Restorative Conflict In Schools: Necessary Roles of Cooperative Learning and Constructive Conflict

David W. Johnson and Roger T. Johnson

University of Minnesota

60 Peik Hall

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55435

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Introduction

In order for restorative justice to be effective, schools must be dominated by cooperative learning and constructive conflict resolution. In order to understand the truth of this statement, it is necessary to review (a) the nature of restorative justice and how it fits into an overall view of justice, (b) social interdependence theory, the theory underlying restorative justice, cooperation, and constructive conflict, (c) the need for a cooperative context in order for restorative justice to occur, (d) the use of integrative negotiations and peer mediation in restoring justice, (e) the use of constructive controversy to make decisions about how justice may be restored, and (f) the development of civic values.

Types of Justice

In order to discuss restorative justice it must first be placed within the field of justice as a whole. Justice involves ensuring that benefits are distributed justly (i.e., distributive justice), the same procedures are applied fairly to all members (i.e., procedural justice), everyone is perceived to be part of the same moral community (i.e., moral inclusion), and any wrongs suffered are righted (restorative justice) (Deutsch, 2006; Johnson & F. Johnson, 2009; Johnson & R. Johnson, 1989, 2005a).

Distributive Justice

Deutsch (1985) defined distributive justice as the method used to grant benefits (and sometimes costs and harms) to group or organizational members. There are three major ways in which benefits may be distributed. The equity (or merit) view is a person's rewards should be
in proportion to his or her contributions to the group's effort. This view is inherent in competitive situations. The **equality view** is all group members should benefit equally. It is inherent in cooperative situations. The **need view** is group members’ benefits should be awarded in proportion to their need. Cooperators typically ensure that all participants receive the social minimum needed for their well being. Whatever system is used, it has to be perceived as "just." When rewards are distributed unjustly, the group may be characterized by low morale, high conflict, and low productivity (Johnson & F. Johnson, 2009; Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2005a).

**Procedural Justice**

**Procedural justice** involves fairness of the procedures that determine the benefits and outcomes a person receives. Fair procedures involve both that the same procedure being applied equally to everyone and that the procedure be implemented with polite, dignified, and respectful behavior. Typically, fairness of procedures and treatment are a more pervasive concern to most people than fair outcomes (Deutsch, 2006). The more frequent the use of cooperative learning, the more students tend to believe that everyone who tried has an equal chance to succeed in class, that students get the grades they deserved, and that the grading system is fair (Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2005a, 2009a). Even when their task performances are markedly discrepant, members of cooperative groups tend to view themselves and their groupmates as being equally deserving of benefits and rewards.

**Scope of Justice**

Justice tends to be given only to individuals who are perceived to be included in one’s moral community, that is, who falls within the scope of justice (Deutsch, 1985; Opotow, 1990; Staub, 1987). Individuals and groups who are outside the boundary of one’s moral community may be treated in ways that would be considered immoral if people within the moral community were so treated. The **scope of justice** is the extent to which a person’s concepts of justice apply to specific others (Deutsch, 1985, 2006). Moral considerations guide our behavior with those individuals and groups who are inside our scope of justice. **Moral inclusion**, therefore, is
applying considerations of fairness and justice to others, seeing them as entitled to a share of the community’s resources, and seeing them as entitled to help, even at a cost to oneself (Opotow, 1990, 1993). **Moral exclusion** occurs when a person excludes groups or individuals from his or her scope of justice, a share of the community’s resources, and the right to be helped. When moral exclusion exists, moral values and rules that apply in relations with insiders are not applicable. Moral exclusion permits and justifies derogating and mistreating outsiders and is perpetuated primarily through denying that it has harmful effects. The denial includes minimizing the duration of the effects; denying others’ entitlement to better outcomes; and seeing one’s mistreatment as negligible (Opotow & Weiss, 2000). Those outside the scope of justice can be viewed as nonentities (e.g., less than human) who can be exploited (for example, illegal immigrants, slaves), or enemies who deserve brutal treatment and even death.

Bullies, perpetrators, and bystanders tend to morally exclude victims and consider them outside the scope of justice. In competitive and individualistic situations, the boundaries between ingroups (in which moral inclusion exists) and outgroups (which are morally excluded) are quite strong and well marked. Cooperative situations, on the other hand, promote a much wider range of moral inclusion and scope of justice. Especially when the members of diverse backgrounds and cultures participate in the same cooperative group, moral inclusion is broadened (Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2005a). Moral inclusion includes the values of fairness, equality, and humanitarianism. Cooperators tend to see all of humanity as being entitled to fair treatment, justice, and help and may even extend moral inclusion and the scope of justice to other species and life forms (Opotow, 1993). Albert Schweitzer, for example, included all living creatures in his moral community, and some Buddhists include all of nature.

**Restorative Justice**

While distributive justice focuses on the perceived fairness of the distribution of benefits and rewards, and procedural justice focuses on the perceived fairness of the procedures used to determine outcomes, restorative justice focuses on righting the wrongs suffered in a destructively
managed conflict. It becomes a concern after a conflict has taken place in which one party was harmed by another. **Restorative justice** involves bringing together all parties affected by harm or wrongdoing (e.g., offenders and their families, victims and their families, other members of the community, and professionals), discussing what happened and how they were affected, and agreeing on what should be done to right any wrongs suffered (Morrison & Ahmed, 2006; Umbreit, 1995). It is both a process that encourage individuals to meet, problem solve, and negotiate with each other and a set of values that emphasize the importance of healing, repairing, restoring, reintegrating the relationships, and preventing harm to others. It is a form of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm done in interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup relationships.

Two important aspects of restorative justice are reconciliation and forgiveness. **Reconciliation** is an emotional reattachment and affiliation between former opponents after conflict-induced separation (de Waal, 2000; Roseth, Pellegrini, Dupuis, Bohn, Hickey, Hilk, & Peshkam, 2010). It reaffirms and restores the positive, cooperative relationship among the parties in a conflict. It some cases it ends the negative sanctions placed on the offender, which often is social exclusion from the mainstream and increased association with deviant subcultures (i.e., prison). It all cases it involves an emotional reattachment among the parties involved in the conflict. **Forgiveness** occurs when the victim pardons the offender and lets go of any grudge, desire for revenge, or resentment toward the offender for the wrongdoing (Enright, Gassin, & Knutson, 2003). Forgiveness conveys the victim’s hope and expectation that the offender can be trusted in the future to not repeat the offense and take responsibility for the well-being of the victim.

In order for restorative justice to occur, there are three major conditions that must be present. The first is creating a cooperative context within which the disputants can reconcile and repair their relationship. The second is the use of integrative (e.g., problem-solving) negotiations to ensure that disputants seeks outcomes that are mutually beneficial. The third is to make
Social Interdependence Theory

Underlying the nature of cooperation, cooperative learning, and constructive conflict resolution is social interdependence theory. Social interdependence theory has its origins in Gestalt Psychology and Lewin’s Field Theory. Gestalt psychologists posited that humans are primarily concerned with developing organized and meaningful views of their world by perceiving events as integrated wholes rather than a summation of parts or properties. One of the founders of the Gestalt School of Psychology, Kurt Koffka (1935), proposed that similar to psychological fields, groups were dynamic wholes in which the interdependence among members could vary. Kurt Lewin (1935) subsequently proposed that the essence of a group is the interdependence among members which results in the group being a "dynamic whole" so that a change in the state of any member or subgroup changes the state of any other member or subgroup. Group members are made interdependent through common goals. Finally, Morton Deutsch (1949) developed a theory of cooperation and competition that serves as the heart of social interdependence theory.

Social interdependence exists when the accomplishment of each individual’s goals is affected by the actions of others (Deutsch, 1949, 1962; Johnson, 1970, 2003; Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2005a, 2009a). There are two types of social interdependence, positive (cooperation) and negative (competition). Positive interdependence exists when individuals perceive that they can reach their goals if and only if the other individuals with whom they are cooperatively linked also reach their goals. Participants, therefore, promote each other’s efforts to achieve the goals. Negative interdependence exists when individuals perceive that they can obtain their goals if and only if the other individuals with whom they are competitively linked fail to obtain their goals. Participants, therefore, obstruct each other’s efforts to achieve the goals. No interdependence results in a situation in which individuals perceive that they can
reach their goal regardless of whether other individuals in the situation attain or do not attain their goals. Each type of interdependence results in certain psychological processes and interaction patterns which, in turn, determine the outcomes of the situation, including the moral socialization and education of the individuals involved.

The basic premise of interdependence theory is that how goal interdependence is structured determines how individuals interact, which in turn determines outcomes. When positive goal interdependence is structured, **promotive interaction** results (i.e., one's actions promote the goal achievement of others). When negative goal interdependence is structured, **oppositional interaction** results (i.e., participants’ actions obstruct the goal achievement of others). When no goal interdependence is structure, there is no interaction. Promotive interaction tends to result in a wide variety of outcomes that may be subsumed into the categories of high effort to achieve, positive relationships, and psychological health. Oppositional interaction tends to result in low effort to achieve by most students, negative relationships, and low psychological health. No interaction tends to result in low effort to achieve, an absence of relationships, and psychological pathology.

Cooperation and competition provide contexts in which either restorative justice will be effective or ineffective.

**Cooperative Context**

In order for the process of restorative justice to be successful, it must occur within a cooperative context (Deutsch, 1973; Johnson, 2003; Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2005a, 2009b). A cooperative context ensures that disputants have a stake in (a) each other’s well-being, (b) the future of the relationships, and (c) the common good. It includes both cooperative goals (resolutions of a conflict are based on common goals and interests) and cooperative processes (e.g., procedures, rules, criteria for success, boundaries) that are understood and followed. In a cooperative context, there is a focus on mutual goals that results in concern for both one’s own and others’ well-being, trust and liking for collaborators, seeing other’s interests and wants as
legitimate, and having a long-term time perspective. In a competitive context, on the other hand, there is a focus on differential goals that results in striving to maximize one’s own well-being while depriving others, distrust and hostility, denying the legitimacy of other’s needs, and having a short term time perspective.

In a cooperative process, furthermore, conflicts tend to be viewed as problems to be solved. Individuals tend to communicate effectively, accurately perceive the other person and his or her position, trust and like the other, recognize the legitimacy of the other’s interests, and focus on both their own and their classmates’ long-term well being. In a competitive process, conflicts are viewed as “win-lose” situations in which individuals focus on gaining an advantage at the expense of others. Individuals tend to communicate misleading information, misperceive the other person’s position and motivation, be suspicious of and hostile toward others, and deny the legitimacy of others’ goals and feelings.

---Insert Table 1 About Here-----

When victims and offenders are brought together to reconcile and restore balance and harmony to their relationships they must perceive a cooperative context and understand that they will engage in cooperative efforts in the future. Within schools, the easiest way to establish a cooperative context and to teach students the nature of cooperative efforts is to use cooperative learning the majority of the school day.

**Nature Of Cooperative Learning**

*Cooperative learning* is the instructional use of small groups so that individuals work together to maximize their own and each other's learning (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1998, 2008). Within cooperative learning groups individuals discuss the material to be learned, help and assist each other to understand it, and encourage each other to work hard. Any assignment in any curriculum for any age student can be done cooperatively.

Effective cooperation requires that five basic elements be carefully structured into the situation (Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 2008). First, there must be a
strong sense of **positive interdependence**, so individuals believe they are linked with others so they cannot succeed unless the others do (and vice versa). Individuals must believe that they sink or swim together. Positive interdependence may be structured through mutual goals, joint rewards, divided resources, complementary roles, and a shared identity. Second, each collaborator must be **individually accountable** to do his or her fair share of the work. Third, collaborators must have the opportunity to **promote each other's success** by helping, assisting, supporting, encouraging, and praising each other's efforts to achieve. Fourth, working together cooperatively requires **interpersonal and small group skills**, such as leadership, decision-making, trust-building, communication, and conflict-management skills. Finally, cooperative groups must engage in **group processing**, which exists when group members discuss how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships.

There are three types of cooperative learning—formal, informal, and base groups. *Formal cooperative learning* consists of students working together, for one class period to several weeks, to achieve shared learning goals and complete jointly specific tasks and assignments (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 2008). In formal cooperative learning groups teachers:

1. **Make a number of preinstructional decisions.** Teachers specify the objectives for the lesson (both academic and social skills) and decide on the size of groups, the method of assigning students to groups, the roles students will be assigned, the materials needed to conduct the lesson, and the way the room will be arranged.

2. **Explain the task and the positive interdependence.** A teacher clearly defines the assignment, teaches the required concepts and strategies, specifies the positive interdependence and individual accountability, gives the criteria for success, and explains the expected social skills to be used.

3. **Monitor and intervene:** Teachers monitor students' learning and intervene within the groups to provide task assistance or to increase students' interpersonal and group skills.

4. **Assess and process:** Teachers assess students' learning and structure students processing of how well their groups functioned.
Informal cooperative learning consists of having students work together to achieve a joint learning goal in temporary, ad-hoc groups that last from a few minutes to one class period (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 2008). During a lecture, demonstration, or film, informal cooperative learning can be used to focus student attention on the material to be learned, set a mood conducive to learning, help set expectations as to what will be covered in a class session, ensure that students cognitively process and rehearse the material being taught, summarize what was learned and precue the next session, and provide closure to an instructional session. The procedure for using informal cooperative learning during a lecture entails having three-to-five minute focused discussions before and after the lecture (i.e., bookends) and two-to-three minute interspersing pair discussions throughout the lecture.

Cooperative base groups are long-term, heterogeneous cooperative learning groups with stable membership whose primary responsibilities are to provide support, encouragement, and assistance to make academic progress and develop cognitively and socially in healthy ways as well as holding each other accountable for striving to learn (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 2008). Typically, cooperative base groups (a) are heterogeneous in membership, (b) meet regularly (for example, daily or biweekly), and (c) last for the duration of the semester, year, or until all members are graduated. Base groups typically consist of three to four members, meet at the beginning and end of each class session (or week) complete academic tasks such as checking each members’ homework, routine tasks such as taking attendance, and personal support tasks such as listening sympathetically to personal problems or providing guidance for writing a paper.

These three types of cooperative learning may be used together. A typical class session may begin with a base group meeting, followed by a short lecture in which informal cooperative learning is used. A formal cooperative learning lesson is then conducted and near the end of the class session another short lecture may be delivered with the use of informal cooperative learning. The class ends with a base group meeting.

**Research Results**
Amount and Characteristics of Research

Over 754 studies have been conducted on the relative merits of cooperative, competitive, and individualistic efforts and the conditions under which each is appropriate. This is one of the largest bodies of research within psychology, and it provides sufficient empirical research to test the propositions of social interdependence theory. The characteristics of the 754 studies that contain enough data to compute an effect size (there are many more studies from which an effect size cannot be computed) are as follows. Many of the research studies have high internal validity, having been carefully conducted by skilled investigators under highly controlled laboratory (31%) and field (65%) settings (see Table 1). When rated on the variables of random assignment to conditions, clarity of control conditions, control of the experimenter effect, control of the curriculum effect (same materials used in all conditions), and verification of the successful implementation of the independent variable, 51% of the studies met the criteria.

The research on social interdependence has an external validity and a generalizability rarely found in the social sciences. As a rule, the more variations in places, people, and procedures that the research can withstand and still yield the same findings, the more externally valid are the conclusions. Exemplifying such diversity, the research on social interdependence has been conducted over 12 decades by numerous researchers with markedly different theoretical and practical orientations working in varied settings. A wide variety of research tasks, ways of structuring social interdependence, and measures of the dependent variables have been used. Participants in the studies varied from three years old to post-college age and have come from different economic classes and cultural backgrounds. The studies were conducted with different durations, ranging from 1 to 100 sessions or more. Social interdependence has been investigated in numerous cultures in North America (with Caucasian, African American, Native American, and Hispanic populations) and in countries from North, Central, and South America, Europe, the Middle East, Asia, the Pacific Rim, and Africa. The research on social interdependence includes both theoretical and demonstration studies conducted in educational,
business, and social service organizations. The diversity of these studies gives social interdependence theory wide generalizability and considerable external validity.

-----Insert Figure 1 and Table 2 About Here-----

**Research Findings**

The many diverse dependent variables examined in studies on social interdependence over the past 110 years may be subsumed within three broad categories (Johnson, 2003; Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2005a, 2009a): effort to achieve, positive interpersonal relationships, and psychological health (see Table 2). In addition, there is a cluster of behaviors and attitudes that occur within cooperative endeavors that are especially relevant to restorative justice. This cluster includes prosocial behavior, perspective taking, high levels of cognitive and moral reasoning, the development of a moral identity, basic self-acceptance, moral inclusion and a wide scope of justice, and viewing situations as being just and fair.

**Effort to Achieve**

A meta-analysis of all studies found that the average person engaged in cooperative behavior performed at about two thirds of one standard deviation above the average person operating within a competitive (effect size = 0.67) or individualistic (effect size = 0.64) situation. When only studies with high internal validity were included in the analysis, the effect sizes were 0.88 and 0.61, respectively. Cooperative experiences promote more frequent insight into and use of higher level cognitive and moral reasoning strategies than do competitive (effect size = 0.93) or individualistic (effect size = 0.97) efforts. Cooperators tend to spend more time on task than do competitors (effect size = 0.76) or participants working individualistically (effect size = 1.17), and in turn, competitors tend to spend more time on task than do participants working individualistically (effect size = 0.64).

**Positive relationships and social support**
The reason we were so good, and continued to be so good, was because he (Joe Paterno) forces you to develop an inner love among the players. It is much harder to give up on your buddy, than it is to give up on your coach. I really believe that over the years the teams I played on were almost unbeatable in tight situations. When we needed to get that six inches we got it because of our love for each other. Our camaraderie existed because of the kind of coach and kind of person Joe was.

Dr. David Joyner

Since 1940, more than 180 studies have compared the impact of cooperative, competitive, and individualistic efforts on interpersonal attraction. Cooperative efforts, compared with competitive (effect size = 0.67) and individualistic (effect size = 0.60) experiences, promoted considerably more liking among individuals. This remains true when only the methodologically high-quality studies are examined (effect sizes = 0.82 and 0.62, respectively) and when those studies are included that focused on relationships between White and minority participants (effect sizes = 0.52 and 0.44, respectively) and relationships between participants with and without disabilities (effect sizes = 0.70 and 0.64, respectively). These results validate Social Judgment Theory (D. W. Johnson & Johnson, 1989), an extension of social interdependence theory. The social judgments individuals make about each other engender either a process of acceptance, resulting in mutual liking and respect, or a process of rejection, resulting in mutual dislike and lack of respect. Furthermore, since the 1940s, more than 106 studies comparing the relative impact of cooperative, competitive, and individualistic efforts on social support have been conducted. The cumulative findings indicate that cooperative experiences promoted greater task-oriented and personal social support than did competitive (effect size = 0.62) or individualistic (effect size = 0.70) experiences. This remained true when only the methodologically high-quality studies were examined (effect sizes = 0.83 and 0.72, respectively).
Psychological health and self-esteem

Seven studies directly measured the relationship between social interdependence and psychological health (Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2005a, 2009a). Participants studied included such diverse samples as university individuals, older adults, suburban high school seniors, juvenile and adult prisoners, step-couples, and Olympic hockey players. The results indicate that working cooperatively with peers and valuing cooperation result in greater psychological health than does competing with peers or working independently. Cooperative attitudes were highly correlated with a wide range of indexes of psychological health, competitiveness was in some cases positively and in some cases negatively related to psychological health, and individualistic attitudes were negatively related to a wide variety of measures of psychological health.

One aspect of psychological health is self-esteem: Since the 1950s, over 80 studies have compared the relative impact of cooperative, competitive, and individualistic experiences on self-esteem. Cooperative experiences promoted higher self-esteem than did competitive (effect size = 0.58) or individualistic (effect size = 0.44) experiences, even when only the methodologically high-quality studies were examined (effect sizes = 0.67 and 0.45, respectively). Norem-Hebeisen and Johnson (1981) conducted four studies involving 821 White, middle-class, high school seniors in a midwestern suburban community. These authors found that cooperative experiences tend to be related to beliefs that one is intrinsically worthwhile, others see one in positive ways, one's attributes compare favorably with those of one's peers, and one is a capable, competent, and successful person. Competitive experiences tend to be related to conditional self-esteem that is based on whether one wins or loses. Individualistic experiences tend to be related to basic self-rejection.

Additional Findings

There is a cluster of behaviors and attitudes that occur within cooperative endeavors that are especially relevant to restorative justice. This cluster includes prosocial behavior, perspective taking, high levels of cognitive and moral reasoning, the development of a moral identity, basic
self-acceptance, moral inclusion and a wide scope of justice, and viewing situations as being just and fair.

**Prosocial Behavior**

In order to reconcile, individuals have to engage in prosocial behavior. **Prosocial actions** are actions that benefit other people by helping, supporting, encouraging their goal accomplishment or well being. Cooperative experiences tend to increase the frequency with which participants engage in prosocial behaviors (Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2005a). Choi, Johnson, and Johnson (in press), in a study involving 217 4th and 5th grade students, found that both cooperative learning experiences and cooperative predispositions predicted the frequency with which the students engaged in prosocial behavior. Competitiveness and individualism, on the other hand, did not predict prosocial behavior. The mutual responsiveness and shared positive affect typically found in cooperative situations, furthermore, seem to be key elements in the development of prosocial behavior (Kochanska, 2002). There are benefits to being prosocial. Prosocial individuals tend to build positive relationships with peers (Asher & Rose, 1997) and, compared with schoolmates, are intrinsically motivated to build relationships with classmates, believe they are involved in positive relationships, value relationships, and enjoy positive wellbeing (Hawley, Little, & Pasupathi, 2002). Prosocial behavior has been found to be related to academic success during the elementary and high school years (Wentzel, 1991).

**Perspective Taking**

Restorative justice is more likely to occur when students accurately take each other’s perspectives, especially the perspective of victims and outgroup members. More frequent and accurate perspective taking was found in cooperative than in competitive (effect size = 0.61) or individualistic (effect size = 0.44) situations (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). In competitive situations, a person's perceptions and comprehension of others’ viewpoints and positions tends to be inaccurate and biased. The opposite of perspective taking is egocentrism and while perspective-taking ability tends to be indicative of psychological health, egocentrism tends to be
a sign of psychological pathology (e.g., extreme forms of depression and anxiety result in a self-focus and self-centeredness). The accurate perspective taking in cooperative situations enhances members’ ability to respond to others' needs with empathy, compassion, and support.

**Level Of Cognitive And Moral Reasoning**

Restorative justice tends to be more successful when individuals use higher levels of cognitive and moral reasoning. More frequent use of higher level cognitive and moral reasoning strategies in cooperative than in competitive (effect size = 0.93) or individualistic (effect size = 0.97) situations (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). There are a number of studies that demonstrate that when participants are placed in a cooperative group with peers who use a higher stage of moral reasoning, and the group is required to make a decision as to how a moral dilemma should be resolved, advances in the students' level of moral reasoning result.

**Moral Identity**

Restorative justice tends to be more effective when individuals have a strong moral identity. A person’s identity is a consistent set of attitudes that defines "who I am" (Johnson & Johnson, 2002). One aspect of identity is the view of oneself as a moral person, with character, who acts with integrity. A moral orientation adds an “ought to,” obligatory, quality to identity. The social context in which individuals function largely determines their moral identity. Identity in a cooperative context defines the person as part of a community that shares a joint identity. Their promotive interaction tends to reflect egalitarianism (i.e., a belief in the equal worth of all members even though there may be differences in authority and status) and characterized by mutual respect. Identity in a competitive context, on the other hand, defines a person as a separate individual striving to win either by outperforming others or preventing them from outperforming him or her. Thus, a competitor may have an identity involving the virtues of inequality, being a winner, and disdaining losers.

Engaging in prosocial behavior by helping and assisting other group members influences how a person thinks of him- or herself (i.e., moral-identity). Midlarsky and Nemeroff (1995), for
example, found that the self-esteem and self-view of people who had rescued Jews during the Holocaust were still being elevated 50 years later by the help they provided. Elementary school students who privately agreed to give up their recess time to work for hospitalized children saw themselves as more altruistic immediately and a month later (Cialdini, Eisenberg, Shell, & McCreath, 1987). Prosocial behavior tends both to enhance and verify individuals’ self-definitions and moral identity (Grube & Piliavin, 2000; Swann, 1990).

Valuing Self

Restorative justice may be more effective when individuals have a basic self-acceptance. Participants in cooperative situations tend to see themselves as being of more value and worth than do participants in competitive (effect size = 0.58) or individualistic (effect size = 0.44) situations (Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2005a, 2009a). While contingent self-esteem dominates competitive situations, basic self-acceptance tends to dominate cooperative situations.

Moral Inclusion And Scope Of Justice

Restorative justice is influenced by moral inclusion and the scope of justice. Bullies, perpetrators, and bystanders tend to morally exclude victims and consider them outside the scope of justice. In competitive and individualistic situations, the boundaries between ingroups (in which moral inclusion exists) and outgroups (which are morally excluded) are quite strong and well marked. Cooperative situations, on the other hand, promote a much wider range of moral inclusion and scope of justice. Especially when the members of diverse backgrounds and cultures participate in the same cooperative group, moral inclusion is broadened (Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2005a, 2009a). Moral inclusion includes the values of fairness, equality, and humanitarianism. Cooperators tend to see all of humanity as being entitled to fair treatment, justice, and help and may even extend moral inclusion and the scope of justice to other species and life forms. Albert Schweitzer, for example, included all living creatures in his moral community, and some Buddhists include all of nature.
Justice And Fairness

An important aspect of restorative justice is ensuring that a perceived unjust situation is modified through restitution and reconciliation to be perceived as just. When rewards are distributed unjustly, the group may be characterized by low morale, high conflict, and low productivity (Johnson & F. Johnson, 2009; Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2005a). The more frequent the use of cooperative learning, the more students tend to believe that everyone who tried has an equal chance to succeed in class, that students get the grades they deserved, and that the grading system is fair (Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2005a, 2009a). Even when their task performances are markedly discrepant, members of cooperative groups tend to view themselves and their groupmates as being equally deserving of rewards.

Summary

The primary way to increase the likelihood that restorative justice procedures will succeed and decrease the frequency of harm-intended aggression is through the predominant use of cooperative learning within the school. Cooperative experiences tend to increase the frequency with which students engage in prosocial behaviors and, therefore, the less likely they are to engage in harm-intended aggression. When conflicts do have destructive outcomes, balance is restored and the relationship is repaired more easily in a cooperative classroom and school. Competitive experiences, on the other hand, tend to increase the frequency of harm-intended aggression and decrease prosocial behavior. Restorative justice is more likely to occur when students accurately take each other’s perspectives. More frequent and accurate perspective taking tends to occur in cooperative than in competitive or individualistic situations. In competitive situations, a person's perceptions and comprehension of others’ viewpoints and positions tends to be inaccurate and biased and students tend to be egocentric, cognizant of only their own point of view. In cooperative situations, students engage in more frequent use of higher level cognitive and moral reasoning strategies than in competitive or individualistic situations. In cooperative situations, a student’s moral identity defines him- or herself as part of
a community that shares a commitment to egalitarianism and mutual respect. In competitive situations, on the other hand, a student’s identity defines a person as a separate individual seeking inequality, respecting winners and disdaining losers. In cooperative situations students see themselves as being of value and worth. In competitive situations, students see themselves as only having worth if they win. In cooperative situations, the scope of justice tends to be broad with everyone included in the moral community. In competitive situations, the scope of justice tends to be small, with most people excluded from the moral community and therefore viewed as nonentities that can be exploited. In cooperative situations, all students are seen as equally deserving of benefits while in competitive situations only winners are seen as deserving of benefits. In cooperative situations the procedures tend to be the same for everyone, in competitive situations the winners try to create procedures that will disadvantage others.

In order to obtain the benefits of cooperation, cooperative learning must be structured throughout the school. Once cooperative learning is established as the predominant instructional strategy, students should be taught how to resolve conflicts constructively.

Teaching Students To Be Peacemakers

Within a community there are conflicts based on individuals’ differing interests within a situation. **Conflict of interests** exist when the actions of one person attempting to maximize his or her wants and benefits prevents, blocks, or interferes with another person maximizing his or her wants and benefits (Johnson & Johnson, 2005b). Such conflicts are ideally resolved through problem-solving (integrative) negotiation. When negotiation does not work, then mediation is required.

Conflict resolution and peer mediation programs have their roots in four sources (Johnson & Johnson, 2005b, 2009b): Researchers in the field of conflict resolution, advocates of nonviolence, anti-nuclear war activists, and members of the legal profession. The research-based peer mediation programs began in the 1960s with the **Teaching Students To Be Peacemakers Program** (Johnson, 1970, 1971; Johnson & R. Johnson, 2005b). It was derived from social
interdependence theory (Deutsch, 1949, 1962; Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 2005a). The Program focuses on teaching all students in a school the nature and value of conflict, the five strategies for managing conflict (withdrawing, forcing, smoothing, compromising, problem-solving negotiations), how to use an integrative negotiation procedure, and how to mediate peer conflicts (Johnson & Johnson, 2005b). All students then take turns in being a class and school mediator.

**Nature And Value Of Conflict**

Students are taught to recognize that conflicts are inevitable, healthy, and potentially valuable. Rather than suppressing conflicts, conflicts should be faced and even encouraged given that all students, faculty, and staff are skilled in resolving conflicts constructively. It is a fallacy to try to eliminate all conflict from the school through suppression and avoidance.

**Mastering The Five Strategies For Managing Conflicts**

Students are trained to keep two concerns in mind when resolving conflicts: (a) the importance of the goals they are trying to achieve and (b) the importance of the relationship with the other person. When those two concerns are present, there are five strategies available for managing a conflict: Withdrawal, forcing, smoothing, compromising, and problem-solving negotiations. In long-term, ongoing relationships maintaining a high quality relationship is usually more important than is achieving one’s goals on any one issue.

**Problem-Solving Negotiations**

All members of the school community need to know how to negotiate constructive resolutions to their conflicts. There are two types of negotiations: **distributive** or “win-lose” (where one person benefits only if the opponent agrees to make a concession) and **integrative** or problem solving (where disputants work together to create an agreement that benefits everyone involved). In ongoing relationships, only a problem solving approach is constructive. The steps in using problem solving negotiations are (Johnson & Johnson, 2005b):
1. **Describing what you want.** This includes using good communication skills and defining the conflict as a small and specific mutual problem.

2. **Describing how you feel.** Disputants must understand how they feel and communicate it openly and clearly.

3. **Describing the reasons for your wants and feelings.** This includes expressing cooperative intentions, listening carefully, separating interests from positions, and differentiating before trying to integrate the two sets of interests.

4. **Taking the other’s perspective and summarizing your understanding of what the other person wants, how the other person feels, and the reasons underlying both.** This includes understanding the perspective of the opposing disputant and being able to see the problem from both perspectives simultaneously.

5. **Inventing three optional plans to resolve the conflict that maximize joint benefits.** This includes inventing creative options to solve the problem.

6. **Choosing one and formalizing the agreement with a hand shake.** A wise agreement is fair to all disputants and is based on principles. It maximizes joint benefits and strengthens disputants’ ability to work together cooperatively and resolve conflicts constructively in the future. It specifies how each disputant should act in the future and how the agreement will be reviewed and renegotiated if it does not work.

**Peer Mediation**

Once the problem-solving negotiation procedure is learned, all members of the school community need to learn how to mediate conflicts of interests (Johnson & Johnson, 2005b). A **mediator** is a neutral person who helps two or more people resolve their conflict, usually by negotiating an integrative agreement. Mediation consists of four steps:

1. **Ending hostilities:** Break up hostile encounters and cool off students.

2. **Ensuring disputants are committed to the mediation process:** To ensure that disputants are committed to the mediation process and are ready to negotiate in good
faith, the mediator introduces the process of mediation and sets the ground rules. The mediator first introduces him- or herself. The mediator asks students if they want to solve the problem and does not proceed until both answer "yes." Then the mediator explains that mediation is voluntary, he or she will be neutral, each person will have the chance to state his or her view of the conflict without interruption, and everyone must follow the rules of agreeing to solve the problem, no name calling, no interrupting, being honest, abiding by any agreement made, and keeping everything said confidential.

3. **Helping disputants successfully negotiate with each other:** The disputants are carefully taken through the negotiation sequence of (a) jointly defining the conflict by both persons stating what they want and how they feel, (b) exchanging reasons, (c) reversing perspectives so that each person is able to present the other's position and feelings to the other's satisfaction, (d) inventing at least three options for mutual benefit, and (e) reaching a wise agreement and shaking hands.

4. **Formalizing the agreement:** The agreement is solidified into a contract. Disputants must agree to abide by their final decision and, in many ways, the mediator becomes "the keeper of the contract."

Once students understand how to negotiate and mediate, the peacemaker program is implemented. Each day the teacher selects two class members to serve as official mediators. Any conflicts students cannot resolve themselves are referred to the mediators. The mediators wear official T-shirts, patrol the playground and lunchroom, and are available to mediate any conflicts that occur in the classroom or school. The role of mediator is rotated so that all students in the class or school serve as mediators an equal amount of time. Initially, students mediate in pairs. This ensures that shy or nonverbal students get the same amount of experience as more extroverted and verbally fluent students. Mediating classmates' conflicts is perhaps the most effective way of teaching students the need for the skillful use of each step of the negotiation procedure.
If peer mediation fails, the teacher mediates the conflict. If teacher mediation fails, the teacher arbitrates by deciding who is right and who is wrong. If that fails, the principal mediates the conflict. If that fails, the principal arbitrates. Teaching all students to mediate properly results in a schoolwide discipline program where students are empowered to regulate and control their own and their classmates actions. Teachers and administrators are then freed to spend more of their energies on instruction.

Continuing Lessons To Refine And Upgrade Students’ Skills

Additional lessons are needed to refine and upgrade students’ skills in using the negotiation and mediation procedures. Gaining real expertise in resolving conflicts constructively takes years of training and practice. Negotiation and mediation training may become part of the fabric of school life by integrating them into academic lessons. Literature, history, and science units typically involve conflict. Almost any lesson in these subject areas can be modified to include role playing situations in which the negotiation and/or mediation procedures are used. In our recent research, for example, we have focused on integrating the peacemaker training into history units and English literature units involving the studying of a novel. Each of the major conflicts in the novel was used to teach the negotiation and/or mediation procedures and students participated in role playing how to use the procedures to resolve the conflicts in the novel constructively.

Spiral Curriculum From The First Through The Twelve Grades

The Teaching Students to be Peacemakers Program is a 12-year spiral program that is retaught each year in an increasingly sophisticated and complex way. It takes years to become competent in resolving conflicts. Twelve years of training and practice will result in a person with considerable expertise in resolving conflicts constructively.

Benefits Of Conflict Resolution And Peer Mediation Programs
We have conducted seventeen studies on implementing the Peacemaker Program in schools involving students from kindergarten through the tenth-grade and several other researchers have conducted relevant studies (Johnson & Johnson, 2005b). The benefits of teaching students the problem-solving negotiation and the peer mediation procedures include students and faculty developing a shared understanding of how conflicts should be managed, students learning the negotiation and mediation procedures and retaining their knowledge throughout the school year and the following year, students applying the procedures to their and other people’s conflicts, transferring the procedures to nonclassroom settings such as the playground and lunchroom, and transferring the procedures to nonschool settings such as the home. Students’ attitudes toward conflict tended to become more positive. Students tended to resolve their conflicts without the involvement of faculty and administrators and, therefore, classroom management problems tended to decreased by about 60 percent and referrals to administrators dropped about 90 percent. Students generally liked to engage in the problem-solving negotiation and mediation procedures. Finally, when integrated into academic units, the conflict resolution training tended to increase academic achievement and long-term retention of the academic material. Academic units, especially in subject areas such as literature and history, provide a setting to understand conflicts, practice how to resolve them, and use them to gain insight into the material being studied.

---Insert Table 3 About Here---

**Constructive Controversy**

To promote healthy development, teachers can structure academic controversies frequently and teach students how to resolve them (Johnson & Johnson, 2007, 2009b). A **controversy** exists when one person’s ideas, opinions, information, theories, or conclusions are incompatible with those of another and the two seek to reach an agreement. Controversies are resolved by engaging in what Aristotle called deliberate discourse (i.e., the discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of proposed actions) aimed at synthesizing novel solutions (i.e., creative problem
solving). Teaching students how to engage in the controversy process begins with randomly assigning students to heterogeneous cooperative learning groups of four members (Johnson & Johnson, 1979, 1989, 2007, 2009b). The groups are given an issue on which to write a report and pass a test. Each cooperative group is divided into two pairs. One pair is given the con-position on the issue and the other pair is given the pro-position. Each pair is given the instructional materials needed to define their position and point them towards supporting information. The cooperative goal of reaching a consensus on the issue (by synthesizing the best reasoning from both sides) and writing a quality group report is highlighted. Students then:

1. **Research And Prepare A Position:** Each pair develops the position assigned, learns the relevant information, and plans how to present the best case possible to the other pair. Near the end of the period pairs are encouraged to compare notes with pairs from other groups who represent the same position.

2. **Present And Advocate Their Position:** Each pair makes their presentation to the opposing pair. Each member of the pair has to participate in the presentation. Students are to be as persuasive and convincing as possible. Members of the opposing pair are encouraged to take notes, listen carefully to learn the information being presented, and clarify anything they do not understand.

3. **Refute Opposing Position And Rebut Attacks On Their Own:** Students argue forcefully and persuasively for their position, presenting as many facts as they can to support their point of view. Students analyze and critically evaluate the information, rationale, and inductive and deductive reasoning of the opposing pair, asking them for the facts that support their point of view. They refute the arguments of the opposing pair and rebut attacks on their position. They discuss the issue, following a set of rules to help them criticize ideas without criticizing people, differentiate the two positions, and assess the degree of evidence and logic supporting each position. They keep in mind that the issue is complex and they need to know both sides to write a good report.
4. **Reverse Perspectives:** The pairs reverse perspectives and present each other's positions. In arguing for the opposing position, students are forceful and persuasive. They add any new information that the opposing pair did not think to present. They strive to see the issue from both perspectives simultaneously.

5. **Synthesize And Integrate The Best Evidence And Reasoning Into A Joint Position:**

   The four group members drop all advocacy and synthesize and integrate what they know into a joint position to which all sides can agree. They (a) finalize the report (the teacher evaluates reports on the quality of the writing, the logical presentation of evidence, and the oral presentation of the report to the class), (b) present their conclusions to the class (all four members of the group are required to participate orally in the presentation), (c) individually take the test covering both sides of the issue (if every member of the group achieves up to criterion, they all receive bonus points), and (d) process how well they worked together and how they could be even more effective next time.

   As Thomas Jefferson noted, "Difference of opinion leads to inquiry, and inquiry to truth."

Over the past thirty years we have conducted over twenty-five research studies on the impact of academic controversy and numerous other researchers have conducted studies directly on controversy and in related areas (Johnson & Johnson, 1979, 1989, 2007, 2009b). The considerable research available indicates that intellectual "disputed passages" create higher achievement (characterized by higher achievement, longer retention, more frequent use of higher-level reasoning and metacognitive thought, more critical thinking, greater creativity, and continuing motivation to learn), more positive interpersonal relationships, and greater psychological health when they (a) occur within cooperative learning groups and (b) are carefully structured to ensure that students manage them constructively. Finally, engaging in a controversy can also be fun, enjoyable, and exciting.

   ----Insert Table 4 About Here-----

**Civic Values**
Some historians claim that the decline and fall of Rome was set in motion by corruption from within rather than by conquest from without. Rome fell, it can be argued, because Romans lost their civic virtue. Civic virtue exists when individuals meet both the letter and spirit of their public obligations. For a community to exist and be sustained, members must share common goals and values aimed at increasing the quality of life within the community. The value systems underlying competitive, individualistic, and cooperative situations are a hidden curriculum beneath the surface of school life (Johnson & Johnson, 1996, 1999). Whenever students engage in competitive efforts, for example, they learn the values of (a) commitment to getting more than others (there is a built-in concern that one is smarter, faster, stronger, more competent, and more successful than others so that one will win and others will lose), (b) success depends on beating, defeating, and getting more than other people (triumphing over others and being “Number One” are valued), (c) what is important is winning, not mastery or excellence, (d) opposing, obstructing, and sabotaging the success of others is a natural way of life (winning depends on a good offense--doing better than others--and a good defense--not letting anyone do better than you), (e) feeling joy and pride in one’s wins and others’ losses (the pleasure of winning is associated with others' disappointment with losing), (f) others are a threat to one’s success, (g) a person’s worth (own and others) is conditional and contingent on his or her "wins," (a person’s worth is never fixed, it depends on the latest victory), (h) winning, not learning, is the goal of academic work, and (i) people who are different are to be either feared (if they have an advantage) or held in contempt (if they have a handicap).

The values inherently taught by individualistic experiences are (a) commitment to one’s own self-interest (only personal success is viewed as important, others’ success is irrelevant), (b) success depends on one’s own efforts, (c) the pleasure of succeeding is personal and relevant to only oneself, (d) other people are irrelevant, (e) self-worth is based on a unidimensional view that the characteristics that help the person succeed are valued (in school that is primarily reading and math ability), (f) extrinsic motivation to gain rewards for achieving up to criteria is valued, and (g) similar people are liked and dissimilar people are disliked.
The values inherently taught by cooperative efforts are (a) commitment to own and others’ success and well-being as well as to the common good, (b) success depends on joint efforts to achieve mutual goals, (c) facilitating, promoting, and encouraging the success of others is a natural way of life (a smart cooperator will always find ways to promote, facilitate, and encourage the efforts of others), (d) the pleasure of succeeding is associated with others' happiness in their success, (e) other people are potential contributors to one’s success, (f) own and other people’s worth is unconditional (because there are so many diverse ways that a person may contribute to a joint effort, everyone has value all the time), (g) intrinsic motivation based on striving to learn, grow, develop, and succeed is valued (learning is the goal, not winning), (h) people who are different from oneself are to be valued as they can make unique contributions to the joint effort.

Constructive conflict resolution promotes the values of subjecting one’s conclusions to intellectual challenge, viewing issues from all perspectives, reaching agreements that are satisfying to all disputants, and maintaining effective and caring long-term relationships. In other words, constructive conflict resolution inherently teaches a set of civic values aimed at ensuring the fruitful continuation of the community.

**Summary**

In order to ensure that restorative justice is effective in a classroom and school, a cooperative context must be developed. The theory underlying the use of cooperative learning and constructive conflict resolution is social interdependence theory. Goal interdependence may be positive (i.e., cooperative) or negative (i.e., competitive). The easiest way to create a cooperative context is for teachers to use cooperative learning the majority of the school day. Doing so will both prevent bullying and harm-intended aggression and create positive relationships in which students frequently engage in prosocial actions, accurate perspective taking, higher levels of cognitive and moral reasoning, and more moral inclusion. They feel
better about themselves, develop a stronger moral identity, and care more about justice and fairness for everyone.

The more cooperative the situations, the peer group, and the person, the more likely relationships are to be positive, the higher tends to be achievement and task engagement, and the more frequent the pro-social behavior. Cooperative learning ensures that all students are involved in and integrated into the academic program of the school and are socially integrated into networks of peer relationships. Prosocial actions reflect cooperation in which individuals are striving to promote each other’s success and well-being. Victims tend to be supported and bystanders tend to intervene to protect victims. Prosocial behavior is reflective of perspective taking, high levels of moral reasoning, a moral identity, basic self-esteem, moral inclusion, and justice and fairness for all.

The more competitive the context, the peer group, and the person, the more likely relationships are to be negative, the lower achievement and task engagement tends to be, and the more frequent the anti-social behavior, such as bullying and harm-intended aggression. The more students are alienated academically and socially due to chronic losing or withdrawal from the competition, the more likely destructive conflicts such as harm-intended aggression and bullying and victimization will occur. In competition, it is against the rules to help someone who is losing and bystanders may not want to take sides. Bullying is reflective of egocentrism, low-level moral reasoning, a differential identity (i.e., identity is based on superior to others), contingent self-esteem (i.e., if I win I have value, if I lose I am worthless), moral exclusion (i.e., only ingroup members are part of the moral community), and the view that justice and fairness applies only to oneself or one’s group.

In order to create conditions for restorative justice, cooperative learning needs to be the predominant instructional strategy used in the school. There are three types of cooperative learning: Formal cooperative learning, informal cooperative learning, and cooperative base groups. The success of cooperative learning depends on the carefully structuring of five elements: positive interdependence, individual accountability, promotive interaction, social
skills, and group processing. Besides creating caring and committed relationships among students and promoting pro-social behavior, cooperative learning ensures that all students are meaningfully and actively involved in learning, ensures that students are achieving up to their potential, the development of the interpersonal and small group skills needed to develop positive relationships with diverse schoolmates, the arena for discussion and solving of personal problems, a sense of meaning, pride, and esteem by academically helping and assisting classmates and contributing to their well-being and quality of life, and a context for resolving conflicts in constructive ways.

In order to maintain positive relationships and cooperative endeavors, it is necessary to resolve conflicts constructively. Students need to learn how to resolve conflicts of interests through problem-solving negotiation and peer mediation. Problem-solving negotiations consist of stating what one wants and feels, stating the reasons underlying one’s wants and feelings, reversing perspective by summarizing the opposing position, inventing three possible agreements that maximize joint gain, and selecting one to implement. The mediation procedure consists of ending hostilities, ensuring commitment to mediation, facilitating problem-solving negotiations, and finalizing the agreement. Students need to learn how to resolve intellectual disagreements through the constructive controversy procedure (research a position, present it persuasively, engage in an open discussion in which the opposing position is critiqued and challenged, reverse perspectives, and create a synthesis that both sides can agree to. This type of conflict is inherent in all decision making. Being competent in resolving conflicts of interests and controversies gives students a developmental advantage that will benefit them throughout their lives. It also ensures that conflicts will be faced and resolved in constructive ways.

Finally, engaging in cooperative efforts and resolving conflicts constructively inculcates civic values in students. Cooperation promotes commitment to others’ success and well-being, commitment to the common good, and taking joy in other’s success and well being. Constructive conflict resolution promotes the values of subjecting one’s conclusions to
intellectual challenge, viewing issues from all perspectives, and reaching agreements that maximize joint gain.

It is the combination of cooperative experiences, constructive conflict resolution, and civic values that most effectively develop the positive relationships and prosocial behaviors that prevent the occurrence of bullying in schools.
References


Figure 2

Outcomes Of Cooperative Learning
# Table 1

## Context of Restorative Justice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Cooperative Context</th>
<th>Nature of Competitive Context</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mutual Goals</td>
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<td>Concern for Self and Other’s Well-Being</td>
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<td>Liking and Trust</td>
<td>Hostility and Distrust</td>
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<td>Others’ Needs/Interests Seen as Legitimate</td>
<td>Denial of Legitimacy of Others’ Needs/Interests</td>
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<td>Inaccurate or No Communication</td>
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<td>Constructive Problem Solving</td>
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## Table 2

Meta-Analysis of Social Interdependence Studies: Mean Effect Sizes

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<th>Dependent Variable</th>
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<th>Cooperative Vs. Individualistic</th>
<th>Competitive Vs. Individualistic</th>
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### High Quality Studies

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Table 3

Meta-Analysis of Mean Peacemaker Studies: Mean Effect Sizes

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### Table 4

Meta-Analysis Of Academic Controversy Studies: Mean Effect Sizes

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