

Restorative Community Conferencing

Restoring & building relationships



+ Restorative Community Conferencing Diversion Program

- This Restorative Justice program run by Community Works has the following components:
- **Admit Involvement.** Youth are required to admit their role in the crime. We meet with the youth and their support community (parent/guardian, coach, friend – anyone who helps them do right in the world) where the youth is required to tell the story of what happened and their involvement. This is necessary for the youth to enroll in the program. We will not allow a meeting with a victim if the youth is back peddling or blaming others.
- **Voluntary Participation.** The program is voluntary. Youth and their families have to opt in or out. This allows the youth to have some control and additionally requires them to step up and be responsible for their actions.



Restorative Community Conferencing Diversion Program Cont.

- **Meet with Victim.** Face to face meeting between the youth and victim(s) of their crime with support and preparation for all who attend. This forces the youth to see the full impact of their crime and be in the presence of the harm their crime caused. This in turn encourages them to view the victim as a person. It also affords the victim the opportunity to have their questions answered, make statements to the youth and participate in determining the best way for the youth to right the wrong they committed.
- **Case Management Support.** Out of the meeting a “plan” is agreed upon whereby the youth does right by the victim and others harmed. A case manager supports the youth in completion of these tasks. A plan involving an assault at a school might include: Reading of an apology letter to open the meeting, making the victim a bracelet, speaking politely to the victim if they see him/her, doing community service at the school, selling of the youth’s CD’s or electronic or game devices to help pay any restitution owed.
- **Success at something other than criminal behavior.** Part of every youth’s “plan” includes engaging in something they are interested in. Case management also supports and helps to locate this activity.





Restorative Community Conferencing Diversion Program Cont.



- **Notification to Referral Agency.** Once the youth successfully completes his/her “plan” the DA is notified and charges are not filed. If at any time before completion of the “plan” the youth does not cooperate, Community Works has the right to return the case to the DA. We try not to do this but feel we have an obligation to the victim, the community, the DA and the youth to be honest about the success or failure of the youth.

+ Types of Charges/Cases

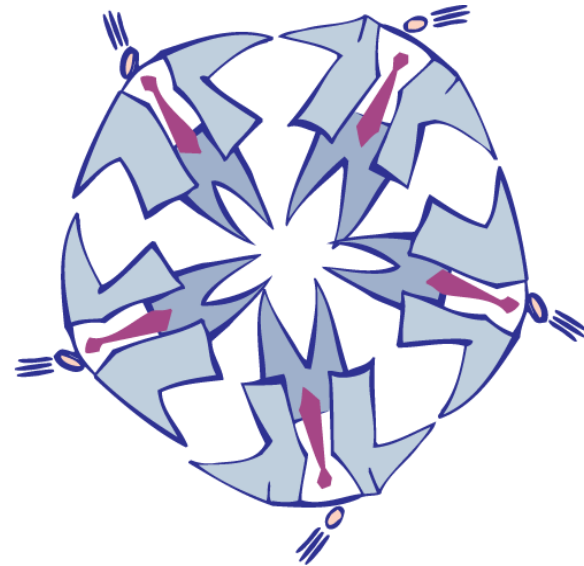
Restorative Community Conferencing Model

- ❖ Burglaries
- ❖ Assaults/Batteries
- ❖ Weapon possession
- ❖ Vehicle Theft
- ❖ Grand Theft/Theft of Person
- ❖ Robberies
- ❖ Arson
- ❖ Theft
- ❖ Possession for Sales

Restorative Community Conferencing (RCC)



- What is it?
- Who is involved?
- What are its goals?
- How does it work?



+ Who is involved?



- Victim and support
- Responsible youth, their family and support
- Community members
- District Attorney /Police



RCC - Goals



- Hold the youth accountable
- Repair the harm
- Prevent further offending





How does an RCC work?



- Information sharing
- Plan Development
- Share the plan





Agreement Plan



Victim

- ❖ Plan is monitored for a period of 3-6 months

Community

- ❖ Frequent contact with responsible youth

Family

- ❖ Connect youth and family with services and referrals

Self

- ❖ Identify barriers to completion and address



Finalize Agreement



- Youth presents the plan
- Person harmed is asked if they would like to add or remove anything
- Work out details (time line, support etc.)
- Explore how responsible youths family feels about the plan
- Go through plan with reality check – measurable, attainable, adequate support, monitored
- Again ask person harmed if they agree
- Again ask responsible youth and family if they agree
- Ask responsible youth “Do you believe you can complete this plan?”
- Ask police if they agree



Letter To Referring Agency

- To: (DA, HPD, BUSD, etc.)
- Re: Report No. 1111111, name name
- Name Name has completed all of his/her obligations to Community Works Restorative Community Conferencing Program and no charges should be filed against him/her. There is no need for any further investigation, the case is complete.





RCC RESULTS IN



- POSITIVE OUTCOMES IN SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY'S
- VICTIM SATISFACTION
- TRUE ACCOUNTABILITY
- INCREASED FAMILY & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
- REDUCED INCARCERATION AND RECIDIVISM
- FISCAL BENEFITS
- IMPACT ON DISPROPORTIONATE MINORITY CONTACT (DMC)





Restorative Community Conferencing

Snapshot of Preliminary Results

RCC program received 70 cases referred by Alameda County District Attorney

80% of these cases successfully completed the program and had all charges dropped against them

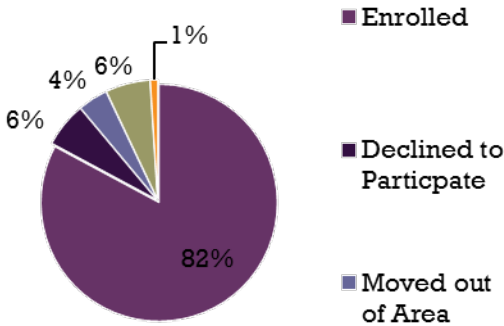
What was the most meaningful part of the program and Why?

Participants Response:

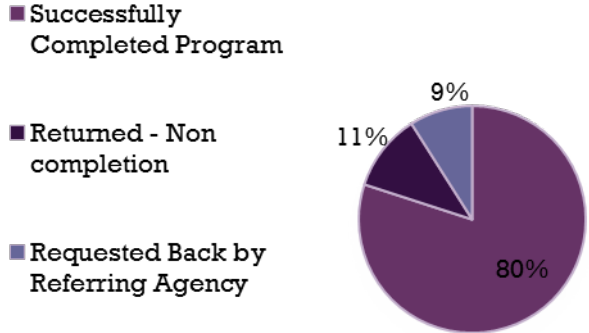
- The most meaningful part was the plan, because I set goals for myself to help myself, my family and the community - Responsible Youth
- Face to face contact that can lead to normalizing relationships in the community we all share - Guardian
- The kids taking real responsibility and understanding their impact on other people - Victim
- I'm just glad we got to talk with the kids before it was too late - Victim
- "Youth admitting to the crime and his plan" - Law Enforcement

Data Range: January 2012 to June 2013

Cases Referred



Enrolled



Youth inspired by conference wrote the following:

I would like to start off by thanking you for allowing me the opportunity to learn from my mistakes by agreeing to take part in this Restorative program. I know I already verbally apologized but I would like to offer this written apology as well.

Although it still hurts to discuss, I'll be honest in telling you that I've been lost for the past 9 months. September 7, 2012 my one and only brother was taken away from me due to gun violence... When he passed so did my soul. I don't care for much anymore. I felt as if nothing else could repair the hurt I was feeling. No one understood. Everyone kept saying "it'll be okay" and still 'til this day I feel like it's not.

I didn't mention this as an excuse, but I wanted to bring a heart beat towards my "cold demeanor." Again, I know that I'm not in any position to play the victim card, and I'm not! I just wanted to be honest about my own personal storm...as everyone has a story. Although, I do regret my poor actions, I don't regret getting caught, because it allowed me the time to self-reflect and I realize that although I lost my brother, I cannot lose myself. There's people, including myself who care a lot about my future and this has restored the faith I once had in myself to be the greatest me! And I thank you for that! I am now a responsible youth.



COLLABORATION

Direct

- Participate in Conferences
- Practitioners or
- Community Representative(s)
- Surrogate Victim

Indirect

- Referrals
- Provide services for responsible youth and families
- Specific expertise
- Short term opportunities

