

A REPORT ON RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

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This report defines and documents the history of restorative justice, describes current practices, and analyzes current trends in the field.

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I. RESTORATIVE JUSTICE – DEFINITION

“Restorative justice is a victim-centered response to crime that provides opportunities for those most directly affected by the crime – the victim, the offender, their families, and representatives of the community – to be directly involved in responding to the harm caused by the crime. The starting point for all restorative justice efforts is to make time to listen to the concerns of those most affected by the crime and to invite their participation in the justice process. Restorative justice is based upon values that emphasize the importance of providing opportunities for more active involvement in the process of: offering support and assistance to crime victims; holding offenders directly accountable to the people and communities they have violated; restoring the emotional and material losses of victims (to the degree possible); providing a range of opportunities for dialogue and problem solving among interested crime victims, offenders, families, and other support persons; offering offenders opportunities for competency development and reintegration into productive community life; and strengthening public safety through community building.” From the brochure *Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking*.

II. RESTORATIVE JUSTICE – HISTORY

“Restorative justice is a philosophical framework that views crime as an injury, and justice as a process for healing to take place. It seeks to balance the needs of victims and communities rather than just those of the offender.”¹ The principles of restorative justice, such as requiring restitution for property crimes, is centuries old and can be found in the Code of Hammurabi (1700 BC), and the Old Testament. Indigenous people in New Zealand, North America, and Australia have practiced principles of restorative justice for generations. The concept as used by the modern day criminal justice system is relatively new.

The framework of restorative justice in modern criminal justice has been evolving since the 1970s when early experiments using mediation between victims of crime and offenders began. Crime victim advocates and criminal justice professionals were seeking ways to involve victims in the criminal justice process. Advocates were seeking compensation for victims’ material losses and a way to repair the emotional damage that results from victimization. Victim-offender mediation, the first restorative justice process, gives interested victims of primarily property crimes an opportunity to meet the offender in a safe and structured setting. A trained mediator guides the process. The goal of the mediation is to hold the offender accountable for his/her behavior while providing compensation to the victim. The victim is able to tell the offender how the crime has affected his or her life and receive answers to questions about the crime. The process is designed to help the victim regain a sense of security and repair the damage that occurred to the victim’s health, family, home, or property. The victim helps develop a restitution plan that holds the offender accountable for the crime. The plan may include compensation, an apology, community service, and other requirements. There are about 300 victim-offender mediation programs in the United States. Cases are most often referred to victim-offender mediation as a diversion from prosecution assuming the agreement is successfully completed. Other cases are referred after a formal admission of guilt

¹ Carey, Mark. “Restorative Justice-A New Approach With Historical Roots.” *Corrections Retrospective 1959-1999*, Minnesota Department of Corrections, p 32.

has been accepted by the courts and the mediation process is a condition of probation. Some programs receive cases at both the diversion and the post-adjudication level. Most victim-offender referrals are from the juvenile justice system. Victim-offender mediation programs are usually sponsored by independent organizations that receive referrals from judges, police, victim advocates, probation officers, prosecutors, or defense attorneys.

III. ADVANCEMENTS IN RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

The use of restorative justice practices has grown in Minnesota in the past 10 years and there has been a dramatic increase in the past five years. The Minnesota Department of Corrections spearheaded much of the growth by sponsoring an initial workshop in 1990 and subsequent conferences on restorative justice every two years since 1992. In 1993, Dakota County was selected as one of three national sites by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to promote balanced and restorative justice. In 1994, family group conferencing, a major innovation involving law enforcement and schools to address juvenile crime, was introduced to Minnesota by Mr. Terry O'Connell of the New South Wales, Australia, Police Department. Also, Dr. Mark Umbreit, a nationally recognized leader in restorative justice, established the Center for Restorative Justice in the School of Social Work at the University of Minnesota. In 1995, the Department of Corrections hired Ms. Kay Pranis as a restorative justice planner to promote restorative justice practices in communities. Circle sentencing, a process engaging significant community involvement, was introduced by Judge Barry Stuart in Mille Lacs County in 1996. That same year the Minnesota Department of Education printed a guide called *Restorative Measures for Schools* to use in preventing school violence.

IV. RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES

Restorative justice practices have expanded beyond the victim-offender model of the 1980s and include a number of activities designed to involve more community and family members in the process. These methods are based on the philosophical belief that in order to have strong cohesive communities, all legitimate interests must be understood and addressed. Further, those interests need to be addressed in a collaborative process, not through an adversarial legal rights process. "Several processes emerged from tribal cultures and were embraced by the restorative justice movement. The processes use consensus decision making that allows all interested parties to have a voice in decisions."² These two characteristics, involving all parties and consensus decision making, are used in various models being developed and practiced in Minnesota. The models include family group conferencing, circle sentencing/peacemaking circles, and community conferencing.

A. Circle Sentencing/Peacemaking Circles. A sentencing circle is a community-directed process conducted in partnership with the criminal justice system to develop a consensus on an appropriate sentencing plan that addresses the concerns of all interested parties. Sentencing circles, also known as peacemaking circles, are used to support victims, to encourage offenders

² Pranis, Kay. "Building Justice on a Foundation of Democracy, Caring and Mutual Responsibility." Minnesota Department of Corrections. 1998. p 3.

to make amends and change behavior, and to determine how best to address the underlying problems (individual and community) associated with the crime. Circles are usually open to all interested parties. All circle members are encouraged to speak during the process and are expected to participate in decision making. Everyone has an equal voice during the circle process, including the judge, the offender, the victim, the prosecutor, the defense attorney, family members, and any community members that attend. Decisions must be acceptable to everyone.

“In the sentencing circle process, participants sit in a circle, which conveys a message of equality. Titles are not used, minimizing authority. A talking piece is used to structure the discussion and participants may only speak when holding the talking piece. The talking piece is passed clockwise around the circle providing each participant an opportunity to speak. Each participant in the circle is encouraged to draw on their life experience to generate an understanding of the problems created by the crime. Participants also draw on their personal experiences to generate possible solutions. Circle discussions about an individual crime often become discussions about larger problems in the community. Circles provide forums for preventing crimes and addressing broader community concerns.”³

B. Family Group Conferencing. Family group conferencing brings together those most directly affected by juvenile crime – the victim, the offender, the family, friends, and key supporters of both the victim and offender – to resolve the criminal incident. Affected parties are brought together by a trained facilitator to discuss how they and others have been harmed by the offense and how the harm might be repaired. The offender must admit guilt to the offense to participate in a family group conference. Participation by all involved is voluntary. The facilitator ensures a safe environment for all participants to openly and honestly discuss the circumstances surrounding the crime and its impact. The facilitator is also responsible for making sure the conference is controlled and fair to all parties involved. An important component of the conference is that both the victim and offender must agree to the restitution.⁴

C. Community Conferencing. Community conferencing is a neighborhood-based restorative justice process that holds offenders accountable to those they have harmed. Typically community conferences deal with crimes that damage the community, including prostitution, drug dealing or possession, public urination, and graffiti. In a conference, the offender meets with people from the affected neighborhood to learn how his/her behavior harmed others. The conference helps the offender determine how to make amends and reinforces acceptable social behavior. The goals are to heal, strengthen, and empower the community. The process promotes social accountability, supports victims, reintegrates offenders into the community, and tries to recreate a safe environment.

“In the community conferencing process, an offender is referred to a coordinating agency. The agency secures a trained community conference facilitator to conduct a community conference. The offender, victim, and supporters meet with community members from the neighborhood where the offense occurred. Conference participants take turns explaining the impact of the behavior. The group creates a reparative agreement decided by consensus with input from each

³ Ibid. p 4-5.

⁴ Ferecello, C. & Umbreit, M. “Client Evaluation of Family Group Conferencing in 12 sites in 1st Judicial District of Minnesota.” Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking. University of Minnesota. November 1998; p 1-2.

person. The offender makes amends to the victim and the community, and carries out the agreement.”⁵

D. Restorative Schools. Schools districts in Minnesota are adopting restorative measures as an alternative to suspension and expulsion. School districts have adapted the process of sentencing circles and victim/offender dialogue to address harm from bullying and harassment, classroom disruptions, chronic attendance problems, and terroristic threats.

V. LESSONS LEARNED AND RESEARCH ON RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES

The greatest body of research on the effectiveness of restorative justice practices relate to victim-offender mediation. The *Research and Resources Review* newsletter of the Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking summarizes all of the 40 known victim-offender mediation empirical studies. The newsletter also summarizes studies of six known family group conferencing evaluations. The newsletter is attached. The following “lessons learned” summarize empirical findings that demonstrate some of the impact of restorative justice practices on juvenile offenders, victims, other participants, and the community. These lessons learned were prepared for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in the report *Conferences, Circles, Boards, and Mediations: Restorative Justice and Citizen Involvement in the Response to Juvenile Crime* in September 1998.

A. Victim-Offender Mediation. A large multisite study of victim offender mediation programs with juvenile offenders found the following:

- Cases were referred to the four-site study over a two-year period, with 95% of the mediation sessions resulting in a successfully negotiated restitution agreement to restore the victim’s financial losses.
- Victims who met with their offender in the presence of a trained mediator were more likely to be satisfied (79%) with the justice system than similar victims who went through the normal court process (57%).
- After meeting the offender, victims were significantly less fearful of being revictimized.
- Offenders who met with their victims were far more likely to complete their restitution obligation (81%) than similar offenders who did not participate in mediation (58%).
- Fewer offenders who participated in victim offender mediation recidivated (18%) than similar offenders who did not participate in mediation (27%); furthermore, participating offenders’ subsequent crimes tended to be less serious.

B. Circle Sentencing/Peacemaking Circles. Very little research has been conducted to date on the effectiveness of sentencing circles. One study conducted by Judge Barry Stuart (1996) in Canada indicated that fewer offenders who had gone through the circle recidivated than offenders who were processed by standard criminal justice practices. Those who had been involved with circles report that circles empower participants to resolve conflict in a manner

⁵ “What is Community Conferencing and What are Community Conferencing Steps.” CCNP Restorative Justice Program Newsletter. March 2000.

that shares responsibility for outcomes; generates constructive relationships; enhances respect and understanding among all involved; and fosters enduring, innovative solutions.

C. Family Group Conferencing. To date, two studies have been conducted to assess the impact of family group conferencing with youthful offenders. One study assessed the impact of a new law mandating the widespread use of conferencing in New Zealand. It found that families of offenders are more frequently and actively involved in the justice process when they participate in family group conferencing rather than standard justice processes. It also found that the offenders and victims, as well as their families, reported that the conference process had been helpful.

A study of Family Group Conferencing at 12 sites in the First Judicial District of Minnesota indicated a high level of client satisfaction with the process. The 455 interviews included victims of crime (166), juvenile offenders (159), and support persons (130). Nine out of 10 victims and offenders were satisfied with the juvenile justice system handling of their case. Nine out of 10 victims and offenders felt that the negotiated restitution agreement was fair. Nine out of 10 victim and offenders, and support people were satisfied with the outcomes of the conference and would recommend conferencing to others. This research did not track recidivism.

D. Community Conferencing. Little quantitative data has been collected on the effectiveness of community conferencing. There is growing belief that these interventions should consider measures besides the standard offender-focused measure of recidivism. Victim and community responsiveness and satisfaction is an essential measure of community conferencing success. Another indicator of success is the development of relationships among community members.

An evaluation of 41 completed community conferences was conducted by the Central City Neighborhoods Partnership Restorative Justice Program in Minneapolis. The conferences centered on misdemeanor crimes against the community such as drug possession and dealing, graffiti, and soliciting prostitution. The evaluation found the following results:

- Almost all participants had high praise for the staff, the program process, and outcomes.
- Offenders and community members voiced satisfaction with most of the agreements. Many mentioned they did not get exactly what they wanted from the agreements but they respected the consensus building process and found the result acceptable.
- A large percentage (86%) of the offenders successfully completed the agreement.
- There was no subsequent crime similar to the presenting offense among the successful offenders. Two of the offenders who failed the program were subsequently charged with similar offenses.
- There is some evidence of community building. Relationships established at community conferencing resulted in additional collaborative efforts to improve the community.

E. School Programs. Four schools in Minnesota have received three-year grants from the Department of Children Families and Learning to demonstrate the use of restorative justice measures as an alternative to suspension and expulsion. The schools are in their second year of the demonstration. A three-year evaluation will be completed by an outside consultant in January 2002.

VI. FUNDERS OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ACTIVITIES IN MINNESOTA

There are five state government entities and a number of county governments that are administering federal, state, county, and local funding for restorative justice activities. The Minnesota Department of Corrections administers a \$250,000 state grant program for community-based restorative justice projects, including peacemaking circles, family group conferencing, and community conferencing. This source of funds was reduced from \$300,000 in 1997 to \$250,000 in 1999. The Department of Corrections also administers the multimillion dollar community corrections program. Some county community corrections agencies use a portion of the funds to support restorative justice projects, including victim-offender mediation, family group conferencing, and peacemaking circles. These grants are made to police departments, court services, and nonprofit community agencies.

The Department of Public Safety provides grants to nonprofit organizations, schools, and local governments through its Office of Drug Policy and Intervention. This office collaborates with the Department of Children Families and Learning to administer \$6 million to \$8 million in state and federal funds for drug free and safe schools. The amount of discretionary funds for restorative justice is limited.

The Department of Children Families and Learning administers a \$300,000 demonstration grant program for in-school behavior intervention grants. The four schools selected to receive grants are using peacemaking circles and conferencing to address a number of disruptive behaviors.

The Department of Human Services administers grants to Family Service Collaboratives throughout the state. A few of the collaboratives are funding local restorative justice initiatives.

The Department of Economic Security provides grants to schools and youth intervention programs.

Various private foundations have made grants to nonprofit organizations to establish restorative justice programs. The Blandin Foundation's funding for training and local restorative justice initiatives through its Center for Reducing Rural Violence is nearing completion.

VII. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES IN MINNESOTA

The types and extent of restorative justice programs are extremely varied. Some organizations and government agencies have comprehensive programs with full-time restorative justice program staff. Others have small programs or components of restorative justice activities as part of larger agency programs. There is no comprehensive list of restorative justice programs funded by state agencies. A committee with members from the Minnesota Department of Corrections and the Department of Public Safety hopes to compile a list within the next six months. A partial list of organizations with restorative justice activities follows.

Victim-offender mediation is being conducted through probation offices in Beltrami, Dakota, and Brown Counties; the community dispute resolution center in St. Paul; various mediation

centers; court services in Washington County; and the multiagency juvenile service coordinating council in Blue Earth County.

Family group conferencing is coordinated by the police department in Woodbury; the probation office in Hennepin, Stearns, and Meeker Counties; the Arrowhead Juvenile Center and Red Wing Juvenile Correctional Facility; community organizations at Walker Community Church and the Central City Neighborhoods Partnership in Minneapolis; and by the victim services program in Houston County.

Peacemaking and sentencing circles for juveniles are coordinated by the following groups: Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe; BIHA Women in Action; Washington County Court Services; South St. Paul Project; Rum River Education Cooperative; Stearns County Community Corrections; and the American Indian Center.

Community Conferencing is happening through the Powderhorn Park Restorative Justice Program; the Central City Neighborhood Partnership in Minneapolis; the Forest Lake Youth Bureau; and the Department of Corrections in Bemidji.

Restorative Measures and Peacemaking in Schools is coordinated by the Department of Children Families and Learning. The four primary school-based programs are in the South St. Paul School District; Princeton Schools; Seward Montessori School in Minneapolis; and West Central Area Schools, a consolidated rural school district with five schools.

VIII. KEY ISSUES AND OBSERVATIONS

A. Restorative justice is a social movement. Restorative justice fits the McKnight goal to improve outcomes for children and youth of all ages by creating a supportive environment in which children and families can thrive. Restorative justice is a young, evolving movement. It is viewed by many as an important social change process that alters how justice is administered in our communities, state, and nation. Restorative justice practitioners and advocates are trying to change systems, institutions, and public policies to improve children's well-being and to support parents in their responsibilities toward their children.

The criminal justice system historically has focused on the offender. It is designed to keep the community safe, to provide a means of retribution for criminal activity, to attempt to rehabilitate offenders, and to provide treatment to prevent criminal behavior. Restorative justice processes are attempting to transfer the responsibility for changing criminal behavior away from the criminal system and to the local community. Restorative justice activities create linkages between courts, prosecutors, defense attorneys, corrections agencies, law enforcement, victims, community members, and the offender. According to those interviewed, the process used in peacemaking circles, family group conferences, community conferences, and victim-offender mediation is as important as the outcomes of the process.

Restorative justice promotes collective responsibility and collective accountability in a caring context. These are activities that provide an opportunity to build strong vibrant communities

according to Kay Pranis. She states that conferencing and peacemaking circles provide opportunities to

- set limits on behavior while providing love and support to a particular person
- clearly articulate norms and expectations for behavior for the entire community
- reinforce a sense of mutual accountability to care about and take care of each other
- practice a new form of democracy, which gives all present an equal voice in decision making

According to David Hines, Woodbury Chief of Police, violence by juveniles and adults is not going to be solved by the criminal justice system. It will only be reduced when the community starts to live with a value of non-violence. Restorative processes force the community to take an active role in promoting these values.

B. Restorative justice is community based. Restorative justice is best defined by the community where it is practiced. There are no standards or models that are advocated as better than others by government agencies, practitioners, or academicians. Practitioners are carving new paths, and people with experience at the local level are mentoring others who are interested in developing programs. Restorative justice draws people with a broad range of interests such as faith-based people, community activists, victim advocates, justice reformers, peacemakers, and citizens concerned about safe neighborhoods.

This passage from a paper titled *Restorative Justice Conferencing* summarizes the opinion of most of those interviewed for this report: "The central issue is not the model intervention or technique. The critical element of victim offender communication is the process that creates a safe place in which the involved parties can engage in genuine dialogue with each other, with minimal intervention by the facilitator."⁶

C. Restorative justice programs are well suited for youth. Restorative justice practices are being used in various settings involving youth. A number of communities use peacemaking circles, sentencing circles, and family group conferencing with youth that have committed crimes. Youth are referred to restorative justice programs as a diversion to court, or for sentencing after being found guilty of a crime. A new program, in the planning stage, intends to use circles as a way to reintegrate youth into the community after they leave juvenile correctional facilities. Schools are increasingly using restorative justice practices to respond to incidents that occur in the school. These include bullying, harassment, truancy, threats, and other actions. Restorative justice processes are being used more holistically at the elementary level to teach about respect and communication. Schools are recognizing that conferencing has uses that go beyond crimes.

D. Collaboration is essential. Restorative justice programs are usually started by either a grassroots movement within the community or by a government official that is interested in involving the broader community in crime prevention and reparation. It is Hines's opinion that grassroots community groups and supporters of restorative justice within government agencies

⁶ Umbreit, M. "Restorative Justice Conferencing: Guidelines for Victim Sensitive Practice." Balanced and Restorative Justice Project. Community Justice Institute, Florida Atlantic University. November 1999. p 33.

must come together to develop effective restorative justice programs. Community organizing by grassroots supporters of restorative justice is necessary to challenge criminal justice professionals to change the way they view justice and to alter institutionalized practices. Government officials provide the entree for community stakeholders to examine policies and procedures that dictate government actions.

E. Connection among participants contributes to success. The process works best when there is a deep, almost spiritual, connection among participants that are seeking reconciliation between the offender, the victim, and/or the community, according to Pranis and Umbreit. Umbreit states that circles may have the most potential for creating healing among victims, communities, and offenders because of the connections that occur when people share their inner-most feelings in a safe place. Circles are labor intensive and Umbreit questions whether it makes sense to marshal many community resources and volunteers for relatively small crimes. Victim-sensitive dialogues, blended with circles, are beginning to be used in murder cases and other severe violent crimes where intensive healing needs to occur. Hybrid models, such as victim-sensitive dialogues expanded to circles, are evolving and hold promise for meaningful victim and community healing.

F. The role of government in promoting restorative justice is varied. Staff from state departments that are involved in restorative justice oppose developing mandates. They view their role as providing vision and engaging community people in discussions about restorative justice. Staff from the three primary funding agencies provide training, technical assistance, and funding. The state has not issued requests for proposals for specific restorative justice projects other than school-based programs. Grants have been awarded to programs designed at the community level. Current government grants for restorative justice projects are for two to three years and there is no stable ongoing funding for community-based projects. Some government services have institutionalized staff positions within agencies. Umbreit believes that restorative justice as a social movement is working against organizations that need to build capacity because some funders do not want institutionalize funding.

G. Government change is slow. Individuals and communities involved in restorative justice need patience while government begins to change its view on how criminal justice is best delivered. Many criminal justice institutions are reluctant to change the current structure. The burden of proof is on restorative justice advocates to demonstrate the value of their programs. On the other hand, many criminal justice personnel recognize that the current criminal justice system is not very effective in reducing crime, particularly among juveniles. The current system does not connect youth to their community and their victims, nor does it demonstrate the harm of their actions. Many are seeking new ways of restoring justice.

H. Defining measures of success is important. There is little agreement on what constitutes success at the community level. Many funders are seeking information about the effect of restorative justice on the reduction of recidivism rates. Russell Reetz, director of Washington County Community Corrections, stated that it is difficult to measure the reduction of recidivism rates for any criminal justice program because there is little agreement on what recidivism means. Further, there is insufficient longitudinal data on restorative justice practices to assess recidivism rates for offenders.

The value of restorative justice should be measured by the involvement of community members in the process and their satisfaction. It should also consider the victim and offenders opinion on the process. A proposed project by the Minneapolis Center for Neighborhoods to develop outcome measures has some value, according to Umbreit. He states that while it is important to establish a set of outcome measures to help communities assess their programs, it is important that standard measures not stifle creativity in program development.

I. Coalition building among restorative justice programs is essential. A statewide coalition of restorative justice programs is necessary to advocate for the needs of the programs and to demonstrate the breadth of the movement. A loose-knit volunteer organization, called the Minnesota Restorative Services Coalition, has had limited success obtaining legislative funding for community-based restorative justice programs. The Coalition meets every other month to share stories and develop strategies to ensure quality restorative practices. It lacks paid staff to help the organization develop a plan and coordinate its work.

IX. NEEDS TO INCREASE THE USE OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

A. Community organizing and capacity-building is key to developing and maintaining restorative justice programs. New programs need leaders that will help define the type of program and develop grassroots and community support for the project. Few of the current grassroots organizations have the capacity to sustain themselves or to grow. Funding is piecemeal and unstable. Current government funding sources for restorative justice activities support projects for up to three years and many grants are for one to two years. There is a need for both startup multiyear funding and ongoing operating support while programs attempt to shift funding within the criminal justice system away from incarceration and to community development and restorative justice programs.

Programs that build the capacity of people to do the work within the community are most likely to be able to sustain themselves. Funding is needed for initiatives that help communities promote peacemaking and non-violent values and for programs that have promising results. A cross-section of organizations doing the work such as small single-focused programs, those that blend various practices, and those that address severe violence would strengthen the body of information about restorative justice practices and build communities.

There is a belief that private foundations have a significant impact on the way government views its work. Foundation support for grassroots organizations and government staff that support restorative justice practices would provide outside credibility for those attempting to change the way funds are allocated for criminal justice services.

B. Coalition building is necessary to develop a unified statewide voice. The Minnesota Restorative System Coalition attempts to coordinate legislative initiatives, training, and information sharing among programs. It does not have any funding or personnel to develop a plan to advance current programs and help develop new programs. The Department of Corrections provides technical assistance to new organizations but its ability to lobby for increased legislative funding is limited by the governor's budget process.

C. Training. Training for community-based programs is provided by practitioners and the Department of Corrections. The Department of Children Families and Learning trains schools in restorative justice practices. The Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking also conducts training and provides some clearinghouse services for information. All those interviewed mentioned training and a stronger infrastructure to manage training as a need. There is also a need for advanced training for those that have been conducting restorative justice processes.

D. Evaluation. Program evaluation was mentioned as a need by all those interviewed. Objective data would help identify best practices and lessons learned. It would also help to demonstrate the value of restorative justice programs to criminal justice professionals, communities, and funders. Evaluation would also help restorative justice programs to solve problems and to define the resources needed to be effective. There is a need to articulate common principles, and to develop sample protocols and measurement tools for use by community groups.

E. Victim-offender mediation and dialogue in crimes of severe violence is the cutting edge work in restorative justice. As this field expands there will be a need for highly trained people to teach others how to conduct the sessions. Highly visible murders reduce the sense of safety and trust by members of the community and neighborhoods. This process is being used to help family members of violent crime to heal, and to provide an avenue for community members to voice the affects of the crime on their well-being. The Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking would be a viable resource for this work.

X. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Restorative justice is a philosophical framework that views crime as an injury, and justice as a process for healing to take place. It seeks to balance the needs of victims and communities rather than just those of the offender. The use of restorative justice practices has grown in Minnesota in the past 10 years and there has been a dramatic increase in the past five years. Restorative justice practices have expanded beyond the victim-offender model of the 1980s and include a number of activities designed to involve more community and family members in the process. These methods are based on the philosophical belief that in order to have strong cohesive communities, all legitimate interests must be understood and addressed. Further, those interests need to be addressed in a collaborative process, not through an adversarial legal rights process. Two characteristics, involving all parties in the discussion about the crime and consensus decision making, are used in various models being developed and practiced in Minnesota. The models include family group conferencing, circle sentencing/peacemaking circles, community conferencing, and school-based restorative processes.

XI. PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

Mark Umbreit, director, Center for Restorative Justice, University of Minnesota

Kay Pranis, director, Minnesota Department of Corrections Restorative Justice Office

Susan Stacey, planner, Minnesota Department of Corrections Restorative Justice Office

Jeri Bouisvert, planning director, Minnesota Department of Public Safety

Nancy Riestenberg, prevention specialist, Minnesota Department of Children Families and Learning

David Hines, chief of police, Woodbury

Russell Reetz, director, Washington County Community Corrections

Maureen Walton, restorative justice planner, Washington County Court Services

Gretchen Nicholls, director, Minneapolis Center for Neighborhoods

Steven Mayer, research consultant, Research, Minneapolis Center for Neighborhoods

Gina Gerard, program coordinator, Central City Neighborhood Partnership Restorative Justice Program

Karen Clark, representative, Minnesota Legislature

Jay Heffern, city attorney, City of Minneapolis

Kathryn Jensen, vice president, Blandin Foundation

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