

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Restorative Justice is an approach that focuses on the needs of the victims, offenders (respondents), and the affected community. Victims can actively participate in the process, while respondents acknowledge responsibility for their actions. The goals of restorative justice are to repair harm, reduce the risk of re-offense and rebuild community.

Our Restorative Justice program is modeled after processes that have been used by Native American tribes for generations.

“Circle Justice” involves residents, victims, and respondents working together to find resolution and repair harm done to communities by crime.



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Our Partners:

Dane County Department of Human Services
Dane County District Attorney's Office
City of Madison Police Department
UW Madison Law School Restorative Justice Project
Dane County Subcommittee on Racial Disparities in the
Criminal Justice System
Center for Court Innovation



Dane County Community Restorative Court

REPAIR HARM

REDUCE RISK

REBUILD COMMUNITY



Circle Justice

A Restorative Justice
alternative for 17-25 year
olds with a misdemeanor
violation

Why the CRC?



The CRC is an innovative way to expedite misdemeanor cases and provide an alternative to the traditional justice system. This approach holds

respondents (offenders) responsible, often with community service and restitution. It also provides human services support when appropriate. Victims are given a voice and community participation is essential. Respondents do not have a CCAP entry and receive no formal charge if they complete their repair harm agreement successfully. This collaborative approach to community justice was launched in south Madison in the Spring of 2015 after years of research and extensive engagement with the community under the leadership of Dane County's Subcommittee on Racial Disparities.

The Mission of the CRC is to:

REPAIR HARM

REDUCE RISK

REBUILD COMMUNITY

CRC's response to crime is victim-based, respondent-focused, and community-driven.

Who is the focus of the CRC?

The CRC is designed for young people 17-25 years old who have committed a misdemeanor crime within the geographic boundaries of the South Madison Police District. Eligible misdemeanors include:

- Simple battery
- Disorderly Conduct
- Obstructing an Officer
- Theft
- Criminal Damage to Property

What is the Process?

A respondent is offered the opportunity to participate in the CRC if eligible and referred by a criminal justice partner. The respondent has to accept responsibility for their actions and be willing to participate in the restorative justice process. The CRC Coordinator is not an officer of the law, but rather a facilitator of a Restorative Justice process. The CRC Coordinator meets with both victim and respondent separately to develop a plan to repair harm, heal the victim and hold the respondent accountable. The Coordinator will involve Peacemakers and other community members in this process.

Is Restorative Justice Effective?

Studies indicate Restorative Justice processes in comparison to the traditional criminal justice system:

- Resolve cases more quickly;
- Result in a higher percentage of offenders making full restitution payments;
- Generate greater satisfaction and feelings of fairness on the part of both victims and offenders with regard to the handling and outcomes of a case;
- Reduce recidivism; and
- Demonstrate significant cost per case savings.*



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**Evidence-based Research Analysis on the Effectiveness of Restorative Justice, Jonathan Scharrer, Director, Restorative Justice Project, University of Wisconsin Law School*