

# Culture COUNTS

## Rachel's Message of Kindness and Compassion "Springs" into Action Across OCM BOCES

By Eric Comtois

Rachel's Challenge has continued to be a catalyst in spreading kindness and compassion across OCM BOCES and the larger community. Student participation in Friends of Rachel (FOR) and Kindness and Compassion (KC) Clubs has grown, and the impact is evident! There are currently 11 active Rachel's Challenge clubs across the organization, with more than 200 student leaders planning and carrying out activities that positively influence school culture.

Rachel's message of kindness and compassion may have been most evident during the holiday season. Clubs participated in events such as volunteering for the Salvation Army's Holiday Distribution Day and bell-ringing, visiting local retirement communities, organizing Rachel's Closet donations, and establishing food drives. We truly made a difference! This March, FOR and KC Clubs helped roll out the White Ribbon Campaign at OCM BOCES to raise awareness and funds to end domestic and sexual violence. Advisors and students are excited to continue the spread of Rachel's message in the community this spring. As we approach the final quarter of the school year, we encourage you to keep in mind the five challenges of Rachel's Legacy (below).

### The five challenges of Rachel's Legacy:

1. Leave a Legacy of Kindness
2. Show Compassion
3. Practice Pre-Acceptance
4. Learn from Your Mistakes
5. Forgive Yourself and Others



Almost 200 teachers, counselors, social workers and teacher assistants attended the OCM BOCES workshop March 13 on Restorative Practices. Turn the page to learn more.

Relationships are the number one priority if we desire student engagement around content.

— Randi Downs,  
Instructional Coach  
OCM BOCES Student Services

### The Power of CIRCLES



Turn this page over to learn more about behavior support techniques.

### Get Social



facebook.com/  
OCMBOCES



@OCMBOCES

OCMBOCES   
Committed to Your Success

# Supporting Students with Trauma

*By Dan Hesler*

Many students who have been exposed to traumatic experiences have difficulty regulating their emotions and impulsive behaviors. Staff have the ability to intervene with the student at the first sign of stress or triggering event, and reviewing behavior support techniques can better prepare staff for this process.

Behavior support techniques provide environmental support to reduces stress and risk in the situation. When choosing a behavior support technique, it is important to assess the meaning of the behavior before choosing a behavior support technique. For examples, please review the list at the right.

## Behavior Support Techniques:

- Managing the Environment
- Prompting
- Caring Gesture
- Hurdle Help
- Redirection and Distractions
- Proximity
- Directive Statement
- Time Away

*More information can be found in your TCI Workbook pages W33-W42.*



*Great discussions at the OCM BOCES Restorative Practices workshop!*



# Collaborative Learning with Restorative Practices

*By Randi Downs*

On March 13, OCM BOCES Student Services middle and high school staff shared in some collaborative learning around Restorative Practices! Almost 200 teachers, counselors, social workers and teacher assistants circled up to discuss the ways we build positive relationships with students. Relationships are the number one priority if we desire student engagement around content.

OCM BOCES Restorative Practice Turnkey trainers led Day 2 circles in both Liverpool and Cortland. At the same time, a group of passionate middle-school educators began their journey with Restorative Practices in a well-attended Day 1 training.

Good luck to all of you as you build community through circle conversations and activities!



*Pictured: Restorative Practices Turnkey group members Rachelle Hoy and Kim Capalonga*