



# Chilliwack Restorative Justice

Repairing Harm. Preventing Crime.



## Restorative School Programs Newsletter

September 2023

### Welcome to the 2023/2024 School Year!

Summer has come and gone so quick! While schools may have been out, we have been busy with preparing for many exciting Restorative School developments here at Chilliwack Restorative Justice. Here are some updates that came up over the summer months:

- Through the generous funding provided by United Way British Columbia, we are now able to deliver an after-school program for children grades 2-5, which is to be hosted at Central Elementary School. This program is called PEACE OUT: School's Out After-school Peace Circles. It aims to build on children's social emotional development through community building activities, peace circle dialogues and interactive teaching from the OWN-IT curriculum, and a participant led project to give back to the community. Principal of Central Elementary, Donna Arnold, shares our excitement about the start up of this program:

***"Our school, as well our Community School Society, is excited to be able to partner with Restorative Justice to run this program. We believe that when students feel connected to their community, they gain perspective, build compassion, and spread kindness. We hope The Peace Circle Program is going to inspire, connect and support our incredible young humans to enhance their skills and form strong relationships with one another and the community they live in."***

- We are preparing to be in 6 schools with classrooms teaching grades 4 and 6 twice a week for the first half of the school year: Vedder Middle, A.D. Rundle, Mt. Slesse Middle, Cultus Lake Elementary, Unsworth Elementary, and Watson Elementary. Stay tuned to see what schools we will be involved in for the second half of the year!

### Another Way to Address Harm

Conflict, harm, and mistakes happen. We offer restorative circles and support to address, repair and prevent further harm. These circles allow a space for each party and their supports to share about what happened and the impact of the incident and what is needed to move forward in a positive way. We accept referrals for restorative circles from all Chilliwack elementary, middle and high schools from **September 5th to April 30th**.

For more information on what the Restorative Response in the schools can look like or how to refer, please contact Danielle, the Restorative School Coordinator.

### Individualized Classroom Circles

Concerned with a wide-spread challenge coming up within the classroom escalating towards further harm? Connect with us to discuss an individualized plan to address the concern through a classroom circle lesson plan centred on restorative conversation and interactive teaching.

### Opportunities to learn more

Interested in having us provide learning opportunities for school staff, parents or students? We offer a variety of experiential workshops that teach about the restorative ideology, building restorative culture through peace circles, what a school restorative circle would look like and more! Connect with us and we can centre a workshop to your educational goals!

Connect at: [schools@restoringjustice.ca](mailto:schools@restoringjustice.ca)

- With the growing OWN-IT Classroom Conversations Program and development of the PEACE OUT after-school program, our team has grown! Over the summer we have hired 5 new staff with 3 more hires coming soon! In total, our Restorative school team will have 10 members!
- We have had the privilege of conducting 3 days of OWN-IT facilitation training with 15 participants from the school district, community, and our organization. As the curriculum is highly experiential and group dialogue-based, so to, was the training. This created an enriching environment to learn from each other and grow skills, as great dialogue and connections were made as we examined how to utilize restorative value-based classroom practices! And of course - we had lots of room to be silly and have fun!

## A Glimpse of what is Next

Our staff are eager to begin our school and after-school programming towards the end of September! We will be starting off with focus on making safe connections through community building activities to make space for the deep and authentic dialogues that often arise through the curriculum. Even through our curriculum training, I witnessed the impact the curriculum has in building strong and authentic connections, as our adult trainees were a very well-connected group by the end of our time together! I greatly look forward to seeing the powerful impact translate to classrooms again this year and start to make a difference in our new after school program!

Regarding our school restorative response, I will be starting to connect with students and staff to promote awareness and understanding of our school restorative response. As I attended events and spoke to people and youth in the community this past year, I heard how unfamiliar people are with the term 'restorative justice'. When we discuss it, the same line comes out as a response from both adults and our local youth: "That makes so much sense!". How great would it be for more people to know that this process is an option available to them and to be able to request it when they are experiencing a harm or conflict in their lives? I believe setting the intentionality here to allow those we interact with in the schools to know and make informed decisions about the processes available to them to support them through harm or conflict, is a vital step towards a more restorative-oriented community.

I look forward to updating you on the progress made by our team in a couple of months!

Until November,

*Danielle Ostermat*

Restorative School Coordinator  
Chilliwack Restorative Justice

## Upcoming mentorship training opportunity

The role of Mentor with Chilliwack Restorative Justice supports a Responsible Party after the Restorative Circle dialogue to equip them for healthy living.

In the mentorship program, a Mentee—that is, the Responsible Party for a harm that has been addressed through a restorative circle, can receive insight and guidance from a trained, mature mentor. A Mentor can empower a mentee to find a stable place to live; receive family support; gain healthy community connections; and help to set goals for education, employment, and mental and physical health in a 3-12 month intentional relationship. All potential Mentees will be part of our existing [Restorative Mentorship program](#).

This program training allows participants to support mentees who have gone through a school-based restorative circle or a community restorative response circle.

Date: Saturday, November 4th, 2023  
Time: 9 - 4 pm (snacks/lunch provided)  
Event Address: TBD  
Cost: FREE

Register below:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeLZad\\_9IPoWquWcl-A8c3SJFrZcmP1UPTb3nU8r8HkThD9uQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeLZad_9IPoWquWcl-A8c3SJFrZcmP1UPTb3nU8r8HkThD9uQ/viewform)



# Meet this year's Restorative School Team!



**Danielle Otermat**

Restorative School Coordinator

Entering her 2nd year as the Restorative School Coordinator with Chilliwack Restorative Justice, Danielle is looking forward to continuing to connect and collaborate with school staff, students and the Chilliwack community. Danielle has an educational and professional background in Early Childhood Education and Child and Youth Care and has worked in the field for the past 10 years. Danielle believes in the transformational power of safe and caring relationships and aims to instill in others a strong sense of community. Outside her time at CRJ, Danielle likes to get out in nature and create art pieces.



**Haley Berger**

Classroom Facilitator

Haley is returning for her 2nd year as a Restorative Classroom Facilitator in Chilliwack schools. She loves the outdoors, spending time with family, and getting to know new people! What Haley loves about being a classroom facilitator is connecting with teachers and helping the students learn how to better see other's perspectives and develop compassion within conflict. Haley looks forward to connecting with many students and staff this coming year.



**Shelsey Pascuzzo**

Classroom Facilitator

Shelsey has lived and worked within the Chilliwack community for 12 years. She has a Child and Youth Worker Diploma, Developmental Services Worker Diploma and is near completion of a BA in Criminology. The majority of Shelsey's career has been spent working with children and youth in the Human Services field through various roles and settings. Fun facts about Shelsey: She is very creative, enjoys the outdoors, is an entrepreneur and loves animals!



**Nicole Burgert**

Classroom facilitator

Nicole is excited to be joining Chilliwack Restorative Justice as a Restorative Justice Classroom Facilitator. Nicole loves working with kids to help them live up to their full potential. She cares about building equitable and safe communities and has always called British Columbia home. In her spare time, Nicole loves playing the piano.



**Josiah Hansen**

After-school Facilitator

Josiah is heading into his third year at the University of the Fraser Valley where he studies Political Science and is also on the executive of the Political Science Students Association. On the side, Josiah officiates a lot of baseball and basketball. For fun, he enjoys chess, pickleball, and the NFL. Josiah is super excited to be working with Chilliwack Restorative Justice this year!

## More great people are on the way!

**Colleen Crottie**

After-school Facilitator

**Jennifer**

**Mackenzie**

After-school Facilitator

**Coming soon**

After-school Facilitator

**Coming soon**

After-school  
Educational Assistant

**Coming soon**

After-school  
Educational Assistant