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National Training & Technical Assistance Center

The logo for nttac features the letters 'nttac' in a bold, red, serif font. A stylized, yellow, flame-like graphic element is positioned behind the letters, curving around them. Below the main text, the full name 'National Training & Technical Assistance Center' is written in a smaller, red, sans-serif font.

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
*Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention*



OJJDP

Restorative Justice

For Victims, Offenders, and Communities

Mark Umbreit, Ph.D
Center for Restorative Justice & Peacemaking
University of Minnesota
School of Social Work

Key Questions: *Retributive Justice*



- What laws were broken?
- Who did it?
- What punishment do they deserve?

Dr. Howard Zehr
Eastern Mennonite University

Key Questions: *Restorative Justice*



- Who has been hurt by this event?
- What are their needs?
- Whose obligations are they?

Dr. Howard Zehr
Eastern Mennonite University

Key Characteristics: *Restorative Justice*



- Victim-centered
- Offender-focused
- Community-driven
- Government as safeguard

Dr. Marlene Young
National Organization for Victim Assistance

Current Justice System: *Holding Offenders Accountable*



- Victim & Offender in passive roles
- Focus on deficits
- Debt is abstract
- Little, if any, victim restitution

Restorative Justice System: *Holding Offenders Accountable*



- Victim and offender in active roles
- Focus on strengths
- Debt is concrete
- Victim restitution/restoration is norm

Key Elements of Restorative Justice

(Howard Zehr 12/98)



Harm-focused

- **Victim-centered responses**
- **Offender accountably addresses the harm**

Key Elements of Restorative Justice

(Howard Zehr 12/98)



- **Engagement**

- Stakeholders involved in the process: victims, community, offender
- Dialogue, exchange of information, mutual agreement encouraged

RJ Dialogue Processes

Prototypes

- **Victim Offender Mediation (VOM)**
 - Victim and offender
 - Multi-party
- **Restorative Group Conferencing (RGC)**
 - Family Group Conferencing (FGC)
 - Community Conferencing (CC)
- **Circles**
 - Peacemaking circles
 - Talking circles

Evidence-based Best Practices

Restorative Justice Dialogue



- A Meta-Analysis conducted by the Canadian Department of Justice, 2001
- Examined 27 victim offender mediation program evaluations
- Examined 8 family group conferencing program evaluations
- 26 youth studies, 9 adult studies

Outcome Measures Examined



- Victim Satisfaction
- Offender Satisfaction
- Restitution Compliance
- Recidivism

Victim Satisfaction

- Higher victim satisfaction ratings when compared to a comparison group
- Total of 13 studies, 9 VOM, 4 FGC

Offender Satisfaction

- Moderate to weak positive impact on offender satisfaction in all but one of the 13 studies when compared to non-restorative approaches
- Total of 13 studies, 7 VOM, 6 FGC

Restitution Compliance

- Substantially higher compliance rates than offenders exposed to other arrangements
- Total of 8 studies

Recidivism

- Restorative justice dialogue or conferencing, on average, yield reductions in recidivism when compared to non-restorative approaches
- Total of 32 studies, 24 VOM, 8 FGC

Participation in Victim Offender Mediation and the Prevalence and Severity of Subsequent Delinquent Behavior: A Meta-Analysis



- Total sample of 9,307 juvenile offenders
- Sample came from 19 program sites (15 prior studies)
- The meta-analysis suggests a 26% reduction in recidivism
- For those who recidivated, their future delinquent behavior decreased in severity (statistically significant)
- The effect size is 2-3 times greater than 2 prior meta-analyses of juvenile recidivism in non-restorative programs
- William Nugent, Mona Williams, Mark Umbreit (University of Tennessee and University of Minnesota, Utah Law Review, December 2003)