The link between HE & a Restorative Culture in Schools
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Restorative Practices (RP) in schools can take many forms and can be used in a variety of ways to achieve specific outcomes. These can range from full restorative conferencing through to mini chats, mediated restorative conversations, restorative circles, classroom conferences and casual conversations (Jansen & Matla, 2011).

The use of restorative practices in a school can have a deep effect on the whole school culture (Morrison, Blood & Thorsborne, 2005). Drewery (2014) reports that “in New Zealand, schools that embrace a whole-school approach have been found to do better on all measures, including suspensions and exclusions, as well as achievement statistics, than schools that used the practices for disciplinary and behaviour management purposes only” (p. 2).

A robust Health Education programme will complement and enhance any school that is working with Restorative Practices. The explicit teaching of relationship building, values and communication skills within a Health Education programme is the cornerstone to developing a restorative culture within a school. A strong Health programme which includes the teaching/exploring of values, interpersonal skills, resilience and social justice can lead to students having increased self-esteem. An increase in self-esteem has a strong correlation with improvement in academic performance which in turn fosters a further increase in self-esteem (Hayes & Fors, 1990). Further, research shows that those with higher self-esteem display less defensive and deviant behaviour (Gurney, 1987).

References: