

# The Effect of School Conditions on the Use of Restorative Justice in Schools

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## What is the study about?

Identifies the school conditions that influence which RJ techniques will be implemented.

## What did they find?

Larger schools are more likely to use peer mediation, less likely to endorse restitution.

School structure does not appear to impact the adoption of a comprehensive RJ approach to discipline.

Schools with more Black students are less likely than schools with more White students to require student violators to provide restitution or community service,

Black student composition appears to have no impact on whether peer mediation or student conferences are used in those instances.

Schools with higher number of low-income households are less likely to offer peer mediation and student conferences.

Overall restorative response to student discipline is less likely to be implemented in schools with larger percentages of Black students, Hispanic students, and economically disadvantaged students.

Demographic characteristics of schools' teachers did not appear to influence the use of RJ.

Schools in urban settings and those characterized by concentrated disadvantage are not necessarily less likely to use RJ, but problematic differences persist.

### Why is the study important?

Identifying the characteristics of a school that may impact the specific RJ techniques used can give us ideas on how to limit disparities between groups of students. In general, by being more aware of these tendencies, RJ can be implemented with more fidelity and may help to improve the school climate and even help some of the students have less involvement in the juvenile justice system.

### What can School Social Workers do?

Become more informed about the disparities & advocate for use of appropriate pieces of RJ techniques across the MTSS for all our students. Also note one of the key takeaways from the study- that certain school level traits influence whether restorative practices are used, so we must help policymakers, school administrators, and districts understand that there should not be differential implementation based on the size of the school, and economic and racial differences.