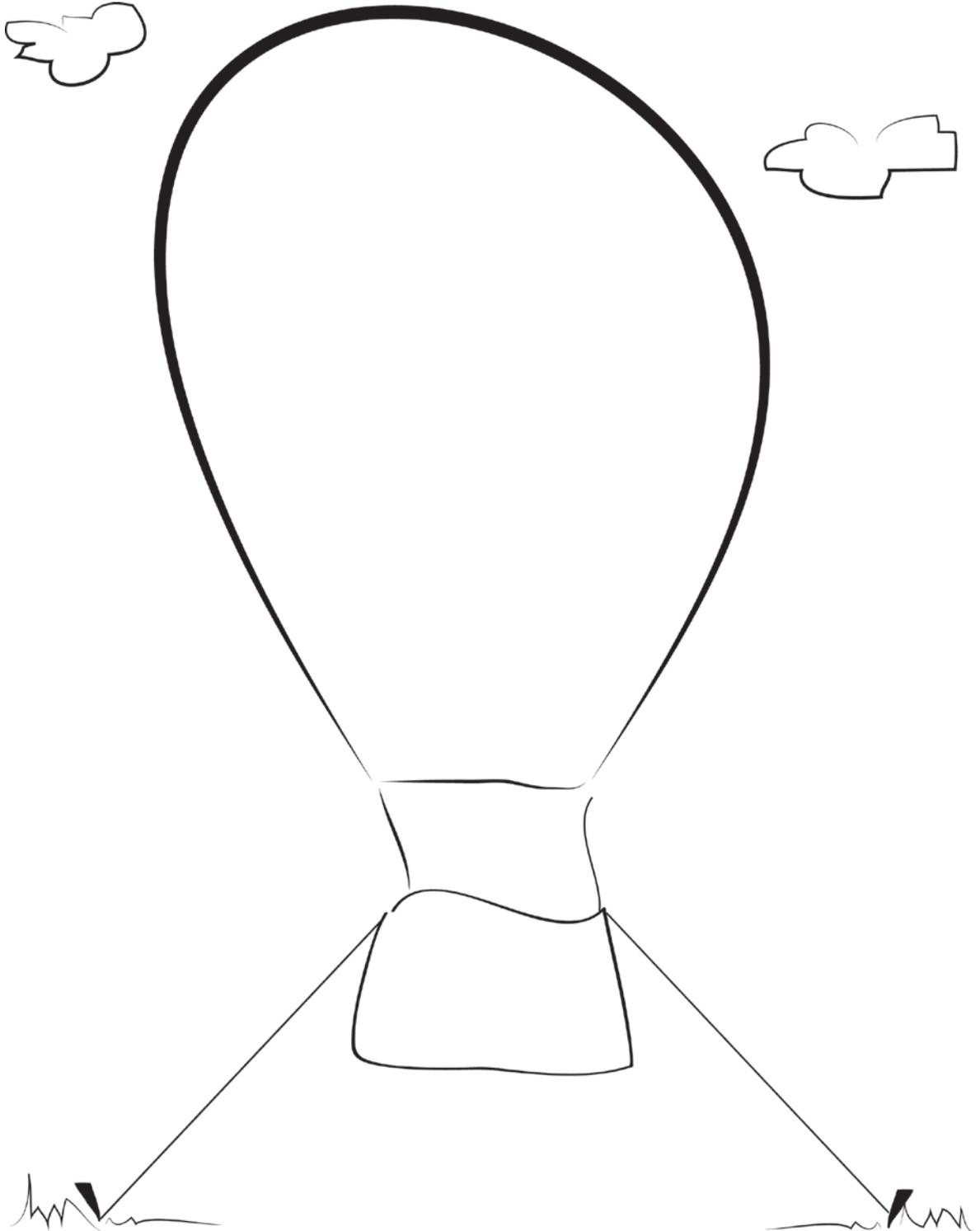
ACTIVITY 2: MEDIATING CONFLICT BETWEEN RIGHTS IN SCHOOLS

30 minutes

Objectives

- To identify and understand the potential for tension/conflict between children's rights within educational settings
- To apply the 'best interests of the child' and the 'views of the child' to mitigate tension between rights of the child within educational settings.

Materials

- Projector, screen, computer
- **RRS Workshop 5 Presentation** – Microsoft PowerPoint® (at **rightsrespectingschools.ca**)
- Refer to a handout from Workshop 1: **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** (participants have a copy in their binders)
- One copy of **Tension between Rights** (pages 11-12) per participant
- Handouts **Rights in Conflict Scenarios** and **Rights in Conflict Assessment** (pages 13-14) – 1 per participant.

Activity

1. Show **slide 15**. Explain that the ultimate goal of leadership for a Rights Respecting School is to **protect and uphold children's rights for all children**. But when we enforce and uphold children's rights, sometimes tensions or conflicts between the rights of individuals and/or groups can occur. This activity will explore how examining the **best interests of children** and the **views of children** can help mitigate these tensions.

2. Share the following with the participants using **slide 16**:

   Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states: *"In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration."*

3. Explain that this article is established by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child as one of the **guiding principles of the Convention, as well as being an actual article or right (Article 3)**. It is intended to guide and inform all provisions of the Convention and how they are implemented.

4. Discuss the following questions with participants:
   - What does 'best interests of the child' mean to you?
   - In what ways is this notion difficult to apply in practice?
   - Who typically determines the best interests of the child? Which children's rights may challenge this trend?

5. Show **slide 17**. Explain that the Convention itself helps us determine what is and what is not in the best interests of the child. Draw the participants' attention to their handout from Workshop 1 ***United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child***. (Consider having a few extra handouts available in case someone requires one).

6. Ask participants to identify a few articles that describe *what is* and *what is not* in the best interests of the child. Then show **slide 18** to share some examples of how the articles do this.

This activity is continued on the next page.

Activity (continued)

7. Explain that this distinction seems clear in the Convention, but in reality there will be many occasions at home and at school when the best interests of the child will not be clear and tensions between conflicting rights will need to be mitigated.

8. Show **slide 19.** Explain that these are some of the most common types of rights conflicts that we see between different stakeholders in the education sector: *between children and their peers; between schools and school boards; between teachers' unions and school boards; and between minority groups and the school, school board or ministry.*

9. Ask participants to brainstorm examples of conflicts that might occur between these groups of stakeholders. Supplement the answers from workshop participants with the examples on **slide 20**.

10. Explain that, as you can imagine, in some situations it can be difficult to determine what exactly is in the best interests of the child. This is where it is important to pay special attention to another **guiding principle of the Convention, Article 12 - the views of the child**.

11. Show **slide 21**. Explain that Article 12 of the Convention states: *"States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting them, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."*

12. Emphasize the fact that the Convention recognizes the evolving capacities of children – that children's views should be considered in light of their age and maturity level. Show **slide 22** to examine the distinctions between younger children and adolescents in terms of the general contributions they can make to decision-making. Explain that these are intended only as a guideline because many factors impact the extent to which, and how, children's views are implemented. Give participants a copy of the handout *Tension between Rights.*

13. **Discuss with participants:**
    o   When making or revising school policies is it a regular practice to seek out, listen to and incorporate the views of children at your school?
    o   What challenges come with making meaningful opportunities for students to engage with policy-making in schools?

14. **If Time Permits:** Show **slide 23**. Distribute one copy of the *Rights in Conflict Scenarios* and one copy of the *Rights in Conflict Assessment* to each group.

15. Ask participants to read aloud the scenario to their group and then determine one or two possible ways to resolve the conflict of rights, taking into account the best interests and views of the child. When groups are finished, ask them to share the main points of their discussion with the large group.

16. **Discuss as a large group:**
    o   When confronted with a conflict across children's rights, how did you weigh the consequences of particular actions to come to a decision?
    o   What tensions and struggles did you experience in this process?

TENSION BETWEEN RIGHTS

When human rights are enforced, there is potential for conflict or tension between the rights of different individuals and/or groups. One contemporary example of rights in conflict with each other within the educational setting has been the nation-wide zero tolerance approach of safe school policies. The implementation of zero tolerance policies has been criticized for infringing the rights of children and youth through its harsh application and potential for being discriminatory in practice. But Canada is now witnessing a shift in safe school policy as schools, school boards, and ministries of education adapt policies to manage the potential for conflict between rights. More progressive safe school policies are being developed to keep victims safe from harm, while ensuring that the policies are not discriminatory towards the accused and do not revoke their right to an education.

The Best Interests of the Child

When the act of upholding certain rights infringes on other rights, the conflict is resolved by using one of the guiding principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (the Convention): the best interests of the child.

This principle is outlined in article 3 of the Convention:
> *In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of laws, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration.*

The best interest of the child is not the only consideration but it should be one of the first when making decisions regarding children. It is challenging to resolve conflict based on the best interest of the child, because the definition has been left vague in the Convention and by interpreters of the Convention. It is argued that the best interest of the child cannot be prescribed, since it should be determined in relation to the child's/children's context.[1]

The Views of the Child

The most effective way to determine the best interest of the child, when making decisions regarding implementation, is to use another guiding principle of the Convention: the views of the child. Considering the views of the child helps to assess the degrees of benefit and damage that the child will experience as a result of the conflict.

Article 12 of the Convention outlines the following:
> *States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.*

Evolving Capacities of Children

It is important to understand that the principle of children's participation is premised on the concept of 'evolving capacities' of children and relies on the guidance of adults. Article 5 of the Convention states that direction and guidance, provided by parents or others with responsibility for the child, must take account of the capacities of the child to exercise rights on his or her own behalf.[2] The evolving capacity of children is important in the provision of Article 12, the central article which states that children have a right to participate in decision-making as it affects them. However, in accordance with other rights, such as Article 5, this does not discount the ultimate decision-making role of adults in relation to children.

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[1] Canadian Coalition for the Rights of the Child, UNICEF, Justice for Children and Youth, University of Toronto Faculty of Law. *Best interest of the child.* (2009) Available at: rightsofchildren.ca/wp-content/uploads/bic-report-eng-web.pdf

[2] Lansdown, G. (2005). The *Evolving Capacities of the Child.* Florence, Italy: UNICEF/Save the Children Innocenti Research Centre. Retrieved May 22, 2011 from unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/evolving-eng.pdf.

Evolving capacities means that as children grow, they gain competencies to make decisions about their lives with less need for direction. According to recent approaches in childhood studies, these competencies evolve at different rates across cultures, life experiences, circumstances, and in association with different rights.[3]

A distinction between younger children and adolescents can often be made:

- **Children 16 years and older** are normally assumed to be sufficiently mature to make decisions, such as decisions relating to their caregivers.
- **Children between 14 and 16** are presumed to be mature enough to make a major contribution.
- **Children between 9 and 14** can meaningfully participate in the decision-making procedure, but their maturity must be carefully assessed on an individual basis. However, care must be taken with younger children and they may require specific assistance to ensure that they can express themselves clearly and freely.
- **Children younger than 9** have the right to give their opinion and be heard. They may be able to participate in the decision-making procedure to a certain degree, but caution should be exercised to avoid burdening them by giving them a feeling of becoming decision makers.[4]

Types of Conflict

According to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, there are three different types of conflict between rights which can occur:

1. The interests of a child or a group of children stand against those of other children.
2. The interests of a child clashes with the wishes of one or both parents or guardians.
3. The interests of a child or a group of children contradict a broader societal interest.

Within educational settings there is much potential for conflict between rights to arise.

Group	Example Conflict
Interests of one child and interests of peers	A student identified as a 'bully' could be expelled (losing his right to education), but if the student remains in school, his/her peers continue to be at risk (losing the protection from harm).
Teachers' unions and school boards	Teachers go on strike for better teaching resources to improve students' quality of education but while on strike the students lose their right to education.
Schools and school board	Resources are allocated to schools on a per capita basis but certain schools have higher needs.
Minority groups and the school, board or ministry	Zero tolerance school safety policy implemented by school boards can be argued to discriminate against disenfranchised youth (racialized and disabled students, according to the Ontario Human Rights Commission).

Those responsible for informing resolutions must take into account not only the rights of the child but a multitude of stakeholders and groups. It is important that school policies and decisions made regarding the child are all made with the best interests of the child in mind.

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[3] Lansdown, G. (2005).

[4] United Nations High Commission for Refugees, *UNHCR Guidelines on Formal Determination of the Best Interests of the Child* (May, 2006). Available at: http://www.unicef.org/violencestudy/pdf/BID%20Guidelines%20-%20provisional%20realease%20May%202006.pdf

RIGHTS IN CONFLICT SCENARIOS

As a group, choose which of the following scenarios you wish to discuss further using *Handout 4: Rights in Conflict Assessment*.

Scenario 1

A Sikh student wishes to wear his Kirpan (a ceremonial dagger carried by baptised Sikhs) to school. Some members of the school community have raised concerns that it could be used as a weapon. The student and his family argue that according to the Multicultural Act, it is an essential accessory for the expression of his religion and is in no way intended for violence. What do you do?

Scenario 2

Some parents in your school community have alerted you to the possibility that students are bringing illicit drugs to school to sell. The police are suggesting that a drug-sniffing dog be used to investigate, but you are concerned that this may be a violation of student privacy. What do you do?

Scenario 3

A 14-year old female student, new to Canada, has been hand-picked by the team captain to join the co-ed intramural soccer league. The student's parents, however, are not willing to allow her to participate. They are concerned because participation would involve their daughter fraternizing with boys which conflicts with their family values, and because they rely on her to come home right after school to care for her younger siblings while they work evening jobs to supplement their income. This student has been experiencing social anxiety and has a hard time fitting in at school — which has also affected her grades. Joining the team is an opportunity for her to make friends and to be a part of the school's athletic community (and would also potentially contribute to her gaining a greater sense of self-efficacy and academic achievement). The student approaches you and asks if there is anything that you can do to help. What do you do?

Scenario 4

A gay male student approaches the school principal (you) about his intention to start a gay/straight alliance at school. He explains that he has heard a number of homophobic jokes in the school, to the point that he is concerned that homophobia is normalized and accepted. The student also explains that he has been the victim of bullying, and he feels that a gay/straight alliance group would create the opportunity for dialogue and transformative attitudes. You have concerns that such a group would 'out' gay students and/or place gay students, including him, at further psychological and physical risk of being targeted by bullies. What do you do?

Scenario 5

A parent has brought it to your attention that a student at your school has been making vulgar and hurtful comments about her child, other children, teachers and the administration online. She wants the student expelled for this behaviour. What do you do?

RIGHTS IN CONFLICT ASSESSMENT

Complete the following chart in your groups for your chosen scenario.

Scenario		
Identify the rights which are in conflict and how they conflict		
Give a brief assessment of child's/children's age and maturity		
	Option 1	**Option 2**
Possible Action-Responses: *Outline possible responses and how these take into account the best interests of the child.*		
Possible Consequences/ Outcome:		
Views of the Child: *Based on the framework on the views of the child and the information you have on the children involved in the conflict, how will you ensure their views are considered?*		
Views of Relevant Stakeholders: *Outline with whom you could also consult on this decision and why. (Examples include: parents, various school staff, other students.)*		

ACTIVITY 3: RESTORATIVE CONFLICT RESOLUTION

25 minutes

Optional

Objectives

- To conduct a children's rights compliance test on a school policy
- To identify changes to could be made to a school policy to make it more reflective of the Convention, and to identify pedagogical and institutional strategies for enacting these changes.

Materials

- Projector, screen, computer
- **RRS Workshop 5 Presentation** – Microsoft PowerPoint® (at **rightsrespectingschools.ca**)
- **Handout 5: Using Restorative Practice** (page 17) – 1 per participant
- **Handout 6: Five Questions to Rebuild Relationship** (page 18) – 1 per participant
- **Handout 7: How Restorative is Your School?** (page 19) – 1 per participant
- Download and preview the video **The Forum: Conflict Resolution in a Circle** (3:00) available at **creducation.org/cre/homebase/content_video/2397/**.

Activity

1. Show **slide 24**. Explain that a foundational component of developing a rights respecting climate in a school is the approach that staff and students use to resolve conflicts between students, and between students and staff. This activity will explore one of several democratic and participatory approaches to conflict resolution, called *Restorative Practice*.

2. [Click to reveal the definition on the slide] Explain that restorative practices enable people to restore and build community in an increasingly disconnected world. The most important function of restorative practices is to restore and rebuild relationships after conflict, disagreement and harm. *Use the rest of the notes on **slide 24** to continue your explanation of restorative practices.*

3. Show **slide 25**. Briefly describe the different types of restorative practices typically used in schools using the notes on **slide 25**. Explain that there are five restorative questions that are typically used as a basis for the different restorative practices. Show **slide 26**.

4. Explain that these restorative questions have been adapted by UNICEF Canada to ground the discussion in children's rights. Adding this element helps reinforce respect for our own rights and the rights of others, and it provides a school-wide framework of values to ground restorative practices in.

5. Give each participant a copy of the handouts *Using Restorative Practice*, *Five Questions to Rebuild Relationships, and **How Restorative is Your School?***

6. Draw participants' attention to the handout *Five Questions to Rebuild Relationships* that suggests the use of 'I' Statements to reduce confrontation and blaming. These statements also clearly spell out how the affected party was hurt and what they need for the situation to come to a resolution.

7. Show the video *The Forum: Conflict Resolution in a Circle* as an example of a restorative practice (3:00).

This activity is continued on the next page.

Activity (continued)

8. Discuss after the video:
   o Does anyone have experience with forum circles or a similar style of collaborative conflict resolution?
   o Is this something you would be interested in using in your classroom? Or at home?

9. Show **slide 28**. Ask participants to work with their group members to review the content of the handout *How Restorative is Your School?* and then discuss the following questions:
   o Which practices on the continuum do you feel are most representative of the general approach to conflict at your school?
   o What is working well at your school? What would you change?
   o What about your own practice? Which approaches do you use often?
   o What is working well about your own approach? What would you change?

10. Explain that UNICEF has produced a short resource on restorative practices through a rights lens with a classroom activity. Explain that you will pass it around during the discussion of the Take-Away Resources at the end of the workshop.

USING RESTORATIVE PRACTICE

What is Restorative Practice?

Restorative practices enable people to restore and build community in an increasingly disconnected world. The most important function of restorative practices is to restore and rebuild relationships after conflict, disagreement and harm.

In the context of education, contemporary disciplinary measures often rely on punishment to change behaviour. In contrast, restorative practices refer to the idea of persons of authority (i.e. administrative and school staff, teachers, parent volunteers) doing things *with* students rather than doing things *to* or *for* them. Implementing restorative practices in schools creates opportunities for meaningful student participation in the decision-making processes that directly affect them. Students that participate in restorative practices are successfully exercising Article 12 of the Convention – the right to participate.

Implementing Restorative Practices in the Classroom

The restorative approach assumes that the best people suited for resolving a conflict, are those who are directly involved. Solutions imposed by an outside party are understood to be less effective, less educative and less likely to be honoured. Engaging *with* students to resolve disputes and determine appropriate outcomes can take many forms. But central to all restorative practices is the free expression of emotion and affect.

Restorative practices can take the form of:	By:	In response to:
Restorative Enquiry: the starting point for restorative practices. Involves non-judgemental listening to help one person find a way forward for themselves.	Peer mentors, Teachers	Minor student worries, Classroom disruptions
Restorative Discussion: used in a challenging situation. Involves the expression of feelings and needs to understand why each has acted the way they have.	Often between a more and less powerful person	Disruption, Inter-personal conflict, Challenging situations
Mediation: used when both parties believe the other is the problem. The mediator is impartial and helps broker a joint solution.	Peer mediators, Teachers	Student conflict, Staff–student conflict
Circles or Forums: useful for solving problems that involve a group of people. Enables the group to express feelings and determine way forward.	Members of classroom community, Class groups	Class issues/harm within class, Problems affecting students

Source: This table was adapted with permission from: Transforming Conflict, *Restorative Approaches*, available at: transformingconflict.org/Restorative_Approaches_and_Practices.htm.

Five Questions to Rebuild Relationships

All restorative practices are centred on five central questions:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- Who was affected and how were their rights impacted?
- What can you do to help those who were affected?
- How can everyone better respect the rights of others in the future?

🎬 Video Resource

The Forum: Conflict Resolution in a Circle creducation.org/cre/homebase/content_video/2397/

FIVE QUESTIONS TO REBUILD RELATIONSHIPS

When a fight or disagreement happens, people and things can be hurt. Afterwards the focus needs to be on how to repair and rebuild the relationship.

The five questions below help people work through problems together. It is best to have someone ask these questions of the people involved. At school, this extra person might be another student or a teacher. At home, it may be your brother, sister, parent or guardian.

The extra person can be called a 'mediator'. Their role is to listen carefully, ask the questions below and make sure that each person gets an equal chance to talk about their feelings and how they were affected by the conflict.

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking at the time?
3. Who was affected and how were their rights impacted?
4. What can you do to help those who were affected?
5. How can everyone better respect the rights of others in the future?

Talking with Respect

The mediator can also ask each person to speak respectfully. For example, they might suggest that each person use 'I' statements to talk about their feelings. 'I' statements help the other person understand why you were hurt and what you need to feel better.

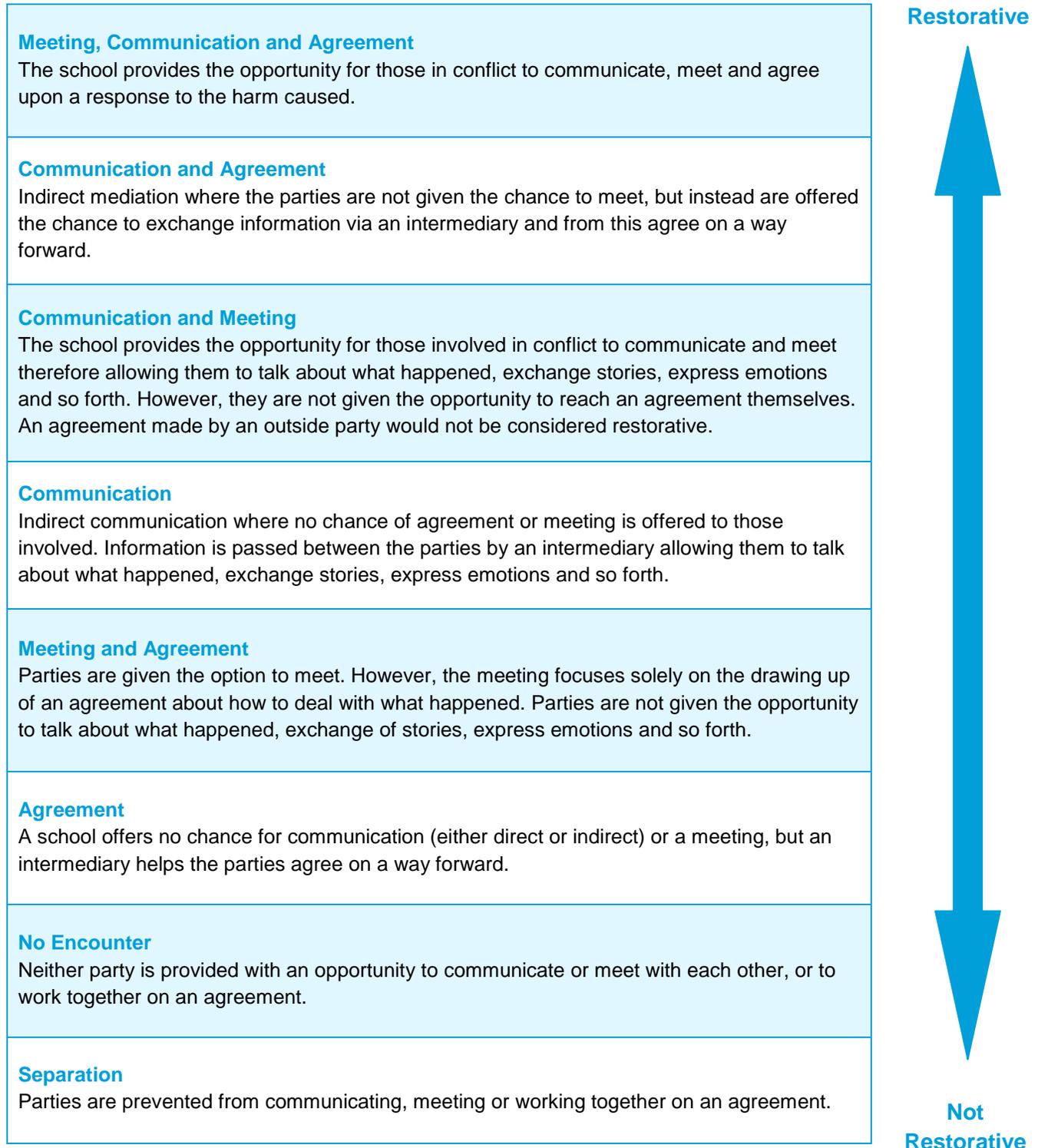| 'I' Statements	Example
1. I felt…	I felt hurt,
2. When…	when you yelled at me,
3. Because…	because I didn't feel like I had done anything wrong.
4. Now I need…	Now I need to know that you feel sorry for yelling.

HOW RESTORATIVE IS YOUR SCHOOL?

Gauge your school's restorative practices using the chart below.

Restorative

Meeting, Communication and Agreement
The school provides the opportunity for those in conflict to communicate, meet and agree upon a response to the harm caused.

Communication and Agreement
Indirect mediation where the parties are not given the chance to meet, but instead are offered the chance to exchange information via an intermediary and from this agree on a way forward.

Communication and Meeting
The school provides the opportunity for those involved in conflict to communicate and meet therefore allowing them to talk about what happened, exchange stories, express emotions and so forth. However, they are not given the opportunity to reach an agreement themselves. An agreement made by an outside party would not be considered restorative.

Communication
Indirect communication where no chance of agreement or meeting is offered to those involved. Information is passed between the parties by an intermediary allowing them to talk about what happened, exchange stories, express emotions and so forth.

Meeting and Agreement
Parties are given the option to meet. However, the meeting focuses solely on the drawing up of an agreement about how to deal with what happened. Parties are not given the opportunity to talk about what happened, exchange of stories, express emotions and so forth.

Agreement
A school offers no chance for communication (either direct or indirect) or a meeting, but an intermediary helps the parties agree on a way forward.

No Encounter
Neither party is provided with an opportunity to communicate or meet with each other, or to work together on an agreement.

Separation
Parties are prevented from communicating, meeting or working together on an agreement.

Not Restorative

ACTIVITY 4: CHILDREN'S RIGHTS-FRIENDLY SCHOOL POLICIES

Objectives

- To conduct a children's rights compliance test on a school policy
- To identify changes to could be made to a school policy to make it more reflective of the Convention, and to identify pedagogical and institutional strategies for enacting these changes.

Materials

- Projector, screen, computer
- **RRS Workshop 5 Presentation** – Microsoft PowerPoint® (at **rightsrespectingschools.ca**)
- Arrange to receive a copy of one of the school's policies (i.e. School Code of Conduct, School Dress Code) – Photocopy 2 per group
- **Handout 8: Children's Rights Compliance Test on School Policy** (pages 21-23) – 1 per participant
- Collect one set of *Rights Cards* per group (at **rightsrespectingschools.ca**).

Activity

1. Show **slide 29. Give the following introduction.** *The Importance of Policy for Guiding Practice:* Explain that one of the best ways to ensure the implementation of children's rights is to put children at the forefront of the policy and decision-making agenda by embedding the Convention in the vision, objectives and frameworks of policies. This makes the Convention a visible reference and provides a children's rights lens in all ensuing programs, actions and initiatives.

   One of the ways we do this is by doing a **Children's Rights Compliance Test** on a school policy. A compliance test is done by analyzing how an existing policy promotes and provides for the rights of the child as outlined in the Convention. Two key points of reflection revolve around to what extent the policy promotes and protects the best interests of children and to what extent the views of the child are ascertained and considered during the development and implementation of the policy. (See **slide 29** for further elaboration).

2. Show **slide 30. Explain to participants that they will be conducting a Children's Rights Compliance Test** (a Leadership good practice) on a chosen school policy. Handout one set of *Rights Cards* and one copy of the policy to each group, and one copy of *Children's Rights Compliance Test on School Policy* to each participant.

3. Have each group read the policy and then identify which children's rights (using the *Rights Cards*) are impacted by the policy.

4. Next the groups use the questions on the *Children's Rights Compliance Test on School Policy* to conduct the compliance test on the policy.

5. Once groups have completed their compliance test, debrief using the discussion questions below.

Discussion

- How did you find the process of examining a policy through a children's rights lens?
- Why is it important to infuse children's rights into our policy and decision-making?
- What (if anything) surprised you about this process? How did it influence your thinking about policy and decision-making?
- What recommendations did you make for this policy?
- How could you use this test (or an adaptation) in your daily practice?

# CHILDREN'S RIGHTS COMPLIANCE TEST ON SCHOOL POLICY

Use this compliance test to determine how an existing school policy promotes and provides for the rights of children as outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

STEP 1: Use the *Rights Cards* to identify which specific articles of the Convention are impacted (positive or negative) by the school policy being examined.

STEP 2: Discuss the following questions in relation to the school policy being examined. Make notes in the areas provided.

SECTION 1: Impact on Children

- *Does the policy have any direct implications (positive or negative) for children or children's rights?*
- *Does it have any indirect (positive or negative) significant effect on children?*
- *What impact does it have on the general welfare of children?*
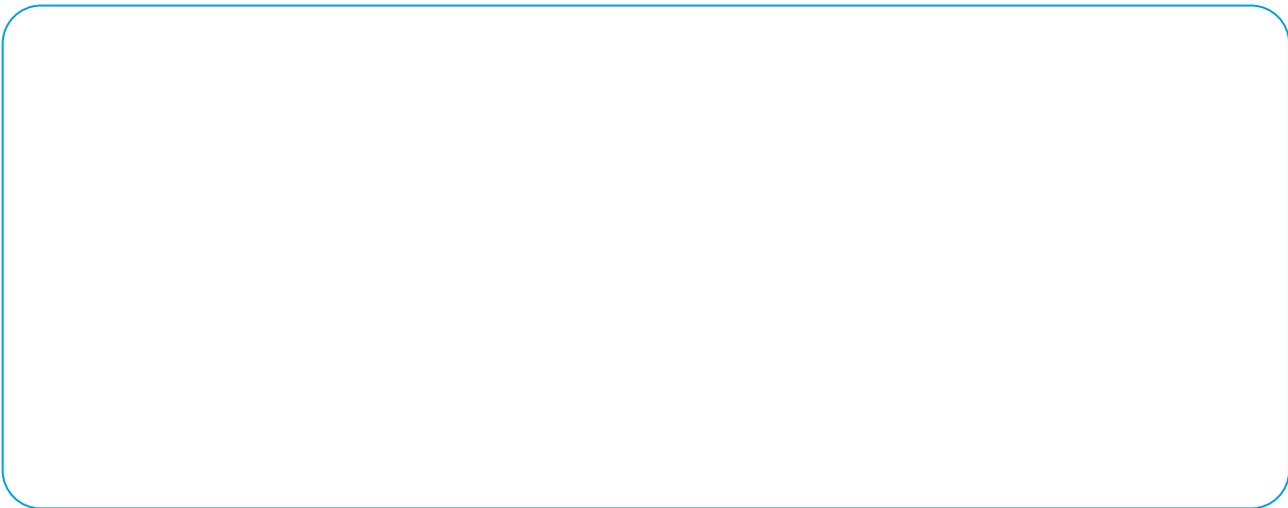
SECTION 2: Impact on compliance with international and national instruments

- *How does the policy relate to, promote, inhibit or contravene the provisions of the Convention?*
- *Does the policy take into account the general principles and articles of the Convention?*
- *How does the policy contribute to the achievement of any goals identified by the government in relation to children?*
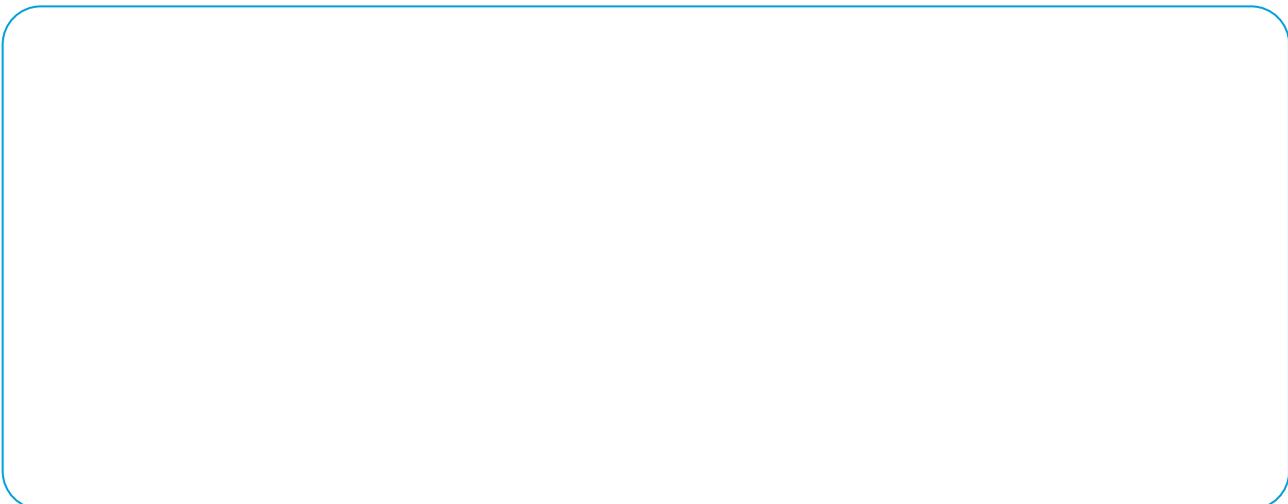
CHILDREN'S RIGHTS COMPLIANCE TEST ON SCHOOL POLICY
(CONTINUED)

SECTION 3: Valuing the Views of Children

- *To what extent have children been involved in the drafting, implementation, and monitoring of this policy?*
- *Have all (including young, vulnerable, minority and excluded) children been given an equal opportunity to participate?*
- *What do children think about this policy?*
- *How were the views of children ascertained? Does the policy reflect this?*
- *Is there a need to ascertain – or ascertain more explicitly – the views of children?*

SECTION 4: In the Best Interests of Children

- *What are the best interests of children in regards to this policy, according to children themselves?*
- *What are the best interests of children in regards to this policy, according to adult stakeholders?*
- *How can any differences in opinion be resolved?*
- *How does this policy take these best interests as a primary consideration?*

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS COMPLIANCE TEST ON SCHOOL POLICY
(CONTINUED)

SECTION 5: Impact on Families and/or Community

- *Who are the family and community stakeholders involved?*
- *To what extent have they been consulted and involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of this policy?*
- *Is advocacy and education needed to gain their support? If so, what might this entail?*

SECTION 6: Impact on Different Groups of Children

- *Are the rights of one group of children more affected than those of another group of children?*
- *Are there any competing interests between groups of children, or between children and other groups?*

OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTIVITY 5: GOOD PRACTICES FOR BUILDING LEADERSHIP OF A RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL

45 minutes

Objectives

- To examine good practice ideas for meeting the RRS Building Block 4 Benchmarks.

Materials

- Projector, screen, computer, chart paper, markers
- **RRS Workshop 5 Presentation** – Microsoft PowerPoint® (at **rightsrespectingschools.ca**)
- Make copies of the **Building Block Chart: Leadership** that was filled in during the **Meeting to Review the Results of the Initial Rights Assessment** (see the Facilitator Guide for that meeting) – one copy per participant.
- Prepare copies of the good practices by Benchmark in the **Good Practices for Building Leadership of a Rights Respecting School** (at **rightsrespectingschools.ca**)
- Prepare one copy each of the **Take-Away Resources: Restorative Conflict Resolution** and **Professional Development Activities for Educators** (at **rightsrespectingschools.ca**)
- Prepare one **RRS Workshop Series Completion Certificate** for each participant (at **rightsrespectingschools.ca**)
- Make copies of the **RRS Workshop Series Participant Evaluation** (page 26) – 1 per participant.

Activity

1. Show **slide 24** to explain that:
   In Workshop 2 we examined the results of the Initial Rights Assessment. Today we will examine what that assessment showed we were already doing well under Building Block 4: Leadership.

   This last activity is going to give us an opportunity to look more closely at each Building Block 4 Benchmark and some good practice ideas for meeting them. We will work in small groups to determine our next steps under each benchmark and continue the development of ideas for our RRS Action Plan.

   After we finish the Workshop Series, the Children's Rights Team will finesse the ideas we develop today and put them into the RRS Action Plan Template.

   When that plan is complete and has been shared with our school community we will have a roadmap to guide us towards becoming a Rights Respecting School. Each year this roadmap will look different as we focus our efforts on different aspects of the initiative.

2. Organize the participants into six small groups/pairs. Assign each group one of the five Teaching and Learning Benchmarks. Distribute chart paper, markers, one copy of the *Building Block Chart: Leadership*, and one copy of the pages from the *Good Practices for Leadership of a Rights Respecting School* guide (and accompanying resources) that are relevant for each group's assigned Benchmark.

   This activity is continued on the next page.

ACTIVITY 5: GOOD PRACTICES FOR BUILDING LEADERSHIP OF A RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL (CONTINUED)

Activity (continued)

3. Show **slide 25**. Have the participants create a 3-column chart on their chart paper with the column headings: Strategy; Resources; Timeline. They should write the Benchmark number at the top of the page. (These are the three columns that the CRT will need to fill in on the RRS Action Plan.)

Benchmark 18: The school has a mission statement, charter and code of conduct that reflect the principles of the Convention.

Strategy	Resources	Timeline
Activities the school will undertake.	*People resource, budget and materials needed to undertake activities.*	*Timing of year, duration of time needed to accomplish the activities.*

4. Explain the resources that each group has been given:
    *   The results on the **Building Block Chart: Leadership** show them where their school is currently at and any ideas that the Children's Rights Team has had about where to head.
    *   The **Good Practices for Building Leadership of a Rights Respecting School** will provide inspiration as they brainstorm.

5. Then give each group 15 minutes to explore the good practice ideas and fill in their chart with strategies to meet their assigned Benchmark.

6. After 15 minutes, have groups stand up and rotate to a different table. Then give them 7 minutes to add to the previous group's ideas.

7. Then after 7 minutes, have groups leave their tables and move about the room however they wish, to see what other groups had developed. Encourage them to add ideas to the charts as they move about.

8. The charts are collected and given to the Children's Rights Team to use when they develop the RRS Action Plan.

FINAL WRAP UP

*   Use **slides 33-35** of the **RRS Workshop 5 Presentation** to discuss the take-away resources.
*   Pass around a copy of the take-away resources **Restorative Conflict Resolution** and **Professional Development Activities for Educators** for participants to flip through. Explain that they can download and print their own copy from at **rightsrespectingschools.ca**.
*   Hand out one **Rights Respecting School Workshop Series Participation Evaluation** to each participant and have them complete it while you continue wrapping up.
*   Use **slide 36** to congratulate the school on their commitment and dedication to completing the Workshop Series. Handout the **RRS Workshop Series Completion Certificates** to participants.
*   Ensure all participants have your contact information on **slide 37** of the presentation.
*   Make sure you have a couple of minutes at the end for questions or comments.

RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS WORKSHOP SERIES
PARTICIPANT EVALUATION

School: _____

You are a: (place an 'X') _____ **Teacher** _____ **Administrator** _____ **Non-Teaching Staff** _____ **Parent**

_____ **Other** (please specify) _____

1. Please comment on the facilitation of the RRS Workshop Series. Was the facilitator engaging? Was the facilitator effective? How would you improve the facilitation of the workshops?

2. How have you brought children's rights into your daily practice with children (i.e. teaching and pedagogy, parenting) since this workshop series began? What were the results?

3. What kinds of support will you need moving forward as a rights respecting educator?

4. What did you like the most about the workshop series? (Please be specific about what worked well).

5. What did you like the least about the workshop series? (Please be specific about what didn't work well).

Thank you for your time and feedback! Please make any additional comments on the back of this form.