# Restorative Justice for the Classroom
# Lesson 1 The Community Web

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## Lesson or Unit Plan Objective

The Unit objective is to teach students about Community Conferencing and the important roles that each community member plays in peaceful conflict resolution practices. This unit places particular emphasis on just consequences that heal the victim and community as well as reintegrate the offender back into the community in a positive, restorative way.

The Lesson Objective is to identify community roles in conflict resolution and develop understanding of the significance of each role in keeping the community safe. Through role play, students learn how each role is a part of an intricate web of community support and how a breakdown in one part of the web affects the whole. Through this lesson students develop communication skills and empathy.

☼ **Time** 40-45 minutes

✂ **Materials**.

- Large ball of yarn or string
- Scissors
- A package of sticky notes

## Getting Started

**Knowledge Now**

- On a piece of blank paper students are to write a name of a person in their community who they think holds the most importance. Students are to write down why that person is important and what would happen if this person wasn't in their community.
- Students are to read their cards out to the rest of the class.

**Engaging Interest**

1. Give each student a small piece of paper.
2. Ask them to identify roles within the community. (some initial guidance may be required).
3. When a student identifies a role have them place their sticky note on the classroom wall.

4. Proceed until the number of identified roles equals or exceeds the number of students in the class.
5. Discuss with students the various types of roles in the community.

## Learning Activities
1. Explain that each student will be expected to choose a "role" in the coming activity.
2. The instructor may wish to choose the "child" role to begin the activity as it is a role with which all students identify. Give the ball of yarn or string to a student.
3. The student with the yarn or string is asked to identify another role in the group. The ball of yarn or string is then passed to this person.
4. The person receiving the yarn or string tells the group how they are connected to the child. The process is continued until all the students have articulated their roles.
5. Others in the group may contribute if their peers have difficulty. An intricate web should now be evident.
6. While students are still in the circle pose a question that would indicate a breakdown in the web. (eg. A grade 5 student, while on his way home from school has been beaten by 2 other children).
7. Initially ask students to tug the string if they feel that they might be affected by such an event. Ask everyone in the web to articulate how they might be affected by such an event.
8. Enter into a discussion with the students regarding the interconnectedness of communities. Conclude with telling the students that they will be learning a new way to cope with problems in your classroom, school and community.

## Assessment/Analysis
- Marks may be taken from student written responses during the Knowledge Now activity and graded on how well the students answered the question and details added.
- Student participation and attitude may be marked based on student attitude during the activity and their attitude and willingness to participate.

## Activities for Extension and/or Integration
- This lesson could be extended for use with the classroom meeting to help build self-esteem amongst classmates. Instead of identifying the roles of people in the community, students may be asked to provide a positive trait about one group member in their class and discuss how each student affects the classroom in a good way, but if someone changes their behaviour or leaves the class, the web is not as strong. Students may want to bring up some of their own experiences in the classroom of others (students to be unnamed) or themselves regarding a time when they or someone else caused the web to loosen and what they did to tighten the web once again.

## Subject and Level Learner Outcomes for Subject and Level
Health 6:

W-6.9 evaluate the impact of personal behavior on the safety and self of others
R 6.4 identify, analyze and develop strategies to overcome barriers to communication.

Health 7:

W-7.10 identify and examine potential sources of physical, emotional and social support.

Health 8

R-8.5 develop strategies for maintaining healthy relationships

R-8.6 describe and provide examples of ethical behavior in relationships; e.g., integrity.

Health 9

9.5 describe and analyze factors that contribute to the development of unhealthy relationships, and develop strategies to deal with unhealthy relationships.

## Safe and Caring Topics and Concepts

**Living Respectfully**

- Taking responsibility for our choices, our actions and for the consequences of our actions.
- Exploring punishment and problem solving as approaches to inappropriate behaviour.

**Resolving Conflict Peacefully**

- Describe and demonstrate a process that helps resolve conflict in a way both sides can accept.
- Helping classmates establish ground rules for resolving conflict.

## Teaching Strategies

| Go to www.sacsc.ca Click on Resources, Strategies for strategy descriptions | Cooperative Learning | Inquiry Learning | Direct Instruction |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Problem Solving | Lecture |

| Generalization and Transfer | Peer Teaching | Empathy/Affective Education | General Teaching Activities/Ideas |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Brainstorming |

## Supplementary Resources

- Gauthier, Gene. 1999. Class Meeting for Safe and Caring Schools.