Pocket Restorative Practice Approaches to Foster Peer-Based Relationships and Positive Development in Schools

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Abstract: In schools, the implementation of restorative practices is linked to an improvement in school climate, discipline and management of conflict. There are a few systematic reviews about the implementation of pocket restorative practice approaches (PRPA) in schools but they are restricted in terms of practices included, outcomes and study design. Moreover, none of them seem to include evidence-based recommendations for their implementation. We have dealt with such issues by carrying out a systematic review of the effectiveness of PRPA and developing evidence-based practice guidelines. Nineteen studies met the inclusion criteria and we developed eighteen evidence-based practice guidelines. The implementation of PRPA seems to be more common in secondary education and may be used to improve social and emotional skills and relationships, and to deal with and prevent conflicts while changing school culture in disciplinary terms. The greatest evidence available is for a specific model of mediation that is recommended to decrease aggression levels in primary education. Our guidelines may offer support to improve the quality of prevention and intervention actions used in schools. The implementation of these kinds of approaches may help to promote mental health and youth development, and deal with adverse behavioral outcomes such as bullying, which are all major public issues in the school community.

Keywords: restorative practices; school; relationships; positive development; evidence-based guidelines; review

1. Introduction

Restorative practices are inspired by the traditional practices of indigenous communities of North America and New Zealand [1]. The principles of restorative practices have their origins in restorative justice, a way of mediating a conflict [2] that allows those who may have committed harm to take responsibility for their acts by focusing on the victims and giving them voice [3]. As stated by the International Institute of Restorative Practices, such practices are based on the notion that “(….) human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make changes to their behavior when those in positions of authority do things with them rather than to them” [4]. From a relational development framework, this notion can be very important for health and, especially, during adolescence. By this period, individuals have already developed the necessary cognitive, behavioral and social-relational skills to actively engage in their own developmental changes [5]. In particular, improving a healthy relational nexus in multiple contexts through restorative practices can potentiate adolescents’ abilities to positively adapt to social challenges in the school context and, therefore, promote healthy youth development [5]. Thus, the implementation of restorative approaches is a core notion in many schools in many countries.
Restorative practices are viewed along a continuum ranging from informal to formal and including affective statements, restorative questions, small conferences, proactive circles, responsive circles and restorative conferences, as described by the International Institute for Restorative Practices [4], which is the model with the most scientific evidence on their implementation [6]. Even so, there are also other models including different restorative practices such as, for example, a specific style of language [7–9], specific types of talking circles [8,10,11], mediation [10,12], group meetings [7,13], restorative chats, a reflection room, or student headship teaching and education of families [13].

In the school setting, the implementation of restorative practices is associated with an improvement in school climate, discipline and positive management of conflict throughout actions that prevent misbehavior, conflicts, suspensions and exclusions. Restorative practices support constructive relationships between all members of the school community, as well as prosocial behaviors, by means of the development of social and emotional abilities such as empathy, awareness and responsibility [14].

According to the extent of restorative practices implementation in schools, one could talk about pocket restorative practice approaches (PRPA) or whole school restorative approaches [15]. While PRPA are mainly a targeted strategy implemented to deal with conflicts by means of responsive restorative practices such as mediation, restorative circles, or conferencing [6]; whole school restorative approaches are a schoolwide ethos strategy [16] that includes the development of a community of care based on a culture of justice. Both types of approaches provide a framework for prevention and intervention for diverse features of school communities [14] by means of the promotion of social and emotional skills, which are both core components of positive youth development [17]. A systematic review of whole school restorative practice approaches shows that their implementation is associated with positive results related to improving social and emotional skills and behavior and that there is high quality scientific evidence to recommend two whole school restorative practice approaches for secondary education [6]. To our knowledge, there is no similar initiative involving PRPA.

There are a few systematic reviews about the implementation of PRPA in schools. Their results show that, when implemented in schools, PRPA are effective in fostering positive management of discipline [18] and bullying [19], improving school climate, promoting positive relationships [14,19–21] and developing social and emotional skills [14,20,21]. Even so, these reviews have limitations. They seem to be restricted in terms of type of: (a) restorative practices analyzed [20]; (b) outcomes [18,19]; and (c) study design [19]. In addition, those reviews include both pocket and whole school restorative approaches at the same time, which may interfere with the generalization of results [21] and none of them seem to include evidence-based recommendations for their implementation. The main aim of this study is twofold. The first objective is to carry out a broad and systematic review of the effectiveness of PRPA. The second study aim is to develop and grade educational practice guidelines grounded on the scientific evidence accessible regarding the effectiveness of such practices in the school setting. Evidence-based guidelines are significant in such a setting. Evidence-based guidelines would allow teachers, school management teams and local administrators to understand the power of the practice guidelines developed for application in their own school communities. The use of evidence-based guidelines could enable decision-making on educational practices and boost their use, while increasing the student education value and matching up practices with needs. Lastly, evidence-based guidelines could help to engage students in the educational community, increase mental health protective factors and, thus, foster students’ school-based peer relationships and positive development.

2. Materials and Methods

A systematic literature review is a compiling of study results conducted to preceding criteria and to reply to an investigation query. This type of review is valid and has quality when the review is grounded on impartial criteria that allow the process to be clear,
transparent, and accurate. The type of systematic review used is a scoping review. A scoping review is used when an amount of evidence has not yet been studied thoroughly or the evidence is of diverse nature and cannot be manageable and does not allow for a more specific type of review. The review was carried out according to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines [22]. It meets all PRISMA criteria appropriate to a systematic and non-meta-analytic review.

2.1. Search Procedure

Evidence searches were intended to be as sensitive as possible to find as many studies as possible on the efficacy of PRPA in the school setting. We also conducted specific searches in the overall literature to identify significant studies meeting the inclusion criteria. We considered all kinds of study designs, ranging from expert opinions to randomized controlled trials planned to investigate the effects of the implementation of PRPA in schools in primary and/or secondary education, considering only students and published between 2000 and 2022. In the area of restorative justice practices, high quality methodological level studies in schools are scarce [6]; thus, we included the aforementioned study designs to be able to reach all the accessible scientific evidence. We only included peer-reviewed papers, to ensure that the scientific evidence identified is of high quality. We omitted studies that were: (a) focused on whole school restorative approaches; (b) conducted in schools for students with special educational needs since students may show additional needs outside those of students in formal education; and (c) not peer-reviewed. Magazines, books and dissertations were not considered. No language limits were established. A computerized search to find studies on the effects of PRPA in schools was conducted in Medline and ProQuest in April 2022. The search in the latter included the following databases: PsycINFO, Educational Resources Information Center or ERIC, Social Services Abstracts, Sociological Abstracts and Education Full-text. The following terms were combined to carry out the systematic search: “restorative”, “practice”, “circle”, “conference”, “mediation”, “conversation”, “meeting”, “effect”, “effectiveness”, “efficacy” and “school”. The basic search approach included: restorati* AND practice* OR circle* OR conferenc* OR mediat* OR conversati* OR meeting* AND school* AND effect* OR efficacy. The records recovered in the searches were compared with the records published in high-impact journals where studies in the field of PRPA may be published. In this way, we corroborated the appropriateness of our literature search approach. Specific websites such as National Educators for Restorative Practices, The International Institute for Restorative Practices, The Restorative Justice Council, Transforming Conflict, and The Schott Foundation were also checked. An ancestral search was carried out checking the reference list of selected articles and contrasting the records identified with those from other systematic reviews close to the study field [14,18–21] to find further articles that may meet the inclusion criteria. Our search approach may have been repetitive since it collected much of the same evidence.

2.2. Synthesis of Data

The following information was extracted from the selected articles: author, year of publication, country, study objective, study design, setting, sample, intervention, control group, follow-up, instruments along with psychometric properties, data analysis methods and outcomes. We then rated the quality of study design by means of the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network [23]; see Table 1. Such a method is proposed for the quality assessment of research study evidence. This method establishes the grade of assurance one could have in the outcomes of studies that have been selected. This method considers the rigorousness of the design of studies along with the bias risk and the likelihood of a causal relationship associated with intervention and effect. There are checklists per each study design to evaluate the internal validity of studies including, for instance, sample details (e.g., selection, size, baseline differences between groups, location, participant dropout during the study and follow-up, etc.) confounding variables and statistical analyses. Those checklists are used to grade the quality of the design of the study. There are eight stages
of evidence that range from 1++ (“High-quality meta-analyses, systematic reviews of randomized controlled trials or randomized controlled trials with a very low risk of bias”) to 4 (“Expert opinion”). Lower scores mean high quality of evidence. Considering the quality of evidence, this method [23] allows for the drafting of practice guidelines based on the evidence available. To draft practice guidelines, the generalization of results to the intended population, the quantity of the available evidence and outcomes consistency are considered. There are four grades of recommendations that range from A (“At least one meta-analysis, systematic review or randomized controlled trial rated as 1++ and directly applicable to the target population; or a body of evidence consisting principally of studies rated as 1+, directly applicable to the target population and demonstrating overall consistency of results”) to D (“Evidence level 3 or 4; or extrapolated evidence from studies rated as 2+”). The quality of studies was assessed independently by two evaluators (VK and LME). Divergences between them were settled by discussion and consensus by a third evaluator (JAAC).

Table 1. Key to evidence statements and grades of recommendation by the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Evidence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1++</td>
<td>High-quality meta-analyses, systematic reviews of RCTs or RCTs with a very low risk of bias</td>
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<tr>
<td>1+</td>
<td>Well-conducted meta-analyses, systematic reviews or RCTs with a low risk of bias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1−</td>
<td>Meta-analyses, systematic reviews or RCTs with a high risk of bias</td>
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<tr>
<td>2++</td>
<td>High-quality systematic reviews of case control or cohort studies. High-quality case control or cohort studies with a very low risk of confounding or bias and a high probability that the relationship is causal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+</td>
<td>Well-conducted case control or cohort studies with a low risk of confounding or bias and a moderate probability that the relationship is causal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2−</td>
<td>Case control or cohort studies with a high risk of confounding or bias and a significant risk that the relationship is not causal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Non-analytic studies, e.g., case reports, case series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Expert opinion</td>
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Grades of recommendation

A At least one meta-analysis, systematic review or RCT rated as 1++ and directly applicable to the target population; or a body of evidence consisting principally of studies rated as 1+, directly applicable to the target population and demonstrating overall consistency of results

B A body of evidence including studies rated as 2++, directly applicable to the target population and demonstrating overall consistency of results; or extrapolated evidence from studies rated as 1++ or 1+

C A body of evidence including studies rated as 2+, directly applicable to the target population and demonstrating overall consistency of results; or extrapolated evidence from studies rated as 2++

D Evidence level 3 or 4; or extrapolated evidence from studies rated as 2+

* RCT: Randomized controlled trial.

In order to evaluate the percentage of agreement when establishing levels of evidence and grades of practice guidelines, inter-rater agreement was calculated between two investigators (VK and LME). They both extracted information from the selected studies and coded them considering the data extracted from each article. Agreement was considered acceptable if it was at least 80% [24]. Ten studies (52.6%) were randomly selected and both investigators worked independently. They extracted data from each article and included them in a codebook. The data were evaluated for consistency between the two researchers by computing the percentage of agreement and disagreement in the diverse codes. The
percent agreement between the two researchers was 100%. Cohen’s Kappa coefficient was 1, indicating almost perfect agreement [25].

3. Results
3.1. Overall Results

We identified a total of 1805 records by means of the computerized search. We also identified 24 more records in the manual search. We ultimately included 19 studies (see Figure 1 for more details).

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**Figure 1.** Search and inclusion process flowchart. * Consider, if feasible to do so, reporting the number of records identified from each database or register searched (rather than the total number across all databases/registers). ** If automation tools were used, indicate how many records were excluded by a human and how many were excluded by automation tools. From: [22] Page, M.J., McKenzie, J.E., Bossuyt, P.M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T.C., Mulrow, C.D., et al. The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. BMJ 2021;372:n71. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71.
Most of the studies were conducted in the USA (10; 53%), New Zealand (4; 21%), Europe (2; 11%), Brazil (1; 5%), the United Kingdom (1; 5%) and Turkey (1; 5%), and published between 2011 and 2021 (13; 68%). They included a total of 13 qualitative studies (69%), three case studies (15%), two quasi-experimental studies (11%) and, finally, one mixed study design (5%). One of the two quasi-experimental studies (5%) was conducted with control groups. No other study was conducted with control groups. Thirteen studies (70%) were conducted in secondary education, four studies (20%) in primary and secondary education, one study (5%) in primary education and in one study (5%) the setting was not stated. With regard to the sample size, three studies (15%) did not report data. The sample size of the studies reporting data (16; 85%) ranged from 1 to 1003 participants. As for the follow-up, it was included only in three studies (16%). The restorative justice practices included in the studies had the following figures: circles (8; 42%), specific restorative practice models (4; 21%), conferencing (3; 16%), mediation (2; 11%), class meetings (1; 5%) and restorative discussions or conversations (1; 5%). Four out of the nineteen studies (21%) used questionnaires to evaluate the effects of restorative justice practices implementation. Of those, only two (50%) were reported to be valid and reliable measures. Seventeen out of the nineteen studies (90%) reported positive effects, while one study (10%) reported positive and negative effects and another one (10%) reported no benefits. Their methodological quality ranged from 3 to 2++ (3: 17, 90%; 2-: 1, 10%; 2++: 1, 10%). See Appendix A for more information.

3.2. Pocket School Restorative Approaches: Evidence Available, Its Quality and Development of Evidence-Based Guidelines

In this section, we include a detailed description of the scientific evidence identified and give the educational practice guidelines developed. We present the results according to the type of PRPA and the level of evidence established by study design. See Table 2 for details and practice guidelines for PRPA.

**Table 2. Details and practice guidelines for Pocket Restorative Practice Approaches.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Practice or Approach</th>
<th>Essential Elements</th>
<th>Practice Guidelines</th>
<th>Grade of Recommendation</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Resolution and Peer Mediation Program</strong> [26]</td>
<td>Aim: to reduce levels of students’ aggression. Elements: A 31-class-hour training program covering four basic skills: (1) understanding the nature of interpersonal conflicts (9 h); (2) communication (4 h); (3) anger management (6 h); and (4) interpersonal conflict resolution (12 h).</td>
<td>Recommended in primary education to reduce levels of aggression of students with lower socio-economic level.</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mediation</strong> [27]</td>
<td>Aim: to help students manage conflicts in schools. Elements: 40 class-hour training program with modules and phases. Process: - Information and sensibilization about mediation including members of all school community. - Establishment of the group (35 participants) and 27 h of training (9 sessions/3 h): * 12 h of theory: (a) mediation and conflict; (b) communication; (c) alternatives and emotional education. * 3 h for organization and getting ready the school for mediation. * 10 h of practices to test the mediation service * 9 h to solve doubts about the implementation of the service and to evaluate the training. - Definitive mediation program including the annual planning, the persons in charge and the members of the school community that support plan.</td>
<td>Recommended in secondary education to improve school climate, interpersonal relationships between a diverse population of students and teachers; while decreasing the incidence of conflicts among such a population.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conferencing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Restorative group conferencing [28]</td>
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Aim: to repair the consequences of an incident.  
Process:  
- All participants involved in the incident have an individual contact with a facilitator to clarify the aims, the rules and the willingness to participate.  
- In the first round, all participants are presented and the aims and rules are restated. All participants are asked to depict the incident consequences.  
- In the second round, participants seek ways for repairing the harm. The proposals are integrated into the restorative plan by the facilitator.  
- Informal meeting in which participants can talk with each other and recover from the session, and the restorative plan is signed by all participants. | Recommended in secondary education to deal with conflicts and prevent expulsions. | D |

| Conference based on a traditional Māori protocol [29,30] |  
Aim: to restore the consequences of an incident.  
Process:  
(1) Prayers and greetings to acknowledge the attendance and respect of all participants;  
(2) “The problem is the problem”; the sentence is written on the board or spoken about;  
Each participant may reply to:  
- “What are you hoping to see happen in this meeting?”  
- “What is the problem that has brought us here?”  
- “What are the effects of that problem on all present?”  
- “What times, places and relationships do we know of where the problem is not present?”  
- “What new description of the people involved becomes clear as we look at the times and places where the problem is not present?”  
- “If there have been people/things harmed by the problem, what is it that you need to happen to see amends being made?”  
- “How does what we have spoken about and seen in the alternative descriptions help us plan to overcome the problem?”  
- “Does that plan meet the needs of anyone harmed by the problem?”  
(3) Participants are given responsibility to carry out a part of the plan. Follow ups are planned.  
(4) Prayers, thanks and hospitality are offered. | Recommended in secondary education for a diverse community of students to address and resolve tensions, make justice evident and fruitful, and support the restoration of harmony between a diverse community of students. | D |

| Formal conferencing [15] |  
Aim: to promote student participation and repair relationships damaged when a conflict occurs.  
Process:  
- Initial and preparatory meetings  
- Archetypal restorative conferencing  
- Follow up meetings  
No further details are provided. | No evidence in favor of its effects. No recommendation can be elaborated. |                         |

**Class meetings**

| Class meetings [31] |  
Aim: To solve problems in classrooms such as a difficult learning environment or lack of respect.  
Elements:  
- The facilitator that makes questions, sets the setting and runs the circle.  
- The reflector that writes down responses, feeds them back at the end of rounds and makes comments/challenge/ or unpack on discourses.  
- Discursive theoretical approach and elements of class conference and circle time.  
Process:  
- Four rounds, each beginning with a question. Students contribute their answers to the questions as they go around the circle in successive rounds. | Recommended in secondary education for students at risk of disengaging with education for the development of interpersonal skills as well as of active listening and contributing appropriately and confidently. | D |
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<tr>
<td><strong>Circles proactive type</strong></td>
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- A talking piece that goes from one person to the next. Only the person holding it may speak.  
- Guidelines: speaking honestly, listening and no interrupting, and keeping confidentiality.  
- The Keeper preserves the circle integrity by modeling the guidelines.  
Process:  
- Four parts: (a) “checking in” (sharing moods); (b) “burning issues” (sharing problems); (c) “topic of the day” (discussing student-generated themes); and (d) “closing” (reading inspiring quotes or making a wish for the week). | Recommended for girls in multi-ethnic secondary educational centers to improve listening, anger management, and empathic skills, and, thus, self-efficacy. | D |

| **Circles reactive type**      |                   |                     |                         |
| Restorative circle [33]       | Aim: To support victims of bullying, to encourage the bullies to make amends and change behavior, and to determine how to best address the underlying problems.  
Process:  
- Circles are open to all involved parties. All parties will be able to speak and are expected to participate in the decision-making.  
- Decisions must be acceptable to everyone and include the interests of everyone. So, everyone has a role in success. | Recommended in primary and secondary education for the development of empathy, respect, values, attitudes, modes of behavior, and ways of life. Restorative circles are recommended as well to help students in primary and secondary education to promote a school culture of peace. | D |

| **Restorative circle** [34]   | Aims: To solve an act of harm in a space that promotes understanding, self-responsibility and action. The act can be anything specifically observable that occurred and is used as a gateway into the conflict.  
Elements:  
- The facilitator. He/she invites those involved to participate.  
- Participants: (a) the “author”; (b) the “receiver”; and (d) the “community”.  
- Anyone can initiate a circle.  
Process:  
- The facilitator conducts separate preparatory meetings with all participants. The meetings take place to build connections, identify feelings and needs, explain the process, and obtain individual consent.  
- A dialogue is facilitated in which all individuals are supported by the facilitator in understanding each other, taking responsibility for their choices, and generating actions or agreements for moving forward. It makes use of the reflection process. Participants are asked to reflect back.  
- Post-circles take place to check agreements and how things are. | Recommended in secondary education for students to taking ownership of their behavior, interrupting the School-to-Prison Pipeline, improving relationships as well as ways of engaging conflict and significant dialogue. | D |
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<tr>
<td><strong>Restorative justice</strong></td>
<td>Aims: establish group goals, connections, and personal narratives. Elements: - A facilitator who actively model ways to empathically acknowledge and validate students' thoughts, feelings and experiences. - Students seated in circle in a private conference room to facilitate rapport, trust, and cohesiveness. - Counter-storytelling. Process: - At the start of each session (40-min), students are informed of privacy, confidentiality, and objectives. - Students are provided sentence starters based on their own experiences. - Students are guided to explore and recognize participants’ strengths and positive character traits.</td>
<td>Recommended along with counter-story telling in secondary education for students at risk of dropping out school in order to improve self-esteem, community support and academic performance.</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community circles</strong></td>
<td>Peacemaking circles Aims: to bring together victims, offenders, their families and other supporters, and community stakeholders to determine the impact of and offense and what could be done about it. Process: - Anyone affected by the event is invited to participate. - By the end of the circle, participants attempt to a reach consensus plan for the offender and a method to heal the victim and the community. Other practices - Community circles - Peer mediation - Conflict management - Comprehensive antibullying efforts - Affective curriculum development.</td>
<td>- Recommended to decrease discipline referrals and suspensions; while improving social and emotional skills of students such as empathy and conflict resolution.</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community-building</strong></td>
<td>Aim: to create and maintain relationships and to heal the harm to those relationships when wrongdoing and conflict occur. Process: - Four-day restorative justice professional development training for teachers and staff. - The content includes restorative conversations, community-building circles, and restorative circles. No further details are provided.</td>
<td>- Their implementation along with restorative conversations is recommended in secondary education in order to improve relationships between students and teachers and academic outcomes.</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Talking circles</strong></td>
<td>Talking circles Aims: to provide a significant basis for a restorative culture by letting teachers and students the same opportunity to express themselves and know their similarities and differences. Process: - Weekly program-wide talking circles. No further details are provided. Healing circles Aims: To solve conflicts. Elements: - A facilitator of the discussion. - The talking piece: An element that goes from participant to participant. Participants can speak only when they hold it. Process: - The harmed parties, and other members of the community conversate in a circle. - Three core: (a) identify the harm; (b) ask community members to say how they were impacted by it; and (c) come up with ways for the responsible party to repair the harm.</td>
<td>- The implementation of weekly program-wide talking circles and smaller healing circles for conflicts is recommended in secondary education for students at-risk of dropping out school to develop and maintain relationships.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preventive circles plus circles to intervene conflict</td>
<td><strong>Preventive circles</strong>&lt;br&gt;Aims: to build character and foster positive attitudes.&lt;br&gt;Process:&lt;br&gt;- Daily circles for all grades for 30 min.&lt;br&gt;- First opening question about a topic and students have the opportunity to respond.&lt;br&gt;- Then, teachers facilitate a student discussion about the topic, prompting their opinions, feelings, and behaviors.&lt;br&gt;Circles to intervene conflict&lt;br&gt;Aims: to intervene conflicts.&lt;br&gt;No further details are given on their elements and process.</td>
<td>Recommended as a schoolwide strategy for students from urban and low-income schools to improve social and emotional skills including communication, expression in terms of emotions and thoughts and perspective taking, as well as to improve learning.</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restorative conversations</td>
<td><strong>Restorative conversations</strong>&lt;br&gt;Aim: to address a problem while respecting each person’s dignity.&lt;br&gt;Process: It focuses on engaging in conversations in which the emphasis is on the problem rather than the person.</td>
<td>- They are recommended in order to create a safe space for communication, develop problem-solving skills and increase motivation to attend school.</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>Specific models</td>
<td><strong>The Fairness Committee Model</strong>&lt;br&gt;Aims: to address community norms violations.&lt;br&gt;Elements:&lt;br&gt;- The committee hearing the cases including 1 or 2 students and 1 teacher, and 1 teacher facilitator. The committee is not fixed and is created for every case, drawing on the pool of the school community.&lt;br&gt;Process:&lt;br&gt;- It works as a gyратory reparative committee that involves all school community.&lt;br&gt;- The committee search for suitable consequences for infractions by means of dialogue and consensus.&lt;br&gt;- One participant may challenge another with his or her actions and explain how they have affected others.&lt;br&gt;- The purpose is: (a) resolve how to restore the community in the wake of actions incompatible with its values; and (b) determine how to reintegrate the community sense.&lt;br&gt;- Fairness remains open-ended and reliant upon the essentials of the event.</td>
<td>- It is recommended to encourage student voice, democratic participation and create a space of trust and confidence. It is recommended as well to validate students’ worth and humanity and prevent drop-out while allowing for academic re-socialization.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The restorative justice plan</td>
<td>[42]</td>
<td>Aims: to educate students involved in hazing and achieve a commitment by school and community leaders that hazing would not be allowed. Educate students about the humiliating and potentially dangerous aspects of their behaviors. Elements: - Steps that should be taken in any restorative justice program (Zehr, 2002). - Best practices for developing a high school restorative justice program (Zaslaw, 2010). Process: - The restorative plan is presented to students. Failure to finish the plan would result in criminal charges being filed. - The plan requires offending students to participate in an educational program: (1) Students had a session with a nationally renowned facilitator to discuss the incident and hazing in general. (2) Development of a personal action plan that requires students to make presentations to high school students on the school disciplinary and the consequences of hazing. (3) Community service. Students are required to perform at least 20 h of community service to pay back the community for the use of taxpayer resources that had been expended due to the hazing. - On completion of the plan, all records of the incident are deleted.</td>
<td>- It is recommended for students in secondary education to decrease the frequency and severity of incidents of hazing and change the school culture of hazing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The respect agreement and letter writing</td>
<td>[43]</td>
<td>Respect agreement Aims: improve respect between members of a class-room. Process: At the beginning of the year students and teachers create it. They define collaboratively what is respect and exmplanify how students can show respect to one another and their setting. Letter writing Aims: learn to apology and retribute between members of a class-room. Process: introduction of the practice by teachers as a way to apology and retribute.</td>
<td>- Recommended as a collaborative work between teachers and students in secondary education to develop actively listening and create an environment of shared respect and inclusion. - Recommended for students in secondary education to develop the competence of emotional regulation including the understanding of the relationship between emotion, thinking and behavior and acting consequently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.1. Mediation

This section includes two studies with different methodological designs. Turnuklu et al. [26] conducted a quasi-experimental study in Turkey to evaluate the effectiveness of The Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation (CRPM) program. The study included a control group and a sample size of 675 students in primary education. By means of pre- and post-intervention measures, the results showed that the intervention reduced student levels of aggression (level of evidence: 2++). Carrasco Pons et al. [27] carried out a qualitative study about the effects of mediation at a secondary school in Spain. The study’s sample size was 60 participants including teachers and students and they used post-intervention measures. Mediation was associated with good school climate, good relationships between students and between students and teachers and low incidence of conflicts among students (level of evidence: 3). The first study presents a low risk of bias. The risk of bias for the second one is higher considering the methodological design. The scientific evidence available allows for the preparation of a medium-grade practice guideline and a low-grade practice guideline:

- The CRPM program is recommended in primary education to reduce levels of aggression of students with lower socio-economic level [26] (Grade of recommendation: B);
- Mediation is recommended in secondary education to improve school climate, interpersonal relationships between a diverse population of students and teachers,
while decreasing the incidence of conflicts among such a population [27] (Grade of recommendation: D).

3.2.2. Conferencing

Regarding conferencing, we identified four studies—one quasi-experimental study, one qualitative study and two case studies. Burssens and Vettenburg [28] conducted a qualitative study on restorative group conferencing in Belgium. It included a sample size of 62 participants in secondary education involved in conflicts including victims, offenders and supporters of both. There was no follow-up. The results showed high participant satisfaction and the intervention eased or eliminated tensions in a class or school and normalized the school situation. Victims’ expectations were met and the intervention was seen as appropriate and fair. The restorative group conferencing prevented expulsion and confrontation between the offender and victim and was judged highly positively (level of evidence: 3). With regard to the effects of conferencing based on a traditional Māori protocol, Wearmouth et al. conducted two case studies [29,30] that included a sample size of two students and one student in secondary education, respectively. The first study [29] included a 15-year-old student, while no details were given for the second student. By means of post-intervention measures, the results showed a decrease in tensions, visibility of justice and re-establishment of harmonious relations between the individuals, the school and between members of the community (level of evidence: 3). The second case study [30] included a sample size of one student in secondary education in order to improve the behavior of a 15-year-old student at an all-age, mixed school. Norris [15] conducted a quasi-experimental study in the United Kingdom without a control group and with pre-and post-measures about the effectiveness of formal conferencing in a secondary school in a group of about 30 students. The intervention had no effect on happiness or school engagement (level of evidence: 2−). The evidence available to develop evidence-based practice guidelines comes from non-analytic studies and, therefore, they have a risk of bias. Two studies include the traditional Māori protocol for conferencing and an integrated recommendation was prepared considering their same level of evidence. The practice guidelines on conferencing are as follows:

- Restorative group conferencing is recommended in secondary education to deal with conflicts and prevent expulsions [28] (Grade of recommendation: D).
- Conferencing based on the traditional Māori protocol is recommended in secondary education for a diverse community of students for the improvement of behavior in the short term. Specifically, it is recommended to address and resolve tensions, make justice evident and fruitful, and support the restoration of harmony between a diverse community of students [29,30] (Grade of recommendation: D).

3.2.3. Class Meetings

We only identified one study on the effects of class meetings. Gray and Drewery [31] conducted a qualitative study to evaluate the effects of class meetings in New Zealand in secondary education and, more specifically, with 15- to 16-year-old students. Using a pre- and post-design, the results showed that class meetings were associated with improvements in peer relationships, active listening, contributing appropriately and confidently, and in participating. Students seemed to be more able to discuss and resolve problems (level of evidence: 3). The evidence available to develop evidence-based practice guidelines comes from non-analytic studies and, thus, have a risk of bias. Considering the amount of evidence identified and its level of quality a practice guideline on conferencing is as follows:

- Class meetings are recommended in secondary education for students at risk of disengaging with education to help them develop greater skills in relating to others as well as in active listening and contributing appropriately and confidently [31] (Grade of recommendation: D).
3.2.4. Circles: Proactive type

One study was identified concerning proactive circles. Schumacher [32] conducted a qualitative study in secondary education to evaluate the effects of talking circles with a sample of 60 girls ranging in age from 14 to 18. Post-intervention measures showed that the implementation of talking circles was associated with the development of social-emotional literacy skills and growth-fostering relationships of girls in multi-ethnic high schools (level of evidence: 3). It is a non-analytic study and has a risk of bias. The following practice guideline has been prepared:

- Talking circles are recommended for girls in multi-ethnic secondary educational centers to improve listening, anger management, empathic skills, and self-efficacy [32] (Grade of recommendation: D).

3.2.5. Circles: Reactive Type

This section includes two qualitative studies and one case study. Krieger Grossi and Mendes dos Santos [33] conducted a qualitative study in Brazil concerning restorative circles. They included 14 teachers and 40 students in primary and secondary schools. Their post-intervention measures showed an improvement in teachers’ conflict-resolution skills as well as student improvements in social and emotional skills. Overall, they observed a better school climate (level of evidence: 3). Ortega et al. [34] also conducted a qualitative study in several schools of secondary education in the USA. By means of post-intervention measures, they showed that restorative circles were associated with both positive and negative outcomes. For negative outcomes, frustration and disappointment were highlighted; while for positive outcomes the following aspects were highlighted: ownership of the process, interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline, improved relationships, prevention of destructive ways of handling conflict, meaningful dialogue and academic and social achievements (level of evidence: 3). Gwathney [35] conducted a case study on the implementation of restorative justice peer circles along with counter-story telling as restorative practice and daily check-ins. It included a 17-year-old African American male in his junior year of high school. The results showed a reduction in suspensions and a growth in self-esteem, community support, and academic performance (level of evidence: 3). All studies identified are non-analytic and have a risk of bias. They allowed for the following low-level practice guidelines to be prepared:

- Restorative circles are recommended in primary and secondary education for the development of empathy, respect, values, attitudes, modes of behavior, and ways of life. Restorative circles are also recommended to help students in primary and secondary education to promote a school culture of peace [33] (Grade of recommendation: D);
- Restorative circles are recommended in secondary education for helping students to take ownership of their behavior, interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline, improving relationships as well as ways of handling conflict and engaging in significant dialogue [35] (Grade of recommendation: D);
- Restorative justice peer circles along with counter-story telling are recommended in secondary education for students at risk of dropping out of school in order to improve self-esteem, community support and academic performance [35] (Grade of recommendation: D).

3.2.6. Proactive Circles plus Reactive Circles

This section includes three qualitative studies and one mixed-design study.

Stinchcomb et al. [36] developed a mixed-method design to examine outcomes of applying both peace-making circles plus community circles in the school setting. It was conducted both in primary (two centers) and secondary education (one center) and the sample size was not specified. The results showed decreases in discipline referrals and suspensions and an improvement in students’ social and emotional skills such as empathy and conflict resolution. Cavanagh et al. [37] conducted a qualitative study in the USA focused on the implementation of community-building circles plus restorative circles along
with restorative conversations. It was conducted in secondary education. The sample size was not stated and included Latino/Hispanic students, their parents and teachers. Post-intervention measures showed that the implementation of the aforementioned restorative practices improved the relationships between students and teachers and academic outcomes. Also in the USA, Knight and Wadhwa [38] conducted a qualitative study on the implementation of weekly program-wide talking circles plus smaller healing circles. The study included about 60 students at risk of dropping out of secondary school. The results showed that implementing the aforementioned practices can provide an equalizing and humanizing structure within secondary education that supports the development and maintenance of relationships. Skrzypek et al. [39] conducted a qualitative study on the effects of schoolwide circle implementation of preventive circles plus circles to intervene in conflicts in an urban, low-income, and predominantly Black middle school in the USA. It included a sample size of 90 students from fifth and eighth grade. By means of post-intervention measures, the results showed that the implementation of preventive circles plus circles to intervene in conflicts promotes communication, expression of feelings and thoughts, perspective-taking, and learning. The four revised studies have a risk of confounding or bias and a significant risk that the relationship between restorative practices and effects is not causal. All studies deal with the implementation of proactive and reactive restorative circles but the essential elements of such implementation are quite diverse across studies. So, it has not been possible to establish an integrated recommendation. The resulting practice guidelines are formulated as follows:

• The implementation of peace-making circles plus community circles is recommended to decrease discipline referrals and suspensions, while improving students’ social and emotional skills such as empathy and conflict resolution [36] (Grade of recommendation: D).

• The implementation of community-building circles plus restorative circles along with restorative conversations is recommended in secondary education in order to improve relationships between students and teachers and academic outcomes [37] (Grade of recommendation: D).

• The implementation of weekly program-wide talking circles and smaller healing circles for conflicts is recommended in secondary education for students at risk of dropping out of school in order to develop and maintain relationships [38] (Grade of recommendation: D).

• The implementation of preventive circles plus circles to intervene in conflicts as a schoolwide strategy is recommended for students from urban and low-income schools to improve social and emotional skills, including communication, expression in terms of emotions and thoughts and perspective-taking, as well as to improve learning [39] (Grade of recommendation: D).

3.2.7. Restorative Conversations

One study was identified in this subsection. Cavanagh conducted a qualitative study [40] in New Zealand to analyze the effects of the implementation of restorative conversations. It was conducted in primary and secondary education in an educational center that included a diverse population of students. It involved 96 students as well as a group of teachers. By means of post-intervention measures and qualitative content analysis of data, the results showed that restorative conversations empowered students to solve their own problems constructively and that they provide a safe place for communication. Restorative conversations motivate students to attend school because they have the means to create and maintain healthy, caring relationships (level of evidence: 3). This is a qualitative study with a high risk of bias and a low probability that the relationship is causal. One low-level practice guideline has been prepared on restorative conversations:

• Restorative conversations are recommended in order to create a safe space for communication, develop problem-solving skills and increase motivation to attend school [40] (Grade of recommendation: D).
3.2.8. Specific Models

Three qualitative studies are included in this section. DeWitt and DeWitt [42] conducted a qualitative study in the USA to assess the effects of the implementation of a restorative justice plan on hazing in a secondary education center. The study involved 437 students and post-intervention measures. The results showed a decrease in the frequency and severity of incidents involving hazing as well as a change in the culture of hazing in the school (level of evidence: 3). Hantzopoulos [41] conducted a qualitative study to evaluate the effects of the Fairness Committee Model on a diverse population of secondary education students. The results showed that such a restorative model positively helps to create a safe environment as well as helping students to grow personally (level of evidence: 3). Weaver and Swank [43] conducted a qualitative study in the USA on the effects of implementing in secondary education the respect agreement and letter writing as a restorative justice disciplinary intervention. The sample size included six students. Their levels were not specified. By means of post-intervention measures and narrative analyses, the results showed that the collaboration in creating the respect agreement allowed students and the teacher to share their ideas in an environment of mutual respect and inclusion. Students expressed appreciation for the letter writing process, as it gave them an opportunity to examine their actions and to be intentional with their response (level of evidence: 3). These are studies that involve a methodological design with a high risk of bias and a low likelihood that the association is causal. One low-level practice guideline has been prepared for the Fairness Committee Model and for the restorative justice plan and two low-level recommendations for the use of the respect agreement and letter writing as restorative justice disciplinary interventions:

- The restorative justice plan is recommended for students in secondary education to decrease the frequency and severity of incidents of hazing and change the school culture of hazing [42] (Grade of recommendation: D);
- The Fairness Committee Model is recommended to encourage student voice, democratic participation and create a space of trust and confidence. It is also recommended to validate students’ worth and humanity, and prevent drop-out while allowing for academic re-socialization [41] (Grade of recommendation: D);
- It is recommended that teachers and students work collaboratively to create the respect agreement to develop active listening and create an environment of shared respect and inclusion [43] (Grade of recommendation: D).
- It is recommended to use letter writing with students to develop the competence of emotional regulation, including an understanding of the relationship between emotion, thinking and behavior, and acting consequently [43] (Grade of recommendation: D).

4. Discussion

The objective of this study was to conduct a comprehensive and systematic literature review on the effects of PRPA and develop evidence-based practice guidelines following the SIGN system [23]. The final aim of the study is to provide guidance on the effects of PRPA implementation, which may improve the quality of prevention and intervention strategies used in such a setting to engage students in the educational community, address negative behavioral outcomes, increase mental health protective factors and, consequently, foster their school-based peer relationships and positive development.

Nineteen studies met the inclusion criteria and we developed 18 evidence-based practice guidelines (two for mediation, two for conferencing, one for class meetings, one for proactive-type circles, three for reactive-type circles, four for proactive circles plus reactive circles, one for restorative conversation and four for specific models), considering the level of evidence, study design and intervention results (See Table 2). Examination of the evidence available shows that the implementation of PRPA is more common in secondary education and may, in general terms, be used to promote social and emotional skills, and improve interpersonal relationships, as well as to deal with and prevent conflicts while changing school culture in disciplinary terms. The greatest evidence available is for
mediation, specifically for the Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation model [26] that is recommended to reduce levels of aggression in primary schools.

Despite the aforementioned overall positive effects of PRPA, most of the evidence analyzed is of low-quality according to the SIGN system [23] and, thus, one should be cautious when interpreting our recommendations. Consequently, our review suggests the need for a higher level of quality of scientific evidence. More experimental trials should be conducted as only one quasi-experimental study on the topic was identified for our review. In this way, the study of the relationship between PRPA and its effects would be more accurate. It is also worth highlighting that some studies with promising results [44–47] were not included in our review since the definition of the PRPA included was too vague and, as a consequence, it was too difficult to associate the intervention with outcomes. Norris [15] highlights that, due to the lack of operationalized descriptions of restorative approaches in the literature, each educational center may interpret the approach in its own exclusive way. To include an operational definition of practices in studies is strongly recommended as each PRPA may have its own elements and processes as seen in Table 2. There is also a need to use reliable and valid psychometric instruments [48] to evaluate the implementation of PRPA as well as blind evaluators to assess the intervention effects and minimize biases. Our guidelines are focused mainly on student outcomes in order to link the implementation of PRPA with outcomes related to youth positive development. By doing so, we might have narrowed the scope of our review, which could have underscored the importance of the schools and systems to change when implementing PRPA. Therefore, further research should consider outcomes related to the whole school community. It is also necessary to carry out studies on the medium- and long-term effects of PRPA [49] and in primary schools where the literature is scarce, or even in other settings where the relationships among children and adolescents are crucial (i.e., residential care homes). Other studies may also include the study of factors affecting the implementation of PRPA as, for instance, the diversity in terms of ethnicity of the student population [50] and the social and economic status [51].

Our review overcomes the limitations of other reviews on PRPA [14,18–21] and, to our knowledge, is the first initiative to develop evidence-based recommendations on such approach. Our review may be complementary to the review and evidence-based recommendations on whole school restorative approaches carried out by Mas-Expósito et al. [6]. Although whole school approaches may seem more beneficial as they are seen as a schoolwide ethos strategy [16], they can also be more resource-consuming in terms of time, materials, professional training, etc. PRPA are mainly a targeted disciplinary strategy that may yield significant results in a more restricted manner. So, the implementation of one approach or another may depend on a school’s needs, its complexity and its ways of doing things as well as the cultural setting and related factors [3]. One should bear in mind that both approaches are not mutually exclusive since PRPA form part of whole school restorative approaches. One strategy for implementation can be to start with putting in practice PRPA and, progressively, incorporating other components to evolve into a whole school restorative approach. More step-by-step guidelines for implementing restorative practices in education are needed [52]. It is important to highlight that restorative practices, when not rooted in a change of the school culture, could resemble traditional discipline [53,54]. To avoid this, pocket restorative approaches should be implemented along with structural school changes that promote a change in school culture in a specific domain such as conflict resolution by means of the processes of the restorative practices described in Table 2.

Our guidelines are significant for the school setting. Our practice guidelines may help teachers, school managers and administrations to understand the power of the practice guidelines for implementation in the school communities. The use of such practice guidelines may help in decision-making involving educational practices and enhance their use, while improving the value of student education and suit practices with needs. Practice guidelines offer support to improve school culture by means of PRPA implementation,
which may enrich the quality of prevention and intervention strategies used in such a setting. The implementation of such approaches promotes youth development and mental health, and addresses negative behavioral outcomes such as bullying, which are all major public issues in the school population. In particular, PRPA can be beneficial to reinforcing positive outcomes in school commitment and behavioral engagement (increase in positive behaviors and decrease in problematic behaviors), affective connections and relational factors that constitute the social identity of an adolescent in the surrounding school environment. This should be undertaken, also considering the situation, context and, in the end, the needs of the whole school community.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualization, L.M.-E., V.K., J.A.A.-C., R.C. and L.L.-J.; methodology, L.M.-E., V.K. and J.A.A.-C.; data curation, L.M.-E., V.K. and J.A.A.-C.; writing—original draft preparation, L.M.-E., V.K. and J.A.A.-C.; writing—review and editing L.M.-E., V.K., J.A.A.-C., R.C. and L.L.-J. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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**Appendix A**

**Table A1.** The Main Characteristics of the Papers Identified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Author (Year)</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Study Design</th>
<th>Sample and Setting</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Control Group</th>
<th>Follow-Up</th>
<th>Instruments</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Level of Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burssens (2006) [28]</td>
<td>Evaluate the application of a restorative group conferencing intervention for incidents of divergent nature in a school context between 2002 and 2004</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>n = 62 (14 victims, 9 offenders, 20 supporters of the victims, 9 parents of the offenders, 8 other supporters of the offenders and 2 absent victims). Secondary.</td>
<td>Conferencing</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Observation, questionnaires, interviews and focus group.</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>High satisfaction of participants, intervention eased or eliminated tensions in a class/school. Victims’ expectations were met and intervention was seen as appropriate and fair. Intervention prevented expulsion. Confrontation between the offender and victim was seen as positive.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrasco (2016) [27]</td>
<td>Analyze the conflict scenarios in school samples</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>n = 60 (teachers and students). Secondary.</td>
<td>Mediation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Observations, survey, focus groups, informal interviews, individual and group semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>Typology analysis</td>
<td>Improvement of school climate, interpersonal relationships between participants and very low incidence of conflicts among students.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table A1. Cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Author (Year)</th>
<th>Objective Study Design</th>
<th>Sample and Setting</th>
<th>Intervention Control Group</th>
<th>Follow-Up Instruments</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Level of Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cavanagh (2009)</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>n = 96 (students from year 7 to 10) and n = 17 (teachers). Primary and secondary.</td>
<td>Restorative conversations</td>
<td>No No</td>
<td>Reflective writing exercise and focused interviews</td>
<td>Levels of use interview procedure</td>
<td>Enhancement of student’s behavior problems and the relationships students–teachers; a schoolwide change sustained over a period of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cavanagh (2014)</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>n is not stated (students, teachers, parents). Secondary.</td>
<td>Circle proactive plus reactive types</td>
<td>No No</td>
<td>Focus group interviews “testimonios” and teacher’s interviews</td>
<td>Typological analysis</td>
<td>Improvement in relationships between students and teachers and improvement in academic achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeWitt (2011)</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>n = 437 students. Secondary.</td>
<td>Restorative justice plan</td>
<td>No No</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Frequencies and percentages of responses</td>
<td>Significant decrease in the number and severity of hazing incidents. Change in the school culture regarding the acceptance of hazing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray (2011)</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>n is not stated. A class (11 grade; 15–16-year-olds) took part in seven class meetings. A class of students was constructed to meet the needs of a group of students who were at risk of disengaging with education due to previous problems with absenteeism, behavior, ongoing illness, and some individual learning needs. Secondary</td>
<td>Class meetings</td>
<td>No Yes</td>
<td>No instruments.</td>
<td>Video data of two class meetings, the first, and the last, were analyzed. To analyze the changes in students’ skills in the key competencies—relating to others and participating, and contributing, certain behaviors or events within the meetings were named as indicators of improvement.</td>
<td>Development of greater skills of students in relating to others and participating and contributing (actively listening and contributing appropriately and confidently).</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Author (Year)</td>
<td>Objective Study Design</td>
<td>Sample and Setting</td>
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<td>Gwathney (2021) [35]</td>
<td>To study the pathway of restorative justice as a tool to decrease inequities in zero-tolerance school suspensions</td>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>n = 1. A 17-year-old African American male in his junior year of high school. He is the oldest of three siblings and resides in the custody of their maternal grandmother due to the incarceration of both parents. Secondary.</td>
<td>Circle reactive type</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No instruments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hantzooulos (2013) [41]</td>
<td>Examined how both current and former students made meaning of their experience at this school that emphasizes democratic and participatory practices</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>n = 180 students. Secondary.</td>
<td>Specific models or plans</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No instruments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knight (2014) [38]</td>
<td>To evaluate critical restorative justice through peacemaking circles to nurture resilience and open opportunity at the school level.</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>n = about 60 students. A small learning community at a High School including students who have failed at least one grade level and have consistently been unsuccessful in school and/or are on the verge of dropping out. Secondary.</td>
<td>Circle proactive plus reactive types</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No instruments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Author (Year)</td>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Study Design</td>
<td>Sample and Setting</td>
<td>Intervention Design</td>
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<td>Krieger (2012) [33]</td>
<td>To investigate the prevalence of bullying and how restorative practices can help to deal with conflict.</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>n = 40 (32 students and 6 teachers who were circle coordinators). Four schools. Primary and secondary.</td>
<td>Circle reactive type</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Self-administered questionnaire based on Fante (2005).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norris (2019) [15]</td>
<td>To evaluate the potential effects of restorative practice approaches on well-being, specifically, happiness and school engagement.</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental</td>
<td>n = 19 (15 males and 4 females). Not stated.</td>
<td>Conferenceing</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Subjective Happiness Scale (Happiness)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table A1. Cont.

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ortega (2016) [34]</td>
<td>To understand how staff and students experience the restorative circle program at their school and also what outcomes they report as a result of the program</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>n = 35 students (20 female and 15 male) and 25 school staff (16 female and 9 male). Secondary.</td>
<td>Circle reactive type</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Semi-structured interview with 14 open-ended questions grouped in three major sections: (a) questions about conflict in general (e.g., “What do you do when you have a conflict with another student at school?”), (b) questions about the RC program (e.g., “Tell me about your circle experience”), and (c) questions about school conflict (e.g., “What should teachers do when students have conflict with each other at school?”).</td>
<td>Qualitative (thematic analysis)</td>
<td>Two categories: (A) Negative outcomes &gt; 1: frustration particularly by lying and fighting; and 2: disappointment, including the theme of unwilling to be vulnerable and not everyone important to the conflict being present. (B) Positive outcomes &gt; 1: taking ownership of process/bypassing adults; 2: interrupting the School-to-Prison Pipeline; 3: improving relationships; 4: preventing destructive ways of engaging conflict; and 5: meaningful dialogue.</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Schumacher (2014) [32]</td>
<td>To evaluate whether out-of-classroom Talking Circles might nurture long-term growth-fostering relationships that address gender-specific issues and encourage the development of emotional literacy skills.</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>n = 60 girls ranging in age from 14 to 18. Secondary.</td>
<td>Circles proactive type</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No instruments</td>
<td>Qualitative (observations of 257 h. of Talking Circles; individual semi-structured interviews and archival documents)</td>
<td>Four themes: (1) the joy of being together and building relationships; (2) a sense of safety grounded in trust, confidentiality, not feeling alone, and not being judged; (3) freedom to express genuine emotions; and (4) increased empathy and compassion. Improvement of the capacity to listen, manage anger, and interpersonal sensitivity.</td>
<td>3</td>
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<th>First Author (Year)</th>
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<th>Sample and Setting</th>
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<tr>
<td>Skrzypek (2020) [39]</td>
<td>To explore restorative practice circle experiences of urban, low-income, and predominantly Black middle school students with attention to the diversity of their experiences by grade level, race, and gender.</td>
<td>Qualitative design</td>
<td>n = 90 (49 students from fifth grade and 41 students from eighth grade). Primary and secondary.</td>
<td>Proactive plus reactive circles. No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Two open-ended questions to gauge acceptability of restorative practices circles. Findings highlighted the benefits of restorative practice circles in promoting communication, expressing thoughts and feelings, perspective taking, and opportunity for learning.</td>
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<td>Stinchcomb (2006) [36]</td>
<td>Examine outcomes of applying restorative justice principles to disciplinary policies in educational settings</td>
<td>Mixed method design (quasi-experimental and qualitative)</td>
<td>n is not stated. Two elementary schools (School 1 and 2) and 1 junior high, School 3 (7th and 8th grade). Primary and secondary.</td>
<td>Proactive plus reactive circles. No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No psychometric instruments. Questionnaires, observations, interview and focus groups, Quantitative: Pre-post changes in the rates of suspensions, expulsions, behavior referrals, and attendance for all three schools. Qualitative: Experiential accounts</td>
<td>Decreases in discipline referrals and suspensions followed the schools’ adoption of restorative practices. The need for reactive practices decreased across implementation. Students tend to indicate that they like the fact that “things got resolved” and “everyone is treated equal”. In the healing tradition of circles, they also report a positive reaction to “seeing progress” firsthand and, for some, “getting my friends back”. Students have expressed greater empathy for others and have noted that the circle helped them understand new ways of solving problems and moving forward.</td>
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<td>Turnuklu (2010) [26]</td>
<td>This study aims to analyze the effects of conflict resolution and peer mediation (CRPM) training on the levels of aggression of 10–11-year-old Turkish primary school students</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental</td>
<td>Experimental group: n = 347 students of fourth-year and fifth-year (173 girls, 174 boys). Primary.</td>
<td>Mediation</td>
<td>Control group: n = 328 students of fourth-year and fifth-year (158 girls, 170 boys)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Aggression Scale developed by Sahin (2004). It is a Likert-type scale that includes 13 items. Participants answer the questions by marking one of the answers as ‘Always do’ (3), ‘Sometimes do’ (2), and ‘Never do’ (1). The maximum score in the instrument is 39, and the minimum is 13. A higher score indicates a higher level of aggression. The validity (construct and content validity) of the scale was analyzed. The internal consistency (Cronbach’s Alpha) of the scale was 0.77. The test-retest method was used to measure the reliability coefficient and the correlation of 0.71 was found. The reliability analysis was repeated in the present study. The internal consistency value from the analysis of 675 students was 0.80 for the pre-test data, and 0.82 for the post-test.</td>
<td>Experimental intervention was found to reduce student aggression</td>
<td>2++</td>
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<td>Wearmouth (2007) [29]</td>
<td>Discuss an example of restorative justice in practice to illustrate how community norms and values can help to encourage more socially appropriate behavior</td>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>n = 1 Secondary</td>
<td>Conferencing</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No instruments</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Improved behavior, but no data</td>
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<td>Warmoth (2007) [30]</td>
<td>Discuss two examples of restorative justice in practice to illustrate how community norms and values can help to encourage more socially appropriate behavior</td>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>the same as in Warmoth et al., 2007b</td>
<td>n = 2. Secondary.</td>
<td>Conferencing</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No instruments</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Improved behavior, but no data</td>
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<td>Weaver (2020) [43]</td>
<td>This case study focused on exploring the implementation of restorative justice discipline/practices within a middle school.</td>
<td>Qualitative study</td>
<td>n = 6 students enrolled in classes where teachers were using RJ practices for discipline. Secondary. Levels are not stated.</td>
<td>Specific modules or plans</td>
<td>We collected data using three methods: (a) interviews, (b) observations, and (c) review of documents.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Analysis of the data after the interviews were transcribed and the data were organized. This process involved: (1) coding the data individually, (2) analytic coding to combine similar codes into categories, (3) triangulation of data sources, and (4) development of themes and consensus about them.</td>
<td>The collaboration in creating the respect agreement allows for students and the teacher to share their ideas in an environment of mutual respect and inclusion. Students expressed appreciation for the letter writing process, as it gave them an opportunity to examine their actions and to be intentional with their response.</td>
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References

1. Hurlbert, M. “Now Is the Time to Start Reconciliation, and We Are the People to Do So”, Walking the Path of an Anti-Racist White Ally. Societies 2022, 12, 31. [CrossRef]


50. Payne, A.A.; Welch, K. Modelling the effects of racial threat on punitive and restorative school discipline practices. *Criminology* 2010, 48, 1019–1062. [CrossRef]


