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Evaluation of the Restorative Practice Programme of the Childhood Development Initiative



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Restorative Practices
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2013
CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE



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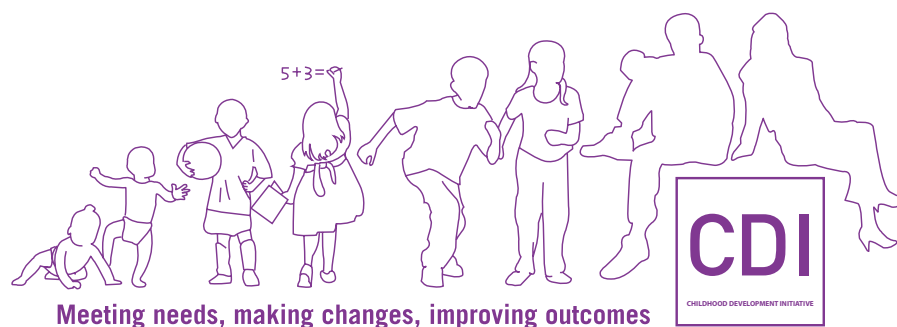
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2013

CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE



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Foreword by Ombudsman for Children

I am delighted to recommend this report to those who are interested in, and concerned about, children, young people, families and communities. As Ombudsman for Children, my focus is on ensuring that children and young people's rights underpin all processes that impact on them and that their voice is a central element of any decision-making which relates to their lives. Restorative Practice has been proven many times over to be an effective mechanism for increasing the chances of both these processes, shaping how we do our work.

This report is important for many reasons. It describes and evaluates an Irish approach, tailored for a disadvantaged community, that developed out of some core objectives regarding a desire to improve outcomes for children and families. Importantly, the approach was also shaped by CDI's recognition that to effect such change requires interventions at many levels and across a spectrum of target groups. So, this approach has been one of collaboration, interagency partnership, cross-generational work and, ultimately, a mechanism to bring together people from backgrounds and perspectives who might not otherwise get to spend time together, to learn together and to practise new skills together.

This emphasis on bringing people together cuts to the heart of an issue which repeatedly occurs for my office: the perspective that young people are 'the problem'. Here, they become part of the solution. The CDI Restorative Practice model recognises the strengths of young people and their families; it seeks to consolidate all that is good in communities like Tallaght West and it sets out to strengthen connections built on trust and respect.

This report gives us great confidence that restorative approaches, and the community-wide engagement supported by CDI, can offer us a better way forward – an approach that enables meaningful engagement and effective communication, and a model that can be replicated in many other communities and settings. I hope we all learn from it, are inspired by it and, ultimately, are better equipped to achieve our common objective of improving outcomes for children and families.

Emily Logan

Ombudsman for Children

CDI Response to the evaluation of the Restorative Practice Programme

The introduction of CDI's Restorative Practice (RP) Programme in Tallaght West was an important development that fulfilled a number of strategic objectives. It was instrumental in re-invigorating energy in relation to our Community Safety Initiative; it resulted in close engagement with a number of schools in the area; it provided the opportunity for a range of statutory, voluntary and community groups and individuals to train and learn together; and it offered a skill set and approach that aim to minimise conflict and maximise the capacity to find solutions.

Since the completion of this evaluation, the RP Programme has continued to grow and thrive. A DVD has been developed to support the training programme, links have been established with a Northern Irish network and CDI has led the establishment of an all-Ireland strategic forum to support and sustain restorative practices. We continue to deliver training both across Tallaght West and more widely, and have increasingly focused on quality assurance and supporting fidelity to restorative principles. We have launched a fully restorative secondary school and are well on the way to a number of other organisations and settings being named as working from this approach. In addition, our panel of trainers continue to develop their expertise and ability to deliver high-quality training and offer appropriate and accessible supports.

CDI intends to continue to drive restorative approaches at a number of levels. In terms of practice, we will continue to deliver training, support self-sustaining mechanisms for this and offer ongoing engagement in relation to quality issues. At a strategic level, we are, as always, committed to ensuring that the learning from this evaluation is disseminated effectively and that attention is given to the implications for policy, practice and professional training. Through the All-Ireland Restorative Practice Strategic Forum, we will work alongside key stakeholders to promote the approach as one which is effective, provides value for money and has been demonstrated as being impactful for many target groups.

We are grateful to the members of the Restorative Practices Management Committee, which has overseen these developments in Tallaght West. The time, energy and enthusiasm that so many have brought to this process has been central to its establishment in the community and is also reflective of the commitment and passion that so many have for this approach.

This evaluation confirms our experience of restorative practices – as an approach that enables effective management of conflict, improves individual and organisational capacity to manage difficulties, and offers the opportunity for a common approach and collective language. We are proud of the work undertaken to date and committed to further supporting the integration of these principles across a range of sectors.

Joe Horan

Chair

CDI Board

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The research team would like to thank the following for their time, effort and goodwill throughout this study:

- the participants who took part in interviews and completed questionnaires as part of this study, including young people, adult residents and staff of various organisations;
- staff in the school and youth service who made it possible to complete two case studies;
- the staff of CDI, for all their help in organising data collection and finalising the report;
- all those who took part in a Reflection Group and who responded to and gave their thoughts on the first draft of the report;
- CDI's Expert Advisory Committee for their comments on the first draft of this report.

We would also like to acknowledge The Atlantic Philanthropies and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs whose generous support made this evaluation possible.

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Executive Summary

This report presents the key findings of an independent evaluation, undertaken by the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre at the National University of Ireland, Galway, of the Restorative Practice Programme, part of the Childhood Development Initiative's (CDI) Community Safety Initiative (CSI). The study comprises (i) a process study evaluation of programme implementation under the headings of programme utilisation, programme organisation and programme fidelity; and (ii) an outcomes study evaluation of programme impact on participants' work, lives, organisations and family, and also the wider impact on community building and collaborative action.

Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice (RP) is *'the science of restoring and developing social capital, social discipline, emotional well-being and civic participation through participatory learning and decision-making'* (Wachtel, 2005, p. 86). Restorative programmes promote dialogue between wrongdoers and harmed persons.

CDI initiated the RP training programme in Tallaght West, which constitutes the four communities of Brookfield, Fettercairn, Killinarden and Jobstown. Despite many positive developments in the past two decades, the area is highly vulnerable in terms of socio-economic disadvantage. It has a young population, a high rate of public housing, a relatively weak social class profile and a high rate of joblessness (CSO, 2011).

The RP training programme as implemented by CDI had a number of overarching targets to be achieved by the end of 2011, in particular relating to participation of young people, residents and professionals working in Tallaght West in the three levels of RP training: Phase 1, awareness raising; Phase 2, facilitation skills training; and Phase 3, training for trainers.

Methodology

The evaluation aims were as follows:

- Describe and locate the training in its theoretical, policy and service, geographical and socio-economic context, and explain how it came to be rolled out in Tallaght West.
- Assess the implementation of the training programme, paying particular attention to recruitment, implementation structures and fidelity.
- Identify the self-reported effects of training on participants' work, lives, organisations and family life (where each is appropriate).
- Reflect the views of stakeholders involved.
- Assess the wider impacts of the programme in areas such as community building and collaboration.
- Identify factors contributing to or detracting from the use of RP.
- Make recommendations for the future roll-out of RP training in Ireland.

Quantitative data were collected from surveys completed prior to and after training. At the pre-training stage, the sample size was 75; at the post-training stage, the sample size was 130. The methods used to collect qualitative data included individual/group interviews and observations. Participants included 11 members of the Management Committee and 9 who had completed Phase 3 training. External stakeholders who participated in data collection included representatives from the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) and the All-Ireland Restorative Practice Strategic Forum.

Findings

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. The findings also demonstrate the need for an effective approach in Tallaght West to manage conflict situations. While conflict was most frequently experienced in work/school and in the home, people believed their capacity to cope with conflict was poorest in the community and in an interagency setting.

The RP Programme was well delivered by CDI. In the main, progress was made towards the attainment of targets for recruitment, the programme was well organised and was delivered with fidelity. It was well received by participants and participants could see its value. The areas where improvements are needed include ensuring more residents are recruited to the programme and that the delivery of the programme enables non-professionals to feel included.

The programme had a positive impact on the use of RP, in particular in work and at school, but also in the home. RP skills were not used as frequently in other settings, in particular in the neighbourhood/community and in an interagency setting. Although RP skills were used less frequently in the community and interagency setting, the programme had a positive impact on the capacity to manage conflicts and to find solutions to conflict, in particular in the wider community and in an interagency setting. There was an increase in the percentage of those who rated themselves 'moderately high' or 'high' for managing conflict in work/school (from 49% to 61%), in the home (from 38% to 48%), in the community (from 16% to 35%) and in interagency settings (from 9% to 37%). In addition, after taking part in training, the percentage of those who experienced conflict everyday decreased with respect to conflict in the workplace (from 60% to 37%), in the home (from 10% to 5%) and in the community (from 3% to 2%).

The programme also had a positive impact on interagency collaboration and the development of a shared approach to conflict management at an interagency level. There was an increase in the percentage who 'strongly agreed' that their service had well-established links with other organisations that deliver front-line services (from 12% to 46%), that their service regularly referred their service users to other services (from 8% to 36%), that their service trains front-line staff to work directly with front-line staff in other organisations (from 3% to 16%), that their service worked with other organisations to integrate services (from 9% to 33%) and that their service shares information about service users (with the latter's consent) with other organisations (from 7% to 28%).

Recommendations

- A key recommendation from this study is that, when conflicts arise, every young person involved should be worked with in a restorative way. An overarching goal of the RP Programme was the creation of a restorative community. That requires a consistency of approach around how authority figures interact with young people. A consistent approach within schools requires that all teachers work with pupils in a restorative way, while a consistent approach across organisations requires the use of a 'shared language' in, for example, schools, community education, child welfare, youth services and juvenile justice, as well as between parents and their children.
- For that reason, CDI's commitment to the implementation of the RP Programme should be maintained. In particular, CDI should continue to deliver the programme and also to support those who have been trained and those who have been trained as trainers.
- Further consideration should be given to how improvements can be made in recruiting residents and also adapting the content of the programme so as to be more inclusive for non-professionals. Trainees should be given more support on how to apply RP in different situations, in particular, by focusing on skills that can be used within the home and in the neighbourhood. Also consideration should be given to the appropriate role of the RP approach in dealing with neighbourhood conflict.
- One of the programme objectives was to support the development of trainer capacity in both Tallaght West and more widely. It is recommended that CDI extend the programme to other agencies and groups with a child or youth remit and consider extending the programme to other areas.
- Managerial support was an important factor explaining why people participated in the programme and also why the programme had positive impacts at an interagency level. It is important that in the future there is continued buy-in and engagement from managers.

- Given the high levels of workplace conflict identified here and the positive impact of the RP Programme in reducing workplace conflict, organisations should be supported to implement the RP Programme with staff, including such initiatives as starting staff meetings with a 'restorative circle,' reference to RP in individual and organisational work plans, and changes to professional practice in managing challenging behaviour, particularly in classrooms, childcare facilities and youth services.
- As they are key outcomes for the programme, in the future CDI should monitor school attendance and disciplinary measures, as well as crime and anti-social behaviour rates, or these data should be monitored internally by the relevant organisation. Support in identifying specific outcomes and appropriate monitoring mechanisms should be provided to all participating organisations.
- CDI should continue to monitor the impacts of the programme over time. Further investigation is needed on whether the programme has become embedded in workplaces, schools and youth services, in homes and communities, and in the interagency setting, and also whether the impacts of the programme have been sustained.
- To ensure fidelity, CDI should continue to provide follow-up support to trainers and trainees, and Communities of Practice (COPs) meetings should continue to play an important role here. Greater effort is required to ensure that those who have attended training but who have not trained as trainers remain engaged with CDI and with the COPs, and in that way receive the support they require.



Chapter 1: Introduction and Study Context



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1.1 Introduction

Restorative practice (RP) is a means of dealing with conflict and offending behaviour which emphasizes dialogue, respect and empowerment. The practice has gained in international appeal over the past decade in particular and has been adopted in many settings. In Ireland, the Children Act 2001 made provision for the application of RP approaches with young people and there has been positive feedback regarding the benefits of the approach (Kenny, 2008; Wilson, 2011). RP programmes emphasize dialogue between wrongdoers and harmed persons, bringing both parties together to reflect on and discuss what has occurred. Through this interaction, it is intended that harmed persons feel empowered to discuss the effects that the misbehaviour has had on their lives, while wrongdoers are given the opportunity to explain why they behaved inappropriately. The objective is that, by pursuing this approach, trusting relationships are developed, harmed persons feel empowered and there is usually more understanding for the wrongdoer and their behaviours. It is theorised that the wrongdoer will be less likely to re-offend, having become aware of the personal impact of his or her actions on the harmed person. There have also been initiatives to develop 'restorative communities' whereby people are encouraged to work with each other to overcome their day-to-day difficulties in positive ways. Instead of blaming, efforts are made to heal relationships and to 'reintegrate' people back into the community (Watchel, 2005).

In 2010, the Childhood Development Initiative (CDI) developed an RP programme, with the aim of developing a 'restorative community' in Tallaght West. The initiative was run by CDI as part of its Community Safety Initiative (CSI) (*see Reddy et al, 2013, for an evaluation of the CSI*). A major element of the CSI was RP training, which was delivered to a range of stakeholders in Tallaght West including staff from a number of agencies and adult and youth residents. The training consisted of three levels: awareness-raising training, facilitation skills training and training for trainers. The RP Programme was also intended to develop RP Trainer capacity in Tallaght West and across Ireland, and to support and promote participation in a learning environment which enables reflection on and sharing of the learning from the implementation of the RP approach.

This report describes the RP Programme and its context, and outlines the findings of the programme's evaluation. The research was carried out by the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre (CFRC) at the National University of Ireland, Galway. The study design combined a process study and an outcomes study, comprising both qualitative and quantitative data. The process study evaluated programme implementation under the headings of programme utilisation, programme organisation and programme fidelity. The outcomes study evaluated the impact of the programme both on participants' work, lives, organisations and family, and also the wider impact on community building and collaborative action. The process study (evaluation of programme implementation) and the outcomes study (evaluation of programme impacts) were integrated in a mixed-methods approach to help identify what factors contributed to or detracted from the use of RP.

Structure of report

The report is structured as follows:

- The remainder of **Chapter 1** provides an **overview of the RP Programme and the evaluation study**. Section 1.2 provides an overview of themes in academic literature related to RP. In Section 1.3, the geographical, socio-economic and policy context for the initiative is described. This is followed, in Section 1.4, by an overview of the CDI Restorative Practice Programme, including its origins, early development and targets. Finally, Section 1.5 describes the design and methodology adopted in this evaluation.
- In **Chapter 2**, the findings of the **process study on programme implementation** are reported and presentation of the findings is organised according to the study research questions.
- In **Chapter 3**, the findings of the **outcomes study on programme impacts** are reported and the findings are also presented in response to the relevant research questions.
- **Chapter 4** discusses the **overall findings**.

- **Chapter 5** summarises the **main conclusions** from the evaluation and makes **recommendations** for practice arising from the study.

The report concludes with a list of **References** used to inform the report, following by a number of **Appendices** detailing various aspects of the evaluation process.

1.2 Review of Literature on Restorative Practice

In this section, a review of academic literature on Restorative Practice (RP) is provided. It begins with an overview of the RP approach and then goes on to explore some of the advantages and challenges in implementing the RP Programme in Tallaght West.

The Restorative Practice approach

The literature on restorative approaches is diverse and many definitions of these concepts have been advanced, with different disciplines drawing on a range of terms to describe restorative approaches (Nelsen, 1996). Some of the main features of restorative approaches include respect, dialogue, reflection, interest and recognition of the needs of others (Hopkins, 2003; Gellin, 2011). Restorative Justice Online (2012) defines **restorative justice** as *'a theory of justice that emphasises repairing the harm caused or revealed by criminal behaviour. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes that include all stakeholders'*. The International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) defines **restorative practice** as *'the science of restoring and developing social capital, social discipline, emotional well-being and civic participation through participatory learning and decision-making'* (Wachtel, 2005, p. 86). According to its website, the IIRP (2012) distinguishes between the terms *restorative practices* and *restorative justice*: *'We view restorative justice as a subset of restorative practices. Restorative justice is reactive, consisting of formal or informal responses to crime and other wrongdoing after it occurs'*. The IIRP's definition of restorative practices also includes *'the use of informal and formal processes that precede wrongdoing, those that proactively build relationships and a sense of community to prevent conflict and wrongdoing'*. The aim of restorative practices is therefore to develop community and manage conflict by building relationships and repairing harm. The focus of the RP Programme, and of this evaluation, is restorative practice.

Restorative practices have their origins primarily among the Maori people of New Zealand, whose conflict resolution strategies emphasize ideals such as participation, listening and respect. The strategies evolved when members of the Maori community were dissatisfied with the ways that their young people were dealt with by the criminal justice system (Hopkins, 2003). In contrast to punishments for law-breaking such as incarceration, which is enshrined in the legal system, the Maori preferred a different approach, where the community worked together to reintegrate the young person back into the community (Wearmouth *et al*, 2007). This was the basis for restorative techniques such as family group conferencing.

Wachtel (2005, p. 91) contends that the following notion lies at the heart of restorative approaches: *'When authorities do things with people, whether reactively, to deal with crisis, or proactively, in the normal course of school or business, the results are almost always better'* (see also McCold and Wachtel, 2003). Braithwaite and Mugford (1994, p. 141) make the point that identities are a social crucible – the vision that a wrongdoer holds of himself as a 'tough guy' or that harmed persons have of him as a 'mindless hooligan' are challenged, altered and recreated. While degradation ceremonies are about the sequence 'disapproval – degradation – exclusion', reintegration ceremonies are about the sequence 'disapproval – non-degradation – inclusion'. The authors argue that countries with low levels of crime, such as Japan, adopt this approach, while countries with high levels of crime, such as the USA, focus on stigmatising the criminal.

The concept of 'restorative practice' has gained in prominence in the literature over the past decade in particular (Hopkins, 2003, p. 11) and in the UK, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa restorative approaches are well established (see, for example, Shaw and Wierenga, 2002; McCluskey *et al*, 2008).

Studies have examined RP approaches in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. For example, there is evidence that RP has been adopted in the Greater Shankill Alternatives in West Belfast to alleviate tensions between Unionist and Nationalist factions (McEvoy, 2006). Wilson's (2011) evaluation of the RP programme in Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, shows that strides have been made towards advancing RP in schools. The relationship between the school principal and other staff members had been strengthened and the staff felt that they were able to engage more with children from disadvantaged and vulnerable backgrounds. Training strategies that were utilised in Dun Laoghaire were seen as beneficial for advancing restorative approaches. Out of a total school staff of 23, 13 were trained, along with 8 Special Needs Assistants (SNAs). This meant that there was a greater opportunity to engage with different staff members and instil a more widespread RP ethos among staff. Wilson also identified evidence of a number of developments in Dun Laoghaire promoted by a local education centre to further advance RP, including the use of RP in supporting the organic development of schools, giving people a voice, promoting common themes, and interdisciplinary and multi-agency working in favour of enhancing the provision offered to failing children and young people (Wilson, 2011, p. 23).

There are many different types of restorative techniques and the diversity of case studies on how they have been applied is testimony to this. These include, for example, family group conferencing, restorative circles and mediation (Hopkins, 2003). In social work, family group conferencing and family decision-making are widely used techniques that empower the extended family to meet privately, sometimes without child and youth professionals being present, and talk about their children's futures. According to Gellin (2011, p. 4), '*Mediation is a voluntary method of conflict management in which an impartial outside party, the mediator, helps the parties of the argument, through a particular mediation process, to come to an agreement that satisfies the arguing parties*'. Mediation is also confidential and it entails no punishments (*ibid*). Commenting on these approaches, Wachtel (1999) places them along a continuum, which ranges from 'informal' to 'formal.' He argues that some of the most informal types of restorative practices can include statements or questions that cause people to reflect on their behaviours and how they affect other people. More 'formal' approaches include group conferencing or restorative circles.

The IIRP (2010, pp. 4-5) defines five main strands of restorative practices. The strands are placed on a continuum ranging from the least to the most structured and formal, as follows:

- *Affective Statements*, which are brief comments about how others were impacted by the person's behaviour.
- *Affective Questions*, which ask the wrongdoer questions like who was affected, how they were affected, etc.
- *Small Impromptu Conferences*, which is where a few people are brought together to talk about the incident, its impact and what to do next.
- *Groups or Circles*, which allow everyone to have some say in what should happen as a result of the wrongdoing.
- *Formal Conferences*, which involve more planning and preparation and tends to be more structured and complete.

Wachtel (2005, p. 84) defines a **restorative community** as a place where '*people regularly express their feelings to one another, including anger, in a safe and respectful way, and where conflict usually reaches quick resolution*'. Essentially, his vision of a restorative community is one where people regularly confront each other about their behaviours and '*where wrongdoers reflect on what they have done, whom they have harmed and how they have harmed them*' (*ibid*). People express their emotions and their feelings about each other in a safe, respectful and calm environment. In this community, families are supported, particularly at times of crisis, and community members initiate 'circles' when they feel that they need to. Overall, in a community like this, people work with each other to overcome their difficulties in very positive ways. Instead of reproaching each other and apportioning culpability, efforts are made to heal relationships and to 'reintegrate' people back into the community.

Advantages of implementing Restorative Practice

There exist numerous case studies of how different types of restorative techniques have been successfully applied in schools, such as circle techniques and mediation (Curry, 1997). According to some authors, implementing restorative techniques can significantly improve the attitudes of students towards learning in many schools, as well as boosting their morale. In contrast to this, enforcing punishments in the classroom for misbehaviour can be detrimental to the self-esteem of individual students and does not encourage them to take responsibility for their actions (IIRP, 2009). With restorative approaches, conflicts and misbehaviours are usually perceived as 'learning situations' as the practitioner supports the young person towards finding solutions regarding his/her misbehaviour (Wearmouth *et al*, 2007; Gellin, 2011).

The IIRP (2009) gives empirical examples of how restorative approaches have improved school life in US cities. The West Philadelphia High School had approximately 913 students in 2008/2009, 27% of whom had special needs. The school was located in a socio-economically deprived area and there were numerous reports of violent incidents between students. In 2008/2009, 'circles' were implemented in the school which led to a 52% decrease in violent acts and serious incidents compared to data from 2006/2007, and also reductions in the number of suspensions (IIRP, 2009, pp. 6-7). Three research studies conducted over 7 years with 4,000 'delinquent and at-risk youth' showed offending rates being reduced by more than half (IIRP, 2009, p. 35). In addition, Wachtel (2011) shows that 'circles' were used very effectively at the University of Vermont after a student committed suicide on campus. Members of the student body organised 'circles' to help others to deal with the tragedy. Research from Britain also suggests that RP improves relationships between teachers and students and that it enhances school culture (Howard, 2009). Significantly, IIRP also gives examples indicating that RP may help to improve pupils' grades in school and lower rates of early school-leaving.

Efforts made to transform the city of Hull into a 'restorative city' have been well documented (Mirsky, 2009, p. 1). Hull is one of the UK's most deprived cities. It once had a prosperous fishing industry, but this has disappeared. According to Nigel Richardson, the director of Children and Young People's Services in Hull, this led to 'low aspirations and self-esteem' and many families are poverty stricken in the region (cited in Mirsky, 2009, p. 1). In Hull, restorative approaches have been successfully implemented in some primary and high schools. For example, Collingwood High School was given Ofsted's lowest ranking before 2004 since it was classified as a school which 'needed special measures;' however, within two years of the implementation of restorative training, it was ranked as 'outstanding' by Ofsted (MacDonald, 2009, p. 5).

Examples are also given in the literature of how restorative techniques like mediation and conferencing are used to solve conflicts between neighbours and within families. For example, Gellin and Joensuu (2011) discuss two projects implemented in Finland: the VERSO school mediation project and the KOTILO neighbourhood mediation project, both of which utilise mediation techniques. The results of these projects are impressive: in the KOTILO project, mediation has been used successfully to address conflicts which developed between neighbours after incidents occurred like name-calling, gossip, blackmailing, cyber-bullying, destruction of property and physical violence. Gellin and Joensuu (2011) also give examples of how RP has been successful in solving conflicts between neighbours.

Challenges in implementing Restorative Practice

Many factors can affect the implementation of restorative approaches, in particular, people's attitudes towards RP (Blood and Thorsborne, 2006). Mirsky and Wachtel (2011) also report that teachers are often reticent about adopting RP in classrooms. A number of studies (Blood and Thorsborne, 2005; Morrison, *et al*, 2005) suggest that achieving staff 'buy-in' to restorative projects is central to effective implementation, but can be problematic. Some teachers fear that greater amounts of time could be taken away from teaching other subjects which they need to focus on in order to complete the curriculum. Other teachers worry that they do not possess the requisite mediation skills that they need to resolve conflicts between students. Mirsky and Wachtel (2011) discuss ways in which these concerns are responded to by those leading the implementation of restorative practice in the USA: first, by using restorative practices in the classroom, teachers will have to spend less time maintaining order in the classroom; and second, although teachers are not trained as counsellors, the training provides them with tools to make students more engaged with academic subjects.

According to Blood and Thorsborne (2005, p. 3), the demands of managing the change process must be addressed because most change initiatives fail because innovators fail to listen to people's concerns and *'those expected to change are not actively involved in the change process'*. The authors argue that resistance to the implementation of a restorative approach in schools is to be expected, in part because staff have different views on the role of educators and the purpose of discipline, and also because some staff will have felt unsupported in the past concerning other initiatives. So as to successfully implement a restorative approach in schools, innovators must gain commitment from others, develop a shared vision, develop a responsive and effective practice, develop a 'whole school' approach and, finally, integrate the innovation into organisational activities (*ibid*).

Hopkins (2003) contends that restorative approaches need to be incorporated into the school's curriculum and that school staff should form relationships with the staff in other schools where RP is also utilised. This strengthens the bonds between the personnel at different schools and can bolster the commitment of staff to RP. In addition, staff can share stories with each other about problems that they may have encountered during implementation and give advice on how to deal with these problems, should they arise in other school settings.

Gellin (2011) notes that while there have been many positive changes to the culture and atmosphere in schools in Finland as a result of restorative training, such change is often slow to occur. For example, some teachers were doubtful about mediation and were not as quick to use it in the classroom as others. This can adversely affect discipline policies in schools as teachers can end up giving 'mixed messages' to children and teenagers about their behaviour. In turn, this can adversely affect the morale among young people at the school and lead to tensions between members of the teaching staff about disciplinary techniques that should be used in different situations.

1.3 Context for the development of the Restorative Practice initiative in Tallaght West

The Prevention and Early Intervention Programme (PEIP) in Ireland, which is jointly funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) and The Atlantic Philanthropies, comprises three sites (CDI, youngballymun, and Preparing for Life). It was set up with 'the objective of testing innovative ways of delivering services and early interventions for children and young people, including the wider family and community settings' (DCYA, 2011).

The Childhood Development Initiative (CDI) is based in Tallaght West. It arose from the common concerns and aspirations of a group of 23 individuals and organisations in the community. The key elements of the initiative include innovative partnerships, the science of evidence-based practice and rigorous evaluation, and a focus on the identified needs of children and families. A partnership was agreed between Government and The Atlantic Philanthropies and the consortium's first piece of work was a needs analysis entitled *How Are Our Kids?* (Axford *et al*, 2004). One of the priorities agreed based on this research was the establishment and incorporation of CDI in 2007.

CDI's programmes, designed and delivered between 2007-2011 for Tallaght West, include the Early Years Programme; Doodle Den Literacy Programme for Senior Infant Children; Mate-Tricks Pro-social Behaviour Programme for 9 and 10 year-olds; the Healthy Schools Programme, a whole-school approach; Early Intervention Speech and Language Therapy; Safe and Healthy Place Initiative; Restorative Practice Programme; Quality Enhancement Programme; and the Community Safety Initiative. These various programmes are both evidence-informed and manualised, and are delivered through existing structures and services. CDI's commitments include promoting quality, fidelity, value for money and added value. These programmes are rigorously and independently evaluated and CDI is committed to sharing the learning and experiences from Tallaght West in order to inform and shape future policy, practice, training and curriculum development.

The RP training programme was developed by CDI as part of its Community Safety Initiative (CSI) in Tallaght West. In the map of Tallaght West (*see Figure 1*), the four communities targeted by the CSI intervention are highlighted – Brookfield, Fettercairn, Killinarden and Jobstown.¹ Although Tallaght is part of the wider Dublin suburban area, in its own right it is the third largest urban area in the Republic of Ireland. At the time of the 2011 Census, the population of Tallaght West was 28,138, which represented an increase of 4,196 from the time of the 2006 Census (CSO, 2011). The 1990s brought

¹ Cited by *South Dublin County History*, available at: www.southdublinhistory.ie

significant change to the area. This included the opening of a large retail space (the Square Shopping Centre) and a third-level technical institute (ITT Dublin), and the re-location of South Dublin County Council and the Adelaide and Meath Hospital to Tallaght. Other more recent developments include the arrival of the Luas tram line, the re-opening of the County Library and the opening of the Civic Theatre, the Big Picture and Rua Red Arts Centre.

Figure 1: Map of Tallaght West



Despite these positive developments, Tallaght West is designated as a socially and economically disadvantaged area and was granted RAPID (Revitalising Areas by Planning Investment and Development) status in 2001. Between 2006 and 2011, the overall population of Tallaght West grew by 17.5% to 28,138 individuals. In this area, there is a larger percentage aged 14 or under (31%) than in the State as a whole (20%) and a larger percentage living in local authority rented housing (43%) than in the State as a whole (8%). The unemployment rate in Tallaght West for those aged 15 and over (36%) was more than double the national rate (15%). Finally, although overall crime rates for Tallaght fell between 2007 and 2008, there was an increase in public disorder incidents and complaints about anti-social behaviour.²

Policy and legislative context

Preventing children from becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour is recognised as a basic children's right by the Children Act 2001, which provided a new framework for the development of the juvenile justice system in Ireland. The central thrust of the Act was to move the juvenile justice and child welfare systems from residential and custodial care to care in the community. The Act seeks to provide two separate routes or pathways for dealing with offending and non-offending children. A diversionary and restorative justice approach is provided for offending children, while for non-offending children, the Act allows for a care and protection approach. The Act also calls for better coordination between families, schools and the wider community, and it accepts that responding to crime and anti-social behaviour requires improving young people's opportunities and prospects (White, 2003). Restorative justice has been utilised by An Garda Síochána since the introduction of the Children Act 2001, which enshrined restorative justice in Irish law (Kenny, 2008).

² Chief Superintendent Manley reporting to South Dublin County Joint Policing Committee (SDCJPC, 15 May 2009).

Furthermore, recent legislation in the Republic of Ireland shows that the Government recognises the importance of engagement with the community in developing policies and strategies targeted at crime and anti-social behaviour. The public reform agenda of the current Government also emphasizes both ensuring greater productivity and increasing collaboration. The An Garda Síochána Act 2005 emphasizes the importance of crime prevention as a mandate of local authorities and also the adoption of a partnership approach. It provides for the establishment of Local Policing Forums, which are designed to encourage the involvement of all relevant stakeholders around crime and anti-social behaviour issues. In 2010, it was decided to pilot the use of RP by An Garda Síochána and Tallaght was chosen as one of the pilot sites. This was in part due to the work already being driven by CDI. Local authorities are now required by the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 to draft anti-social behaviour strategies that coordinate services and adopt a preventive approach. At the local level, South Dublin County Council (SDCC) aims to encourage collaboration between statutory and voluntary groups and works to build the capacity of local groups to engage in community action (SDCC, 2010).

Schools are an important setting for the implementation of the RP programme in Tallaght West. The Education (Welfare) Act 2000³ sets out the law in relation to discipline in State primary and post-primary schools. Under the Act, the Board of Management of the school is obliged to draw up a code of behaviour for students stating the disciplinary rules and procedures. Codes are drawn up with input from teachers, parents and the Educational Welfare Officer. As seen in Section 1.2, strides have been made towards advancing RP in schools in Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin (Wilson, 2011). In 2009, the Southside Partnership's Restorative Practices Network was established, promoting links between schools, Home School Community Liaison Coordinators, School Completion Coordinators and An Garda Síochána. The vision included school completion, support for 'at-risk students' in both primary and secondary schools, and support for teachers, parents and guardians (Wilson, 2011). A restorative approach was also adopted in the North West of Ireland: in September 2004, a pilot programme in Restorative Justice in Schools was begun in six schools in Donegal and Sligo. The initiative was supported by the Health Service Executive (HSE), North West (O'Connor, n.d.).

1.4 Overview of development of the Restorative Practice Programme

This section provides an overview of the development of the Restorative Practice (RP) Programme by the Childhood Development Initiative (CDI), looking at its origins and early development, its targets, and then the consultation phase and the training phase in its development. The purpose of this discussion is to fulfil one of the key aims of the evaluation, namely to explain how the RP Programme came to be rolled out in Tallaght West.

The Childhood Development Initiative (CDI) and Restorative Practice

In developing this initiative, 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 phases 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.

³ Available at: www.irishstatutebook.ie/2000/en/act/pub/0022/print.htm#sec1

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 authority figures interacted with young people, whether they were 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 the Community Safety Initiative were key factors in participants' decision to become members of the Management Committee. Their 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* (2011a, 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. Phase 2) and a further 20 participants would have completed the 'training for trainers' level (i.e. Phase 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.

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) 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 will be 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 which 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 phase

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;⁴
- 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 phase

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

- Phase 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.
- Phase 2: *Upskilling* – This is a 2-day session which provides the tools to organise restorative ‘conferences’ to repair broken or damaged relationships.
- Phase 3: *Training for Trainers* – This 5-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 Phase 1 and Phase 2 was delivered on a monthly basis during school terms. The first round of Training for Trainers began in June 2011, with 9 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) meetings. 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.

⁴ Attendees included service agency management and front-line staff, and residents from both CSI pilot sites, as well as from the MacUilliam Estate and the wider Tallaght West area.

1.5 Methodology and Study Design

This section provides an overview of the methodology and study design for this evaluation, including the evaluation aims, the study design and research questions, sample size, data collection and ethical issues.

Evaluation aims and study design

The aim of the evaluation was to assess the implementation of RP training and its value to recipients. The specific objectives of the study (NUI Galway, 2011) were to:

- describe and locate the training in its theoretical, policy and service, geographical and socio-economic context, and explain how it came to be rolled out in Tallaght West;
- assess the implementation of the training programme, paying particular attention to:
 - the processes of recruitment into the training programme;
 - the implementation structures put in place;
 - fidelity to the underpinning theoretical model.
- identify the self-reported effects of training on participants' work, lives, organisations, family life (where each is appropriate);
- reflect the views of stakeholders involved;
- assess the wider impacts of the programme in areas such as community building and collaboration;
- identify factors contributing to or detracting from the use of RP;
- make recommendations for the future roll-out of RP training in Ireland.

The evaluation design combined a process study (an evaluation of programme implementation) and an outcomes study (an evaluation of programme impacts).

The process study was to answer the following three research questions:

1. What was the extent and nature of programme take-up and what was the extent to which the intended target population received the intended services? (programme utilisation)
2. How well was the programme organised and run? (programme organisation)
3. What was the extent to which the programme was implemented in line with the model as specified in the programme's Business Plan and were its service delivery and support functions consistent with programme design? (programme fidelity)

The data employed in the process study were both qualitative (interviews and observations) and quantitative (analysis of implementation data). The study was formative as it is possible for findings to inform future development of the RP Programme. The study was also summative as the findings will evaluate how successful programme implementation was.

The outcomes study was to answer the following research question on programme impacts:

4. Was the programme successful in creating improvements in outcomes for participants and for the wider community?

The data employed in the outcomes study were both qualitative (interviews and observations) and quantitative (pre- and post-training surveys). The survey data were collected prior to the training and then again after the training, and as such they make possible a quantitative estimate of programme impact.

The two studies were combined in an explanatory mixed-methods design to help answer the fifth research question, which explored the **reasons for the observed outcomes** or the predictors of response to intervention:

5. What factors contributed to or detracted from the use of Restorative Practice?

Process study data were used to expand on and find plausible reasons for outcomes study findings. The mixed-methods approach was used to help identify what factors contributed to or detracted from the use of RP. In particular, the mixed-methods approach evaluated how the quality of programme implementation related to programme impacts.

Sample size and recruitment

Participants were recruited from a database of 470 people who had taken part in the RP training and who had given full contact details to CDI. This database also included CDI staff and the Management Committee of the RP Programme.

CDI aimed to attract participants to the programme from residents, NGOs, local service providers and statutory agencies. As of March 2012, there were 630 programme participants on CDI's database. Of the 470 programme participants available for contact by the research team, 123 had also gone on to complete Phase 2 training and 11 had gone on to complete Phase 3 training.

Qualitative data collection: Participants

The methods used to collect qualitative data included individual/group interviews and observations. Table 1 presents the profile of participants in interviews. Observations were also conducted in a secondary school and at training sessions.

Table 1: Study participants' sectors (qualitative data)

Interviews	n
Post-primary school staff	12
Post-primary students	8
Primary school staff	4
Child care staff	7
Residents	3
An Garda Síochána/Probation	4
County Council	3
Foróige staff	8
Foróige participants	8
Other community facility/service	6
External (All Ireland RP Forum)	7
CDI staff	3
Total interviewed	73

Participants included 11 members of the Management Committee and 9 who had completed Phase 3 training. External stakeholders who participated in data collection included representatives from the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) and the All-Ireland Restorative Practice Strategic Forum. The target sample size was 92 respondents and the profile of participants was in line with the aims of the research team's initial evaluation proposal:

- Face-to-face interviews or focus groups (n=25-30) to include: sample of Phase 2 and Phase 3 participants; school staff and students; Youth Service young people and staff; CDI staff.
- Telephone interviews with interagency sample (n=25-30) of Phase 1 participants.

Quantitative data collection: Participants

Surveys were completed prior to and after training. At the pre-training stage, the sample size was 75; at the post-training stage, the sample size was 130.

Of those who completed the pre-training questionnaire, 19% were 'residents living in Tallaght West,' and 61% were residents elsewhere. The participants' organisations are presented in Table 2. In the pre-training survey, the vast majority of participants (93%) were either school staff or pupils. The profile of participants in the post-training survey was different as the percentage belonging to a school decreased from 92% to 43% and the percentage belonging to a community-based service increased from 4% to 30%.

Table 2: Participants' organisations

	Pre-training	Post-training
School	92% (69)	43% (55)
Statutory service	0%	10% (13)
Community-based service	4% (3)	30% (38)
Youth service	0%	6% (8)
None	0%	2% (3)
Other	2.7% (2)	8% (10)
Not applicable	0%	2% (2)
Total	100% (74)*	100% (129)*

* Data are missing from one participant.

The organisational position of participants is presented in Table 3. Between pre- and post-training surveys, there was some increase in the percentage of those who were in a managerial role, from 8% to 15%, and also a small increase in those who were front-line staff, from 56% to 62%.

Table 3: Organisational position of participants

	Pre-training	Post-training
Manager	8% (6)	15% (19)
Front-line staff	56% (42)	62% (79)
Volunteer	0%	2% (3)
Secondary school student	0%	1% (1)
Administration	5% (4)	1% (1)
Other	25% (19)	16% (20)
More than one indicated	1% (1)	2% (2)
Not applicable	4% (3)	2% (3)
Total	100% (75)	100% (128)*

* Data are missing from two participants.

At the time of the pre-training survey, a small minority had prior knowledge or experience of restorative practices (13%). Therefore, this small minority had already been exposed to the intervention prior to the baseline or pre-training data were collected. Data on the ages of participants were only collected as part of the post-training survey (see Table 4). Only 4% of the participants were categorised as 'youth' (i.e. aged under 25).

Table 4: Age of participants (post-training survey)

Age	
19-24 years	4% (5)
25-34 years	33% (43)
35-44 years	25% (32)
45-54 years	29% (37)
55-64 years	10% (13)

Documentary and Case Study

This evaluation combined a literature review, documentary analysis, individual and focus group interviews, two case studies, survey questionnaires and observations. As part of the documentary analysis, the research team had access to documents held by CDI relating to the planning and implementation of the programme, including the minutes of meetings, training, planning and recording documents, and the *Restorative Practice Progress Report* (CDI, 2011b).

The first case study completed as part of this evaluation focused on a post-primary school. Consent was sought from the school principal to interview school staff, observe the school setting and run a focus group with pupils trained in RP. Informed consent was also sought from the young people involved and their parents. The second case study was carried out in a youth service. Fieldwork included interviews with management and staff, a focus group with staff and a focus group with young people. Parental consent was received for the involvement of young people.

Data analysis

Thematic analysis guided by the study's main research questions was used in the analysis of qualitative data. Interview transcripts and field notes were first analysed for themes. Themes were then linked back to the research questions concerning both programme implementation and programme impacts.

Survey data were analysed using descriptive statistics. The profile of participants in pre- and post-training surveys was analysed. Participant responses to the survey questions were reported both as raw numbers and as percentages. Comparisons of pre- and post-data were reported as differences in percentages. The limitations associated with the survey data are discussed below.

Ethical issues

The research team was guided in its ethical requirements for this evaluation by the Research Ethics Committee at the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUI Galway, 2009). Full ethical approval was sought and granted for both the process study and the outcomes study. The research team was cognisant that conducting a study with young people from disadvantaged areas raises ethical issues. Furthermore, systems and processes were put in place to manage potential child protection issues, to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants and to secure informed consent.

Informed consent process

Informed written consent was sought from all participants. When participants were minors, informed written consent was sought first from parents (*see Appendices 2 and 3*) and then from the children/young people (*see Appendices 4 and 5*). Participants were free to withdraw from the data collection at any time. Where appropriate, informed written consent was sought first from the relevant gatekeeper (e.g. a school principal if data were being collected on a school premises) and only then would consent be sought from parents and children.

Confidentiality and anonymity

Members of the research team alone had access to primary data. Data were stored on a password-protected computer. Data were also presented in such a way as to ensure the anonymity of participants.

Reporting suspicions of child abuse or neglect

All researchers involved with the study underwent Garda vetting. The study was also conducted in accordance with *Children First: National Guidance* (DCYA, 2011). Researchers were responsible to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the designated Child Protection Officer in the Child and Family Research Centre.

Limitations

There are some limitations to be noted concerning the survey data. Although the RP Programme was delivered throughout 2011, the pre-training survey was administered to those who received training from November 2011 up to the end of January 2012. As a result, the pre-training survey sample was drawn from a subgroup of all those trained. Participation in the pre-training survey was low (n=75), although participation levels were much higher for the post-training survey (n=130). The post-training surveys were administered over the months of April and May 2012. This means that the time between receipt of training and participation in post-training surveys varied for participants (potentially between as little as 2 months and as much as 16 months). A 2-month separation between pre-training and post-training surveys also limits our ability to measure change over time. In addition, the survey design was not longitudinal as it was not possible to link data from participants at pre- and post-training stages. In regard to the profile of participants, some stakeholders were under-represented in the surveys (in particular young people) and the profile changed between the two data collection periods (the percentage of those belonging to a school decreased and the percentage of those belonging to a community organisation increased).

However, despite these limitations the research team decided it was possible to use the data to capture change occurring as a result of exposure to the RP training programme. This is the case since the two surveys capture two separate cross-sections of the same community at two time points (before and after receipt of the training). The survey data are also interpreted in light of findings from the qualitative data. As we shall see in Chapter 3, the qualitative data support the messages emerging from the survey data about programme impacts.



Chapter 2: Findings of Process Study on programme implementation



CDI
Restorative Practices
for a community worth living in

In this chapter, findings from the evaluation of the implementation of CDI's Restorative Practice (RP) Programme in Tallaght West are presented. The process study findings are based on data collected through observations, focus groups, individual interviews, two case studies and pre-training and post-training survey questionnaires. The presentation of the findings is structured around the three main research questions addressing programme implementation concerning utilisation, organisation and fidelity.

2.1 Programme utilisation

Research Question 1

What was the extent and nature of programme take-up and what was the extent to which the intended target population received the intended services?

This section explores the issue of programme utilisation. In the roll-out of the training programme, the whole Tallaght West community was targeted, in particular agencies working with young people. The objective was to provide training to 800 people, including adult and youth residents. It was also planned that approximately 20 would complete all three phases of training and so would be accredited local trainers (*see Table 5*).

Table 5: Delivery targets and actual delivery

Programme component	2010-2011 Target	2010-2012 Delivery	% Target achieved
Phase 1	800 (100 adult residents) (100 young residents)	630 (65 adult residents) (87 young residents)	79% (65% adult) (87% youth)
Phase 2	150	123	82%
Phase 3	20	11*	55%*

* 9 trainers were fully accredited by June 2012 and 2 were accredited to deliver the Introductory day. 7 more began in July 2012 and will be fully accredited by February 2013 (90%).

According to the CDI database, by March 2012, 630 people had received Phase 1 training, 87 of whom were young people and 65 were adult residents. Of these, 123 had continued on and completed Phase 2 training and 11 had completed Phase 3. These figures indicate that, although substantial progress was made, targets were not met by the end of 2011 as planned. The cohort of 11 trainers comes from a variety of backgrounds: secondary schools, youth services, childcare, community activism, counselling and CDI staff. Table 6 shows that the majority of those trained at Phase 1 were members of schools. A large minority trained at Phase 2 were members of Tallaght West organisations (*see Table 7 for a breakdown of these organisations*).

Table 6: Background of programme participants

	Phase 1	Phase 2
Tallaght West organisation*	8%	21%
Community groups	3%	9%
Early Childhood Care and Education	4%	14%
Non-Tallaght West	4%	8%
Schools	75%	39%
Housing Association	1%	0%
South Dublin County Council	1%	1%
An Cosán	3%	8%

* See Table 7 for breakdown of this total figure.

Table 7: Programme participants from Tallaght West organisations

Tallaght West organisation	Phase 1	Phase 2
National Educational Welfare Board	5	4
Tallaght Probation Project	12	8
Tallaght Youth Service	9	8
Childhood Development Initiative	7	2
Probation Service – Young Persons	1	1
Jobstown Assisting Drug Dependency	4	3
Tallaght Rehabilitation Project	3	3
South Dublin County Childcare Committee	2	0
Sub-total	44	29

The majority of participants in the pre-training survey (73%) first heard of the training course from their own organisation, but this was the case for only 48% of post-training survey participants. At pre-training, only 12% heard of the programme directly from CDI, but among the post-training participants this figure had increased to 36%. Those who had heard about it from 'other' sources decreased from 15% at pre-training to 9% at post-training. Some heard of the programme through word-of-mouth in the community or from other community organisations. Positive reports of the programme also affected people's decision to take part, for example, *'We were doing a course with An Cosán and they said that it would be good'*. Only 2% (both at pre-training and post-training) said that they heard about the programme from advertising.

The reasons why people chose the training course varied. A large minority of respondents were asked to attend the training by their managers in work: 21% in the pre-training survey and 27% in the post-training survey. A large minority took part so as to improve their ability to deal with conflict: 17% of the pre-training participants and 21% of post-training participants. Only 1% of the pre-training participants attended because *'it sounded interesting'*, but this figure rose to 9% among the post-training participants.

The reputation of CDI was one reason why people decided to take part in the training. In interviews, one woman commented that she knew from previous experiences with CDI that they provided high-quality training courses and that this affected her decision to participate. Similar motivations were expressed by staff in other agencies:

'We [An Garda Síochána] have a long history of working with CDI because we find them very adept at tailoring programmes to meet a community need and involving people at ground level.'

An existing relationship between CDI and other stakeholders was an important factor in recruitment to the training programme. As mentioned above, the majority of participants heard about the programme from their employers and many participated because they were asked to do so by their manager. Some of those interviewed indicated that CDI made efforts to integrate the training around their work practices. This was particularly evident in interviews with teachers. For example, one primary school teacher commented that the training for staff took place on a day that was convenient for all the teachers.

The training was also encouraged as an individual professional development opportunity and as a chance for organisations to improve their skill-base in dealing with conflict situations. One teacher commented that the school management desired staff to *'up-skill'* and undertake additional training courses that could help to deal with behavioural issues among pupils. Within a youth service, the training was seen as an investment in staff skills in dealing with young people and a planned approach within the organisation on how staff should engage with young people. A small number of participants hoped to attain accreditation on undertaking the training and in some cases so as to enhance employment opportunities in the future. Some saw the training as one way to contribute to the community: *'I suppose just to stay active in the community that I work in'*. It was particularly important that the trainees were not charged a fee for participation.

The recruitment of residents was not as successful as the recruitment of other stakeholders. As one participant noted, the same challenges are faced by any organisation that tries to engage with the wider community, as opposed to engaging with other service providers. CDI is no different in facing these challenges and what is needed is for all relevant stakeholders to work together and to learn how to improve community engagement. The trainers commented that they needed more support in the recruitment of participants to the programme. As one trainer said, *'Maybe you would need somebody on the ground nearly selling it'*.

Those who went on to become trainers (i.e. having completed Phase 3 training) commented that this was made possible by support from their own organisation. One participant also noted that *'especially after the second two days training'* it was seen to be *'immediately applicable to our work and to what we're trying to achieve in our work'*, and for that reason when the opportunity arose to complete Phase 3 training it was taken.

The vast majority of participants indicated that they had little or no knowledge of RP prior to taking part in the training course. Those with prior knowledge were working in youth justice or mediation. Some teachers also said that they had heard of the concepts of restorative justice and RP before, but the majority did not have an in-depth knowledge. Some participants would have preferred more information from CDI prior to the commencement of the training, in particular concerning the content of the training sessions and the objectives of the programme.

Findings from the case study of one school show there was a consensus among most of those spoken to concerning the value of RP and there was a high level of awareness among staff and students of the approach. However, not all staff were trained in the approach, in particular due to pressures from other work commitments. Two members of staff reported that they did not agree with the approach and for that reason had not availed of the training. Students also noted that not all teachers used the approach. However, students also seemed to be aware of what approaches different teachers would adopt in response to conflict situations.

2.2 Programme organisation

Research Question 2

How well was the programme organised and run?

This section explores the issue of programme organisation. Participants were asked about their experiences of and satisfaction with the running of the programme. The participants in the training programme came from diverse backgrounds (see Table 6). Some of those interviewed believed that the diverse occupational background of participants was beneficial because it facilitated knowledge-sharing and more discussion about their experiences:

'It did bond people and people shared.'

'Building relationships is always useful to us, as you don't know when you are going to need them or meet them again.'

'I think it's good and I think it's important because the whole purpose of RP is that it's a community approach to working together so that it's important to have a mix of people.'

However, a small number of participants felt that the diversity of occupational backgrounds was problematic. One respondent made the point that because 'professional' staff present had previous knowledge and experience of RP, 'non-professionals' *'felt alienated'* at the training sessions and *'out of their depth'*. Another participant expressed a concern that social workers and people from the community may have had previous dealings with each other and this could create discomfort.

The diverse profile of participants also affected their views on when the training should take place. While most of the participants were happy with when the training programme was run, some teachers commented that they would prefer to see the programme scheduled for out-of-term times or at the start of the school year when a new cohort of students was entering. As one teacher said, the middle of term was a busy period for them and so made attendance at training events difficult.

In general, programme participants were highly satisfied with the activities and the content of the training programme. One of the young people interviewed mentioned that she liked the video and the role plays because it enabled her to see how this approach works in practice:

'Well, I liked it when we were doing the training and we watched how you were able to solve the problems by watching the video and we done different problems and there were people acting out the part. And it's good to use as well.'

A childcare worker spoke of the benefits of using the cards, video and role plays:

'Yeah, they gave us scenarios to act out; they gave us little cards with the questions, what to ask. They showed us a few clips as well and then we started role playing. So we were kind of in it so we knew how to go about it.'

A primary school teacher said the course was *'very well run'*, that it was *'very well organised'* and *'enough time was given'* to complete the different activities. Another teacher commented that she liked the fact that they were told about *'success stories'* at the training.

Some participants mentioned that they were reticent about taking part in the role-plays at first, but the majority found this part of the training beneficial. For example, one participant stated that on hearing that role plays were part of the training course, she was doubtful about wanting to take part: *'I hate role plays and I think quite a lot of my peers would hate role plays.'* However, after she completed the role-plays, she felt that she could see their value and that they helped her think about how RP could be applied in the school context.

Most of the participants were satisfied with the materials they received at the sessions. A community centre manager in particular appreciated the literature provided with the training:

'There was a procedure guide to a restorative circle ... and they were useful to have in my capacity as a centre manager in the community ... and gave really good practical examples of how it would work in real life which I suppose is really the key to it: how does it work in reality?'

A teacher said that the books provided were very helpful as you *'then have a reference'*. Many people mentioned the question cards. One woman said that she keeps them with her at all times in her purse and she regularly uses them to resolve conflicts. However, three participants said they would have benefited from having received more material on RP.

Three of those interviewed expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of information received prior to the training about the content of the programme. Another participant was critical of the way information was communicated about the scheduling of the sessions.

Participants generally commented positively on the quality of the facilitation at the training events. For example, one woman said: *'Yeah, the facilitator was good, the way he explained things and all'*, while another remarked *'Yeah, the facilitators were very good and very entertaining'*. Another participant commented that the facilitator at his session *'looked relaxed'*, that he liked his style of facilitation and that he *'enjoyed working with him'*.

One teacher described the facilitation process as follows:

'The facilitators were very good, they went through every step with you and then they paired us off into groups with different scenarios. They went over everything and they made sure that every one of us knew about it. It wasn't just breezed over and I found it very good and they didn't move on until everyone got it.'

The only criticism of the facilitation referred to the presenter's approach and style on the first introductory day delivered in Tallaght. However, CDI addressed this with the training provider and changes were made immediately. CDI also offered the revised format to participants who had been dissatisfied the first time around. The positive feedback from training participants suggests that this response was effective and satisfactory.

2.3 Programme fidelity

Research Question 3

What was the extent to which the programme was implemented in line with the model as specified in the programme's Business Plan and were its service delivery and support functions consistent with programme design?

This section explores the issue of programme fidelity. Some changes and accommodations were made to the RP training sessions so as to adapt them to local requirements. In particular, the trainers believed the training was improved by being delivered to smaller groups and in shorter days than specified by the IIRP. As one trainer said, they decided to *'only go through four slides at a time and have more breaks'*.

Trainers made accommodations and changes to the content of training, particularly the examples and scenarios used. As one trainer said, this did not compromise training fidelity as *'we don't leave anything out'*. In some cases, the adaptations related to creating scenarios that were relevant geographically and/or culturally. The trainers believed people would be turned off and be unnecessarily distracted if the trainers used words like 'pounds' and 'police' rather than 'euro' and 'An Garda Síochána,' as they relate to a different context. Comments from those who were trained as trainers suggest that people responded well to examples that they could relate to:

'I've really put some work into finding out who the participants are and what their needs are and trying to meet them. We don't leave anything out but we do really focus on how this is going to be relevant to the people on board.'

As one teacher observed, having scenarios from schools (even though they were not Irish schools) made the content very relevant for teachers:

'There were 70 or 80 of us teachers and we were receiving training on the intro-day you know. We all knew each other prior and we received it from individuals who were in a similar secondary school situation and their background reflected what we would be meeting on a daily basis. So everybody was like "Okay, they know what they are talking about. They acknowledge the fact that it's not a magic wand or whatever," you know?'

One trainer described how making adaptations to the training was necessary so that trainees could appreciate the relevance of RP to their everyday lives:

'A lot of people did it initially and they were thinking they couldn't see the relevance. They say "I don't work with groups," and yet they work with groups all the time. But they just didn't make the connection. So we made it different, presented it differently – the scenarios we had were the ones we knew that they would be dealing with and then it just clicked.'

Follow-up support was also provided after the training was completed. After completion of the training, CDI supplied participants with a contact telephone number and e-mail address, and encouraged contact for any required ongoing support. Some of the follow-up supports reported included receiving site visits from CDI staff relating to a specific issue, meeting with groups from the community and chairing a meeting with staff/residents in a restorative way. Some participants received follow-up support in terms of e-mails, telephone calls about further training, reports and agendas. Trainers in particular indicated that they were getting full support from CDI after training: *'I'd say a month doesn't go by without having some sort of interaction with someone about restorative practice.'*

Those who participated in the training also shared contact details with each other and could provide their own support to each other. One trainer was specifically trained to work in schools. This person also offered services and support to schools after the staff in the school were trained. This model worked well since there was one point of contact between those trained in the school and the staff at CDI.

Communities of Practice (COPs) meetings were 'intended to maintain quality and fidelity in the use of restorative practice' (CDI, 2011a, p. 5). For that reason, participants who took part in training were invited to engage in follow-up peer support through attendance at COPs. In general, participants valued the experience of these meetings as a place where trainees could be a support to each other, as well as giving people an opportunity to find out what was going on in their area.

In general, participants were happy with the follow-up support from CDI. One participant said that CDI is very proactive and gives just enough support. Some trainees observed that follow-up contact was not as comprehensive as they had expected. One participant believed that the priority in CDI had been with the development and initial delivery of the training, and although CDI was clearly willing to provide follow-up support, this was impeded somewhat by problems with logistics and scheduling. For example, participants mentioned difficulties attending COPs meetings due to competing demands within their job. However, one participant who had attended meetings highlighted that despite location and timing suiting them, many of their colleagues still did not attend:

'Considering the number of people who had done the training there was very low uptake on the Community of Practice and it wasn't because people didn't know about them. It's about asking "are we communicating in the best way possible to people that this is available to them and that it's free of charge and that it's a support and there's a value." I think they (CDI) did as much as they could do to try and encourage people to come, but there was something about the time and just releasing people.'

Staff from CDI also expressed concerns about attendance at COPs meetings. One staff member expressed a concern that trainees were not given sufficient encouragement to attend meetings and for that reason it was important that during the training sessions, trainees should hear *'It's really important that you check back in, and here's what CDI can offer to support you'*.

COPs meetings appear to have worked well for the trainers' group, who named their group FRESH (from the FRESH tool – Fair, Respect, Engaging, Safe, Honest). Members of this group were in the unique position of needing their own professional and peer support, and also needing to provide support to trainees. Peer support and peer learning were valued from the FRESH meetings: *'That kind of sense of "Yeah, we're singing from the same hymn sheet and we're all for the common good"'*.

Programme fidelity was also ensured in part through an accreditation process. All those who train participants are accredited to do so by the IIRP. This is the case also for the 11 participants in this sample who had completed Phase 3 training.

Fidelity was also ensured through follow-up support and a number of measures have been put in place to support those who have been trained. However, CDI did not put in place a system to monitor those who were trained. In most instances, it would have been difficult or not feasible to do so because CDI did not have the authority to monitor the work or private lives of those trained, and also as RP is often implemented in informal settings. For these reasons, trainees were responsible for their own fidelity to the model. As one teacher pointed out, *'It is up to the teachers themselves to read the [RP] books and some of them did, not everybody'*.

Chapter 3: Findings of Outcomes Study on programme impact and value



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Restorative Practices
for a community worth living in

In this chapter, findings from the evaluation of the impact and value of the Restorative Practice (RP) Programme are presented. The findings are based on data collected through interviews and pre-training and post-training survey questionnaires. The presentation of the findings is structured around the research question addressing programme impact and value, and the final research question addressing the factors that contributed to or detracted from the use of RP.

3.1 Programme impacts

Research Question 4

Was the programme successful in creating improvements in outcomes for participants and for the wider community?

Section 3.1.1 explores the issue of programme impact on individual participants' lives. The findings are presented in four sub-sections as follows:

1. The impact of the programme on participants' readiness to apply the restorative approach after training is discussed and data from the post-training survey are presented along with qualitative data.
2. The impact of the programme on participants' experience of conflict and conflict management and conflict resolution is discussed, and data from pre-training and post-training surveys are presented along with qualitative data.
3. The impact of the programme on relationships is discussed, beginning with data from the post-training surveys. Then qualitative data are presented on the impact of the programme on relationships under a number of headings: emotional impact, impact at work, impact in school and impact in the home.
4. The impact of the programme on young people is discussed and qualitative data are presented on the perspectives of adults and of young people.

Section 3.1.2 explores the issue of programme impact on the wider community. The findings are presented in two sub-sections as follows:

1. The impact of the programme on the development of a shared language is discussed and the findings are based on qualitative data.
2. The impact of the programme on interagency awareness is discussed and data from pre-training and post-training surveys are presented along with qualitative data.

3.1.1 Effects of training on participants' work, lives, organisations and family life

1. Readiness to apply the restorative practice approach after training

This study explored whether participants applied the skills learnt in RP training. The survey found considerable diversity regarding the utilisation of these skills across different settings (*see Table 8*). RP was used most frequently (i.e. daily or weekly) at work (55%) and at school (46%). The setting where participants were least likely to use RP (i.e. rarely or never) was in the community (41%) and in the home (40%). However, RP was used daily or weekly in the home by a sizeable minority (25%). In an interagency setting, the largest number of participants used RP only monthly or rarely (30%).

Table 8: Use of skills gained from RP training

How often have you used the skills gained from RP training ...					
	... at home?	... in the community?	... at school?	... at work?	... in an interagency setting
Daily	13.8% (15)	7.9% (8)	28.9% (28)	31.3% (35)	3.5% (3)
Weekly	11% (12)	8.9% (9)	17.5% (17)	23.2% (26)	10.6% (9)
Monthly	13.8% (15)	9.9% (10)	2.1% (2)	14.3% (16)	12.9% (11)
Rarely	31.2% (34)	23.8% (24)	10.3% (10)	16.1% (18)	16.5% (14)
Never	8.3% (9)	16.8% (17)	8.2% (8)	2.7% (3)	11.8% (10)
Not applicable	22% (24)	28.7% (29)	33% (32)	10.7% (12)	44.7% (38)
Error	0%	4% (4)	0%	1.8% (2)	0%
Total	100% (109)	100% (101)	100% (97)	100% (112)	100% (85)

The findings also show that RP was being used by those who had been trained (see Table 9). In data collected after the implementation of the training programme, a majority of participants 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that they had experienced other people in their area, class or organisation using RP (75%). A large minority of participants 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that, as a result of RP training, there were less disputes in their work, class, neighbourhoods (43%) and that they were more willing to report crime and anti-social behaviour (36%).

Table 9: Impact on use of RP, on conflict and on reporting crime/anti-social behaviour

	I have experienced other people in my area/class/organisation using RP training	There are less disputes in my work/class/neighbourhood as a result of RP training	I am more willing to report crime and anti-social behaviour in my community as a result of RP training
Strongly agree	28.9% (37)	21.3% (27)	15% (18)
Agree	46.1% (59)	21.3% (27)	21% (26)
Neither agree nor disagree	3.1% (4)	35.4% (45)	30% (38)
Disagree	10.2% (13)	6.3% (8)	6% (7)
Strongly disagree	2.3% (3)	0.8% (1)	2% (3)
Don't know	3.9% (5)	3.1% (4)	7% (9)
Not applicable	5.5% (7)	11.8% (15)	19% (23)
Total	100% (128)	100% (127)	100% (124)

The findings also show a willingness to use the RP techniques. Although some participants in the interviews for this study commented that they were unwilling to do *'role plays'* or to facilitate a *'restorative conference'*, most were somewhat confident about applying particular aspects of their training. For example, some said that the *'questions'* were easy to use and they could think of situations where they could apply this technique. One secondary school teacher commented on the effectiveness of the restorative conferencing technique as a behavioural management strategy in school:

'You don't get the full power and impact of what you are actually doing until you run it yourself. You can see how the emotions change, and it's really focusing on the behaviour.'

Some participants noted that an initial successful experience in using RP was a strong motivator to continue with its use. Equally, those who did not have positive experiences early on were less likely to persevere with the approach. Other interviewees commented that they gained in confidence as they started to use RP more and more. For one participant, having peer and organisational support was also important for continuing to use the approach:

'We started using it straight away, but we weren't confident in using it. And definitely the first time we used it there was still a sense that we were not sure about what we were doing. But then when we started to see it work, we were fine after that. And I would say it was the best training I was ever on, without a shadow of a doubt.'

Another participant said:

'The practice was applicable to nearly every situation and I suppose gave us more confidence in really applying it to our work and to the situations we're dealing with.'

The pre- and post-training questionnaires show that people were less likely to use RP in a community setting. Although there was one example of a trainer being asked to help solve a dispute in a residential area, both young people and one teacher stated that they felt they could not always intervene in neighbourhood disputes because they felt that people would not always react well to the intervention. However, positive impacts at the community level were seen after the provision of RP training to staff in a community centre. An RP approach was used to resolve a conflict between a young person and the community centre. Also the manager of the community centre believed both that this way of resolving the issue would have positive effects for the young person and his family, but also that more generally the provision of RP training had helped increase people's involvement in the community centre.

2. Experience of conflict and conflict management and resolution

Overall impact on managing conflict and other problems

The survey data show that participants believed that as a result of the RP Programme they were better able to manage conflict and other problems. The majority of participants either *'strongly agreed'* or *'agreed'* that, as a result of RP training, they could manage conflict better in home, class, work or community (87%) and that they could manage other problems better in home, class, work or the community (82%).

Many participants felt that RP training had transformed their individual approach to resolving conflicts and how they think about conflict resolution. According to one participant:

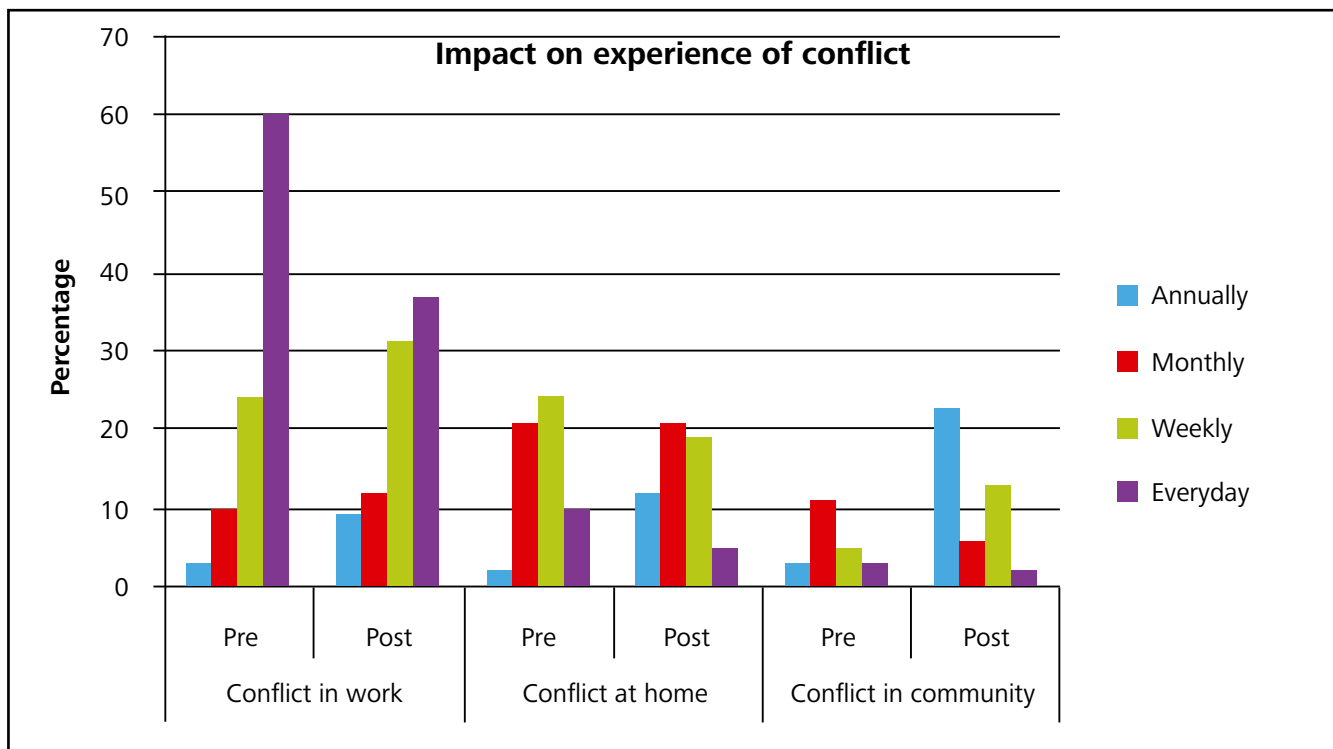
'Restorative practice acts as a very good vehicle especially in conflict situations. If you say "How did you feel about that?" and "Where did you think the main problem was?"; it gives them a chance to back away from the emotive language and to reintegrate themselves with normal and respectful discourse.'

Impact on experience of conflict

In this section and below, data from the pre-training survey are compared with data from the post-training survey to illustrate changes over time on key variables.

As seen in Figure 2, after taking part in training, the percentage of those who experienced conflict everyday decreased with respect to conflict in the workplace (from 60% to 37%), in the home (from 10% to 5%) and in the community (from 3% to 2%). The percentage of those who experienced conflict only annually increased with respect to conflict in the workplace (from 3% to 11%), in the home (from 2% to 12%) and in the community (from 3% to 23%). The data also show that conflict as an everyday experience was most likely in the workplace, and this was the case at pre-training and at post-training. Further details are provided in Table A1-1 in Appendix 1.

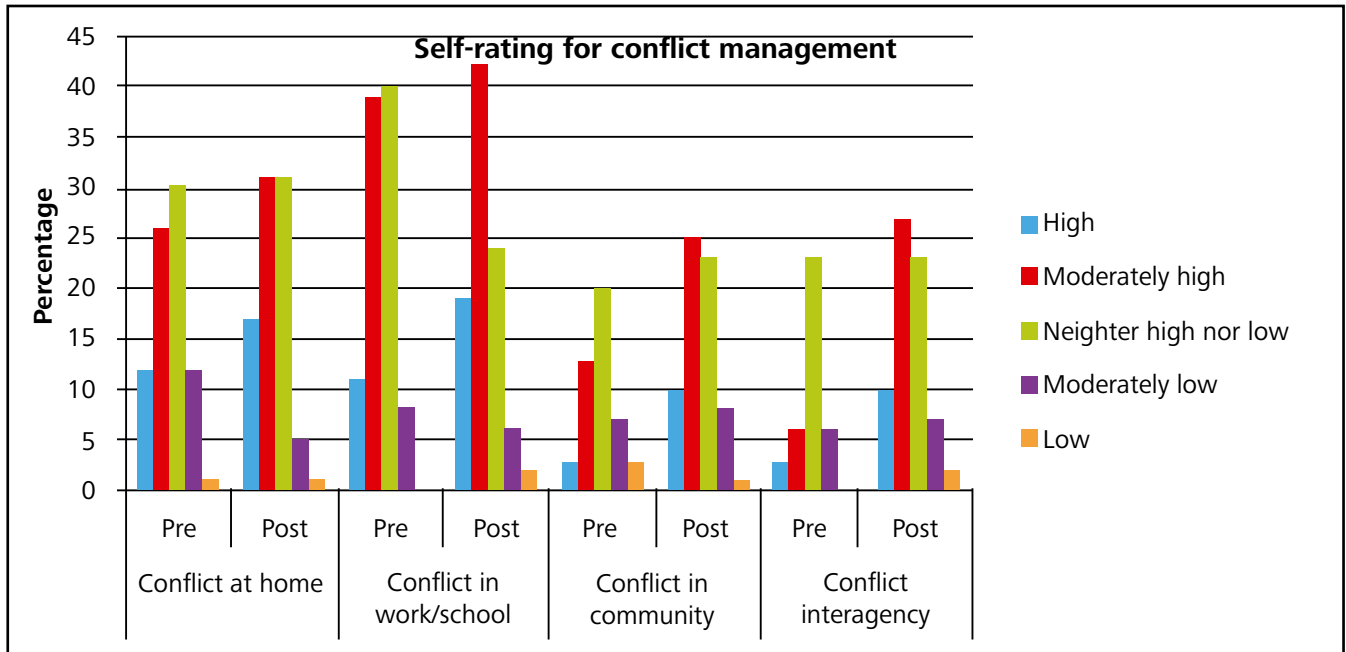
Figure 2: Impact on experience of conflict



Impact on self-rating for conflict management

As seen in Figure 3, there were increases in the percentages of those who rated themselves ‘moderately high’ or ‘high’ for managing conflict in work/school (from 49% to 61%), in the home (from 38% to 48%), in the community (from 16% to 35%) and in interagency settings (from 9% to 37%). The data therefore also show that, both before and after the training, participants rated themselves lowest for managing conflict in the community and in an interagency setting, but also participants made the greatest improvements in these settings, enjoying gains of 19 and 28 percentage points respectively. Further details are provided in Table A1-2 in Appendix 1.

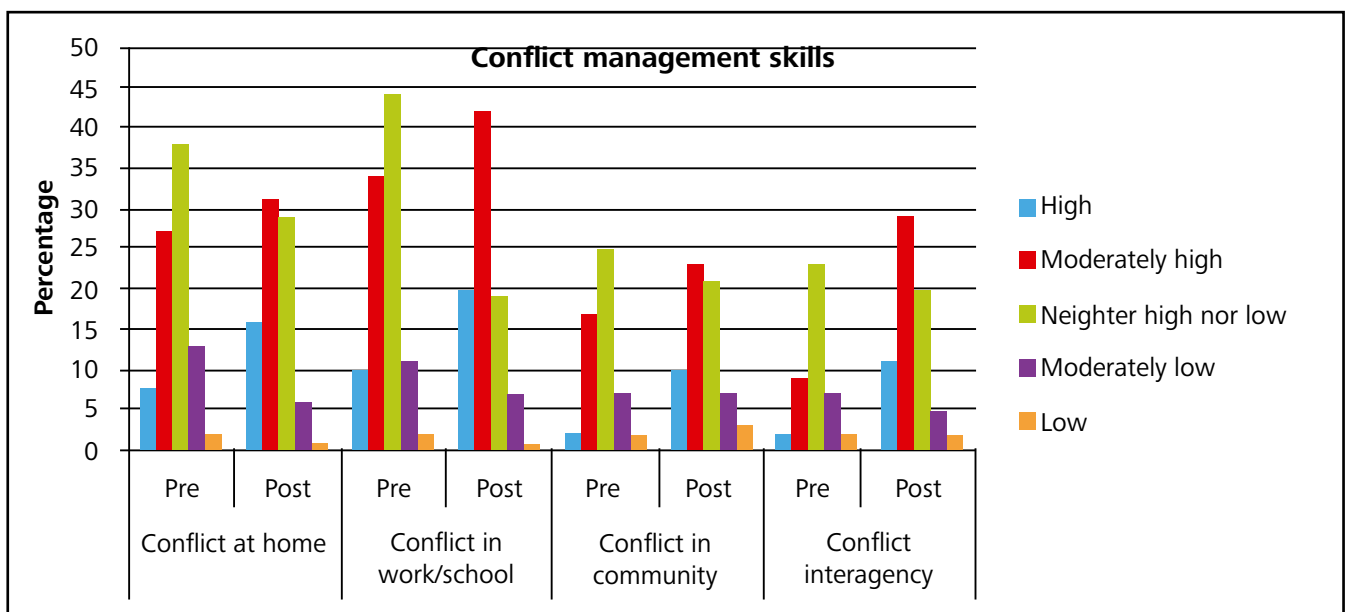
Figure 3: Impact on self-rating for conflict management (self-reported data)



Impact on conflict management skills

As seen in Figure 4, there were increases in the percentages of those who rated themselves ‘moderately high’ or ‘high’ for conflict management skills at work/school (from 44% to 62%), in the home (from 34% to 47%), in the community (from 19% to 33%) and in interagency settings (from 11% to 40%). Before receipt of the programme, conflict management skills were poorest in the community and interagency settings, and best in work/school. In addition, participants made the greatest improvements in interagency settings, enjoying gains of 29 percentage points. Further details are provided in Table A1-3 in Appendix 1.

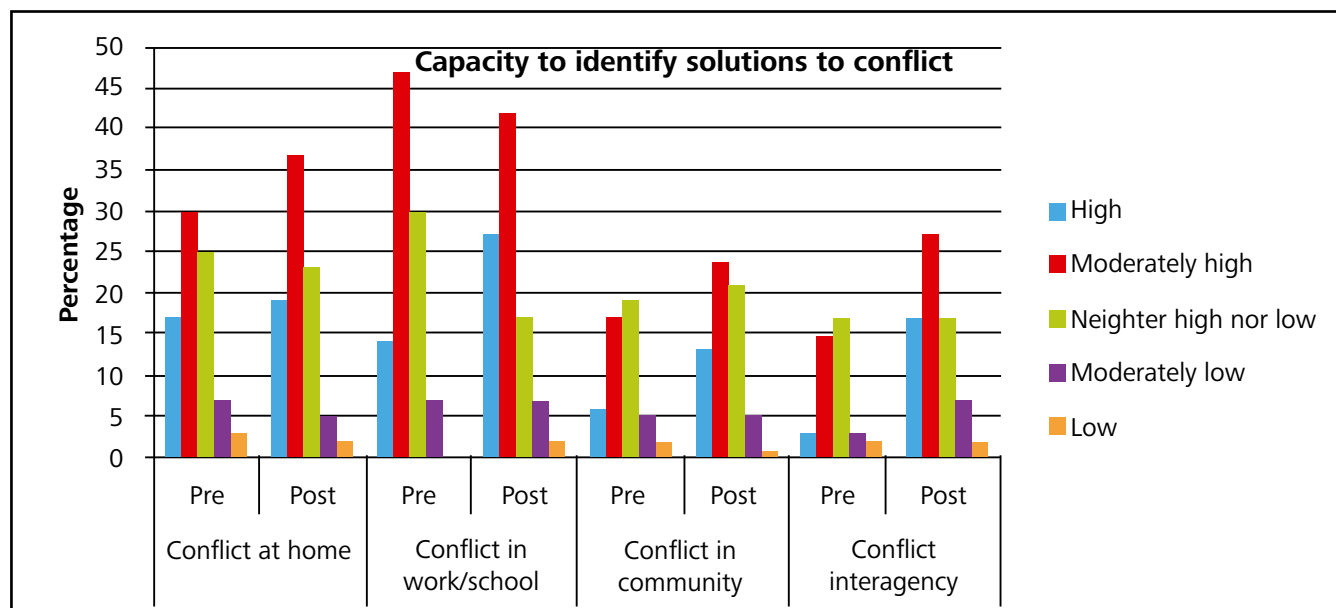
Figure 4: Impact on conflict management skills (self-reported data)



Impact on capacity to identify solutions to conflict situations

As seen in Figure 5, there were increases in the percentages of those who rated themselves 'moderately high' or 'high' for their capacity to identify solutions to conflict situations at work/in school (from 61% to 69%), at home (from 48% to 56%), in the community (from 24% to 37%) and in interagency settings (from 18% to 44%). Both before and after receipt of the programme, the capacity to identify solutions to conflict was poorest in a community setting and best in work/school. However, participants made the greatest improvements in community and interagency settings, enjoying gains of 13 and 26 percentage points respectively. Further details are provided in Table A1-4 in Appendix 1.

Figure 5: Impact on capacity to identify solutions to conflict (self-reported data)



The quantitative data show that participants scored highest for conflict management and resolution at work/in school, both before and after receiving training. In interviews for this evaluation, some believed that RP reinforced how they already dealt with conflict and looked for solutions. One teacher spoke of the need to retain pupils in class as a way to arrive at the best solution:

'One of the reasons why I love restorative practice is because I don't believe in suspension, I don't believe in expulsion. I feel that it's harder to reintegrate somebody back into a class where they've been misbehaving if they've been out for two days and they are even further behind in the academic side of things, so they come in and they are lost. How do they get back in there? They don't. So what are they going to do? They are going to misbehave.'

Similarly, youth workers spoke about the restorative approach to dealing with conflict between young people during activities. The main impact of this approach was that the conflict situation was dealt with through inclusion of the young people involved, whereas in the past exclusion would have been the response.

3. Impact on relationships

Post-training surveys

Survey data were collected on the impact of the programme on participants' relationships (see Table 10). A comparatively low percentage 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that, as a result of RP training, they got on better with their neighbours (14%) and a comparatively high percentage 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that, as a result of RP training, they got on better with their organisation's service users (61%), their work colleagues (47%) and their family members (44%). Of those for whom the question was 'applicable,' more than half (n=14) 'neither agreed nor disagreed' and less than half (n=10) either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that, as a result of RP training, they got on better with their classmates. Therefore, the largest impact of RP was on relationships with an organisation's service users (which would include relationships between teachers and students) and there was some evidence of a positive impact on relationships among young people, work colleagues and family members, but less so regarding relationships with neighbours.

Table 10: Impact on relationships

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Not applicable	Total
I get on better with my neighbours as a result of RP training	5% (6)	9% (11)	34 % (42)	4% (5)	2% (2)	3% (2)	43% (50)	100% (122)
I get on better with my work colleagues as a result of RP training	12% (15)	35% (44)	34% (42)	2% (3)	1% (1)	1% (1)	15% (19)	100% (125)
I get on better with my classmates as a result of RP training	5% (5)	5% (5)	13% (14)	0%	0%	0%	77% (84)	100% (109)
I get on better with my family as a result of RP training	12% (15)	32% (39)	29% (36)	2% (3)	1% (1)	2% (2)	22% (26)	100% (123)
I get on better with my organisation's service users as a result of RP training	18% (23)	43% (54)	21% (27)	3% (4)	1% (1)	0%	14% (17)	100% (126)

Qualitative data

In addition, qualitative data were collected on the impact of the programme on participants' relationships under the headings of emotional impact, impact at work, impact in school and impact in the home.

(i) Emotional impact

In interviews for the study, the majority of participants believed that they had become more tolerant towards others since they completed the training. For example, one participant commented that she tended to argue more in the past. However, since she completed the training, she *'gives other people a chance'* and asks them to recount their version of events instead of engaging in an argument.

Many participants were amazed by the power of asking restorative questions (see Appendix 6). As one teacher commented:

'By asking just a simple question such as "What happened?" the person would open up and tell you all that happened. We're getting young people to talk and they're saying how they are feeling. So for me that was huge. My relationship with my students has really improved since then.'

Another participant has learnt to *'take a step back'*, to not become as emotionally involved, and as a result is achieving more positive outcomes for the community. Many participants spoke about the power of taking a *'neutral'* and *'non-judgemental'* approach to situations, and being able to let go of the need to attribute blame. For example, teachers spoke of using *'restorative circles'* to deal with issues such as students not doing their homework and disruptions in class; and youth workers spoke of the routine use of restorative circles in group activities improving young people's experience and participation.

The findings also show that the programme had an impact on young people's confidence, as discussed below.

(ii) Impact at work

Participants said that RP had affected the way they interact with their colleagues. According to one participant, they were able to collaborate well together, hold meetings and let everyone have a voice, and, as a result, they are approached by their colleagues for advice. One participant said that she was inspired by RP because it allows her to share her skills and best practice. One noted how informal conversations at coffee breaks tended to be more focused on positive outcomes and less on *'giving out'* about people or situations.

Some participants reported never using RP with work colleagues since *'there was never a problem with them'* or they tended to deal with things in a restorative fashion anyway. However, for others, completing the training changed their mindset about arguing with others at work. A few participants could recount situations where they had used RP in their workplace to resolve conflicts between staff members. One commented that, since taking part in the training, they are more mindful of other people's feelings in the workplace:

'When I'm in the staff room, I suppose it keeps you more mindful of the impact of what you say or how it could be perceived.'

Evidence of the impact of RP training on routine work practices include staff meetings starting with a *'restorative circle'*, reference to RP in individual and organisational work plans, and changes to professional practice in managing challenging behaviour, particularly in classrooms, childcare facilities and youth services.

(iii) Impact in school

A primary school teacher commented that, since completing the training, the staff had adopted a new, positive and affirmative way of dealing with children in the classroom:

'We have this thing of having five positive statements a day, which doesn't sound like much but it is hard enough just to stop and praise. Praise isn't something they'd admit to wanting, but you can see that it does improve their confidence and self-esteem.'

As part of the recording of incidents at school, some teachers now include the children's written account of what happened, using the set of restorative questions (see Appendix 6).

There is evidence of impact on organisational culture in one school where RP has been strongly supported. One participant noted that there has been a change in conversations about discipline and codes of behaviour: rather than being concerned solely with rules and regulations, according to this participant, there is now a greater focus on relationships between students and teachers.

(iv) Impact in the home

There was some evidence from the interviews that RP training had a positive impact in the home. One parent remarked that she did use the '*question cards*' at home with her teenage daughters, especially if they were talking about engaging in age-inappropriate activities. One of the young people said that she had taught some RP 'questions' to her mother who, in turn, used them with her younger son.

Another participant, who discussed using RP with her children, found that it does work but that it is hard to be consistent in using it. She believes that it is useful in dealing with a crisis. Another participant said her family members are starting to use RP just from observing her with her children; they have not attended training, but are behaving restoratively without actively thinking about it.

There was also some evidence that RP had improved relationships between parents and children at home. One teacher mentioned a situation where a boy had been getting into trouble in school. His mother was called to the school and an RP 'conference' was held. Afterwards, the child's mother returned to the school to thank the teacher in person and to say that her son had been much less aggressive towards her at home after the conference.

Participants mentioned that using RP helps parents to feel more comfortable coming into the school as they are shown respect and issues are dealt with without blame and in a non-threatening way. As one teacher stated, they would always have spoken fairly to parents who came into the school, but the training reinforced this for them.

4. Impact on young people

(i) Impact on young people: Adult perceptions

In the case studies for this evaluation, positive impacts were observed in young people's relationships in a secondary school and a youth service. For example, there were improvements in the way in which a child with special needs was treated, as in the past there had been name calling. There was also general support in these settings for some of the activities related to the RP training. One example was a video made by students about drug-taking in the area. In addition, the youth service participating in this evaluation is working with the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) to come up with more youth-friendly content for its material.

All the adults interviewed spoke about the positive impact of RP on young people and the enthusiasm they had witnessed among young people about the approach. One of the participants found that RP is of interest to young people who are struggling with life because they see it as a fair way to deal with issues. Another teacher in a local school talked about RP as a '*powerful tool*', a '*powerful resource*' and a type of '*life skill*' that the students would be able to develop for themselves over time.

Many participants have found that the young people themselves are requesting to use 'restorative circles' as a means of addressing issues of conflict. A number of students in one school have been trained to facilitate restorative conferences between students over matters deemed appropriate for them to manage, such as '*a scuffle in the corridor, name calling, or something like that*'. One participant spoke of the positive impacts of the RP approach both in the home and at school on one young person: the young person '*went from a place of being at risk of leaving school to becoming a confident advocate for the use of RP*'.

Another participant referred to the power of RP to increase young people's empathy:

'The young people come to understand how everyone that was involved in an incident was affected by it and that understanding leads to the harm being repaired. Sometimes it came as a shock when they found out how what they were doing was affecting others.'

Participants found the use of '*restorative language*' was effective in working with young people, particularly the use of the FRESH tool – meaning Fair, Respect, Engaging, Safe and Honest.

RP has allowed young people to develop what one trainer identified as an '*emotional bank of words*'. Supports such as 'cards' containing different emotions/ facial expressions were found to be helpful to engage young people initially in discussing their feelings.

Driving CDI's restorative practice mission was the belief that, according to one staff member, as adults using RP show respect to young people, the young people will show respect to their peers and elders. Also RP empowers young people to sort out their own problems, to be part of their own solution, to experiment with questions, and to use these new skills 'outside' school. RP has also '*shown young people skills and qualities they didn't know they had, their confidence has increased and their opportunities have increased*'.

(ii) Impact on young people: Young people's perceptions

The young people interviewed as part of this study gave their views on the value and impact of RP. There was general agreement about the benefit of RP in certain contexts, in particular the school and youth service and sometimes among friends, but not in other contexts, including the neighbourhood and for some the home.

Young people valued RP because it was successful in resolving conflicts peacefully. One participant said '*everyone's chilled out, talking about their problems and all*'. Another young person observed that RP had brought a change to the way teachers responded to conflict situations, as '*before RP, a teacher wouldn't listen to your side of the story*'. One participant commented that she had encouraged her friends to talk about certain issues that they had with each other; she felt that the RP training had encouraged her to do this, as previously she would have '*lashed out*' at others instead of talking things through.

Views differed on the applicability of RP in the home. Some felt it '*depends on what the parents are like*' and '*depends on what happened actually*'. In contrast, others felt unable to approach a parent as RP requires: '*If I said anything like that to my Da, I tell ya ...*'. Others felt it was not possible to adopt such an approach when faced with neighbourhood disputes, as others need to be aware of what the approach is and what tools are used:

'You are not going to stand there and do it if nobody else knows what it is.'

'If you do it in a public place, you'll be laughed at. "Oh, just wait till I whip my card out!"'

'I think it would be hard to say "I have done restorative practice training and I know what to do". It's sort of hard to tell them unless they have done it [the training]. They're sort of not listening, but asking "Why ask me these questions if they have done that to me?"'

In addition, one young person stated that, in the future, he/she did not want to need to use this kind of approach or these techniques:

'No, I want my kids growing up in an average house not going around with no "cards".'

3.1.2 Wider impacts of the programme in community-building and collaboration

This section explores the issue of programme impact on the wider community.

1. Shared language

Many of those interviewed as part of this study believed that RP training contributed to community-building and collaboration across agencies. Participants noted the benefit to interagency work of having a 'shared language' with which to work. A Garda talked about RP as a common language or framework that brings organisations together and enables people to work together to solve disagreements:

'People who were trained in restorative practice were trained from those groups so that when we're dealing with people we are able to go in and ask them to put into words their experience.'

A participant who had substantial experience of working in an interagency way and of working with restorative justice identified the added value of RP to the process:

'Everybody comes from an organisation's specific background, the Guards talking about the DPP and whether you are going to the District Court or the Circuit Court or the High Court and bail conditions, and the HSE have their own language, Barnardos have language, community groups. Restorative practice enabled us to have a joint approach.'

In one instance, the focus on RP provided an opportunity for forging connections between the pre-school, primary school, secondary school and CDI in Tallaght. The teachers and principals in each school also interact with parents more, using RP with parents and children, and this has brought a powerful feeling of community.

Participants also valued the additional impact of working with young people who were being dealt with restoratively in other settings. A practical illustration is provided by the experience of staff in a community centre for young people. Conflict had arisen on occasions when staff at the community centre's coffee shop had asked the young people attending youth services in the centre not to 'hang around' the premises. However, no incidents of conflict had been reported since staff at the coffee shop had the chance to take part in RP training.

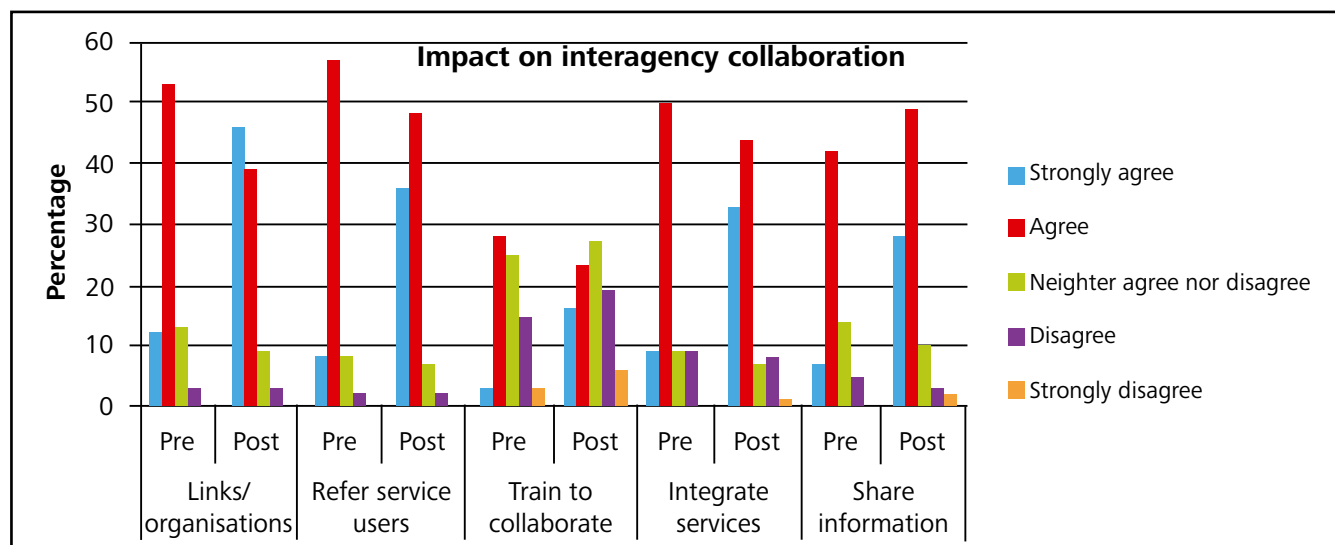
2. Interagency awareness

A further positive impact of the RP training programme was an improved knowledge of what was happening in the community. Although good interagency relations already existed in Tallaght, there were lots of practical ways in which this was improved. This was the case for one youth worker:

'We're in the grounds of a school and yet we had almost no connection with the primary school and no connection with the secondary school, and the RP in itself just brought us together if nothing else.'

Data from the surveys also provide evidence of the impact on interagency working. As seen in Figure 6, there were increases in the percentage of those who 'strongly agreed' that their service had well-established links with other organisations that deliver front-line services (from 12% to 46%), regularly referred their service users to other services (from 8% to 36%), train front-line staff to work directly with front-line staff in other organisations (from 3% to 16%), worked with other organisations to integrate services (from 9% to 33%) and share information about service users (with the latter's consent) with other organisations (from 7% to 28%). Further details are provided in Table A1-5 in Appendix 1.

Figure 6: Impact on interagency collaboration



3.2 Factors contributing to or detracting from the use of restorative practice

Research Question 5

What factors contributed to or detracted from the use of Restorative Practice?

This section explores the issue of predictors of response to intervention. As part of an explanatory mixed-methods approach, process study data were used to expand on and find plausible reasons for outcomes study findings.

Restorative practice in the work environment

The outcomes study data show that RP was successful in the work environment. As seen in Section 2.1, support from management was a key reason for people's participation in the training; in addition, it was encouraged as an individual professional development opportunity and as a chance for organisations to improve their skill-base in dealing with conflict situations. As seen in Section 3.1.1, RP skills were used more in the work environment than in the wider community: participants scored highly in this environment for conflict management and conflict resolution skills, and participants also rated highly the relationships with service users and the relationships among staff. The outcomes study data also show that participants were most likely to experience conflict in the workplace, but also that experiences of conflict almost halved as a result of the RP training programme.

The process study data suggest reasons why RP was used more in work and also why it had such beneficial impacts. Although CDI staff have observed that it took time to ensure 'buy-in' to this approach, nonetheless people believed RP would work and they felt comfortable with its use in a context where others were themselves trained in or aware of RP, or where RP was part of the organisation's work plans. This was the case in some of the school settings in particular, as school staff felt comfortable adopting this approach in staff-pupil and pupil-pupil relations, and also in interactions between staff. Similarly, young people believed the approach could work in the school environment and perhaps among friends trained in the approach, but not in the neighbourhood and wider community. The data also show that many participants were already committed to working in a restorative fashion prior to the training and therefore the impacts of the training built on pre-existing commitments. Once again, this was the case for many working in schools, but also for staff in youth services.

Restorative practice in the wider community

The survey data show that RP was not used as often in the wider community as it was in schools and at work. In interviews for this evaluation, many felt that they could not always intervene in issues of community safety and neighbourhood disputes. This was the case because they felt that people in the community would not always react well to the intervention. For example, one young person felt that she could not produce an RP 'card' if she saw people arguing on the street as they would not know what she was doing and they could '*make a mockery*' of her. One barrier to using RP at a personal level was the individual's fear of doing something different. One participant said it is hard to use RP with certain groups who culturally deal with feelings and conflict differently. In addition, very few of the interviewees could mention a concrete example of when they saw RP being practised in the area to resolve arguments between neighbours or in public places. Nonetheless, two residents were accredited as trainers and two more were due to be accredited as trainers, and the training script and format were being re-worked to be more accessible to residents.

While the majority of interviewees expressed highly favourable attitudes towards CDI and the work it does, people also commented that they would like to have received more guidance from the organisation about how to utilise restorative techniques in different situations. Some people stated that while they believe RP works in theory, they wished that they knew more about how to apply it in practice. It was suggested that if the course was run in future, participants could benefit greatly from this.

The lower impact in the wider community is explained in part by the convergence of two issues, one concerning recruitment to the programme and the other the content of the programme. The implementation data show that recruitment was successful among service providers, but less so among residents. Interviews show that service providers took part because they had an already existing relationship with CDI and/or because their managers suggested they take part in the programme and supported their participation. In contrast, the problems that CDI experienced in recruiting residents were part of a more general problem of community engagement by service providers. In addition, interviews show that professionals were not put off by and did not feel alienated by the technical nature of some of the training programme. In contrast, some non-professionals were put off and alienated by the technical content of the training sessions.

Restorative practice in schools and youth services

The outcomes study data show that RP was successful in the school environment. Young people believed that RP could be used in the school environment and participants scored highly in this environment for conflict management and conflict resolution skills. Participants also rated highly the relationships between school staff and pupils, and the relationships among school staff.

Process study data show that managers and staff reported that logistically it is easy to use RP in a school setting. It is '*a natural fit*' for a number of reasons: schools involve large numbers of people, some teachers are already trained in RP, all the staff are '*in it together*' with a clear idea of ethos and culture that is now beginning to include RP. Participants acknowledged that the context is very different in the Council, the HSE and An Garda Síochána, where there are such a variety of settings, hierarchies and work practices.

Some school staff were initially resistant to RP, viewing it as yet another pressure in an already heavy workload. However, seeing the positive changes and what one participant identified as '*the spectacular results which have taken place due to restorative practice*', they now feel that RP is not only beneficial to the children, but it can make the teacher's job easier. One primary school teacher noted that many of the children in her school now took part in 'circles' on their own in the playground and they regularly ask her if they can do a 'circle' in class:

'It solves conflict quickly, less time is wasted. I have used restorative practice solving problems within my class. I have facilitated "circles" for other teachers.'

There are still competing pressures and commitments in schools which make full implementation challenging. One school staff participant noted that, even where there are significant changes in culture and practice, room for improvement can be identified within the school:

'It hasn't been implemented well [by the school]. That is being honest. It's not that there hasn't been support from management or staff, but it does take years to implement it. We are only two years down the road of implementing it ... I'm working with the students a lot, but we need more staff buy-in, we need to put it in our policies properly.'

Building links between agencies and organisations

The outcomes study data show that the RP Programme was successful in increasing interagency working. The programme participants also enjoyed the greatest improvements in conflict management and conflict resolution in interagency settings.

The process study data show that many participants were already committed to RP principles prior to training and also that for many participants and their organisations, there were already existing relationships with CDI and therefore already existing interagency working. In addition, participants had the support of their own management to engage in training and therefore also to further develop an interagency approach to their work.



Chapter 4: Discussion



CDI
Restorative Practices
for a community worth living in

In this chapter, the findings from the evaluation of the Restorative Practice (RP) training programme are discussed. Section 4.1 discusses findings from the process study and explores programme implementation under the headings of utilisation, organisation and fidelity. Section 4.2 discusses findings from the outcomes study and explores the impacts of RP training with reference to the 10 objectives of the RP Programme in Tallaght West. Section 4.3 explores the reasons why the programme succeeded where it did and how successful programme implementation contributed to positive programme impacts.

4.1 Programme implementation

What was the extent and nature of programme take-up and what was the extent to which the intended target population received the intended services? (i.e. programme utilisation)

Assessing programme utilisation *'consists of examining the extent to which the intended target population receives the intended services'* (Rossi *et al*, 2004, p. 171). In the implementation of the RP Programme, considerable progress was made towards attaining targets for recruitment. In addition, as a result of the training programme, a majority of participants experienced other people in their area, school or organisation using RP.

An important question to consider is why recruitment was successful. A number of studies have shown the importance of stakeholders' motivations in the successful implementation of RP programmes. People's attitudes towards restorative practices can affect training and also the implementation of the approach (Blood and Thorsborne, 2006). In the implementation of the RP Programme by CDI, the recruitment process was successful for a number of reasons, including CDI's reputation, its existing relationships with stakeholders and the support offered to people attending training by the Management Committee. Utilisation was successful also because of the 'buy-in' from other organisations since the training was encouraged as an individual professional development opportunity and as a chance for organisations to improve their skill-base in dealing with conflict situations.

The findings show that recruitment was successful in schools and that RP was used most often in school and at work. This was a considerable achievement given the difficulties noted in the literature in achieving 'buy-in' from school staff to restorative projects (Blood and Thorsborne, 2005; Morrison *et al*, 2005). However, the findings also show that improvements could have been made to the recruitment process. The area where programme utilisation was least successful concerned the involvement of residents in the training programme. This was seen as one instance of a more general problem of community engagement faced by all organisations and a problem that all organisations needed to acknowledge and attempt to address together.

How well was the programme organised and run? (i.e. programme organisation)

Assessing programme organisation *'requires comparing the plan for what the programme should be doing with what is actually done, especially with regard to providing services'* (Rossi *et al*, 2004, p.171). The data show in the main the programme was well organised and run. Programme participants in general were highly satisfied with the activities and the content of the training programme and with the materials provided. Initial problems with the facilitation of the introductory day were addressed promptly by CDI and participants expressed satisfaction with the way this problem was dealt with.

The literature shows that for programme implementation in schools to be successful, restorative approaches need to be incorporated into the school's curriculum (Hopkins, 2003). Participants in this study reported that, although the RP training has been well received by staff and pupils in schools, the implementation of a restorative approach in schools will require a sustained effort over a long period by both staff and pupils. This corresponds with findings from elsewhere, that positive change to the culture and atmosphere in schools is often slow to occur (Gellin, 2011). Some school staff also suggested training should not be scheduled for the middle of term. Scheduling of programme delivery around the availability of key stakeholders could also help improve recruitment.

The diverse background of participants in the training sessions was thought by many to facilitate knowledge-sharing and relationship-building. However, a minority thought that non-professionals felt excluded and even alienated due to what was perceived to be the technical nature of some programme content. This is a further area where problems were experienced in attempting to engage with the community. Therefore, so as to ensure the implementation of the programme is inclusive, attention is required with respect to programme content, delivery and facilitation, as well as the recruitment of participants.

What was the extent to which the programme was implemented in line with the model as specified in the programme's Business Plan and were its service delivery and support functions consistent with programme design? (i.e. programme fidelity)

Fidelity to programme design is clearly related to programme outcomes (Rhine *et al*, 2006; Broderick and Carroll, 2008; Webster-Stratton, 2004). Having high programme delivery fidelity has been shown to predict significant improvements in the behaviours of parents and children across a number of different evidence-based practices (Broderick and Carroll, 2008; Eames *et al*, 2009).

Some changes and accommodations were made to the delivery of RP training so as to adapt it to local requirements. Trainers believed the programme was improved by being delivered to smaller groups over shorter days than specified by the IIRPUK. Other accommodations and changes related to training content, particularly the examples and scenarios used. However, as none of the core training content was removed, the participants were confident that programme fidelity had not been compromised by the adaptations made.

Fidelity was to be ensured through a number of methods, including accreditation of trainers, support from CDI to trainers and trainees, and the support of Communities of Practice (COPs) meetings. The trainers, in particular, indicated that they were getting full support from CDI after training, and in general participants valued the experience of COP meetings as a place where trainees can be a support to each other. However, improvements could be made to the measures taken to guarantee fidelity. In particular, trainees said they would have benefited from more support from CDI. Also, trainees were not monitored in their application of RP. All trainees should feel they have the support of CDI after training is completed. In addition, it may be necessary to tailor support, including monitoring of implementation, to the specific requirements of the trainees, for example, in helping apply the RP approach to neighbourhood disputes.

4.2 Programme impacts

Was the programme successful in creating improvements in outcomes for participants and for the wider community?

Outcome monitoring is '*the continual measurement of intended outcomes of the programme*' (Rossi *et al*, 2004, p. 171) and an outcome '*is the state of the target population or the social conditions that a programme is expected to have changed*' (*ibid*, p. 204). When evaluating programme impacts, we are concerned with outcome level (i.e. the status of an outcome at some point), outcome change (i.e. the difference between outcomes at different points in time) and programme effect (i.e. the portion of outcome change that can be 'attributed uniquely' to a programme) (*ibid*, p. 206). The implementation of the RP Programme in Tallaght West had 10 objectives and the evaluation of programme effect is linked to these intended programme outcomes (*see below*).

Interagency objectives

- Improved interagency collaboration among front-line staff.
- Improved relationships between service providers and residents.
- Increase in use of a common approach across sectors and disciplines.

The literature supports the view that the RP approach leads to the best outcomes when it is part of a wider collaboration between organisations and stakeholders. For example, the best results within schools are achieved when teachers form relationships with staff from other schools also adopting this approach (Hopkins, 2003). The findings in the present study show both the difficulty in establishing the use of the restorative approach at an interagency level, but also the positive impacts the training has had at this level. On the one hand, participants used RP rarely in an interagency setting and participants gave themselves a low rating for managing conflict in an interagency setting. On the other hand, the greatest gains in conflict management and conflict resolution were made in the interagency setting and interagency collaboration increased as a result of training.

The findings suggest that prior to the implementation of the programme, there was little evidence that staff in the participating organisations were adopting a restorative approach at an interagency level. However, after participating in the training, collaboration with other organisations had improved. Participants were more likely to have well-established links with other organisations that deliver front-line services, refer their service users to other services, work directly with front-line staff in other organisations, work with other organisations to integrate services and share information about service users (with the latter's consent) with other organisations.

There is also evidence that the nature of the interagency collaboration was shaped by the RP approach. There was evidence that RP training had led to the use of a shared approach, or 'common language,' concerning conflict resolution. Also, participants valued working with young people who were being dealt with restoratively in other settings, and as a result of RP training, a high percentage 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that they got on better with their organisation's service users. This finding is further supported by the positive impacts of RP in the school and youth work settings, and on the relationships between school staff and young people (*see below*).

Objectives for organisations

- 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.
- Increased confidence of front-line staff in dealing with conflict situations.
- Improved staff morale within participating organisations.

The previous section discussed the impact of the RP approach when it is part of a wider collaboration between organisations and stakeholders. This section discusses how within organisations the RP approach can impact setting targets, staff morale and staff confidence. The literature suggests that the first challenge is to ensure that staff fully accept and embrace the new approach since achieving staff 'buy-in' to restorative projects is central to effective implementation, but can be problematic (Blood and Thorsborne, 2005; Morrison *et al*, 2005). When there is staff buy-in, the literature has shown that RP programmes can be successful in schools as it improved the attitudes of students towards learning, boosted their morale, encouraged them to take responsibility for their actions, but also improved relationships between teachers and students, enhanced school culture and improved pupils' grades (Curry, 1997; Wearmouth *et al*, 2007; Gellin, 2011).

In the present study, RP was used most frequently at work and in school. In addition, after receiving the training, there was an increase in those who rated themselves 'moderately high' or 'high' for managing conflict in work and/or in school. The data also show that the experience of conflict was more likely in the workplace than at home or in the neighbourhood, and after taking part in the training programme, there was a decrease in the percentage of those who experienced conflict everyday in the workplace. The findings show positive impacts on work practices, particularly in schools and youth services, including staff meetings starting with a 'circle' and reference to RP in work plans.

Some primary school teachers commented that staff had adopted a new, positive and affirmative way of dealing with children in the classroom. The programme was also credited with bringing changes to professional practice in managing challenging behaviour in classrooms and youth service settings, although a small number of teachers reported that they did not have time for or did not accept the RP approach. Young people also observed that RP had brought a change to the way teachers and youth workers responded to conflict situations, although they also reported that not all teachers adopted an RP approach.

The programme did have a positive impact on pupil behaviour, on relations between school staff and pupils, and on school staff morale and work practices. While not discernible from the survey data, data collected from interviews and observations suggest this experience was mirrored in youth services. However, there is no data available on the impact of the programme on school attendance since this outcome was not monitored by CDI in the implementation of the training programme or by this evaluation team. The programme also had a positive impact on work practices and staff morale, and also on relations between staff and service users. However, there is no data available on whether each organisation did identify one or two specific targets to be achieved through the implementation of RP approaches, or whether they were successful in achieving those targets.

Neighbourhood/community objectives

- 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.

Some studies have found that the RP approach worked at the community level. For example, efforts were made to transform the city of Hull into a 'restorative city' (Mirsky, 2009, p. 1). At a smaller scale, restorative techniques like mediation and conferencing have been used to solve conflicts between neighbours and within families (Gellin and Joensuu, 2011). In the present study, as was the case concerning the impact of the RP approach at interagency level, the findings show both the difficulty in establishing the use of this approach at community level, but also at the same time the positive impacts the training has had at this level.

The data from this evaluation show that RP was used infrequently in the community, that only a small minority got on better with their neighbours as a result of RP training and that participants rated themselves lowest for managing conflict in the community. At the same time, people did not experience conflict in the community as often as they did at home or in work/school, and therefore did not have use for a restorative approach in the community as frequently as at home or in work/school. Also, participation in RP training did have a positive impact on neighbourhood disputes, as there was an almost two-fold increase in the number of participants who rated themselves 'moderately high' or 'high' for managing conflict in the community.

The findings show that while participants rated themselves highly for management of conflict in work and in school, they rated themselves lowest for managing conflict in the less structured environment of the community. However, participants were better able to manage community conflicts as a result of their training. For example, a large minority 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that they were more willing to report crime and anti-social behaviour as a result of RP training. However, it is not possible to comment on whether the rates of crime and anti-social behaviour improved since they were not monitored by CDI in the implementation of the training programme or as part of this evaluation.

Objectives for parents and children

- Increased confidence among participating parents in managing their children's behaviour and being solution-focused.
- Improved capacity among participating children and young people for dealing with conflict and managing problems.

According to Wachtel (1999), the restorative parent is described as being 'authoritative' rather than 'authoritarian' since high levels of control (limit-setting and discipline) are combined with high levels of support (encouragement and nurturing). Therefore, the restorative parent is neither permissive (i.e. not controlling) nor neglectful (i.e. neither controlling nor caring). The literature also has shown that restorative techniques have been used to solve conflicts within families (Gellin and Joensuu, 2011). Restorative approaches used in the family setting can be informal, such as the use of statements or questions that cause people to reflect on their behaviours and how they affect other people. More formal approaches

include those used in social work, such as family group conferencing and family decision-making, sometimes without child and youth professionals being present (Wachtel, 1999). Furthermore, restorative models have also been adopted by police forces in addressing conflict situations involving young people outside of the family setting and have proven successful in helping both young offenders and the victims of crime (Gellin, 2011).

The data from this evaluation show the RP Programme had a positive impact in the family. As was the case in the community and neighbourhood, the RP approach was used infrequently in the family. However, as a result of the training programme, the experience of daily conflict in the home decreased and people's capacity to manage and resolve conflicts in the home increased. Among young people, there was general agreement that RP was not beneficial in the neighbourhood and young people were unlikely to attempt to use this approach to deal with neighbourhood disputes because others would not be familiar with or accepting of the approach. Some young people also said the same thing about using the RP approach in the home and in particular that they believed their parents would not accept it. However, participants were better able to manage conflicts in the home after their training and the qualitative findings show that both parents and young people saw the benefits of the approach. All the adults interviewed spoke about the positive impact of the training programme on young people, including its use to resolve conflicts in school, and among young people themselves there was general agreement about the benefit of RP in school and sometimes among friends.

Can the observed changes in outcome level be attributed uniquely to the programme?

The participants in the study believed that the outcome changes discussed above were programme effects since they were explained by or caused by participation in the programme. The majority of participants either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that, as a result of RP training, they can manage conflict better (87%) and they can manage other problems better (82%) in home, class, work or community.

However, there are two reasons why it is difficult to identify the portion of outcome changes that can be 'attributed uniquely' to the programme. Because there was no comparison group in this study, it is not possible to conclude that the improvements observed here would not have been observed anyway due to the passing of time. This is referred to as a 'maturation effect,' where 'natural changes occurring over time' are confused with a treatment effect (Shadish *et al*, 2002, p. 55). Also, there were many other services available over the course of this study that may account for some of the observed outcome changes; in other words, there may have been a 'history effect' as 'events occurring concurrently with treatment' could cause the observed effect (*ibid*).

Some limitations were also highlighted in regard to the survey data (*see Section 1.5*). However, despite these limitations, the research team decided it was possible to use the data to capture change occurring as a result of exposure to the training programme. The two surveys capture two separate cross-sections of the same community at two time points (before and after receipt of the training). In addition, the qualitative data supported the messages emerging from the survey data about programme impacts.

4.3 Relationship between programme implementation and programme impacts

What factors contributed to or detracted from the use of restorative practice?

The outcomes study data show that RP was successful in the work environment, including schools and youth services. People were more likely to use RP regularly at work/in school and training brought about improvements in conflict management, conflict resolution and in relationships at work/in school. Data collected from interviews show that people believed the approach would work and they felt comfortable with its use in a context where others were trained in or aware of RP, where it was part of the organisation's work plans and where they were already committed to working in a restorative fashion. The RP approach was successful when it was made part of an organisation's work plan and when there was a commitment to working restoratively, as others have found (Hopkins, 2003). Also, support from management was a key reason for people's participation in the training; in addition, it was encouraged as an individual professional development opportunity and as a chance for organisations to improve their skill-base in dealing with conflict situations.

The survey data show that RP was not used as often in the wider community and in the family as it was in schools and at work. As data collected from interviews show, many felt they could not always intervene in issues of community safety and neighbourhood disputes, people in the community would not always react well to the intervention and it was hard to use RP with certain groups who culturally deal with feelings and conflict differently. It was suggested that more guidance was called for from CDI about how to utilise restorative techniques in different situations. In addition, recruitment was less successful among residents due to a general problem of community engagement faced by all service providers. Finally, a small number of participants suggested that non-professionals felt excluded by the technical content of the training programme. Nonetheless, although before the training programme began participants reported low levels of confidence in conflict management and conflict resolution, the RP training did lead to improvements in this area. This suggests that the programme may have been more successful in the community setting if the process of community engagement had been improved, including consultation with all stakeholders about how this is to be done. Also, the use of the programme in the community may have been improved by specific follow-up support strategies. For example, trainees wanted more guidance on how to apply RP to neighbourhood and community disputes, as well as facilitation of conflict resolution in community settings.

The outcomes study data show that the programme was successful in increasing interagency working. It was also successful in improving conflict management and conflict resolution at an interagency level. The process study findings show that participants were supported by their own management to engage in training and therefore they were supported by their management to further develop an interagency approach to their work. The success of the programme in an interagency setting depended on the support for the programme among managers in the various organisations.

The outcomes data show that RP was successful in the school environment and the process study findings provide a number of plausible explanations for this. Logistically, it is easy to use RP in a school setting since it is 'a natural fit.' Staff saw the approach as beneficial to the young people and as making the teacher's job easier. Young people believed that RP can work in the school setting, where rules for its use are clearly understood, but for many it could not work in the neighbourhood or in the home. Therefore, the success of RP training in the school setting depended on the support and buy-in from management, staff, young people and parents. In particular, it is crucial that young people are trained in this approach and then supported by staff and parents to use this approach themselves in managing conflict.



Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations



CDI
Restorative Practices
for a community worth living in

This final chapter provides a summary of the main conclusions from this evaluation, and then makes recommendations for the future implementation of the Restorative Practice (RP) training programme.

5.1 Main conclusions

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. The findings also demonstrate the need for an effective approach in Tallaght West to manage conflict situations. While conflict was most frequently experienced in work/school and in the home, people believed their capacity to cope with conflict was poorest in the community and in an interagency setting.

The RP Programme was well delivered by CDI. In the main, progress was made towards the attainment of targets for recruitment, the programme was well organised and the programme was delivered with fidelity. The programme was well received by participants and participants could see the value in the programme. The areas where improvements are needed include ensuring more residents are recruited to the programme and also ensuring that the delivery of the programme is such that non-professionals feel included.

The programme had a positive impact on the use of RP, in particular in work, school and youth services, but also in the home. RP skills were not used as frequently in other settings, in particular in the neighbourhood/community and in an interagency setting.

Although RP skills were used less frequently in the community and interagency setting, the programme had a positive impact on the capacity to manage conflicts and to find solutions to conflict, in particular in the wider community and in an interagency setting, but also in the home. The programme also had a positive impact on interagency collaboration and the development of a shared approach to conflict management at an interagency level.

5.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations emerge from this study:

- A key recommendation from this study is that, when conflicts arise, every young person involved should be worked with in a restorative way. An overarching goal of the training programme was the creation of a restorative community. That requires a consistency of approach around how authority figures interact with young people. A consistent approach within schools requires that all teachers work with pupils in a restorative way, while a consistent approach across organisations requires the use of a 'shared language' in, for example, schools, community education, child welfare, youth services and juvenile justice, as well as between parents and their children.
- For that reason, CDI's commitment to the implementation of the RP Programme should be maintained. In particular, CDI should continue to deliver the programme and also to support those who have been trained and those who have been trained as trainers.
- Further consideration should be given to how improvements can be made in recruiting residents and also adapting the content of the programme so as to be more inclusive for non-professionals. Trainees should be given more support on how to apply RP in different situations, in particular, by focusing on skills that can be used within the home and in the neighbourhood. Also consideration should be given to the appropriate role of the RP approach in dealing with neighbourhood conflict.
- One of the programme objectives was to support the development of trainer capacity in both Tallaght West and more widely. It is recommended that CDI extend the programme to other agencies and groups with a child or youth remit and consider extending the programme to other areas.
- Managerial support was an important factor explaining why people participated in the programme and also why the programme had positive impacts at an interagency level. It is important that in the future there is continued buy-in and engagement from managers.

- Given the high levels of workplace conflict identified here and the positive impact of the RP Programme in reducing workplace conflict, organisations should be supported to implement the RP Programme with staff, including such initiatives as starting staff meetings with a 'restorative circle,' reference to RP in individual and organisational work plans, and changes to professional practice in managing challenging behaviour, particularly in classrooms, childcare facilities and youth services.
- As they are key outcomes for the programme, in the future CDI should monitor school attendance and disciplinary measures, as well as crime and anti-social behaviour rates, or these data should be monitored internally by the relevant organisation. Support in identifying specific outcomes and appropriate monitoring mechanisms should be provided to all participating organisations.
- CDI should continue to monitor the impacts of the programme over time. Further investigation is needed on whether the programme has become embedded in workplaces, schools and youth services, in homes and communities, and in the interagency setting, and also whether the impacts of the programme have been sustained.
- For the purposes of ensuring programme fidelity, CDI should continue to provide follow-up support to trainers and trainees, and Communities of Practice (COPs) meetings should continue to play an important role here. Greater effort is required to ensure that those who have attended training but who have not trained as trainers remain engaged with CDI and with the COPs, and in that way receive the support they require.

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Appendix 1: Additional tables

Table A1-1: Impact on experience of conflict

Experience of conflict	Time	Everyday	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Not applicable	Total
How often are you facing conflict in the workplace?	Pre	60% (42)	24.3% (17)	9.7% (7)	2.9% (2)	2.9% (2)	100% (70)
	Post	37.1% (46)	30.6% (38)	12.1% (15)	8.9% (11)	11.3% (14)	100% (124)
How often are you facing conflict in the home?	Pre	10.3% (7)	23.5% (16)	20.6% (14)	1.5% (1)	44.1% (30)	100% (68)
	Post	5.3% (6)	19.3% (22)	21.1% (24)	12.3% (14)	41.2% (47)	100% (114)
How often are you facing conflict in the community?	Pre	3.2% (2)	4.8% (3)	11.3% (7)	3.2% (2)	77.4% (44)	100% (62)
	Post	1.8% (2)	12.8% (14)	6.4% (7)	22.9% (25)	55% (60)	100% (109)

Table A1-2: Impact on self-rating for conflict management

Managing conflict – Self-rating	Time	Low	Moderately low	Neither high nor low	Moderately high	High	Not applicable	Total
How would you rate yourself at managing conflict in the home?	Pre	1.4% (1)	12.3% (9)	30.1% (22)	26% (19)	12.3% (9)	17.8% (13)	100% (73)
	Post	0.8% (1)	5% (6)	30.6% (37)	31.4% (38)	16.5% (20)	15.7% (19)	100% (121)
How would you rate yourself at managing conflict in work/school?	Pre	0%	8% (6)	40% (30)	38.7% (29)	10.7% (8)	1.3% (1)	100% (75)
	Post	1.6% (2)	5.6% (7)	24% (30)	41.6% (52)	19.2% (24)	8% (10)	100% (125)
How would you rate yourself at managing conflict in the community?	Pre	2.9% (2)	7.1% (5)	20% (14)	12.9% (9)	2.9% (2)	54.3% (38)	100% (70)
	Post	0.8% (1)	7.8% (9)	22.6% (26)	25.2% (29)	9.6% (11)	33.9% (39)	100% (115)
How would you rate yourself at managing conflict in interagency settings?	Pre	0%	6.2% (4)	23.1% (15)	6.2% (4)	3.1% (2)	60% (39)	100% (65)
	Post	1.8% (2)	7.1% (8)	23% (26)	27.4% (31)	9.7% (11)	31% (35)	100% (130)

Table A1-3: Impact on conflict management skills

Conflict management skills	Time	Low	Moderately low	Neither high nor low	Moderately high	High	Not applicable	Total
How skilled are you at managing conflict in the home?	Pre	1.6% (1)	12.5% (8)	37.5% (24)	26.6% (17)	7.8% (5)	14.1% (9)	100% (64)
	Post	0.8% (1)	5.9% (7)	28.8% (34)	30.5% (36)	16.1% (19)	17.8% (19)	100% (118)
How skilled are you at managing conflict at work/ in school?	Pre	1.6% (1)	11.3% (7)	43.5% (27)	33.9% (21)	9.7% (6)	0%	100% (62)
	Post	0.8% (1)	7.3% (9)	18.7% (23)	41.5% (51)	20.3% (25)	11.4% (14)	100% (123)
How skilled are you at managing conflict in the community?	Pre	1.7% (1)	6.8% (4)	25.4% (15)	16.9% (10)	1.7% (1)	47.5% (28)	100% (59)
	Post	2.6% (3)	7% (8)	20.9% (24)	22.6% (26)	10.4% (12)	36.5% (42)	100% (115)
How skilled are you at managing conflict in interagency settings?	Pre	1.8% (1)	7% (4)	22.8% (13)	8.8% (5)	1.8% (1)	57.9% (33)	100% (57)
	Post	1.8% (2)	5.3% (6)	19.5% (22)	29.2% (33)	10.6% (12)	33.6% (38)	100% (113)

Table A1-4: Impact on capacity to identify solutions to conflict situations

Identification of solutions to conflict	Time	Low	Moderately low	Neither high nor low	Moderately high	High	Not applicable	Total
What is your capacity to identify solutions to conflict situations at home?	Pre	2.9% (2)	7.2% (5)	24.6% (17)	30.4% (21)	17.4% (12)	17.4% (12)	100% (69)
	Post	1.7% (2)	5% (6)	22.5% (27)	36.7% (44)	19.2% (23)	15% (18)	100% (120)
What is your capacity to identify solutions to conflict situations at work/in school?	Pre	0%	7.1% (5)	30% (21)	47.1% (33)	14.3% (10)	1.4% (1)	100% (70)
	Post	2.4% (3)	6.5% (8)	17.1% (21)	42.3% (52)	26.8% (33)	4.9% (6)	100% (123)
What is your capacity to identify solutions to conflict situations in the community?	Pre	1.6% (1)	4.7% (3)	18.8% (12)	17.2% (11)	6.3% (4)	51.6% (33)	100% (64)
	Post	0.8% (1)	5.3% (6)	21.2% (24)	23.9% (27)	13.3% (15)	35.4% (40)	100% (113)
What is your capacity to identify solutions to conflict situations in interagency settings?	Pre	1.7% (1)	3.3% (2)	16.7% (10)	15% (9)	3.3% (2)	60% (36)	100% (60)
	Post	1.8% (2)	7.1% (8)	16.8% (19)	27.4% (31)	16.8% (19)	30.1% (34)	100% (113)

Table A1-5: Impact on interagency collaboration

Interagency working	Time	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Not applicable	Total
Well-established links – other organisations/ front-line services	Pre	11.7% (7)	53.3% (32)	13.3% (8)	3.3% (2)	0%	5% (7)	11.7% (1)	100% (60)
	Post	45.7% (58)	38.6% (49)	8.7% (11)	3.1% (4)	0%	1.6% (2)	2.4% (3)	100% (127)
Regularly refer service users to other services	Pre	8.3% (5)	56.7% (34)	8.3% (5)	1.7% (1)	0%	13.3% (8)	11.7% (7)	100% (60)
	Post	35.7% (45)	48.4% (61)	7.1% (9)	1.6% (2)	0%	3.2% (4)	4% (5)	100% (126)
Trains front-line staff to work directly with other organisations	Pre	3.3% (7)	28.3% (17)	25% (15)	15% (9)	3.3% (2)	8.3% (5)	16.7% (10)	100% (60)
	Post	16.1% (20)	23.4% (29)	26.6% (33)	18.5% (33)	5.6% (7)	4.8% (6)	4.8% (6)	100% (124)
Worked with other organisations to integrate services	Pre	8.6% (5)	50% (29)	8.6% (5)	8.6% (5)	0%	8.6% (5)	15.5% (9)	100% (59)
	Post	33.3% (42)	44.4% (56)	7.1% (9)	7.9% (10)	0.8% (1)	3.2% (4)	3.2% (4)	100% (126)
Shares information about service users with other organisations	Pre	7% (4)	42.1% (24)	14% (8)	5.3% (3)	0%	14% (8)	17.5% (10)	100% (57)
	Post	27.8% (35)	49.2% (62)	9.5% (12)	3.2% (4)	1.6% (2)	5.6% (7)	3.2% (4)	100% (126)

Appendix 2: Information for Parents/Guardians



Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child is being invited to take part in a study on restorative practices in their school. Before you decide whether or not to let your child participate in the study, we feel that it is important for you to know the purpose of the research and what it involves. This sheet will hopefully answer any questions you might have. If anything remains unclear, please feel free to contact us. If you agree to take part, please sign the attached consent form.

Who is conducting this study?

The Child and Family Research Centre at the National University of Ireland, Galway is conducting this research with people who have taken part in restorative practice training with Tallaght CDI. The people on the research team are Dr. John Canavan, Liam Coen, Dr. Celia Keenaghan and Dr. Lisa Moran, who are all researchers at NUI, Galway.

What is this research about and what does it involve?

The purpose of this research is to look at the impact that restorative practice has had upon people's lives and to make recommendations to Tallaght CDI about their restorative practice training. The study itself involves talking to people in Tallaght about their experiences with restorative practices. We will be asking your child about his/her views on the training and his/her experience of using restorative practice.

How can you help?

We are interested to hear about young people's experiences of restorative practice and the impact that it has upon their lives. We are asking your permission to allow your child to be interviewed as part of the study. Participation is entirely voluntary and a meeting will only take place once both you and your child provide written consent. The meeting itself should take no more than an hour in duration and your child can leave at any time or refuse to reply to any questions they do not want to answer.

How will the information be treated?

Only members of the research team will have access to your child's responses. We will treat them confidentially. Neither will anything be published from which a participant could be identified. However, the researchers are bound by Children First guidelines. This means that no information about your specific child will be passed on to Government bodies unless the researcher feels there is a significant risk. All information will be securely stored for five years after the completion of the study.

Who can I talk to if I need further advice about participating in the study?

Lisa Moran can be contacted at NUI, Galway at 087 9676965 or lisa.moran@nuigalway.ie

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

Appendix 3: Research on Restorative Practice – Consent Form (Parent)



1. I have read the information given to me and I understand the purpose of this meeting.

2. I fully agree to allow my child to participate in this meeting.

3. I understand that he/she is free to leave at any time and he/she can refuse to answer any questions should they wish to do so.

Signed: _____

Please print name: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for your help.

**Child and Family Research Centre
NUI, Galway**

Appendix 4: Information for Participants



Dear Participant,

This letter is to invite you to take part in a study on restorative practice. Before you decide whether or not to help us, we feel that it is important for you to know the purpose of the research and what it involves. This sheet will hopefully answer any questions you might have, but if anything remains unclear please feel free to contact us. If you agree to take part, please sign the consent form.

Who is conducting this study?

The Child and Family Research Centre (CRFC) at the National University of Ireland, Galway is currently conducting this research project. The people on the research team are Dr. John Canavan, Liam Coen, Dr. Celia Keenaghan and Dr. Lisa Moran, who are all researchers in NUIG.

What is this research about and what does it involve?

The purpose of this research is to look at the impact that restorative practice has upon people's lives. The study itself involves meeting with people who have completed training in restorative practices through Tallaght CDI. We will be asking you about your views on the training and your experience of using restorative practice.

How can you help?

We are interested to hear about your experiences of restorative training and the impact this has had upon you and your community. We are asking your permission for us to talk to you as part of the study. Participation in the study is entirely voluntary and this meeting will only take place once both you and your parent/guardian provide written consent. This meeting should take no more than an hour in duration and you can leave at any time or refuse to reply to questions you do not want to answer.

How will the information be treated?

Only members of the research team will have access to your answers and will keep them totally private. No information about you will be passed on to government bodies unless the researcher feels you are at significant risk. Neither will anything be published from which you could be identified.

Who can I talk to if I need further advice about participating in the study?

Lisa Moran can be contacted at NUI, Galway at 087 9676965 or lisa.moran@nuigalway.ie

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

Appendix 5: Research on Restorative Practice – Consent Form (Participants)



1. I have read the information given to me and I understand the purpose of this meeting.

2. I fully agree to participate in this meeting.

3. I understand that I am free to leave at any time and I can refuse to answer any questions should I wish to do so.

Signed: _____

Please print name: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for your help.

**Child and Family Research Centre
NUI, Galway**

Appendix 6: Restorative Questions

These restorative questions are used when conducting either a formal or informal restorative conference using an internationally tried and tested process, which delivers improved outcomes in resolving conflict and restoring relationships that have been harmed. A trained facilitator will conduct these conferences and the questions afford all participants the opportunity to be heard, to understand where everybody else is coming from, to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to be part of the solution to whatever problem is being dealt with.

Restorative Questions 1: Responding to challenging behaviour

- What happened?
- What were you thinking of at the time?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- Who has been affected by what you did?
- In what way have they been affected?
- What do you think needs to happen next?

Restorative Questions 2: Responding to those harmed

- What happened?
- What were your thoughts at the time?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- How has this affected you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen next?

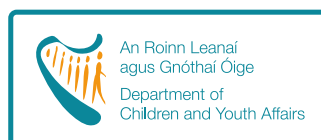




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