

Restorative discipline policies focus on non-punitive conflict resolution, at the expense of accountability and effective school discipline. These practices inadvertently fail to address misbehavior in a way that fosters responsibility, crippling the student's mental maturity and validate violence. Instead of ensuring that students face appropriate consequences for their actions, such policies can undermine behavioral growth and justify violence.

This therapeutic approach to misbehavior results in classrooms that are mismanaged, chaotic and even unsafe. By tolerating repeated disruptions and emotional outbursts, the learning environment becomes detrimental to both students and teachers. Furthermore, restorative practices, schools no longer take disciplinary measures such as suspension, the most extreme circumstances. Until they commit egregious acts of criminality, violent kids are kept in school and assigned shadows under the therapeutic ethos.

The tragic case of Nikolas Cruz, the shooter at Marjory Stoneman Douglass High School, underscores the dangers of such policies. Despite multiple prior incidents of violence and behavioral concerns, Cruz remained in school under interventions focused on treatment rather than accountability. This failure to enforce actual consequences contributed to an environment where his escalating behavior went unchecked, ultimately culminating in his taking the life of 17 innocent lives.

Maryland schools must prioritize policies that balance accountability with support to ensure safe and effective learning environments. Restorative practices should not replace disciplinary measures. I urge you to oppose this bill, as it risks further eroding school discipline and jeopardizing the safety and well-being of students, teachers, and the broader community