



**LEARNING  
IN THE 21ST CENTURY**  
A RESTORATIVE VISION



## Black Family Development, Inc. Hosts World Conference

“Since 2010, Black Family Development, Inc. (BFDI) has partnered with the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP), an accredited graduate school, to lead Restorative Practices initiatives in our region. BFDI and IIRP work together to implement programs that have proven effective in reducing violence and increasing family and community engagement,” states Alice G. Thompson, CEO, Black Family Development, Inc.

On October 24 - 26, 2018, BFDI will host the IIRP World Conference, “Strengthening the Spirit of Community”. This 3-day event will explore effective ways to build community, respond to conflict and harm, and enhance the well-being of neighborhoods, organizations, and families and individuals through the lens of Restorative Practices and allied approaches.

Attendees will be able to hear from Detroit residents who have championed the cause of Restorative Practices in their Detroit east side neighborhood in Precinct 9 using Restorative Circles to resolve community problems. Attendees will hear from Restorative Practices Practitioners from around the world who are using Restorative Practices in their government, organizations, schools and community.

The significant aspects of Restorative Practices are . . .

“All humans are hardwired to connect. Just as we need food, shelter and clothing, human beings also need strong and meaningful relationships to thrive. Restorative Practices is an emerging social science that studies how to strengthen relationships between individuals, as well as social connections within communities.”

The fundamental hypothesis of Restorative Practices is that human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things with them rather than to them or for them. The “aim” of Restorative Practices is to develop community and to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and restoring relationships. This work is most important to our schools.

The State of Michigan’s 98th Legislature in regular session in 2016 enrolled House Bill 5619 into law, as approved by Governor Snyder. The Michigan Legislators passed this law in an effort to reduce school expulsions and suspensions.

Most importantly, this legislation encourages the use of Restorative Practices as the first consideration to remediate offenses such as interpersonal conflicts, bullying, verbal and physical conflicts, theft, damage to property, class disruption and harassment and cyber-bullying.

In addition, the revised State Student Code of Conduct, as well as the new legislation, indicates that school districts and school boards shall consider using Restorative Practices as an alternative to suspension, or in addition to suspension.

Kudos to the Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) and its Board of Education, who have revised and approved the District’s Student Code of Conduct, which encourages and lays out standards for the use of Restorative Practices in all DPSCD schools. The use of Restorative Practices will keep more students in the learning environment, while at the same time help to solve problems and repair harm.

Black Family Development hosts 10 licensed Restorative Practices trainers, and is a frequent invited guest of Wayne RESA, providing Restorative Practices training to school leaders, educators, social workers and counselors.

Black Family Development’s Restorative Practices initiatives have included numerous trainings throughout Michigan, and have been extended to include Canton, Ohio, and Henrico County, Virginia school districts.

Restorative Practices is making a difference.

### FEATURED SPEAKERS



**Hon. Mike Duggan**  
Mayor of Detroit



**Alice G. Thompson**  
CEO, Black Family Development, Inc.



**Henry McClendon**  
Michigan Regional Representative, IIRP



**Tonya Allen**  
President & CEO, The Skillman Foundation



**Cami Anderson**  
Founder & Managing Partner, Thirdway Solutions



**Christine Cray, M.A., M.S.Ed.**  
Director, Student Services Reform, Pittsburgh Public Schools



**Karen Webber, J.D.**  
Director, Ed. & Youth Development Open Society Institute-Baltimore



**Randy Liepa, Ph.D.**  
Superintendent, Wayne, MI, Regional Educational Service Agency



**Chris Kolb, Ph.D.**  
District 2 Board Member, Jefferson County, KY, Board of Ed.