

Childhood Development Initiative



Restorative Practices in Organisations: An Implementation Guide



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2023



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Glossary

Booster training: Follow-up training for practitioners subsequent to, and complementary of, initial training.

Evidence-based programmes: Programmes that are based on research and are proven to work through independent evaluation.

Evidence-informed practice: Use of the best available research and practice knowledge to guide programme design and implementation.

Fidelity: The degree to which a programme is delivered compared to the essential elements and approach of the original programme.

Manualisation: Service delivery that is guided by a manual. The manual should contain clearly defined outcomes to be achieved, clear target criteria, a strong logic model and well-defined service components.

Quality: The standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind.

Acronyms Used

ABC	Area-Based Childhood Programme
AP	The Atlantic Philanthropies
CDI	Childhood Development Initiative
CES	Centre for Effective Services
CoP	Community of Practice
DCEDIY	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
HCRP	Hull Centre for Restorative Practice
HR	Human Resources
IG	Implementation Guide
IIRP	International Institute for Restorative Practices
PEIP	Prevention and Early Intervention Programme
PLC	Professional Learning Community
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
RP	Restorative Practices
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers

Acknowledgements

This Implementation Guide is modelled on the Childhood Development Initiative's Implementation Guide for a Community-Wide Restorative Practices Programme (CDI, 2014) and is based on both research into best practice and CDI's and the authors' experiences of working to introduce and embed restorative practices into organisations. The learning from the many – too many to name – individuals and agencies with whom CDI has worked over 12 years is deeply appreciated. This Guide would not have been possible without you all.

Discussions on what it takes to embed RP in organisations were held with a number of CDI's RP Trainers, RP Associate Quality Specialists and critical (in all senses of the word!) friends, and were hugely useful in developing this Guide. We offer our heartfelt thanks in particular to Richie Walsh, Ann Ryan, Eithne Coyne, Orla Hanahoe, Mary Mullen, Eoin Houlihan, Ann Marie Moylan, Andy Battell, Jean Gilmore, Eileen Havern, Niamh Fowler, Bernie Shone, James Bowes, Joe Power, Susan Kavanagh, Mick Levens, Lena Timoney, Emma Wheatley and Michelle Stowe.

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INTRODUCTION

Overview of the Implementation Guide

This Implementation Guide describes the steps involved in establishing a Restorative Practices (RP) initiative or approach in organisations. It is adapted from and builds on its companion CDI Implementation Guide for a Community-Wide RP Programme. The present Guide explains the recommended steps for setting up and implementing an RP initiative aimed at establishing a cohesive, organisation-wide approach. It also describes what is required in terms of ongoing support to ensure both effective service delivery and ongoing sustainability of the RP initiative. While the Guide focuses primarily on a whole-organisation approach, it also includes more limited adoption of RP, say in dealing with complaints, grievances or breaches of discipline or codes of behaviour. It is not a manual for delivering RP training but does outline training options. Further information about RP training provision in Ireland is available from www.restorativepracticesireland.ie.

The Guide is presented in six parts, with accompanying appendices, as follows:

- This **Introduction** provides an overview of the Childhood Development Initiative (CDI) and its community-based Restorative Practices Programme, and then goes on to discuss implementation in general, how to use this Guide and logic modelling.
- **Section 1** provides an overview of Restorative Practices (RP), the benefits that RP have been shown to accrue for organisations that use these practices and a brief outline of evidence of RP as a best practice approach in organisations. It goes on to outline the steps to be taken in **getting started** with the introduction of an organisation-wide RP initiative by discussing organisational readiness, the identification of key stakeholders, the importance of leaders, consulting with stakeholders, identifying RP champions and achieving buy-in for an organisation-wide RP initiative.
- **Section 2** looks at what is involved in **putting the plan together** for an RP initiative in organisations, including clarifying the scope of the RP initiative (e.g. establishing a restorative organisation or introducing elements of restorative practice), gathering resources, establishing an RP team and putting an effective implementation plan in place.
- **Section 3** is about **doing it**, i.e. implementing an RP initiative in organisations. It discusses the delivery of RP training, supporting the training of in-house RP trainers, achieving quick wins, developing in-house promotional and resource materials, and the importance of ongoing quality assurance processes, Communities of Practice, and robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
- **Section 4** concerns **sustaining** the RP initiative in the organisation and discusses reflective practice and its role in bedding down RP as a way of working, methods of promoting RP in the organisation, ongoing monitoring and development of the RP initiative, and what it takes to become a restorative organisation.
- **Section 5** concludes the Implementation Guide with a list of things to consider in order to keep the RP initiative running smoothly, and to maximise its sustainability.

The Childhood Development Initiative (CDI)

CDI is funded under the Government's Area-Based Childhood (ABC) Programme, which built on the learning from the Prevention and Early Intervention Programme (PEIP). Through prevention and early intervention approaches the Area Based Childhood Programme aims to work in partnership with families, practitioners, communities and national Stakeholders to deliver better outcomes for children and families living in areas where poverty is most deeply entrenched ([Tusla, 2022](#)). CDI was

established in 2007 through a partnership between the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) and The Atlantic Philanthropies (AP) under the PEIP, which was set up with the objective of testing innovative ways of delivering services and early interventions for children and young people, including working with their families and in community settings.

CDI is based in Tallaght West and is the result of the professionalism, passion and persistence of a consortium of 23 concerned individuals and organisations in the community, who had a vision of a better place for children. Through innovative partnerships, they brought together the science of evidence-based practice and rigorous evaluation with the spirit of an approach focused on the identified needs of children and families. CDI designs, delivers and evaluates a suite of programmes across a spectrum of local needs including language, literacy, health, early years, conflict management and community safety. All CDI programmes are evidence-informed and manualised, and are delivered through existing structures and services.

This Implementation Guide draws on the independent evaluations of CDI's programmes (available at <https://www.cdi.ie/research-policy/evaluation-reports/>) and lengthy experience in supporting the delivery of high-quality evidence-informed services.

CDI's Restorative Practices Programme

The aim of restorative practices is to build strong, happy communities (however we define or understand 'community') and to manage conflict or tensions by actively developing good relationships and easily resolving conflict in a healthy manner. In 2010, CDI identified the work of the Hull Centre for Restorative Practice ([HCRP](#)) as being relevant to the Tallaght West context and offering a model that could meet locally identified needs. An approach that supports everyone to build healthy relationships and to take responsibility for their actions was regarded as an appropriate fit with the dynamics and relationships within Tallaght West, and the HCRP solution-focused model offered an evidenced, outcomes-based and sustainable intervention.

CDI's Restorative Practices Programme got underway in mid-2010 when CDI established an RP Programme Management Committee to oversee the roll out of training, the development of supports and the independent evaluation of the work. Training was delivered by the UK Office of the International Institute for Restorative Practices ([IIRP](#)) on a monthly basis and targeted all of the agencies with responsibility for children and young people (including schools, Early Years services, youth services, education welfare staff, local authority staff, probation services, community centres, community Gardaí, and adult education services), as well as parents and young people.

RP training provides people with a simple set of tools for building and sustaining healthy personal and work relationships and with a very straightforward, fair and effective means of resolving conflict when it arises. The delivery of the RP Programme between 2010 and 2012 was independently evaluated by the Child and Family Research Centre at the National University of Ireland, Galway (Fives *et al*, 2013). The research showed that RP training had proved very effective in improving people's confidence and skills in relation to resolving conflict. It also noted a reduction in disputes and found widespread use of RP across a range of sectors.

From 2013, CDI began developing and delivering its own training, based on further training and education with [Netcare](#) and [Ulster University](#) and on our experience of implementing RP and delivering RP Training in Tallaght and further afield. To date, CDI has delivered RP Training to over 4,500 people and has worked with over thirty organisations (schools, youth and community services, and statutory services with responsibility for young people) to support the introduction and

bedding-in of RP as business as usual in organisations. See Appendix 1 for an overview of CDI's Programme of Restorative Practices.

This Guide is based on our learning about the common factors across diverse settings and sectors that support the adoption of RP at organisational level.

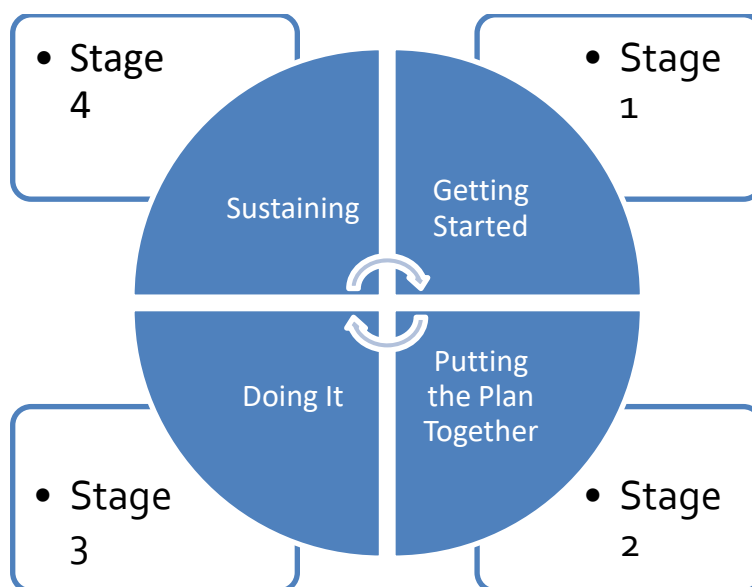
Introduction to Implementation

Implementation refers to the process of carrying out a plan and focuses on the 'how' rather than the 'what' of the initiative in question (Burke *et al*, 2012). It relates to all aspects of putting a new evidence-based initiative into operation and bridges the gap between theory or training and practice at an individual or organisational level.

An Implementation Guide sets out the 'how to' of getting the delivery of the initiative underway. It supports the set-up Stages and guides the user through a step-by-step process to bring the initiative to the 'sustaining' Stage. Implementation is seen as crucial in the delivery of an initiative since it can have a huge impact on whether or not the initiative achieves its intended outcomes. This Implementation Guide draws on CDI's experience with, and research into, what works in implementing evidence-based interventions in that the implementation stages described in the following sections are adopted from "*Quality Services, Better Outcomes - A Quality Framework for Achieving Outcomes*" (CDI, 2019).

This Guide is presented in four stages which are summarised in Figure 1 and focus on (1) the start-up of the initiative (getting started); (2) putting the plan together; (3) doing it; and (4) sustaining the programme or approach. These Stages operate in an overlapping rather than linear fashion, and the organisation may move back and forth between stages. Each of these stages are described in detail in the following sections of the Guide, and written in the context of an organisation – wide approach to the use of RP.

Figure 1: The Four Stages of Implementation



Source: *Quality Services, Better Outcomes* (CDI, 2019)

How to use this Implementation Guide

The information contained in this Implementation Guide is based on CDI's experience of working with a range of organisations to introduce and embed restorative approaches. Working across organisations with various stakeholders to effectively integrate RP, CDI drew on international research and best practice in relation to the delivery of evidence-based initiatives.

The Guide outlines the processes needed to establish relationships, identify key stakeholders and get people involved. It also describes the training and quality assurance methods that are used to ensure that the best possible RP initiative is developed and delivered. Each Stage of the implementation process concludes with a checklist to track progress and identify any areas in need of further development.

While the work of implementing an RP initiative is described in discrete Stages, these may merge and be revisited a number of times, and some aspects of implementation will be ongoing throughout. **It is therefore recommended to read the entire Guide at the outset of the initiative and to refer back to the relevant sections for detailed consideration as implementation progresses.**

Introduction to Logic Modelling

Logic modelling is a central element of developing and implementing evidence-based programmes. Many organisations, having experienced the benefits that come with the clarity and focus of a logic model, have now integrated logic modelling into their management processes. Some organisations use similar methods, such as developing a theory of change, and processes that include identifying specific objectives, activities to achieve them and the rationale for the activities. All of these are very similar to the logic model approach.

An organisation with an established mechanism for planning and monitoring their work can utilise these existing processes to support their RP initiative. Logic modelling may assist with improving existing planning and monitoring processes by, for example, adding a focus on outcomes or evaluation.

A logic model is defined as a framework or tool that may be used for programme planning, implementation and evaluation (Alter and Egan, 1997; Julian, 1997; McLaughlin and Jordan, 1999). It links the **evidence** (i.e. what research and best practice tells us about a programme – issues/anticipated outcomes), **inputs** (i.e. the resources available to and required by the programme) and **activities** (i.e. what you deliver) to the anticipated **outputs and outcomes** (Hernandez, 2000; McLaughlin and Jordan, 1999). In other words, the logic model process provides the rationale for delivering specific programme activities (i.e. that X will lead to Z if Y is implemented).

CDI and many others have used logic models to agree objectives, to maximise the potential to improve outcomes for children, to manage programmes and shape their associated evaluations, and to ensure accountability of resources and outcomes. Figure 2 gives an outline of the various elements to be considered when completing a logic model, which can be used at a strategic organisational level or very specifically for a certain piece of work. CDI's *Quality Services, Better Outcomes* (2019), which acts as another companion to this Guide, provides further information on developing and maintaining a logic model.

Figure 2: Logic Model Key Elements

What you want to change	What change you expect to see		What the research tells us	What you plan to do		What resources are needed
THE CURRENT SITUATION	OUTCOMES (Short & Medium) <i>i.e. the changes in attitudes, behaviour knowledge and perceptions that you want to achieve</i>	IMPACT (Long-term outcome)	RESEARCH EVIDENCE/BEST PRACTICE	ACTIVITIES <i>i.e. what activities are expected to occur or be delivered</i>	OUTPUTS <i>i.e. what is expected to result from activities or be produced in the short term</i>	INPUTS/ RESOURCES
Monitoring and Evaluation of Implementation and Outcomes						

Source: Quality Services, Better Outcomes (CDI, 2019)

The clear description of a programme’s anticipated outcomes, activities and outputs provides an opportunity to involve programme managers, staff and other key stakeholders in the identification of the necessary resources (i.e. what do we need?), the assignment of responsibilities (i.e. who is responsible for what?) and the clarification of relationships between specific activities and expected outcomes (i.e. will implementing these activities produce the desired results?) (Millar *et al*, 2001). However, it is important to note that an examination of existing practice in terms of, for example, how resources are allocated, the way in which activities are implemented or whether anticipated outcomes are achieved may encounter resistance at a group or individual level (Kaplan *et al*, 2004) and so we need to be prepared for this.

Table 1 provides an illustration of a possible logic model for an organisation-wide Restorative Practices (RP) initiative. Note that the process of developing a logic model needs itself to be restorative – see Section 1.2.

Table 1: Illustration of a possible Logic Model for an Organisation’s RP Initiative

What you want to change	What change you expect to see		What the research tells us	What you plan to do		What resources are needed
THE CURRENT SITUATION	OUTCOMES (Short & Medium)	IMPACT (Long-term outcome)	RESEARCH EVIDENCE/BEST PRACTICE	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	INPUTS/ RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unacceptable levels of conflict involving service users and staff, both within and between these groups • Unacceptable levels of conflict and distance between members of the organisation at all levels, including management • Significant under-achievement of organisational goals • Lack of a common approach to resolving conflict • Lack of competency and skills in terms of dealing with conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved relationships between service providers and users • A more collaborative way of working among staff • Increased confidence of front-line and other staff in dealing with conflict situations • Increase in use of a common approach and language across the organisation • Increased satisfactory resolution of disputes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RP is ‘business as usual’ at all levels in the organisation and in internal as well as external interactions • All internal and external clients are dealt with restoratively by staff • RP training modules are included in induction and continuing professional development training courses • Decreased conflict at all levels of the organisation • Greater effectiveness in service delivery, including improved results and outcomes for service users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RP is an effective tool for building and maintaining relationships • Positive outcomes for staff and clients where organisations take on a restorative approach, including improved staff morale • Using RP results in improved outcomes for children and young people in schools, care homes and detention centres, including fewer disciplinary incidents and improved learning and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek buy-in and identify champions through seminars and meetings • Establish RP Team • Develop RP Implementation Plan • Identify training provider • Deliver appropriately targeted training to all staff, and to relevant stakeholders and service users • Develop organisation capacity through training and accreditation of in-house trainers, and production of customised materials • Support ongoing use of RP through Communities of Practice (CoPs), CPD and policy development • Develop and implement monitoring and evaluation plan including feedback loops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X seminars for managers • X seminars for key stakeholder groups • X meetings with potential champions • RP Team established • 1 RP Implementation Plan produced • X number of staff trained • X number of stakeholders trained • X number of service users/participants trained • X number of in-house trainers accredited • X number of CoPs • DVDs, publicity materials, evaluation report • X RP champions in the organisation • X number of restorative groups established in the organisation • X Relevant policies updated to include RP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding • Training • Staff • Time • Materials and equipment • Technology • Evaluation expertise
<p>Monitoring and Evaluation of Implementation and Outcomes</p>						

SECTION 1: Stage 1: GETTING STARTED:

Introduction

'Getting Started' refers to the process of identifying organisational needs and then finding a programme or approach that addresses these needs. Having identified RP as an appropriate response, developing a Logic Model for the initiative will be helpful since it links the evidence, literature, inputs and activities to the intended outcomes and outputs for the initiative, and this will be a first step in establishing what an RP initiative in your organisation will aim to do.

The first Stage of implementation will focus on how to begin developing the RP initiative, once it has been decided that this is the appropriate mechanism by which to respond to organisational needs. Reading all of this Implementation Guide is an important part of Stage 1 since the information contained in it will assist you in exploring what restorative practices can offer individuals and the organisation as a whole in terms of improved outcomes. When starting a new RP initiative, the initial steps will include preparing the ground, identifying the key people to consult with and developing promotional materials. Consultation with key stakeholders is important at this stage because it will promote buy-in and help to identify initiative champions who can, in turn, support and drive the implementation of the initiative (Burke *et al*, 2012).

By the end of Stage 1, you will have:

- developed an understanding of restorative practices;
- recognised the benefits of taking an RP approach and the evidence of RP as a model of best practice;
- developed a Logic Model for an RP initiative;
- completed your Organisational Readiness analysis;
- identified the key stakeholders and potential initiative leaders specific to your organisation;
- consulted with the key stakeholders and established their necessary buy-in to the initiative;
- sourced potential champions for the RP initiative.

In some organisations, staff may have undergone training in advance of completion of all aspects of Stage 1. This may occur for a variety of reasons including the availability of training opportunities generally, the enthusiasm and curiosity of individual staff, the belief or vision of a particular senior manager or the endorsement of RP in national strategy and policy relevant to your organisation. Regardless of the timing of training, it is important to complete Stage 1 in all its aspects. The fact that some staff have already undergone training will in all likelihood facilitate the implementation process by, for example, developing understanding and identifying champions. **There is a significant risk of failure, however, if training is carried out in isolation rather than as part of a coherent plan supported wholeheartedly by senior managers.**

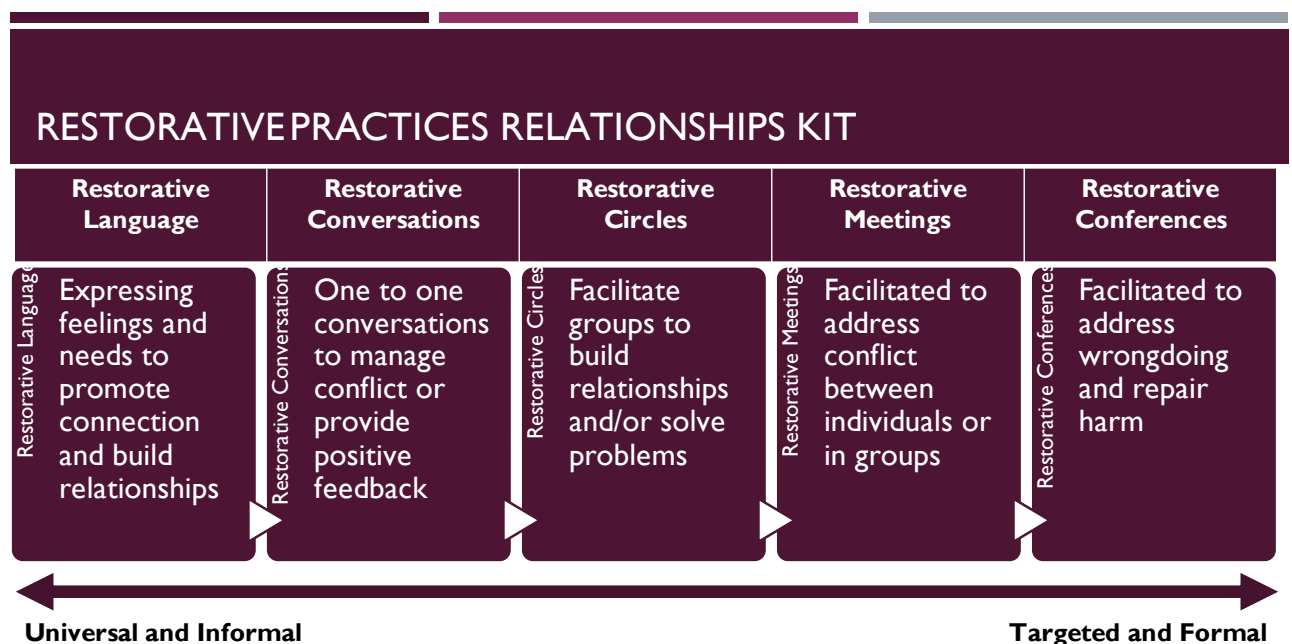
1.1 An Overview of Restorative Practices

1.1.1 RP Approaches

RP is both a philosophy that highlights certain values (such as respect and fairness) and a set of skills that have the core aim of building and maintaining strong relationships, resolving conflict in a healthy manner, and repairing harm where wrongdoing has occurred. Being restorative means being able to effectively restore damaged or broken relationships, and more importantly, it means being able to consciously prevent relationships breaking down in the first place.

RP comprises a set of processes that are suited to different situations and purposes. They are summarised in Figure 3. The processes range from the use of restorative **language** in everyday interactions with others to highly structured **conferences**. Restorative **conversations** can take place between two people to address negative issues that have arisen between them or to provide more effective positive feedback to each other. Use of restorative language and conversations will help to promote emotional intelligence, empathy between people and stronger relationships. Restorative **circles** can be used in a group or organisational setting to actively build good relationships and to solve problems effectively as they arise. Restorative **meetings** involve groups of people constructively resolving low-level conflict as it arises, guided by someone in the role of facilitator. Formal restorative **conferences** can be used to resolve serious conflicts among groups of staff: they seek to support the needs of every participant in devising a resolution to the conflict that everyone can live with. Restorative Conferences can also be used to address serious conflict or wrongdoing (e.g. bullying) and will be the first step in grievance and disciplinary processes in restorative organisations.

Figure 3: Processes Used in Restorative Practice



RP training provides the skills to both build good relationships and to repair damaged ones, meaning that trainees are better equipped to manage conflict when it arises. There are a number of levels of training that will equip a practitioner or organisation with some or all of these skills. Anyone can become competent to begin using RP after one day's training and can gain the skills to become an RP facilitator after a further two or three days' training. This is possible because RP builds on skills that everyone has instinctively and provides a clear framework for using those skills consciously and more consistently and, consequently, more effectively. Subsequent use of the skills acquired from RP training to improve outcomes in your life or work will be supported by participating in ongoing meetings called Communities of Practice (CoPs), where people come together to share experiences and learning, and by taking part in booster training from time to time if a new need arises and to keep the approach fresh and focused.

1.1.2 Benefits of RP

People who use RP as a way of working report that it makes their professional relationships easier, more enjoyable and more effective. Parents report better relationships with their children, residents report better relationships with their neighbours and young people report increased confidence and better relationships with their teachers, their families, their friends and their peers. Benefits in organisations include an enhanced sense of community and belonging (Nathanson, 1998) and an environment that supports learning and change and involves staff in addressing company problems and devising solutions (Wachtel, 1999).

The use of RP has the potential to positively influence human behaviour and strengthen social capital within organisations and communities and throughout society as a whole. This has considerable implications for all aspects of our lives, including families, schools, prisons, workplaces, associations and statutory agencies, because RP can improve relationships among these groups and develop more effective work practices. RP provides a structure and set of skills that allow people to do things that work well consciously and consistently, giving better results in work and home life.

1.1.3 Evidence of RP as Best Practice

Research carried out in Tallaght (Fives *et al*, 2013) found that 43 percent of those surveyed reported experiencing a reduction in disputes, with the greatest gain made in the reduction of disputes at work. The same report showed that 87 percent of those that had undertaken RP training reported being better able to manage conflict and 82 percent reported being better able to manage other problems within their workplace or family structure as a result of undertaking the training.

In schools, restorative techniques have been shown to improve the attitudes of students towards learning, boost their morale, encourage them to take responsibility for their actions, improve relationships between teachers and students, enhance school culture, improve pupil attendance and grades and enhance staff morale (Hopkins, 2004; Kane *et al*, 2007; Wearmouth *et al*, 2007; Gellin, 2011; Thorsborne and Blood, 2013). In social work and social care, benefits have included improved attendance and morale among staff and higher staff retention rates, as well as better outcomes for clients including a reduction in the number of young people categorised as 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' and increased stability in foster care placements and residential care; benefits have also included increased resolution of community disputes and reduction in disorder at community level (Mirsky, 2009; Carlile, 2008). Restorative techniques like mediation and conferencing have regularly been used to solve conflicts between neighbours and within families (Gellin and Joensuu, 2011).

1.2 Developing an RP Initiative Logic Model

Developing a Logic Model for your organisation's RP initiative will be a very helpful start to the process of implementation. It acts as a **framework to provide guidance** through the early stages of implementation and will be useful in communicating the intentions and potential benefits of the RP initiative to stakeholders. Basically, you need to think about your RP initiative under the following six headings:

1. Current situation (i.e. the situation that requires changing, the rationale for wanting to introduce RP, the level of ambition of the RP initiative);
2. Research evidence (i.e. what the research or best practice tells us about the contribution that RP can make to improving the situation);
3. Inputs (i.e. the resources necessary to bring about the change required);
4. Activities (i.e. the activities that are required to deliver the desired outputs);
5. Outputs (i.e. the immediate tangible results that flow from activities);

6. Outcomes (i.e. **changes** in attitudes, behaviour, knowledge and perceptions).

You will find a detailed description and example of how to develop and maintain a logic model in CDI's *Quality Services, Better Outcomes* (CDI, 2019), which acts as a companion to this Guide. Essentially this requires completing a template as shown in Table 1. An important element of taking a restorative approach is to consciously strive to **work with** everyone affected by decisions. The development of an RP Programme Logic Model within an organisation will therefore involve working with all of the key stakeholders to the organisation. As outlined in *Quality Services, Better Outcomes* (CDI, 2019):

“Your stakeholders at this stage may include managers, practitioners, service recipients, community champions and opinion leaders, and you may also consider consulting leaders or practitioners from other agencies who have experience of delivering a similar service. You may include service users or someone living in the community who can also guide the discussion in terms of what will fit in the community and with a specific target group. Gather a small group for a more informal brainstorm, organise a focus group, or use an existing forum to develop your Logic Model.” (Pg. 36)

In short, the RP Programme Logic Model development process should be fully participative and involve all key stakeholders. It should result in a realistic and achievable overview of the RP initiative.

It is also important to remember that a logic model is a **live, working document** and therefore should be reviewed at regular intervals and updated in line with developments. It is highly recommended that the RP Team, once established, commits to an annual review of the RP initiative's Logic Model.

1.3 Organisational Readiness

An important initial step in implementing an evidence-informed initiative involves checking for organisational readiness by assessing the needs of the organisation and answering the questions 'Are we up for this?', and 'Do we have what it takes?' (CES, 2012). In order to assist you and your organisation to answer these questions, we recommend using an adaptation of work by the National Implementation Research Network (Blase *et al*, 2013). This is a method that helps organisations to systematically evaluate the timelines of an openness to new and existing interventions by considering six broad factors:

- Need (what are the priority unmet needs in our organisation?);
- Fit (to what extent will introducing restorative practices address unmet needs?);
- Resource availability (what resources will be needed and where can they be sourced?);
- Evidence (what is the evidence that this is the appropriate initiative at this time?);
- Readiness for replication (what level of relevant skill and expertise is already present in the organisation?);
- Capacity to implement (what level of interest, energy and enthusiasm is there for adopting restorative practices?).

The organisational readiness assessment tools described by Barwick (2011) have been adapted to fit the Irish context and the **Organisational Readiness Checklist** in Table 2 draws on both Barwick's work and the work of Blase *et al* (2013). Working through this checklist, preferably with other interested colleagues, will assist you in laying the groundwork for an organisation-wide RP initiative and in identifying areas for development. A plan of activities may be required to address these, such as ascertaining whether there are parts of the organisation that are interested in championing RP,

identifying potential resources for implementing the programme, or gathering and sharing evidence of the outcomes from using RP in similar organisational settings.

Thorsborne and Blood (2013) offer a comprehensive readiness-for-change checklist for schools that has relevance for other types of organisations too. In their view, the first step is to be clear about what it is that is being embarked upon. Their checklist seeks to establish if the organisation already has a relational culture where the restorative philosophy would be a good fit and encounter little resistance. If there are minimal gaps between the prevailing culture and restorative philosophy, then what they term “first order change” or “tinkering with what you already have” may be sufficient. If gaps are large, “second order change” may be required, involving long-term sustained culture change where the organisation has to do something significantly or fundamentally different from what is happening currently. Such second order change requires a much more complex change management effort.

Table 2: Organisational Readiness Checklist

	Factor	Fully There	Partially There	Nowhere Close	Notes
	A. NEED				
	To what extent:				
A1	do you think the organisation needs an RP initiative?				
A2	do you have evidence of such need?				
A3	has any person or section expressed an interest in restorative practices?				
A4	is there consensus about the need for an RP initiative?				
A5	might the organisation be willing to adopt a whole-organisation approach to using RP?				
A6	other (<i>specify</i>):				
	B. FIT				
	To what extent:				
B1	will RP build on existing work to support organisational relationships and effectiveness?				
B2	might RP undermine existing work to support organisational relationships and effectiveness?				
B3	are there individuals, groups, sections or structures that will facilitate the use of RP?				
B4	do RP values such as collaboration and problem-solving focus fit with the organisation's culture?				
B5	is there organisational interest in fostering positive relationships among staff and with clients?				
B6	is the organisation a learning organisation committed to staff development?				
B7	other (<i>specify</i>):				
	C. RESOURCE AVAILABILITY				
	To what extent:				
C1	are there people available to lead an RP initiative?				
C2	is there a group or section available to take on the role of Lead Group/Section?				
C3	are resources or funding available to:				
	• engage RP trainers?				
	• free up staff to attend training?				
	• produce local materials?				
	• conduct evaluation(s)?				
	• undertake PR activities?				
C4	other (<i>specify</i>):				

	Factors	Fully There	Partially There	Nowhere Close	Notes
	D: EVIDENCE				
	Do you have evidence:				
D1	of beneficial outcomes from using RP in a similar organisation?				
D2	of the cost-effectiveness of using RP in a similar organisation?				
D3	of beneficial outcomes for stakeholders (especially service users and staff)?				
D4	other (<i>specify</i>):				
	E: READINESS				
	Do you have:				
E1	Restorative Practice trainers and/or practitioners available to support your RP initiative?				
E2	other useful expertise or technical assistance, e.g.				
	• programme management skills?				
	• evaluation expertise?				
	• resourcing expertise?				
	• other (<i>specify</i>):				
E3	examples of relevant organisations where RP has been adopted that can be visited/observed?				
E4	the necessary support in the organisation to initiate and implement an RP initiative, e.g.				
	• people with RP skills?				
	• leaders?				
	• individual champions?				
	• one or more 'champion' groups or sections?				
	• other (<i>specify</i>):				
E5	other (<i>specify</i>):				
	F. CAPACITY				
	To what extent:				
F1	are individuals and groups/sections in the organisation open to new learning and ways of working?				
F2	will the use of RP in the organisation be easily maintained and developed over time?				
F3	other (<i>specify</i>):				

Source: Adapted from Blase *et al* (2013); Barwick (2011); Childhood Development Initiative (2019)

1.4 Identifying Key Stakeholders

The type and size of organisation and the intended scope of the RP initiative will determine who the key stakeholders are and therefore who needs to be targeted to get buy-in to the initiative. A school, for example, might identify key stakeholders as including the Board of Management, the principal and deputy-principals, holders of posts of responsibility, teaching staff, ancillary staff, parents and students. A youth service might consider among its key stakeholders the Board of Directors, managers, staff, young participants and parents or guardians. A residential service might similarly view oversight bodies, managers, staff in all functions and residents as key stakeholders, while public service bodies could include managers and staff in particular locations and units (such as front-line and support services) as well as service users. Representatives of these stakeholders need to be identified and included in the RP initiative. Key stakeholders in any setting will include leaders and champions, as discussed below.

Size of organisation is also relevant. In a modestly-sized organisation, it may be easier to adopt restorative approaches across the range of functions and units and involve all personnel directly. In larger organisations, it may be necessary to deal with stakeholders representatives if the RP initiative is to be rolled out across the whole organisation, rather than the entire workforce.

A clear vision for RP in the organisation is important as it sets the level of ambition for the RP initiative. A school, for example, may wish to adopt a whole-school approach in which everyone in the school community uses restorative skills on a daily basis and where RP is used proactively as well as to deal with conflict. The whole-school approach involves a continuum of restorative practice with an overall focus on developing positive relationships between and among students, teachers, other staff, parents and the wider community (Thorsborne and Blood, 2013). There is growing evidence that “ultimately a restorative project will be much more effective if it is part of a whole-school approach in which everyone in the school community is using restorative skills on a daily basis” (Hopkins, 2004). Alternatively the school may wish to introduce RP as a way of dealing with challenging behaviour only, restricting use of RP to dealing with student breaches of the disciplinary code in which persons in authority interact with individuals who have caused harm or otherwise broken school rules. It may also leave it to individual teachers to determine the extent to which they adopt and use restorative approaches in their classroom.

Other organisations such as youth services, residential centres (for both young and older people), public service departments and agencies, voluntary and community bodies and private sector businesses interested in becoming restorative organisations will face similar choices: do they wish to use RP universally to develop and maintain relationships or in a limited set of situations where things go wrong; do they wish to use it for all relationships including management and staff relations or with sub-sets of stakeholders (such as service users, participants or people in their care). The implications are significant in terms of effort required, with an integrated whole-organisation approach requiring cultural and relational transformation and a commitment to restorative values such as respect, fairness and inclusivity in all aspects of its dealings. This necessarily involves greater interaction with a wider group of stakeholders.

The process of agreeing and articulating the RP vision needs itself to be restorative, by engaging meaningfully with all interested and affected parties, explaining and exploring what is involved, and clarifying expectations around what will be delivered and by whom. Consideration needs to be given to how this will be achieved, including awareness-raising and giving everyone a chance to ask questions, express concerns and make suggestions.

This Stage of implementation will be assisted by having an understanding of the initiative’s Logic

Model, thereby having clarity about the objectives, research underpinning the approach, the outcomes you can expect and the required activities to deliver an RP initiative. Understanding these will help communication with stakeholders since they provide a clear overview of what the initiative sets out to do and what it takes to achieve this. In addition, being able to refer to proven benefits such as the findings from the independent evaluation of CDI's RP Programme, will also help to engage stakeholders in the early stages because it is a proven programme with a set of robust findings; the report by Fives *et al* (2013) is summarised at Appendix 1.

1.5 Importance of Leaders

Enhancing our skills by learning how to apply restorative practices will require altering the way we normally work if we are to be fully effective. Transforming organisational structures and cultures, such as revising our values and opinions or changing our everyday practice, is undeniably challenging. Such change requires time, commitment, self-belief and persistence on the part of those working for change, in addition to good planning. A shared vision on the part of leaders is also essential in order to enable the delivery of consistent messages in relation to the transformation that is anticipated. It is vital that senior managers model RP with both staff and service users and that they speak and behave in a manner that is consistent with the vision for change, not expecting one thing of others while doing something different themselves. Anything less will fail. Leaders play a vital role in organisational activities and in creating a shared vision among all staff. They are therefore a key determinant of success or failure in the implementation of an RP initiative. Once the training is delivered, leaders can play a huge part in further developing and bedding down RP approaches.

Thorsborne and Blood (2013) make the point that the leadership role includes the way they talk to staff and deal with difficulties in the organisation. They name five necessary leadership behaviours for change including leaders modelling the way to relate to each other (by "walking the walk" and being accountable for their practice). They also highlight that leaders need to have a good understanding of RP, bring concerns of staff to the surface, align policy and practice and, in a school setting, deal with adult issues. They comment that they were unable to think of one school that was successful in sustaining RP where the senior leadership team had not been active and present in every step of the process. Change management specialists Kotter International (2018) stipulate among four change principles that leadership is paramount, and not just from one executive. The ideal timing for policy change to incorporate restorative practices is not clear as the nature of changes required will not be evident until people are familiar and confident with the full range of restorative approaches. Hopkins (2009) warns that there will inevitably be a time when practice runs ahead of existing policy, and notes that strong leadership is required at that stage.

The primary focus above has been on leadership by those in the most senior positions in an organisation. It is difficult to see how successful implementation of an RP initiative can be achieved without their visible support and personal modelling of RP in all aspects of their behaviour. It is important to recognise and embrace leadership from other sources too, including middle managers and respected members of staff. It is hugely helpful to have their buy-in and assistance from the start. Some will become champions for RP – see Section 1.7.

1.6 Consulting with Stakeholders

In this Getting Started Stage, it is important to seek the buy-in of people at various levels in the organisation. Their buy-in from the start will be extremely helpful since they will be able to encourage and support other stakeholders to participate.

Once you have identified your stakeholders, the next step is to consult with them in a meaningful way, which may include:

- individual meetings;
- information sessions for groups of stakeholders;
- workshops that give an overview of RP and explore its possible benefits for the organisation and its service users;
- workshops where questions and concerns can be raised and worked through;
- circulation of an information leaflet about RP;
- an anonymous survey to establish levels of interest in taking on a restorative approach.

When consulting with stakeholders, it is useful to customise your approach to each audience, thinking about the type of information each entity or person will need and how best to communicate this to them. Think through how to present their potential involvement in the RP initiative as an opportunity for them – what the benefits to them will be and how this is a win-win proposal. In every case, it is important to be clear about what you are asking of stakeholders and what they can expect from you. For example, depending on the context, it may be very important to have one or more entities or individuals centrally involved in planning and delivering the RP initiative (e.g. front-line staff, teachers, care staff) and you will need to be especially clear about what you will be offering them and asking of them.

1.7 RP Champions

In the process of consulting with stakeholders and during training, champions will stand out and are easily identifiable because they clearly ‘get it’ – i.e. they understand the potential of RP and express the enthusiasm and drive to promote its adoption and use throughout the organisation. These will be people who have credibility and influence with their peers, experience of working in partnership with others and an interest in their organisation developing as a restorative one.

For an organisation-wide process, it will be very helpful to start with a few ‘champion’ groups or sections that are interested in taking on and modelling the use of RP for others. These are the people and groups that you should approach first as part of your stakeholder consultation in order to seek their agreement to championing an RP approach and to obtain their assistance in identifying, consulting and engaging with other key stakeholders. It is valuable to identify champions who can be members of the RP Team for the initiative. They can be the “sparks” who start to share their excitement and vision with like-minded people, “firing” them with their enthusiasm so that they warm to the vision (Hopkins, 2009).

Rogers (2003) identifies five categories of people according to the rate at which they adopt change. His model of diffusion of innovation describes innovators (3%), early adopters (13%), early majority (34%), late majority (34%) and laggards (16%). Champions are likely to be early adopters, who will become role models for the innovation. It is helpful if they already occupy positions of weight in the organisation. They will influence the early majority in particular, described as “pragmatists with goodwill” who follow rather than lead and who need to see RP in action and have proof that it works. The late majority are likely to adopt the practice when experimentation to remove the risks has occurred and the new practice has been written into policy. Thorsborne and Blood (2013) see the early adopters as internal change agents who require networking and support opportunities.

Working with those who are most interested in RP increases the chances of success in adopting RP across the organisation but it is also advisable to involve some sceptics. At a minimum they can identify likely barriers to success and many initial sceptics ultimately become the most ardent champions of RP in organisations.

1.8 Achieving Buy-in

Achieving stakeholder buy-in is essentially about making them an offer that they are happy to receive and in which they can immediately see one or more benefits to them. It may involve allaying fears or correcting misconceptions about what RP actually involves. Many are unclear about the differences between RP and restorative justice and confuse the two. A confounding factor is that there are different models and applications of restorative justice and they may be familiar with only one or two. Achieving buy-in may also involve following up with additional information and evidence if they are unconvinced of the net benefits to their organisation or group, or providing contact information for referees who can provide positive personal testimonies or otherwise support the case for introducing restorative practices. Anecdotal evidence from within the same or a similar organisation is likely to be a useful complement to non-specific empirical research. Look for possible “quick wins” where RP can make an immediate impact, for example, by helping resolve an existing conflict or with particular working relationships challenges.

Different stakeholders may need to be involved in the process in different ways, so it will be useful to offer a variety of options for participation that are relevant to and workable for their situation. For example: Do they need to attend every meeting? How often can they attend meetings? Is it sufficient that they receive regular updates and opportunities for input by e-mail?

It will also be very helpful to agree clear lines for ongoing communication with and involvement by your stakeholders. For example: How will you follow up after the initial consultation with them? What level of involvement will they have in the ongoing management of the initiative? When and how can they expect to hear back from you?

1.9 Checklist and Next Steps

Track your progress throughout this Stage 1 by completing the **Getting Started Checklist** in Table 3. This will help to ensure that the essential steps have all been considered, taken or progressed during this first Stage.

Now you can move on to Stage 2 – Putting the Plan Together for your RP initiative.

Table 3: Stage 1 – Getting Started Checklist

Activity	Description	Implementation status			Comments/Actions Required
		FULL	PARTIAL	NOT AT ALL	
Organisational readiness	Has the organisation been assessed as having a need for an RP initiative?				
	Has the Organisational Readiness Checklist (Table 2) been completed?				
Understanding of Restorative Practices and the RP Initiative	Are you familiar with restorative practices?				
	Are you familiar with the RP initiative's Logic Model?				
Identifying key stakeholders	Have the key stakeholders for the RP initiative been identified?				
	Have the identified key stakeholders been contacted?				
Leaders	Are the senior and middle management team committed to implementing the RP initiative?				
	Have they undergone RP training?				
	Do they themselves model its use?				
	Is RP part of their strategic vision for the organisation?				
Consulting with stakeholders	Have you met the relevant stakeholders and shared information regarding RP and how they can be involved in developing a restorative organisation?				
Programme champions	Have you found individual champions for the RP initiative?				
	Have you found any teams or departments within the organisation interested in championing the RP approach?				
Achieving buy-in	Have you secured the buy-in of the relevant stakeholders?				
	Have you secured the buy-in of a sufficient number of stakeholders to get the RP initiative underway?				
Other					

SECTION 2: Stage 2: PUTTING THE PLAN TOGETHER

Introduction

The second Stage of implementation focuses on gathering the resources for the RP initiative, preparing documents and ensuring that the elements needed for delivery are in place. This Stage will also involve ensuring that the structures to support delivery are established. These will include establishing an RP Team, securing funding, confirming the budget and putting in place the necessary resources (Burke *et al*, 2012).

At the end of Stage 2, you will have:

- gathered together the required resources for the RP initiative;
- established an RP Team;
- agreed an Implementation Plan for the initiative.

2.1 Gathering Resources

Introducing and embedding an organisational RP initiative will require resources.

One important resource to identify and agree is an RP Team to drive the initiative. The RP Team should be able to provide administrative support for the initiative and will greatly benefit from having senior management involvement (for the first year at least) and personnel that possess the following:

- experience of change management and engaging staff in projects similar to the RP initiative;
- project management, administration, implementation and evaluation experience and expertise;
- communication skills;
- organisational skills;
- facilitation skills;
- IT skills;
- experience of designing and/or undertaking evaluations; and
- report-writing skills.

The responsibilities of the RP Team can vary over the lifetime of the RP initiative and may include:

- coordinating and supporting the delivery of RP training;
- sourcing and managing funding for the programme;
- facilitating others to be involved;
- implementing elements of the RP Implementation Plan, such as appointing trainers, recruiting trainees, facilitating Communities of Practice, developing resources, or providing publicity material;
- managing the involvement of any external expertise/consultancy engaged to assist the RP initiative;
- managing the monitoring and evaluation of the RP initiative;
- driving the longer-term sustainability of the initiative; and
- preparing reports as needed.

Other resources may be required. The nature and extent of these will depend on the RP vision and ambition of the organisation and its choices about implementation methods. Funding will be

required for initial training provision at least and may be required for staff cover, secondment, travel costs, publicity and other resources and equipment. It may also be required for external consultancy to help at crucial stages of the change management process and, perhaps, for the appointment of an RP co-ordinator.

Funding needs to be ring-fenced. Even if the programme is endorsed by senior management, directors or parent bodies, funds ear-marked for training may be vulnerable to pressure to achieve savings or to finance new or unanticipated expenditure under other headings. In some circumstances it may be possible to charge for training provided, especially if external personnel are targeted. Once a panel of in-house RP trainers has been established and training is part of their normal duties, the cash costs of the RP initiative will be greatly diminished, if not eliminated.

2.2 Establishing an RP Team

At the very start of an RP initiative, it is important to establish an RP Team to ensure its implementation and to monitor and drive progress. The RP Team can ensure buy-in, ownership and influence by all relevant groups in the organisation. Membership of the RP Team can be determined from the stakeholder list you have developed and from the potential RP champions identified through the consultation process. Senior management should play an active role. The RP Team should include champions who are interested in RP and enthusiastic about it (see Section 1.7) as well as some who are more sceptical about RP. Such sceptics can be very helpful in planning activities, not least in identifying what won't work with like-minded sceptics.

The ideal is to have an RP Team that includes members from a range of areas and services within the organisation, who will be able to:

- consider the big picture (i.e. collectively possess knowledge of the organisation as a whole and have a common vision of what the long-term goals are);
- understand how RP fits with the organisation's ethos, professional values, ways of doing things and legal and policy constraints;
- develop and implement the RP Implementation Plan;
- monitor and evaluate activities and plans;
- be accountable for the overall work of the RP initiative;
- link what the RP initiative is planning and doing to developments, problems and opportunities for the organisation as a whole;
- plan and work for sustainability (i.e. that the initiative will be maintained within the organisation in the future).

2.3 Terms of Reference

The RP Team should have clear terms of reference to guide their work. This will express a clear and common understanding of the intended line of action. (See Appendix 2 for checklist in developing a Terms of Reference document.)

The Terms of Reference (ToR) should include the following:

- aims and objectives of the RP Team;
- timeframes for completing activities;
- the commitment expected from each member of the Team;
- management and operational arrangements (e.g. resources);
- reporting structures;
- restorative conflict resolution mechanisms;

- governance issues (e.g. reporting lines and decision-making processes);
- monitoring and evaluation processes;
- quality assurance procedures and mechanisms.

Many issues that have the potential to throw the group and its work off course will arise in the lifetime of the RP Team. If these issues have been anticipated and discussed in advance, which is possible through the development of an effective ToR document, it is more likely that the RP Team will be in a position to address these issues proactively and continue to work effectively.

2.4 Implementation Planning

CDI's work over the years has greatly benefitted from using a straightforward form of **implementation planning** as its general *modus operandi*. An implementation plan is simply a list that includes the activities to be undertaken, the timeframe for each activity, who will be responsible for ensuring that the activity is undertaken as planned, and how progress on each activity will be monitored and reported. .

There are a number of aspects of the implementation planning process that will be highly beneficial to the RP Team (indeed, to any group adopting RP as a way of working), including:

- Implementation planning will translate overall objectives into a series of achievable activities;
- Developing an implementation plan will enable everyone to be explicit about both their responsibilities for and contribution to getting the work done;
- Agreeing an implementation plan means making concrete decisions about what activities will happen, when they will happen and who will be responsible for making them happen;
- When the RP Team is meeting on a regular basis, an implementation plan will show regular progress in the work, which is good for maintaining motivation among members;
- The implementation plan process will also show where there are blocks to getting work done, enabling the RP Team to adjust plans appropriately; and
- Using an evolving implementation plan gives everybody in the group the chance to both take responsibility for getting work done and to be acknowledged for the work that they do. Again, this is a very good way of maintaining motivation in the group.

A template for developing an organisation's **RP Implementation Plan**, including a number of key tasks required to get the initiative underway, is provided in Table 4.

Table 4: RP Implementation Plan Template

Key objectives (What do we want to achieve?)	Activities to achieve objectives (What will we do to achieve it?)	Timeframe (By when will this be complete?)	Responsibility (Who is responsible for getting this done?)	Reporting/Monitoring (How will this be monitored and where will progress be reported?)
Establish effective planning and strategic structures	Identify and consult with stakeholders			
	Identify and consult with potential RP champions			
	Convene 1st RP Team meeting			
	Agree ToR			
	Agree Implementation Plan			
	Other			
Develop a restorative organisation	Develop and disseminate promotional materials			
	Identify and engage trainers			
	Prioritise and recruit target group(s) for training			
	Develop training schedule			
	Agree trainee recruitment plan			
	Deliver training			
	Track training participation by unit			
	Target and support participation by units and individuals slow to participate			
	Utilise existing networks and connections to promote participation Other			
Ensure quality and fidelity	Identify facilitators and establish Communities of Practice (CoPs)			
	Develop and disseminate reflective practice tools to enhance delivery			
	Support groups to identify and track anticipated outcomes			
	Support groups to develop and utilise fidelity checklists			
Develop a panel of in-house trainers to support sustainability	Identify potential trainers			
	Recruit trainee trainers			
	Deliver training of trainers site observations and CoP's			
	Other			
Develop sustainability	Collect 'good news' stories			
	Develop in-house resources to increase ownership			
	Conduct regular planning and review			
	Develop and institute evaluation mechanism(s)			
	Other			

2.5 Checklist and Next Steps

Track your progress throughout this Stage 2 by completing the **Putting the Plan Together Checklist** given in Table 5. This will help to ensure that the essential steps have all been considered, taken or progressed during this second Stage.

Now you can move on to Stage 3 – Doing It.

Table 5: Stage 2 – Putting the Plan Together Checklist

Activity	Description	Implementation status			Comments/Actions Required
		FULL	PARTIAL	NOT AT ALL	
Gathering resources	Have you agreed a Lead Team or Department?				
	Have you identified resources available and/or secured funding for your RP initiative?				
Establishing RP Team	Have you secured the commitment of the key stakeholders needed to drive your RP initiative?				
	Have you established an RP Team?				
Implementation Plan	Has your RP Team agreed an Implementation Plan for at least the first year of operation of your RP initiative?				
Monitoring and Evaluation	Has the RP Team had access to appropriate expertise?				
	Has an M and E plan been developed?				
	Have responsibilities been delegated and timelines set?				
Other					

SECTION 3: Stage 3: DOING IT

Introduction

Programme delivery begins in Stage 3. This may be the first time that RP is introduced to the organisation you are working with and it may be introduced on a pilot basis before being rolled out to the whole organisation (Burke *et al*, 2012).

By the end of Stage 3, you will have:

- delivered RP training to your targeted units or groups;
- developed a panel of in-house trainers;
- developed in-house promotional materials and resources;
- established mechanisms for ongoing supports to individuals and groups taking on RP as a way of working;
- have monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place.

3.1 Delivering Restorative Practices Training

3.1.1 Overall considerations

There are a number of considerations that need to be taken into account in order to make decisions about the delivery of training in restorative practices. The most important of these are set out below.

Choosing a training programme

When planning the delivery of RP training, it is necessary to first choose the level of ambition for RP (whole organisation or particular functions) and determine the type and extent of training required to deliver the vision. It is also necessary to recognise that some training programmes focus primarily on dealing with the aftermath of harm-doing and criminal behaviour. RP derived from restorative justice and they have common ground in responding to harm-causing behaviour. However RP differs from restorative justice in key respects. These include, notably, the application in domains other than criminal justice and the emphasis on proactive building and maintaining of relationships and conflict prevention. RP is also different in its focus on collaborative problem-solving and its relevance to situations where there is no clear wrong-doer, i.e. where everybody has responsibility for the conflict and therefore a part to play in it being resolved.

The skills required to work in a restorative manner include skills in listening, communication, facilitation, planning and evaluation. RP training provides a framework for using all of these skills to build relationships consciously and to resolve conflict easily. RP training also provides insights into restorative values that are essential to effective use of the tools described in Section 1.1.1 and summarised in Figure 3. Training can be provided for the range of levels of restorative practices (from the informal to the formal), and tailored for particular target groups, such as schools, parents, youth workers and Gardaí.

It is therefore important to ‘shop around’ for the training that will be the best fit for the organisation. This may involve a public tender process. The selected training programme should be appropriate to the target audience, typically including a variety of approaches consistent with internationally recognised adult learning styles and taking account of prior learning.

Identifying trainers

Many Irish organisations that were early adopters of RP, especially in the justice arena, used the services of international training providers. These still provide training options. The RP training capacity and experience in Ireland has developed apace since and a number of Irish training providers have delivered RP training to UK organisations. Using Irish-based trainers offers advantages: they can help provide a focus that is local and relevant to the audience, drawing on Irish experience, citing examples from familiar settings, using appropriate cultural and linguistic references. It will also be more cost-effective because of lower travel and other overhead costs. RP is now used widely across Ireland and there are a number of trainers and training agencies who deliver training, often using materials produced in-house (see www.restorativepracticesireland.ie for a list of resources and trainers in Ireland).

Cost of training

The costs involved in providing RP training will be influenced by your choice of trainer(s) but can be reduced by developing and using in-house trainers. They will also be influenced by the size of the intended audience, whether training will be provided to all or selected staff and whether service users (such as students, members or residents) will be included, as well as the level of training to be provided.

Costs for training include promotion costs, trainer fees, venues, refreshments and materials. In most organisations, these can be provided from within existing resources at little or no out-of-pocket expense. Depending on the organisation of training delivery, costs of substitute staff (e.g. teachers) may need to be factored into budgets. Costs of staff time undergoing training need to be considered, even if a direct, out-of-pocket cost is not incurred. Travel costs are also likely to arise, while for some organisations, provision of childcare may be necessary.

Accreditation of in-house RP trainers could incur a cost. Different training providers may have licensing arrangements for accreditation of trainers whereby there will be ongoing charges for keeping an RP trainer's accreditation active and providing access to training materials. Careful planning of budgets will therefore include identifying the most cost-effective accreditation route for in-house RP trainers.

Potential for in-house delivery of training

In planning an RP training programme, the potential for in-house delivery should be taken into consideration. The Implementation Plan for the RP initiative should include identifying potential RP trainers from units or groups that have the prospect of delivering training to work colleagues. This will require negotiation with managers for staff to be freed up to both undergo training as a trainer and subsequently to deliver the training within their own organisation. Developing a team of in-house trainers will cut the costs of the RP initiative, build local resources and maintain buy-in and a collective sense of responsibility for the ongoing support of the initiative.

Accreditation processes

In planning the provision of RP training, it is important to consider what is needed by your organisation in terms of accreditation of any training being delivered. It may be the case that there are individuals who are keen to gain restorative skills without necessarily acquiring any accreditation for the training they receive. Thinking accreditation options through when planning your training will support you in taking a quality-focused approach (see Section 4.1). Given the option, most people will accept accreditation if it is on offer.

Currently, there are a number of ways to be accredited in the use of RP or as an RP Trainer and these accreditation options include:

- training certificates, which provide documentation of continuing professional development;

- certificates awarded by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI);
- modules within courses provided by Irish universities, third-level institutions or professional bodies (e.g. The Law Society);
- accreditation by private commercial training providers based in Ireland or abroad.

Restorative Practices Ireland (an all-Ireland forum for RP organisations and practitioners) is working to develop and promote Irish accreditation routes (see www.restorativepracticesireland.ie for details and updates).

Pilot Stage

At the outset of delivering RP training in an organisation, it is highly recommended that the training be piloted with the RP Team before being offered more widely. This will accomplish a number of important implementation tasks. Firstly, this approach ensures that the RP Team are all ‘skilled up’ as restorative practitioners and therefore have credibility when asking others to undertake the training. Second, it will afford the RP Team the opportunity to provide constructive feedback to trainers on how to ensure that the training is a good fit for the organisation. Finally, it will mean that all members of the RP Team are aware of the content of the RP training they are promoting and are able to explain it to other personnel in the organisation or service users whom it is intended to invite to training.

3.1.2 Design of the Training Programme

Different organisations will be interested in different levels and types of RP training. However, a rule of thumb for groups or organisations wishing to adopt a restorative approach is for **all members** of the organisation to do **basic training**, which provides an overview of RP and offers practical tools for **using restorative language and conducting restorative conversations**.

This is an important first stage of becoming a restorative group or organisation since it ensures that everyone has an understanding of how RP works and can be part of integrating the approach in the group or organisation. Basic-level training in RP is recommended for all staff, even if an organisation only wishes to adopt RP in a subset of activities, since positive RP outcomes may be undermined by those who are not familiar with RP or have misconceptions or biases in relation to it. It is important to stress too that ‘all members’ means just that. For example, in a school it will mean all members of the Board of Management; the teaching staff; the classroom support staff; the administration, catering and maintenance staff; and any other personnel who regularly work with the school, such as youth workers or School Completion Programme staff.

In addition, for schools and a whole range of other organisations providing services for children, young people and their parents (e.g. childcare services, youth services, community development services), ‘all members’ includes these service users. It will be important for the children, young people and parents using a service to receive the basic training when the organisation or group is embarking on becoming restorative.

Following on from this basic RP training, it is usual (and recommended) for at least 10 percent of the members of a group or organisation to do **further training** in the use of **restorative circles** and the facilitation of meetings and **conferences**. A higher percentage is likely to be necessary in smaller groups (up to 20 percent). These will be people in the group or organisation who have a particular interest in or passion for RP, who have leadership positions, or who have responsibility for discipline or human resource (HR) functions.

3.2 Training Children and Young People

An RP initiative in an organisation that works with children and young people (such as schools, youth services, residential settings) will include RP training for them as an integral part of the initiative. CDI's experience has been that children and young people respond extremely well to restorative practices and that young people need less training in the approach than their adult counterparts in order to take it on.

It will be very helpful to include training for young people from the start of your RP initiative because these young people will naturally evolve as role models and mentors for their peers, their juniors *and* their seniors. Young leaders will be identified through this process and these RP 'champions' should be supported to become RP trainers, who can and will be very effective in delivering further training to other children and young people.

3.3 Training of Trainers

As mentioned above, it will greatly enhance the ongoing sustainability of an organisation-wide RP initiative to have people in the organisation who are trained as RP trainers. There are currently a variety of routes available for doing so (see above and www.restorativepracticesireland.ie). Potential RP trainers can be identified during the delivery of RP training or can be self-selecting from those who are interested.

3.4 Promotional Materials

Promotional materials are important in raising awareness of restorative practice and promoting the benefits of its use throughout the organisation. There are a range of videos, leaflets and brochures freely available on the internet (see www.restorativepracticesireland.ie) that will be of use at the outset of your RP initiative. In an organisational context, the best promotional materials you can have are the stories that people tell you about how they are using RP and the results they are getting. It is highly recommended that you have a system for collecting these stories right from the start.

The promotional materials you develop may include leaflets, brochures, newsletters, webpages, social media posts, posters, DVDs and slide shows. It is extremely helpful to have a plan in place for photographing or filming the delivery of your training, and the conduct of RP encounters (e.g. circles or conferences) when they begin to occur. **However, it is important to remember that you will need the permission** of the people recorded in this way (and the permission of parents/guardians of young people under the age of 18) for any photos or films to be stored and/or published in any form, whether in print or digitally.

3.5 Resource Materials

It is very useful if development of **in-house resource materials** is an explicit element of the RP implementation plan since doing so will contribute to building the capacity of your organisation to take on and sustain restorative practices as a way of working. The kinds of materials that can and should be developed in-house will include posters and training materials.

There are lots of possible ways to develop in-house materials. In CDI's RP Programme, schools, youth groups and community centres in Tallaght developed a variety of posters through competitions and art projects, and the process of producing posters has itself been part of promoting RP within these organisations.

Similarly, organisations working with children and young people have produced materials that are used to train them in the use of RP. Part of the restorative approach is about being able to express emotions constructively. It can be a challenge for children and young people to accurately name what they are feeling and schools, youth groups and parents have found it useful to develop wall charts, flash cards or posters illustrating emotional scales and a range of words for different feelings. Again, the process of developing these materials along with the children and young people is itself restorative and educational. Such processes can have similar benefits for members of organisations of all ages.

3.6 Communities of Practice

A Community of Practice (CoP) is a space where a group of people come together to share their experiences and knowledge in creative ways that foster new and improved approaches to delivering services and programmes (Wenger and Snyder, 2000). CoPs tend to be a key support for service providers and may include sessions involving invited speakers on relevant topics, case study presentations or facilitated sessions on issues identified as affecting service delivery.

The objectives of Communities of Practice include:

- to support fidelity to a manual/programme;
- to provide technical assistance in programme delivery, particularly in terms of connecting practice and theory;
- to offer a space for reflection, consideration and sharing the learning;
- to identify and respond to training and support needs;
- to collectively identify solutions to issues impacting on service delivery;
- to inform the development of best practice guidelines for services;
- to improve practice and programme delivery.

To ensure that the benefits of RP training are maximised, it is essential to have a plan in place to provide **post-training supports**. Regular CoPs provide an excellent forum in which to facilitate, maintain and develop the use of RP. They also allow for necessary supports to be identified and put in place to ensure the training is being used, support such as mentoring, sector-specific CoPs¹ and identification of further target groups to engage in RP. CoPs encourage reflective practice, identifying both strong practices and areas in need of development, so supporting quality service delivery. They also help team-building.

RP Communities of Practice can be organised in a number of ways:

- Where an organisation or group is developing as a restorative one, the CoP will effectively be in-house (e.g. in schools RP champions have organised their CoP as a Professional Learning Community (PLC); other organisations have established RP Implementation Teams or Committees).
- People who have undergone training can be offered the opportunity to meet together to share information about how they are using the training, troubleshoot by sharing ideas about how to respond restoratively to issues or problems, and develop collaborative actions as appropriate. These meetings can also be used to identify outstanding training or support needs. Such CoPs will require one or more people to organise and facilitate them, a role that could be rotated among members of the RP Team.
- CoPs can also be organised by sector or by theme (e.g. a CoP on the use of circles, or exploring the topic of “respect”).

¹ For example, CoPs for the education, youth work, social care, or justice sectors.

Organisation of CoPs can be more challenging where staff work shifts and are on different rosters such as in residential settings. In such circumstances opportunities to meet together will be more limited but still need to be provided. CoPs can be supplemented by smaller meetings with colleagues or with identified “buddies” to facilitate reflective practice and sharing of experience. Supervision can also be used to reflect on practice and is more effective if the supervisor has also completed RP training. The appointment of an RP Co-ordinator to answer questions or the establishment of an on-line helpdesk can also provide support in the organisation. Booster or refresher training should be considered from time to time, covering issues that emerge through CoPs, reflection, supervision or observation of practice.

Research conducted by the US National Staff Development Council and Stanford University (2002) indicates that without having support structures in place (such as CoPs) to provide peer mentoring and support, the knowledge and skills that are transferred into practice remain extremely low. This phenomenon is clearly illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6: Transfer of Skills or Knowledge from Professional Development Training

Components of professional development	Knowledge	Skill	Transference into practice
Theory	10%	5%	0%
Modelling/Demonstration	30%	20%	0%
Practice	60%	60%	5%
Peer Mentoring (Community of Practice)	95%	95%	95%

Establishing strong systems of support is therefore a critical component of implementing an RP initiative in an organisation, and the programme’s RP Team will need to have a strategy for the development of CoPs in place before any training is delivered. Agreements will need to be made about what kind of CoPs are needed, who will take on responsibility for organising them, and how they will be reviewed.

3.7 Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms

Monitoring means keeping track of what you are doing while you are doing it, so that you can take corrective action if necessary. Evaluation means finding out if you have achieved the effect on your target population that you said you would achieve, after you have finished implementing the activities.

3.7.1 Monitoring Progress

How progress is monitored will depend on what it is hoped to improve by adopting RP in an organisation. It is highly recommended to start small when introducing any new RP initiative and to aim for some early ‘wins’ that can be built upon. Regular monitoring of progress serves the dual functions of ensuring that plans are being followed, and both successes and obstacles are being identified. Progress can be monitored through ongoing self-reflection by individual practitioners, by the RP Team and by Communities of Practice. Independent observation of restorative interventions (such as circles, conferences or training sessions) can also be established. You will also need to monitor outputs such as numbers trained and from which disciplines and/or departments, numbers of CoPs facilitated and the numbers attending CoPs.

The RP Team will also have a function in monitoring the use of RP in the organisation and supporting its development on an ongoing basis. In order to monitor the implementation of restorative practices, the RP Team will find it useful to agree the standards that it aims to reach. The RPI publication *Aspiring to High Quality Restorative Practices – The RPI Quality Assurance Framework*

(O'Dwyer, 2021)² contains a clear set of standards and values that can be used and adapted by restorative practitioners and organisations.

Organisations or groups committed to being restorative can be supported by the RP Team to develop **Restorative Practices Fidelity Checklists** that will assist with both monitoring the implementation of RP and with ongoing internal reflective practice. Fidelity in this context is simply the extent to which practices adhere to the standards and values established for the organisation. A sample of such checklists is included in Appendix 5.

3.7.2 Evaluating your RP Initiative

It will be very useful for the RP team to decide on a system which can be put in place from the outset, for evaluating the outcomes and impact of the RP initiative. Obviously, measurement of progress towards intended outcomes and assessment of their impact will depend on what objectives are set for the RP initiative – you need to know what you are trying to achieve in order to decide what you will monitor, measure and evaluate.

The Logic Model developed for your RP initiative will be central to informing this process. Consideration should be given to collecting baseline data even before training commences. Baseline data are the initial data collected prior to the start of an intervention. These data serve as a point of reference as subsequent data are collected and compared against the baseline data to measure progress towards intervention goals.

Look for opportunities for collecting and developing both **qualitative and quantitative data for measuring progress**. As far as possible, data collection should be built around what is already in place. For example, trainees will be filling out application forms for the training and completing evaluation forms at the end of training sessions; questions could be included in the application form about their confidence in dealing with conflict, which could provide some of your baseline data (see Appendix 4) and the same questions asked at the end of training or at a subsequent CoP.

Where an organisation is adopting RP, the evaluation should be framed around the aspects of the organisation's work that it is seeking to improve. Again, where possible, systems for collecting data that are already in place should be used, built on or adapted as appropriate. For example, schools in Hull have been able to show the positive impact of RP by comparing the frequency and types of disciplinary procedures required *before* they started using RP with the same information one and two years later (Mirsky, 2009; Carlile, 2008).

The kinds of evaluation mechanisms that are used can vary enormously depending on what questions you are seeking to answer about how the RP initiative is working. Large or in-depth research projects can be costly, but one option is to offer a **research opportunity** to Masters or PhD students. Since RP is increasingly being used in Ireland in a whole range of settings, there is a rich source of potential research available to students across a range of disciplines, including childcare, education, social care, youth work, management and criminology.

3.9 Checklist and Next Steps

Track your progress throughout this Stage 3 by completing the **Implementing and Operationalising Checklist** given in Table 7. This will help to ensure that the essential steps have all been considered, taken or progressed during this third Stage.

² O'Dwyer, K., (2021). *Aspiring to High Quality Restorative Practices – The RPI Quality Assurance Framework*. Dublin: [Childhood Development Initiative](#)

Now that your RP initiative is fully operational, you can move on to Stage 4 – Sustaining your RP programme.

Table 7: Stage 3 – Doing It Checklist

Activity	Description	Implementation status			Comments/Actions Required
		FULL	PARTIAL	NOT AT ALL	
Training programme	<p>Have you identified who will deliver the training?</p> <p>Have you agreed your target group(s) for training?</p> <p>Have you recruited trainees?</p> <p>Has training been delivered?</p>				
Training children and young people	<p>Do you have a strategy in place for the training of young people and children and other service users?</p>				
Training of trainers	<p>Have you agreed a mechanism for training in-house RP practitioners to become RP trainers?</p>				
Promotional materials	<p>Have you agreed what promotional materials you need?</p> <p>Have you mechanisms in place for developing promotional materials?</p>				
Resource materials	<p>Have you agreed what resource materials you need?</p> <p>Have you mechanisms in place for developing resource materials?</p>				
Communities of Practice (CoPs)	<p>Have you identified how to deliver Communities of Practice?</p> <p>Have you the necessary supports in place for your CoPs?</p>				
Monitoring progress	<p>Have you agreed how your RP initiative will be monitored?</p> <p>Have you put monitoring mechanisms in place?</p>				
Evaluation mechanisms	<p>Does your logic model adequately state what it is you are trying to change? Have you agreed how your RP initiative will be evaluated?</p> <p>Have you put evaluation mechanisms in place?</p>				
Other					
Other					

SECTION 4: Stage 4: SUSTAINING

Introduction

Stage 4 is the final Stage of implementation and, whilst the initiative will require constant monitoring and review, your RP initiative is fully operational and embedded in the organisation. This Stage relates to consolidating the programme and ensuring continued quality and sustainability.

Reaching Stage 4 means you will have:

- received results from your monitoring and evaluation strategies that will enable you to reflect on the implementation process, assess the level of embeddedness of RP in your organisation, and understand to what extent RP is meeting the needs of your staff, clients and key stakeholders;
- progressed actions to embed RP as the *modus operandi* for your organisation;
- established a system for ongoing monitoring and development of the initiative.

4.1 Quality Assurance

The quality of RP practice needs to be ensured in the organisation on an on-going basis. Quality is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as *'the standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind; the degree of excellence of something'*. Quality assurance is defined as *'the maintenance of a desired level of activity in a service or product, especially by means of attention to every stage in the process of delivery or production'*.

Quality in restorative practices *'is about safety and consistency, adherence to principles and values and achievement of fair outcomes'* (O'Dwyer, 2014) and is important for a number of reasons, including staff and client confidence in RP. Perhaps the most important rationale for paying attention to quality is that there is evidence that poor outcomes in restorative interventions have been the result of poor practice rather than the result of the restorative approach (Brathwaite, 1994, Morris and Maxwell, 2001). Fidelity to good practice is therefore crucial to achieving the desired outcomes when adopting a restorative approach. Achieving fidelity means being aware of the values, standards and methodologies which underpin restorative practices and undertaking regular, structured, reflective review of practices (see below and Appendix 5).

The CDI guide *Towards Excellence in Restorative Practices – A Quality Assurance Framework for Organisations and Practitioners* (O'Dwyer, 2014), examines key elements of quality assurance and it is **recommended reading** for anyone seeking to implement an RP initiative in an organisation (available at: <http://www.restorativepracticesireland.ie/resources/publications/>). This Implementation Guide draws on that framework for achieving excellence in restorative practices.

4.2 Reflective Practice

Reflective practice involves learning through experience: your practice, or how you do your job, is shaped and informed by a range of behaviours, skills, dispositions, assumptions and theories you employ to carry out your professional duties (Larrivee, 2008). Reflection is the process of exploring and analysing your practice, including your feelings and perceptions, and it generates knowledge about the reality of what is happening and about your own practice (Barnett and O'Mahony, 2006). Reflective practitioners aim to use learning to improve their future practice. As Daudelin (1996, p. 39) puts it:

‘Reflection is the process of stepping back from an experience to ponder, carefully and persistently, its meaning to the self through the development of inferences; learning is the creation of meaning from past or current events that serves as a guide for future behaviour.’

Adopting RP as an individual or organisation will be supported by having regular and focused opportunities for reflecting on people’s experiences of using RP. Individuals should be encouraged and supported to keep notes of their practice to underpin and inform such reflecting and learning, for their own personal use and potentially for sharing with colleagues. Headings under which information might be kept include circumstances of use, what worked well and what might be improved upon. Information should be kept short so that the task does not become too onerous.

Where two or more colleagues are involved in an RP event, it can be very valuable to reflect jointly in the immediate aftermath. Other structured opportunities to reflect and share learning include the Communities of Practice and meetings where users of RP can come together to discuss and share both experiences and concerns. Another opportunity is provided when monitoring and evaluation results are received. These will provide the basis for reflecting on progress towards the improvements that are intended, including celebrating achievements to date and identifying barriers that need to be overcome. They also provide an opportunity to identify solutions to any challenges that have been encountered.

4.3 Embedding in RP as a Way of Working

‘Embedding RP in’ is about making it the ‘business as usual’ for an organisation. This has to take account of the scope of intended RP use. It could be that it has been decided that RP is to be used in all aspects of organisational life, including as a way of staff and volunteers working with or relating to each other as well as clients. It is CDI’s experience that sustaining RP in organisations requires taking on RP on a whole-organisation basis. This typically takes three to five years, depending on the size of the organisation and the commitment of the leadership to having RP adopted. Alternatively, it could be intended that people use RP for a sub-set of organisational activities, such as dealing with harmful behaviour or breaches of discipline, or dealing with a particular set of people such as students, offenders or residents in a centre. Organisations can and do start out small and then move to spread RP throughout the organisation but the sooner this can be achieved the better if the full benefits of RP are to be realised.

Problems arise frequently from inconsistent application of RP in an organisation as this sends mixed messages and causes confusion, raising doubts about the organisation’s commitment to changing its ethos and culture. Ensuring that your quality assurance mechanisms are in place and operationalised will minimise the opportunities for problems to arise.

Embedding can be understood as ensuring that RP becomes the standard, consistent way of doing business after training has been completed. Too often, good intentions during training wane once the glow of training has dimmed. It is important to keep the momentum going and continue to work on maintaining the initiative’s strength, stability and quality of practice. It is easy to lose focus or forget core principles, and the initiative can become less effective as a result. Maximising the potential for positive outcomes through the use of RP requires ongoing reflection and review, along with openness to learning from each other. Consideration also needs to be given to turnover of staff and clients of organisations and meeting the RP training and support needs of new members and stakeholders in the organisation.

The RP Team has a role in ‘embedding’ RP across the organisation and in maximising opportunities for the promotion of RP. The kinds of actions that will be useful in this respect include:

- raising awareness of RP within the organisation e.g.:
- sharing the positive benefits and challenges of RP (e.g. through newsletters or bulletins);
- keeping Heads of Departments and managers informed of the benefits of RP;
- tracking and disseminating both factual data about outcomes from evaluations and ‘good news’ stories from RP practitioners;
- using presentations, DVDs and in-house media to promote RP;
- organising celebrations of significant restorative milestones;
- ensuring provision of refresher training for those already trained and new training opportunities for those not yet trained; and
- ensuring on-going commitment to quality of practice;
- study visits, reforming with other organisations through CoP’s reflective.

Having examples of RP in action in the organisation will be crucial for all of the above. Ask people who undertake the training to **provide you with feedback** about how they are using RP and its impact. Actively seek their input by providing them with a ‘Feedback Form’ with a few simple questions about their experiences (see template in Appendix 6).

4.4 Ongoing Review and Development

The RP Team will also play an important role in being responsible for ensuring that there is ongoing review and development of the organisation’s RP initiative. Opportunities for bringing stakeholders together to share learning, to reflect on their practice and to plan further restorative projects should be built into the RP Team’s annual action plans.

The RP Team itself should also allocate time to review and reflect on its work and plan ahead based on the learning from this process. Successes should be acknowledged as part of the RP Team’s review procedures and celebrated as part of the strategy for promoting RP in the organisation.

4.5 Checklist and Next Steps

Reaching Stage 4 will mean that restorative practices have become fully embedded in your organisation. Track your progress through this final Stage by completing the **Sustaining Checklist** given in Table 8. This will help to ensure that attention is paid to all ongoing tasks for the maintenance and development of your RP initiative and that a restorative approach is now the norm in the organisation.

The activities in this section are aimed at enabling you to sustain this level of engagement, keep staff motivated and focused, develop opportunities to build a restorative organisation and to ensure good practice. These require ongoing attention and a degree of tenacity.

Table 8: Stage 4 – Sustaining Checklist

Activity	Description	Implementation status			Comments/Actions Required
		FULL	PARTIAL	NOT AT ALL	
Reflective practice	Have you organised opportunities for all of the key stakeholders to reflect on their practice of RP?				
Promoting RP in the organisation	Have you developed appropriate mechanisms to capture and disseminate impacts and outcomes? Have you an on-going RP promotion strategy in place?				
Ongoing review and development	Have you organised ongoing opportunities for all of the key stakeholders to discuss the development of your RP initiative? Has your RP Team agreed a process for ongoing review and development of the RP initiative?				
Ongoing training	Have you ensured opportunities for new and refresher training for those identified as being in need?				
Other					
Other					

SECTION 5: ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Implementing an RP initiative in your organisation can be a challenge. The four Stages given in this Guide provide you with a solid framework on which to develop your initiative and the following thoughts may help in your work:

- **Planning:** Careful consideration needs to be given to the process of implementing a new initiative. As the implementation process progresses, a number of Stages can be active at the same time and you may move back and forth between these. Remember to track your progress and be prepared for items that will come up in subsequent Stages. This can be helped through the use of some of the resources included in this Implementation Guide (such as the checklists), but can also be assisted through contact with other people who have implemented RP as a whole-organisation approach. Contact can be made via Restorative Practices Ireland (see www.restorativepracticesireland.ie/).
- **Time:** Implementing a new initiative takes time. This can relate to all aspects of the implementation process, but is particularly true as implementation commences. Perseverance is the key – stick with it. The experience to date is that the first few months of delivery are time-consuming, but that this quickly becomes easier and, indeed, once RP is bedded in, time formerly spent on managing conflict will be saved. There may also be a need to refer back to the activities of the previous Stages in the implementation process or for some stages to run simultaneously.
- **Communication:** Good communication is essential in ensuring that stakeholders, champions and participants are all kept on board. Consider feedback loops and appropriate ways for keeping the key people you are working with engaged with the initiative. In-house newsletters, celebrations of milestones and sharing of individual success stories are just some of the ways of keeping people motivated.
- **Support:** Trying something new, however positive, can be daunting, irritating, frustrating and exciting – perhaps all at the same time! Use your contacts, check in with other areas using RP, think about how best to use your time at Communities of Practice and stay in touch with Restorative Practices Ireland for support and resources (see www.restorativepracticesireland.ie/). Be open to attending and participating in RP events such as conferences and seminars, including events that relate to use of RP in domains different from your own.

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Appendix 1: CDI's Restorative Practice Programme – Overview and Key Findings

The Child and Family Research Centre at the National University of Ireland, Galway, conducted an evaluation of CDI's Restorative Practice Programme between 2010 and 2012 (Fives *et al*, 2013, available at: http://www.twcdi.ie/images/uploads/general/CDI-RP_Report_Web.pdf). The following extract from the evaluation report (pp. 12-15) includes an overview of the development of the programme, and key findings are also highlighted.

The Childhood Development Initiative (CDI) and Restorative Practice (RP)

In developing this programme, CDI's overarching goal was to develop a 'restorative community' in Tallaght West. It was envisaged that the RP approach could offer a 'common language' whereby people in Tallaght West could share an agreed approach to the resolution of conflicts and disputes. The approach taken was to train a wide range of stakeholders in RP and to support them in embedding this approach in dealing with conflict situations that arise. Specifically, the initiative aimed to improve relationships between agencies, between agencies and services users, between residents, between employees in local schools and agencies, and between students and teachers in schools. Through the RP approach, they aimed to offer 'a framework which focuses on identifying solutions, being explicit about practice and challenging and supporting one another to take responsibility' (CDI, 2011). In addition to improving relationships between a wide range of stakeholders, it was also hoped that the initiative would help to reduce conflict and anti-social behaviour in the area and to improve pupil retention in schools.

This section reviews the various Stages in the development of the RP programme. Firstly, the origins and early development of the programme are outlined, followed by an overview of the programme targets, the consultation undertaken, and the training provided.

Origins and early development of the Restorative Practice Programme

The interest of CDI in RP was stimulated by a presentation at a conference run by the Irish Youth Justice Service. CDI staff identified the potential of the approach in progressing the work of CDI's Community Safety Initiative (CSI) and proceeded to engage with a range of stakeholders to develop an RP initiative in Tallaght West. As one staff member noted, the main vision in the first instance was that there would be a consistency of approach around how young people were interacted with by authority figures, whether parents, school staff, An Garda Síochána, anti-social behaviour officers, youth workers, or others.

CDI staff subsequently made contact with external stakeholders who had an interest in or experience of RP, which proved to be a valuable learning experience in terms of deciding how best to approach the initiative in Tallaght West. Key stakeholders from within the local area, who were perceived to be important to the implementation of RP in Tallaght West, and external stakeholders who could advise on the effective development of the initiative, were invited to form a management committee. The management committee was made up of representatives of CDI staff, schools, restorative justice services, An Garda Síochána, residents, youth services, county council staff, county childcare committee staff, and community education and enterprise staff. CDI's reputation and pre-existing involvement with CDI were key factors in participants' decision to become members of the management committee. The management committee's role encompassed both operational and strategic functions, including the following:

- promoting the implementation process and the training programme;
- recruiting participants for training;
- providing support, advice, and guidance to trainees;
- strategic planning;
- representing their own organisations/agencies.

The management committee oversaw the development of a business plan for the initiative. According to CDI's *Restorative Practice Business Plan* (2011, p. 2), by the end of 2011, 800 people (including 100 young people and 100 parents) living and working in Tallaght West would have received RP awareness training. Of these, it was proposed 150 would have completed RP facilitation skills training (i.e. Stage 2) and a further 20

participants would have completed the 'training for trainers' level (i.e. Stage 3), allowing them to train others in the RP approach. It was also proposed that RP training in Tallaght West would use Irish-based trainers where possible in order to build awareness and capacity in RP training both in Tallaght West and in Ireland (CDI, 2011, p. 3).

In a parallel process, CDI co-founded the all-Ireland Restorative Practice Strategic Forum (RPSF), which facilitated networking with agencies that had an interest in and strategic role regarding RP in Ireland. The RPSF aims to promote and support the use of RP across schools, communities, and services, both locally and regionally, throughout the island of Ireland. It also aims to support the national development of a strategy designed to embed these practices across the range of services within the context of a life-cycle approach (RPSF, 2012). The RPSF is open to all those across the island of Ireland who have a role in the strategic management and development of restorative practices and includes participants from academic, policy, and practice settings.

Through taking this approach, CDI's intention was to build the programme on best international practice, on national expertise and experience, and in conjunction with stakeholders who were identified as central to successful implementation. In this way, as one respondent observed, conceptual and pragmatic issues 'were able to be ironed out early on'. One example is the attention that was given to the relationship between this new project and pre-existing restorative justice projects in the area. Taking such a combined local, national, and international approach to the development of the programme was important in getting buy-in from agencies.

Programme targets

The RP training programme as implemented by CDI had a number of overarching targets to be achieved by the end of 2011. Those targets were as follows:

- that 800 people living and working in Tallaght West will have participated in awareness raising training;
- that 150 of the above will have completed facilitation skills training;
- that these participants will be drawn from residents, NGOs, local service providers and statutory agencies;
- that at least one training session will be held for senior managers in order to ensure an organisational awareness of the commitment to the approach and support its integration;
- that a group of 20 practitioners will be trained as trainers and accredited by the IIRP;
- that RP training is delivered to 100 young people (aged 10-25 years) in targeted locations/settings in order that they can become drivers of the approach with their peers;
- that 100 parents living in Tallaght West will be targeted to participate in awareness raising training and supports established to enable them to utilise the approach;
- that trainer capacity in both Tallaght West and across Ireland is developed by utilising and enhancing the experience of Irish-based trainers wherever possible;
- that a forum is established in Tallaght West to support and promote participation in a learning environment that enables reflection and sharing of the learning from the implementation of the RP approach.

The targets of the RP Programme were linked to a number of anticipated outcomes as follows:

- that each participating organisation identifies one or two specific targets to be achieved through the implementation of RP approaches, the achievement of which will be tracked over the next 12 months;
- improved interagency collaboration among front-line staff;
- improved relationships between service providers and residents;
- increased confidence of front-line staff in dealing with conflict situations;
- increased confidence among participating parents in managing their children's behaviour and being solution-focused;
- increase in use of a common approach across sectors and disciplines;
- increased satisfactory resolution of neighbourhood disputes in the Community Safety Initiative (CSI) pilot sites;
- increased reporting of anti-social behaviour and crime in the CSI pilot sites;

- improved capacity among participating children and young people for dealing with conflict and managing problems;
- improved staff morale within participating organisations.

Consultation Stage

A two-month consultation process was undertaken by CDI in Spring 2010 in order to gather views and opinions regarding the introduction of RP training to Tallaght West. Those consulted included service agency management and policy-makers, front-line staff, teachers, An Garda Síochána and local residents. This consultancy work included:

- a number of seminars delivered by the Hull Centre for Restorative Practices in the UK and attended by service providers and community residents;
- the distribution and analysis of a questionnaire concerning the RP training programme to interested service agencies and community groups;
- the circulation of an RP newsletter to service agencies and community groups.

Training Stage

Training was coordinated by a part-time member of CDI staff and was delivered by trainers supplied by the United Kingdom branch of the IIRP (IIRPUK). Three levels of training were provided, which were as follows:

- **Stage 1: Restorative Practice in Neighbourhoods.** This awareness training is a one-day session introducing restorative concepts and the RP framework and how these can be applied in workplaces and neighbourhoods.
- **Stage 2: Upskilling.** This is a two-day session which provides the tools to organise restorative 'conferences' to repair broken or damaged relationships.
- **Stage 3: Training for Trainers.** This five-day course and follow-up observation of trainees delivering the training enables participants to become trainers in RP.

The timeframe for the roll-out of training was as follows:

- planning and piloting (June – October 2010);
- training roll out (November 2010 – May 2011);
- review, consolidation (May – October 2011).

Beginning in November 2010, training in Stage 1 and Stage 2 was delivered on a monthly basis during school terms. The first round of Training for Trainers began in June 2011, with nine local trainers achieving full accreditation by June 2012. CDI also designed their RP Programme to provide ongoing support to training participants in the implementation of RP approaches. All participants who took part in training were invited to engage in follow-up peer support through attendance at Communities of Practice (CoPs). In addition to peer support, it was intended that CoPs would help to maintain quality and fidelity in the application of RP throughout Tallaght West.

Trainees included local residents, both adults and young people, and people employed in local agencies and schools. Employees were drawn from a diversity of occupational backgrounds, including teachers (primary and secondary), school principals, childcare workers, mediators, early years' educators, An Garda Síochána, youth probation services, council employees, managers of childcare facilities, community workers and youth workers. The majority of the participants lived and worked in the Tallaght area.

Impacts of RP in Tallaght

The authors of the evaluation report (Fives *et al*, 2013) conclude that:

'The findings demonstrate the effectiveness of the RP programme for the management of conflict in Tallaght West. There were improvements in people's ability to deal with conflict in work, school, in the home, in the community and in interagency settings.'

Key Findings

- A restorative approach is being used frequently across a range of sectors in Tallaght West. 75% of those surveyed reported that they had experienced RP being used at work, home or in the community.
- For those who had undertaken RP training, there were significant improvements in their ability to manage conflict – 87% reported being better able to manage conflict and 82% found that they were better able to manage other difficulties by using a restorative approach.
- In terms of prevention, 43% of those surveyed reported experiencing a reduction in disputes, with the greatest gain made in the reduction of disputes at work (reported by 23% of those surveyed).
- Prevention of conflict was supported by the reported improvements in a variety of relationships. 61% of those surveyed reported that taking a restorative approach had improved relationships between service providers and service users. 47% reported improved relationships with their work colleagues as a result of using RP and an equal proportion of those surveyed (47%) said that relationships with their family members had improved through using RP. The lowest (yet still significant) gain in this respect was the reported improvement in relationships with neighbours (14%).
- Significantly, from a community safety point of view, 36% of those surveyed said that they were more willing to report crime and/or anti-social behaviour as a result of restorative approaches being employed across the community.

The evaluation of CDI's RP programme found that a number of schools had taken a whole-school approach to RP, which led to a number of young people stating that the previous two years in school had been the happiest in their lives.

Feedback

CDI have also had a large amount of feedback from people who have undertaken RP training about how it has helped in their work and their relationships. The following are a small sample of the stories collected by CDI over the first two years of the implementation of the Restorative Practice Programme:

'I felt the restorative approach would really allow me to help this young person who had been bullied. It was on my mind all weekend, but I had confidence in the process and believed it would be effective. I was right. The issue was resolved most respectfully. I could not have anticipated just how effective the process was going to be.'

[Secondary School Teacher]

'There are difficulties that cannot be resolved by restorative practice. It can't sort everything, but the RP approach helps me to understand both perspectives, not get caught up in the emotion, blaming and anger. RP has enabled me to hear the different perspectives, stand back from the conflict.'

[Volunteer]

'Being able to step out of the parental role enabled me to really listen to and understand my daughter. It gave me an empathy that was missing previously. I needed to leave my own emotions out of it. It allowed both of us to offload something.'

[Parent]

'Restorative approaches were used to manage disruptive behaviour in a youth group. The outcome was the group became self-regulating, managing their own ground rules and taking responsibility for how they participated. They got to say how they felt and also to hear how it was for the staff. A lot of the time, discussions are just about the behaviour and not about what underpins the behaviour. It was also really important that the process allowed the young person to hear and understand the experience of the staff.'

[Youth Worker]

Appendix 2: Terms of Reference for a Restorative Practices Team

Clear terms of reference will greatly assist and guide the work of an RP Team within an organisation or group. Terms of reference generally include statements on:

- what the group hopes to achieve;
- the role and responsibilities of the group and individual members;
- frequency of meetings;
- reporting procedures;
- how the work of the group will be managed;
- how the resources will be allocated, distributed and managed;
- how any potential conflicts will be addressed.

Completing Table A2.1 collectively will assist everyone to be clear about their role within the RP Team.

Table A2.1: Identifying and agreeing roles and responsibilities in RP Team

Responsibilities at RP Team meetings	Lead Role	Reporting to?
1. Organising and Chairing Meetings	Chairperson	RP Team
2. Planning RP Initiative	RP Team	Organisational Chief Executive Officer
3. Monitoring RP Initiative	RP Team	Organisational Chief Executive Officer
4. Evaluating RP Initiative	RP Team	Organisational Chief Executive Officer
5. Communicating Successes	Communications Officer	Chairperson
6. Other?		
7. Other?		

Appendix 3: Training of RP Trainers Application Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Job Title/Role (where applicable): _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please answer the following:

1. Describe your experience of working with groups.
2. What training or experience have you had which you think prepares you for delivering restorative practice training?
3. What is your motivation for applying to undertake this training?
4. Please provide any other information you believe is in support of your application.

Declaration:

I understand that part of both training and practising as an RP Trainer is the requirement to attend a regular two-hour Community of Practice.

I also agree that once accredited as an RP Trainer, I will deliver a minimum of **XX** days of training within (**name of unit or group**) over the subsequent 12 months.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

To be completed by your line manager (where applicable):

Name: _____

Address: _____

Job Title/Role _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

I am willing to support (**name**) in participating in the Restorative Practice Training of Trainers Programme. I understand that this will require (**name**) to undergo (**X days**) training. I also understand (**name**) will be required to attend a monthly two-hour Community of Practice. Once accredited as an RP Trainer, I authorise (**name**) to deliver a minimum of **XX** days of training within (**name of unit/group**) over the subsequent 12 months.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 4: Examples of Evaluation Questions

A: Questions that can be used pre- and post-training

1. How confident are you about **managing conflict**? *(please tick as appropriate)*

	Really poor	Poor	Average	OK	Good	Brilliant
At home						
In work						
In the community						

2. How confident are you about identifying **solutions in conflict situations**? *(please tick as appropriate)*

	Really poor	Poor	Average	OK	Good	Brilliant
At home						
In work						
In the community						

3. How do you rate **your skills in managing conflict**? *(please tick as appropriate)*

	Really poor	Poor	Average	OK	Good	Brilliant
At home						
In work						
In the community						

4. How do you rate **your skills in preventing and diminishing conflict**? *(please tick as appropriate)*

	Really poor	Poor	Average	OK	Good	Brilliant
At home						
In work						
In the community						

B: Questions that can be used post-training

Rate the following statements (*please tick as appropriate*)

As a result of restorative practice training ...	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Not applicable
I get on better with my neighbours							
I get on better with my work colleagues							
I get on better with my classmates							
I get on better with family members							
I get on better with my organisation's service users							
I feel I can manage conflict (in home, class, work, community) better							
I feel I can manage other problems (in home, class, work, community) better							
There are fewer disputes in my work/class/ neighbourhood							
I am more willing to challenge unacceptable behaviour in my community							

Appendix 5: Sample RP Fidelity Checklists

Adapted from Stowe (2012) and Van Ness (2002)

Event	Measures of Restorativeness	Absent	Somewhat	Adequate	Excellent	Learning/Action
RESTORATIVE CONVERSATION Describe the event below:	Extent to which both/all participants were able to express feelings					
	Extent to which both/all participants were able to have their say					
	Extent to which the interests of both/all participants were taken into consideration					
	Extent to which the conversation focused on finding a solution.					
	Extent to which a way forward which is acceptable to both/all participants was agreed and implemented					
RESTORATIVE CIRCLE Describe the event below (including number and types of participants):	Extent to which everyone in the circle could see everyone else					
	Extent to which participants were facilitated to express feelings					
	Extent to which everyone was facilitated to have their say					
	Extent to which the interests of participants were taken into consideration					
	Extent to which the conversation focused on finding a solution					
	Extent to which a way forward which is acceptable to all was agreed and implemented					

Event	Measures of Restorativeness	Absent	Somewhat	Adequate	Excellent	Learning/Action
RESTORATIVE MEETING Describe the event below (including number and types of participant):	Extent to which participants were facilitated to express feelings					
	Extent to which everyone was facilitated to have their say					
	Extent to which the interests of participants have been taken into consideration					
	Extent to which the conversation focused on finding a solution					
	Extent to which a way forward which is acceptable to all was agreed and implemented					
RESTORATIVE CONFERENCE Describe the event below (including number and types of participant):	Extent to which all those affected have been invited to take part in the process					
	Extent to which everyone's participation was informed and voluntary					
	Extent to which participants were facilitated to express feelings					
	Extent to which everyone was facilitated to have their say					
	Extent to which the interests of participants have been taken into consideration					
	Extent to which an apology, promise of restitution and change occurred					
	Extent to which the process focused on finding a solution					
	Extent to which a way forward which is acceptable to all was agreed and implemented.					

Appendix 6: Feedback Form Template

Have you used skills acquired during restorative practices (RP) training? Have you seen others using restorative skills? We would really appreciate any feedback you could give us by filling in the following form. We will use any information provided anonymously to:

- inform our ongoing learning;
- explain to others how RP works; and/or
- promote our RP initiative.

What happened?

How did using RP skills impact the situation?

Any other feedback about your use of RP skills?

Thank you for your feedback.