



HISTORY

Restorative Justice (RJ) is a practice rooted in the cultures of Indigenous people of the Maori Tribe of New Zealand and Africa. The focus of these indigenous practices were on healing and problem solving, not punishment. These practices were inclusive and involved the community.

WHAT IS RJ?

Restorative Justice (RJ) is an approach to achieving justice that involves, to the best extent possible, those involved in a specific incident or harm to collectively identify and address harms, needs and obligations in order to heal and put things as right as possible. It is rooted in the value of respect for all parties. Unlike criminal justice, RJ looks for the root causes behind the harm in order to address all parties' needs. RJ encourages outcomes that promote accountability, and healing for all.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE VS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

TWO DIFFERENT VIEWS

Crime is a violation of the law and the state.

Crime is a violation of people and relationships.

Violations create guilt.

Violations create obligations.

Justice requires the State to determine blame (guilt) and impose pain (punishment).

Justice involves victims, offenders and community members in an effort to repair the harm, to "put things right".

Central Focus: offenders getting what they deserve.

Central Focus: victim needs and repairing harm.

THREE DIFFERENT QUESTIONS

What laws have been broken?

Who has been harmed?

Who did it?

What are their needs?

What do they deserve?

Whose obligations are these?

RJ AT DYRS

The DC Government's Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) utilizes restorative practices throughout its activities. Some examples of RJ activities include:

1. Restorative Conversations: a voluntary process that provides impacted stakeholders an informal opportunity to a facilitated dialogue.
2. Restorative Justice Circles: a facilitated group activity focused on collectively and holistically addressing a harm, taking responsibility to repair said harm, and promote healing.
3. Community Building Circles: a circle process focused on building trust and belonging. This format can be used for staff, youth and community.
4. RJ Related Community Events: refers to a variety of community events rooted in the RJ values of respect, responsibility and relationship

RJ VALUES

The foundation of Restorative Justice is rooted in three values:

RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY AND RELATIONSHIPS.

BALANCED APPROACH TO RESTORATIVE JUSTICE (BARJ)



For more information, please contact us at restorative.justice@dc.gov