

Restorative Justice Factsheet

In the face of crime and conflict, RJ is a philosophy and an approach that views crime and conflict principally as harm done to people and relationships. It strives to provide support and safe opportunities for the voluntary participation and communication between those affected (victims, offenders, and community) to encourage accountability, reparation, and a movement towards understanding, feelings of satisfaction, healing, safety and a sense of closure.

RJ is a non-adversarial, non-retributive approach to justice that emphasizes healing in victims, meaningful accountability of offenders, and the involvement of citizens in creating healthier, safer communities.

The RJ approach is based on values and principles that emphasize:

- Recognition of Harm
- Inclusion
- Accountability
- Facilitated Dialogue
- Truth
- Voluntary Participation
- Safety
- Choice
- Holism
- Humanism
- Reparation

How is Restorative Justice Applied?

RJ views crime as a violation of people and relationships. RJ is an approach that seeks to determine who has been hurt, what their needs are, and how these needs can be addressed. RJ uses processes that are collaborative and inclusive to all parties affected - victim, offender and community.

RJ processes include but are not limited to:

- Victim-Offender Dialogue
- Restorative Conferencing
- Circle Processes

What are the Benefits of RJ Processes?

Victims can tell their story; be certain the offender understands the impact; find answers to questions; hold the offender accountable; and when possible, identify what can be done to repair the harm.

Offenders can tell their story; accept responsibility for and acknowledge the harm caused; hear how their behavior affected others; and participate in determining how to repair the harm, to the extent possible.

Communities can be empowered to gain a better understanding of the root causes of crime, engage in a process to express and reduce their fears, and contribute to an understanding of the wider impacts of crime.

