

Restorative Justice

What is Restorative Justice (RJ)?

It involves the victim and offender and the community and can include families, communities and friends. It helps victims understand why it happened and helps reduce the fear of crime. It also helps offenders to take greater responsibility for their actions.

What does the Youth Justice Service (YJS) achieve?

The YJS encourages young people who commit offences to take responsibility for the harm and loss they have caused their victims. Research shows that this is a major factor in reducing further offending.

Restorative Justice includes:

Victim/Offender mediation: This involves the young person meeting the victim to explain their actions and apologise. It helps the victim to explain the problems it caused and hopefully reduce the fear of it happening again.

Direct Reparation: May involve the young person writing a letter of apology to the victim or carrying out a task at the request of the victim to benefit the victim, local community or a charitable organisation the victim is involved with.

Indirect Reparation: is where the victim does not want direct reparation and may involve some activity or work carried out for the benefit of the community.

All restorative justice activities are supervised by trained staff.

Some examples of Restorative Justice

- Meeting the young person face-to-face. This meeting would be in a supervised and controlled, safe environment. The victim can tell the young person the effects of the crime and possible ways of repairing the harm.
- Nominating a South Gloucestershire community project that the young person can be involved in such as local regeneration, charitable or multi agency projects, which benefit the local community.
- Agreeing involvement in a project which is personal to the victim or carrying out some practical work for them.

Who benefits from Restorative Justice?

Victims

- Victims needs are no longer ignored
- Victims may get answers to their questions
- Victims can tell their story
- Victims can participate in the settlement

Young People

- Young people face up to the consequences of their actions and are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions
- Young people can tell their story.
- Young people will do something positive to pay back to the community.

Communities

- Communities are directly involved in reducing crime, enabling them to contribute to reducing offending in their area.
- Community safety is addressed in a positive way
- Communities become more accepting of/and value reformed offenders

It's Your Choice

Taking part in a restorative process is completely voluntary and the YJS will respect your wishes at all times. Whatever you decide, South Gloucestershire YJS remains committed to educating young people about the effects of their actions on victims and communities through the programmes they deliver. We cannot do this without your help and involvement.

If you know of any projects in your area that we could become involved in please contact the Youth Justice Service.

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