Whole-School Uses of Circles

Tier 1 Circles: Building Relationships & Communities, Everyday Practices
Reaffirming relationships in the school
Universal: School-wide, 100% of the school community
• Check-In Circles • Talking Circles • Community-Building Circles
• Teaching Circles • Writing Circles

Tier 2 Circles: Problem-Solving and Issue-Focused
Repair relationships at the first sign of things going wrong
Targeted: As needs, problems, and issues arise
• Circles of Understanding • Support Circles • Celebration Circles
• Honoring Circles • Grief Circles • Reintegration Circles

Tier 3 Circles: Deal with Conflicts or Harms
Rebuilding relationships in those out of balance
Intensive: 1–5% of the school community
• Circles of Understanding • Repairing Harm Circles
• Healing Circles • Resolving Conflicts Circles
• Reintegration Circles

Originating in the mental health field, this three-tiered pyramid concept builds on the work of Brenda Morrison (2007) and Peta Blood (2004), both of whom adapted the pyramid model to show how restorative practices can be most effectively used in schools. Kay Pranis has adapted their pyramid model to show how Circles can be used in schools on all three tiers.

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