



Victims of Crime Benefit from Restorative Conferences

“Although the conference was very difficult, I think it was very effective and meaningful. It brought everybody together in one place and let us see and experience each others’ humanity.”—Crime Victim

- Restorative Justice is rooted in the Victims’ Rights movement.
- The needs of victims are the primary consideration in how restorative conferences are organized.
- Victims’ voices are primary in describing impacts and what needs to be done to make things right, or as right as possible.
- Many victims experience restorative conferencing as a healing process.

“I appreciate being able to meet the offenders face-to-face and express the impact their action had on me.”—Crime Victim

Victims of Crime Favorably Evaluate their Restorative Experiences

Average Overall Satisfaction Rating 1 (low) to 5 (high)	4.47
The conference was fair	94%
The conference was meaningful	94%
The restorative plan was fair	94%
The plan fully addressed the impacts of the crime	94%

“I learned a lot from the creation of the plan in the conference. It is an excellent evolutionary process. As the victim who reported the event I appreciated the ongoing contact with the young offender as he completed a part of his plan. I hope that contact helped him see and understand the human element involved in and affected by his actions.”—Crime Victim



Restorative Conferencing for Juvenile Crime

Restorative Resources' First Restorative Conference	July 18, 2001
Total Offenders Accepted in Program since then	645
Successful Completions ¹	558 (91%)
Unsuccessful Completions	58 (9%)
Open Cases (April 30 2009)	39
Average Age of Offender	15.3
Rate of no new sustained petitions (non-recidivism)	96.4% ²
Incarceration rate	3.0%

The plan the young offender had to follow was far more thorough than any probation or jail time he would have received. Nice work.

--Law Enforcement

The most meaningful part was the contact with the victim, because I found out what harm I had caused the family.

--Juvenile Offender

The conference was a profound example of how things should work in the world. I am very glad to have the chance to participate.

--Community Member

One of the things that made this conference so powerful for my son was that he had to face his victims' anger and hurt. That had a lot of impact on him.

--Parent of Offender

¹ Successful Completion means the young offender completes all obligations for repairing the harms caused by their actions, as specified on the Restorative Plan developed by participants in Restorative Conference.

² Data from Sonoma County Probation Department, 2007-08 clients.



Program Participants are highly Satisfied with the Restorative Conference

Average Overall Satisfaction with Restorative Conference from 1 (low) to 5 (high)	
Family	4.53
Law Enforcement	4.40
Offender	4.33
Offender Support	4.41
Other	4.74
Parent	4.23
Probation	4.67
Victim	4.47
Victim Support	4.41
Grand Total	4.42

I think this program gives the most meaningful and personal consequences. Instead of being rushed through the system, young offenders have to truly face their actions.

—Law Enforcement

Not only did this process powerfully advocate for the victim, we came away with hope for the offender's rehabilitation.

—Victim Support



**The Restorative Conference Process
is Fair and Meaningful**

The Conference Process Was Fair (N=430)	
Family	100%
Law Enforcement	100%
Offender	91%
Offender Support	89%
Other	98%
Parent	90%
Probation	100%
Victim	94%
Victim Support	91%
Grand Total	93%

The Conference Was Meaningful (n=407)	
Family	100%
Law Enforcement	94%
Offender	98%
Offender Support	98%
Other	98%
Parent	94%
Probation	100%
Victim	94%
Victim Support	91%

The program provided all parties involved the opportunity to heal from the offense. The plan addressed everyone's concerns.

--Parent

The conference was a powerful experience of reconciliation.

--Community Member



Restorative Plans are fair and fully address the impacts of the young person's offenses

The Restorative Plan Was Fair (n=431)	
Family	100%
Law Enforcement	98%
Offender	91%
Offender Support	93%
Other	98%
Parent	90%
Probation	100%
Victim	94%
Victim Support	86%

The Plan Fully Address the Impacts (n=396)	
Family	100%
Law Enforcement	100%
Offender	95%
Offender Support	94%
Other	96%
Parent	88%
Probation	100%
Victim	94%
Victim Support	81%

The conference addressed deep issues and by the end of it there was a plan to address those issues and move on with life.

—Probation Officer

After a shaky start, our son positively bloomed as he completed his contract. He seems so much happier now.

--Parent of Offender



Types of Offenses Addressed in Restorative Conferences

February 2008-February 2009

Charge	Percent
Assault	22%
Burglary	18%
Petty Theft	10%
Vandalism	7%
Illegal Fireworks	7%
Conspiracy to Commit Crime	6%
Arson	4%
Vehicular Manslaughter	4%
Possession of Controlled Substance	3%
Trespassing	3%
Receiving Stolen Property	1%
Reckless Driving	1%
Resisting a Peace Officer	1%
Grand Theft	1%
Failure to Obey Court Order	1%
Threat	1%
Bomb Threat	1%
Vehicle Theft	1%
Public Intoxication	1%

Sometimes in my line of work I can be skeptical of things, but I truly believe your program works.

--Law Enforcement

The conference gave me a better perspective on life. Now I think before I act.

--Offender



Age of Offenders in Restorative Conferences

July 2001 – April 2008

Age	Total	Percent
9	1	0.2%
10	4	0.7%
11	5	0.8%
12	27	4.4%
13	59	9.6%
14	98	15.9%
15	120	19.5%
16	108	17.6%
17	113	18.4%
18	70	11.4%
19	7	1.1%
20	2	0.3%

I was deeply moved by the change of heart the victim's mother had toward the offender.

--Community Member

The conference really helped people get their feelings out in the open. It gave the family of the victim a change to give input into the plan. This was very effective.

--Offender Family Member

The full process from start to finish was very powerful.

--Community Member

A great opportunity for the offender to really see the harms their action caused.

--Crime Victim