

## Contact Us

### RF-RJE

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*"We are broken within the context of relationships; and we are also healed within the scope of relationships."*

Hilda Nadjiwan

## Who We Are

### Relationships First: Restorative Justice in Education NL Consortium

is a not-for-profit organization whose various partners recognize the significance of authentic relationships in healthy development of youth in NL. Its aim is to nurture and support educational organizations where children, youth, and adults alike thrive because their inherent worth, wellbeing, and interconnectedness is recognized and honored. **We provide professional development and a variety of services to create environments of belonging** and respect where challenges and harm are addressed proactively using restorative justice.



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**Relationships First:**  
*Restorative Justice in Education Consortium  
Newfoundland and Labrador (RF-RJE)*

## Relationships First: Background

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Restorative justice originates from various indigenous and spiritual traditions that identify justice holistically as promoting the worth, well-being, and interconnectedness of all people.

This **Relationships First** perspective is primarily about *living justly*--proactively creating and nurturing healthy relational communities where people commit to interacting in a manner that upholds the dignity of all. In this context, when harm occurs, instead of asking "What rules were broken? Who did it? What do they deserve?" a **Relationships First** approach asks, "Who has been hurt? What are their needs? Who is obliged to address the needs and put right the harms?" (Zehr, 2005).



## Relationships First: Professional Development

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**Relationships First (RF-RJE)** offers **introductory, intermediate, and intensive** professional development opportunities to support the creation of educational cultures that focus on *relationships first*.

Participants learn:

- To nurture inclusive, caring, safe spaces;
- Support day-to-day interactions amongst adults, students, and community;
- Facilitate restorative justice conferences for serious incident response.



## Relationships First: Serious Incident Response

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At times, serious incidents occur that require outside advice and/or facilitation. RF-RJE provide comprehensive support to work through the complexities that arise using a restorative justice process.

Upon invitation and after consultation, a team may be deployed to work *with* those affected in a process that, at every stage, is intentionally inclusive and respectful of each individual and the group.

Collectively, those involved identify and address harms, needs, and obligations, in order to heal and put things right. The resolution includes support and accountability for each participant and arises from the interconnectedness within the group.

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*"People are longing to discover true community. We have had enough of loneliness, independence, and competition." Jean Vanier*