



Debrief on the Restorative Justice Cook County Community Court Site Visit

Jael Currie, Community Court Coordinator

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Racial Disparities Subcommittee Meeting



Presentation Objectives

01

Cook County Restorative Justice
Community Court Overview

02

Impacts/Benefits

03

Observations from the Visit

04

Takeaways

05

Questions/Thoughts

Cook County Restorative Justice Community Courts

What/Where:

- Four criminal courts located in 4 Chicago neighborhoods; Englewood, North Lawndale, Sauk Village, and Avondale
- Crime and conflict is resolved through restorative conferences and peace circles involving participants, victims, family members, friends, others affected by the crime, and the community

Who:

- Young adults aged 18-26 years old charged with a non-violent misdemeanor or felony
- Reside within an RJCC neighborhood
- Have a non-violent criminal history

Why:

- Scientific research has shown the brains of young adults are still emerging and the portion responsible for good judgement isn't fully developed until the age of 26
- RJCC's give young adults a second chance to keep their records clean and get their lives back on track

Key Goals

REPAIR HARM

Address the impact
of the offense on
individuals and the
community

ACCOUNTABILITY

Encourage those who
cause harm to take
responsibility for
their actions

COMMUNIT Y HEALING

Rebuild relationships
and strengthen
community bonds

REDUCE RECIDIVISM

Provide participants
with tools and
support to prevent
future offenses

Impacts/Benefits



Empowers Communities

- Involves local voices in conflict resolution
- Participants gives back through meaningful service hours across the community

Promotes Healing

- Supports emotional and psychological recovery for all parties
- Allows individuals to make amends without a criminal record

Data Driven Success

- 13% recidivism rate for RJCC graduates vs 65% for people who went through traditional courts
- 90% RJCC completion rate





Team got to observe:

- Team meeting/staffing
- Community Peace Circle
- Court hearings
- Q&A w/Judge and staff



“What I observed here today **parallels** some of the things I see in the juvenile court I preside over, the approach we take in terms of **rehabilitative measures** and how we’re addressing the issues they’re experiencing in life.”

- Honorable Nia Trammell

“We know that the **RJCC model is innovative** and the attention provided to these young people, who are given a **second chance in life**. This new lease on life comes to them after they have been held accountable in the restorative justice process.”

-Chief Judge Evans



Key Takeaways



- Focusing on needs geographically has been successful and drives how each court is modeled
- Requiring standardized goal(s) can work
- Community involvement and engagement is necessary



- Collaboration, humility, and understanding are driving forces
- Peer to peer support amplifies impact
- “Think big, start small, keeping moving”



THANK YOU!

