

# Culture COUNTS

## Crisis Prevention: Relationships Matter!

By Dan Hesler

Josh Shipp is a youth motivational speaker who shares his story about growing up in the foster system and links his success in life to one caring adult, Rodney. Josh's story can be found here: <https://joshshipp.com>. As we start the new school year, it is important to spend time building relationships with your students. A positive relationship with your students can play a huge role in decreasing crisis behavior. In TCI, we learned that "most crises can be prevented by building caring relationships, establishing structure and activities that meet student's basic needs. ..." (TCI Reference guide, R13)

“Every kid is ONE caring adult away from being a success story.”

- Josh Shipp

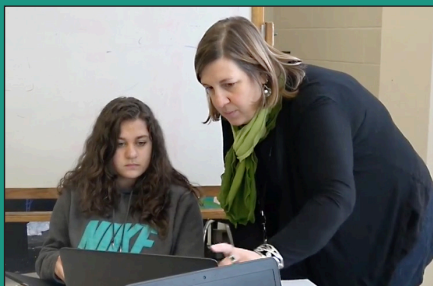
## The Power of CIRCLES



Turn the page to learn about their simple but powerful benefits.

## TIPS TO HELP

- ✓ Provide children with as much consistency as possible.
- ✓ Let children know at least once a day how much you like them and how happy you are to be working with them.
- ✓ Check with students throughout the day on how they are feeling.
- ✓ Provide children with opportunities to experience themselves as important contributors to the classroom.
- ✓ Use positive self-talk!
- ✓ Replace "you" statements (You are ...) with "I" statements (I feel ...). This helps both de-escalate the situation and reinterpret the events.



All of the above tips are from the book, *"Reaching and Teaching Children who Hurt,"* by Susan E Craig.

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# Restorative Practices: Why Circles?

By Randi Downs

Over the next year, our 9-12 teachers will be trained in Restorative Practices. One component of Restorative Practices is the use of circles to build relationships. You might be wondering, why circles? Circles involve everyone so that the entire classroom community has ownership of the process. Circles also remind us that we are facilitators of the dialogue, not presenters. Something magic happens when we sit in a circle with our students; imagine the feeling of connectedness that we might foster when we sit in a circle, put out a prompt and invite all voices to be heard!



For more information, visit the [International Institute of Restorative Practices](#), and be on the lookout for upcoming training opportunities!

# Rachel's Challenge: The Spread of Kindness Continues

By Eric Comtois

OCM BOCES is excited to continue to spread the message of kindness and compassion through Rachel's Challenge. Rachel's Challenge exists to inspire and equip every person to create a permanent positive change not only in themselves, but their schools, businesses and communities. Last school year, OCM BOCES students and staff worked together to establish Friends of Rachel (FOR) and Kindness and Compassion (KC) Clubs throughout the district. Through these clubs, a chain reaction of positivity and generosity emerged. The impact was widespread throughout our schools, programs, and local communities. This year, the message will continue to grow through our FOR and KC Clubs. Kick-off presentations and training sessions took place during the week of October 1-5. Across the organization, students and staff are ready to continue the Rachel's Challenge mission of spreading kindness to others!



Top row: Crossroads students "choose kind" with painted handprints on the walls. Rachel Scott, the inspiration for Rachel's Challenge, encouraged others to use their hands to do good.  
Bottom left: Students at McEvoy sign a "legacy" challenge to continue showing kindness. Bottom right: A Rachel's Challenge presenter, Ali, kicks off the year.