

Restorative Justice Conference Process

Prior to the conference beginning the facilitator would arrange the chairs in a circle. Assigned seating should also be arranged. Offender supporters should sit with the offender and victim supporters with the victim.

Prior arrangement should be made to have snacks set out in the same room where the meeting is held.

The facilitator should ideally have someone in place to record the proceedings and be prepared to type the final agreement. Access to a word processor and photocopier is helpful.

Introduction:

Welcome.

My name is _____. I will be the facilitator for this group conference. Before the conference begins I would like to work my way around this group, introduce everybody and indicate their reason for being here. (Introduce each participant and indicate their relationship to the victim and/or offender.)

All discussion today is confidential.

I would like to thank you for making the effort to attend. This is difficult for all of us and your presence here will help us deal with the matter that has brought us all together.

This conference will focus on an incident which happened.

(detail the date, time and particulars of the incident)

It is important to understand that we will focus on what offender name did, and how his/her unacceptable behaviour has affected others.

We are not here to decide whether offender name is a good or bad person. We want to explore in what way people have been affected and hopefully work towards repairing the harm that resulted from offender name actions.

Offender name has admitted his/her part in these incidents.

At any stage of this conference, offender name, if you no longer wish to participate you are free to leave but you need to know that this matter will be dealt with very differently if you do.

This matter will be finalized subject to your satisfactory participation in the conference and compliance with the conference agreement. Do you understand? *(Ask the offender's parents/caregivers also.)*

This is an opportunity for all of you to be involved in repairing the harm that has been done.

Offender Portion

To help us understand who has been affected by this incident we'll start by asking *offender name* to tell us what happened.

To following issues must be covered if not volunteered by the offender.

- How did you come to be involved?
- Tell us what happened?
- What has happened since?
- What were you thinking about at the time?
- What have you thought about since the incident?
- Who do you think has been affected by your actions?
- In what way have they been affected?

Victim Portion

- What did you think at the time?
- What did you think immediately after?
- How has this incident affected you?
- How did your family and friends react when they heard about this incident?

Victim Supporters

- How did you find out about the incident?
- What did you think when you heard about it?
- What has happened since?

Offender Supporters

(Acknowledge to parents and caregivers that this must be very difficult for them to hear these proceedings.)

- What did you think when you heard what had happened?
- What has happened since?

Offender

Before we move on is there anything you want to say to *victim*?

Agreement

To the victim: You've heard all that has been said here. What do you want to see happen as a result of this conference?

To each victim supporter: You've heard what has been said here. What do you want to see happen as a result of this conference?

To the offender: Do you think this is fair?

To offender supporters: Is this a fair agreement?

Is everyone happy with the outcomes?

(At this point decide who will monitor the various parts of the agreement? Who will coordinate the reporting of the outcomes?...to whom by what date?)

Break for food and drink. Facilitator or designate leaves to type up the agreement

Closing the Conference (Everyone resumes their seat.)

Facilitator: Allow me to read back what you have agreed upon.

Each person must have a copy of the agreement. Ask each individual to read the agreement. Each person is required to sign 3 copies of the agreement.

1 copy for the Facilitator.

1 copy for the Victim.

1 copy for the Offender.

Facilitator: Completion of this agreement will go a long way to putting right the wrong and allowing us all to learn from this unhappy experience. Is there anything else anyone wants to say?

Thanks again all of you for coming. It has been difficult and we hope it's been worthwhile.