

7 STEPS FOR DEVELOPING A CARE TEAM

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Step 1: your care team identifies which behaviors should be managed in a classroom and which behaviors require immediate referral to the care team. Decisions of this nature should be done as a team in a CBC. Below are some prompts to get the team started. Capture responses on chart paper or a whiteboard.

- What behaviors should be classroom managed and why?
- What behaviors should result in an immediate Office Discipline Referral (ODR) and why?

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Step 2: as a team, create a process for classroom managed behaviors, moving from the least restrictive to the most restrictive interventions. For example, teachers engage in at least three unique, progressive interventions prior to referring a student to the care team.

Progressive discipline: three strategies to use prior to an ODR

1. Proximity, nonverbal redirection, verbal redirection, full-class verbal redirection, humor
2. Restorative conversation (RC)
3. Call care team and/or call home

When these three interventions are done with integrity, a teacher can dramatically decrease their numbers of ODRs per year.

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Step 3: noting the third intervention above, when a teacher calls for support of a care team member, there are three ways a care team member can use RCs when responding to a classroom:

1. Least-restrictive: care team member has a RC with a student in the hall and they return to class directly after.
2. More-restrictive: care team member has a RC with a student in the hall and care team member pushes into the classroom with the student, helping them re-engage with the lesson before fading support.
3. Most-restrictive: care team member has a RC with a student in the hall and, recognizing that the student needs time/space to de-escalate, walks with the student to a private reflection space for a longer RC if needed.

The goal in restorative discipline is to return the student to class as quickly as possible, but this can only be done once they are calm and ready to focus on the lesson.

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Step 4: create a process for an immediate care team referral.

Sample process:

- Walk with referral (if paper copy) to designated space
- Student silent reflection
- Reflecting with care team member

How do we make it right:

planning for re-entry conversation

Often, a care team member may not be available to see a student right away. In this case, staff can provide the student with a developmentally appropriate reflection sheet. For example, kindergarteners may need picture cues.

Things to include in a reflection sheet:

- What happened?
- What will the teacher say happened?
- Who's been harmed?
- What needs to be done to make things right?

For younger students, this should be less complex, perhaps coloring in or circling emojis that express the situation, etc.

When the care team member is ready, they will review the reflection sheet with the student and help them plan for the re-entry conversation with the teacher. The teacher needs to be ready to accept their return.

2022 Relationships First: Restorative Justice-Practices in Philly Public Schools. No author, pp. 42-43.

<https://www.philasd.org/schoolclimate/#relationshipfirst>

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Step 5: student re-entry post-ODR occurs with the student, member of the care team, and classroom teacher. If the relationship is not reestablished, the undesired behavior may continue or worsen.

Re-entry tips:

- Remember **RC's** are **always** free from guilt, shame, lecture, and judgment.
- Welcome back warmly
- Explicitly state the behavioral change you expect to see.
- Move forward amicably.

Reminder: as part of Tier 1, all staff members should be trained in RC's.

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Step 6: create a process for the implementation of **HHCs**, **WCs**, and **COSA**. Harm & Healing Circles (**HHCs**) are used for mutual conflicts both big (violations of the code of conduct and even the law) and small: mediation for all!

- Identify the referral process for **HHCs**.
- Identify the primary care team members responsible for facilitating **HHCs** and training youth mediators.
- Train youth as peer mediators. **HHCs** are great ways to empower the youth to handle conflicts peacefully both in and out of school.

Circles of Support & Accountability (COSA) are used for major concerns regarding behavior, academics, or attendance by creating a restorative student support plan.

- What will the referral process be for **COSA**?
- When will **COSA** occur?
- What members of the care team are responsible?
- Will youth leaders join the **COSA** to lend support? How will these students be chosen?

Welcome Circles (WCs) are used when new students arrive in a classroom or students return from extended absence.

- What will the referral process be for **WCs**?
- When will **WCs** occur?
- What members of the care team are responsible?
- Will youth be trained to lead **WCs**?

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Step 7: Identify other restorative alternatives to punitive discipline. Like discipline, consequence is a neutral term, not necessarily punitive or restorative. Consequences should be natural.

To ensure that a consequence is restorative, we have to intentionally make it so.

Besides **COSA** and **HHCs**, there are some alternatives to punitive discipline the care team can utilize. More on this in the next section but a few things to consider:

- **What lesson can a student learn from this consequence?**
 - Assign a project or paper
- **How can others learn from this lesson?**
 - Have the student create a presentation and present to the class
- **How can this be used to make the community stronger, better, more beautiful?**
 - Assign community service, making it as natural as possible. For instance, if a student trashes the cafeteria, they meet with the cafeteria staff and help them clean it for a predetermined period of time.
 - If a consequence can't be natural, make it arbitrary but in a fun way! Employ the Wheel of Nia. The student spins a wheel demarcated by various acts of communal kindness (i.e. clean a classroom, take care of school garden, graffiti removal, trash pickup, etc). Whatever it lands on becomes the student's community service.