



FACILITATING RESTORATIVE JUVENILE GROUP CONFERENCING

Restorative Group Conferences

Restorative group conferences are incident-based, initiated in response to a crime, other harm or a dispute, and behavior-based, making a clear distinction between the harmful act and the actor. A restorative group conference, as the term is used here, refers to a process that seeks to identify, repair and prevent harm, based in restorative justice values that include meaningful accountability. A restorative group conference is led by a trained facilitator and involves face-to-face contact among one or more victims and/or their representative, the offenders, supporters for both, and other people who are affected. Participation of the victim is completely voluntary, and participation of the offender is based upon their willingness and readiness. Conferences focus on empowering the participants, looking at underlying causes, and making referrals. Decisions are consensus based and successful conferences end in an agreement with which all participants can agree to. Conferences are appropriate for use with adults or juveniles and can be used at any point in the justice system or at any point in a person's life.

About the Curriculum

Facilitating Restorative Juvenile Group Conferences is a curriculum designed for training volunteer and employed facilitators who will conduct restorative group conferences. Conferencing is only one of many restorative justice measures, and it may occur in a variety of settings including schools, workplaces, community-based justice programs, corrections facilities, faith community institutions and other community organizations. This curriculum is appropriate for use in any conferencing setting and is built upon the assumption that the individual trainer will customize the materials for their own setting.

Facilitators who will work with crimes of severe violence, domestic violence, interfamilial violence, or abuse and neglect issues will require additional training beyond that offered in this curriculum. Best practice would require training for new facilitators to be followed by an apprenticeship period with an experienced facilitator. In the rare situation where that is not possible, the new facilitator should work with a co-facilitator or partner for a minimum of the first five conferences.

DAY 1

Introduction
Conferencing and Restorative Justice
Understanding Conference Participants
Role of Facilitator (part 1)

DAY 2

Role of Facilitator (part 2)
Development of Conferencing Skills
Practice Conference 1

DAY 3

Practice Conference 2
Practice Conference 3