

Presentation to Smiths Falls Council

April 28th, 2025



Repairing Relationships & Building Stronger Communities with Restorative Practices



Our Vision: A community that embraces restorative practices to repair harm, build community and strengthen relationships.

Tamara Derkzen – Board Chair
Marilyn Bird – Board Member

Our Programs

□ Court Diversion

An alternative to the traditional Criminal Justice System.

□ Restorative Parenting / Restorative Families

Support for parents and other family members in connecting, repairing past harms and collaborating with teen children to find new ways forward.

□ Restorative Practices for Educators Training

Workshops teaching restorative practices in dealing with conflict in schools.

The Restorative Process

1. Referral from either **Police, the Crown or the Community**
2. **Intake Process / Risk Assessment**
 - Key issues
 - Accountability
 - Identify Participants
 - Agreement
3. Assigned to **Facilitators** – Lead, Co-lead and Observer
4. **Interview the Participants** and prepare for the **forum**

What Happens at a Forum:

Facilitators ask:

- The **Complainant** to describes the Impact on them because of the crime.
- What happened, who was harmed, what were you thinking at the time, what have you thought about since, how can you make things right?

A **Legally Binding Agreement** is agreed upon, which is supervised and supported. Referrals can be made to other agencies to support accused and victims.

Result: Charges avoided, withdrawn or stayed.

Present:

- Accused+ support
- Complainant+ support
- Facilitators & Observers



Who Benefits?

The Criminal Justice System:

RJ is **Less Expensive** (thousands \$ saved). RJ **Reduces Recidivism**: 30% vs 5%-8%. RJ is a **Community Response** to crime and wrongdoing.

The Accused: No criminal record; is not labelled or stigmatized.

They understand the consequences and **accept responsibility**.

Apologizes to the Complainant. **Reconciliation** and forgiveness may result. Avoids legal costs.

The Complainant(s): Have a **voice** in the process and agreement / **traumatization is reduced** / receives **compensation & apology** / reconciliation is possible. Increased feelings of **safety & security**.

Does it Work?

Measure	Justice System	LCCJ RJ Process
Satisfaction with how the case was handled	68%	90%
Would recommend to another complainant	24%	98%
Days to complete	150	82
Recidivism	30%	5%-8%
Cost per case	\$20,000 +	\$2,000

So:

- **Recommendation rate 4 x the justice system,**
- **Half the time,**
- **75% less likely to re-offend,**
- **One tenth of the cost.**

How Can People Help ?

- 1. Become a volunteer facilitator**
- 2. Join our Board of Directors**
- 3. Provide free meeting space for community justice forums**
- 4. Ask for Restorative Justice when harm has occurred in your community**