



Handout | No Violence here

The story

You are members of a school community. Several cases of gender-based violence have occurred in recent weeks, for example sexist comments on the school Facebook page, people making jokes about a student who identifies as transgender, and a girl who was beaten by her boyfriend. You all want to make sure that there is no place for gender-based violence in your school.

For that reason, the school management, in response to claims by a number of students, has decided to draw up a policy against gender-based violence in the school. To begin with, you will work in separate groups:

- students nominated by the school community
- teachers, including school management
- parents.

There will also be a group of independent experts to support you in devising such a policy. The task of each group will be to develop a short statement (about 3-5 points) outlining the most important things to be included in a policy against gender-based violence. Each group should also write a short paragraph (or series of bullet points) on how occurrences of gender-based violence should be addressed. You will have about 30 minutes to do this, and after 15 minutes, you will be given the chance to consult with some 'independent experts'. The experts will invite each group for a meeting, and the group will have 3 minutes to present the outcomes of their work and discuss their recommendations with the experts.

Meeting schedule

- Welcome address and aims of the meeting
- Short presentations from each group (students, teachers and parents) – 3 minutes each
- Question and answer session: about 10 minutes
- Open discussion: 15 minutes (optional)
- Agreement on the policy guidelines for the policy paper: what should be included (list all items on the flipchart)
- Closure of the meeting

Restorative justice

Restorative justice can be used in all instances where something happens which causes harm to people, relationships, or the community.

The concept is based on 3 ideas:

- repair: violence causes harm, and restorative justice demands that the harm is repaired;
- encounter: the best way to determine how to repair the harm is to have the parties decide together and
- transformation: repair can cause fundamental changes in people, relationships and communities.

Restorative justice is a way of dealing with cases of disruption or violence by addressing not just the wrongdoing, but also the damage caused.

It maintains that the best way to do this is for all people concerned to meet and discuss the problem and to propose solutions.



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At such meetings:

- All parties are included (victims, perpetrators, and other people affected). The meeting should be facilitated by an impartial outsider
- Addressing the damage caused is an important part of any resolution
- The resolution must be agreed upon by all parties at the meeting

In practice, such a process can look like this:

There is a group of people nominated by the school community that facilitates a meeting, at which both victim and perpetrator are present.

Each side presents what happened and how they understand it.

The victim can suggest how they believe justice can be restored, which might involve making demands on the perpetrator to repair the situation.

Such a proposal can also come from the facilitator, but the victim has to be in agreement.

The perpetrator then needs to agree to the measures proposed to repair the harm.

The process of restoring justice is supervised by the facilitators or people nominated by the facilitators.

Restorative justice cannot be used in all instances of gender-based violence. Many types of gender-based violence constitute a crime and should be reported immediately to the law enforcement authorities, which should take legal action (which may involve restorative measures).

Based on the [Tutorial: Intro to Restorative Justice from The Centre for Justice & Reconciliation, a program of Prison Fellowship International](#)

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ROLE CARD: PARENTS

You are a group of parents at a school where there have been instances of gender-based violence. The school has decided to devise a policy against such violence, and you are in favour of such a move.

Your group's priorities are:

- The safety of your children is of the utmost importance
- The school should pay greater attention to respect for civic and family values among students
- You would like to have more influence on the teaching of so called 'controversial issues', such as LGBT

Prepare a short statement (about 3-5 points) outlining what you stand for and what you regard as the important things to be included in the policy against gender-based violence. Then write a short paragraph (or bullet points) on how occurrences of gender-based violence should be addressed.

You will have about 30 minutes for this task in your group. Half way through, after 15 minutes, you will be given the chance to consult with experts. You can use this to refine the points you wish to raise during the school meeting.

At the meeting, you will have 3 minutes to present your ideas and then discuss them with others. The meeting will be facilitated by a group of independent experts who will help to finalise the policy.

ROLE CARD: STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

You are a group of students who were nominated by the school community to help to devise a school policy against gender-based violence.

Your group's priorities:

- You are in favour of full gender expression: everyone has the right to be who they want, and this decision should be fully respected.
- LGBT+ people should be protected, and facilities should be created for transgender people, including gender-neutral toilets
- The values you would like to promote are: nonviolence, non-discrimination, tolerance, equality
- You want to make sure everyone feels safe at school, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation

Prepare a short statement (about 3-5 points) outlining what you stand for and what you regard as the most important things to be included in the final policy against gender-based violence. Then write a short paragraph (or bullet points) on how instances of gender-based violence should be addressed. You are in favour of restorative justice approach. You can read about this in the separate handout.

You will have about 30 minutes in total in your small group for this task. Half way through, after 15 minutes, you will be given the chance to consult with experts. You can use this to refine the points you wish to raise during the school meeting.

At the meeting, your group will have 3 minutes to present your ideas, and you can then discuss them with others. The meeting will be facilitated by the group of independent experts, who will help to finalise the policy.



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ROLE CARD: TEACHERS (INCLUDING SCHOOL MANAGEMENT)

You are a group of teachers and representatives of school management who have been selected by the school community to draw up a school policy against gender-based violence.

Your group's priorities:

- Student safety is of the utmost importance for you. The school should be free from violence, and students should feel that they are properly protected against violence, including knowing that measures will be taken when gender-based violence occurs.
- The school needs to put more effort into prevention of gender-based violence
- The values you would like to promote are: non-violence, non-discrimination, tolerance, equality

Prepare a short statement (about 3-5 points) outlining what you stand for and what you regard as the most important things to be included in the policy against gender-based violence.

Then write a short paragraph (or bullet points) on how instances of gender-based violence should be addressed. You are aware of the concept of restorative justice, but you are not sure if this is an appropriate response in cases of gender-based violence. You should discuss other ideas for tackling incidents of gender-based violence at school.

You will have about 30 minutes in total in your small group for this task. Half way through, after 15 minutes, you will be given the chance to consult with experts. You can use this to refine the points you wish to raise during the school meeting.

At the meeting, your group will have 3 minutes to present your ideas and you can then discuss them with others. The meeting will be facilitated by the group of independent experts who will help to finalise the policy.

ROLE CARD: EXPERTS

You are the group of experts which was invited to help the school draw up a policy against gender-based violence. Your task is to support the students, teachers and parents in drafting the policy and help them make sure it is as inclusive as possible.

You should make sure the policy includes:

- Measures to ensure the safety of all students, including LGBT+ people
- The promotion of such values as: non-violence, non-discrimination, tolerance, equality
- Provision for education on gender-based violence (prevention)
- Measures to be taken in case gender-based violence occurs (you are in favour of a restorative justice approach. You can read about it in the accompanying paper)

You will have about 15 minutes to discuss how you are going to support the groups. After this time, the groups may call you and ask for guidance.

After the preparation phase, you will facilitate the meeting with teachers, students and parents, which should result in the final policy guidelines for the policy statement, including the measures to be taken when gender-based violence occurs. You do not have to finalise the paper during the meeting.

