

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE WINONA COUNTY

Community Group Conferencing

“Making things right”



(507) 457-6478

Mission Statement

To expand quality restorative services for at-risk youth, victims, offenders, and the community as a whole within Winona County by offering an alternative to and within the traditional judicial process.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE WINONA COUNTY

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What the Program can offer the Winona Area

Community Group Conferencing can be used as a resource tool for:

- ◆ K-12 Schools
- ◆ Police
- ◆ Courts
- ◆ Probation Officers
- ◆ Correctional and treatment facilities
- ◆ Colleges and universities
- ◆ The workplace



For more information
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History

Community Group Conferencing is based on the principles of the Maori People in New Zealand. The practice was adopted in Anoka, Minnesota, in 1994 and began in Winona County in December of 1999.

We have volunteer facilitators from diverse backgrounds who are willing to serve our community with Community Group Conferencing.

Advisory Board Members

Concerned Citizens

Area Churches

Minnesota Department of Corrections

Restorative Justice Program

Area Businesses

Local Attorneys

Winona Public Schools

Local Universities

What is Restorative Justice?

Restorative Justice is a victim-centered response to crime that provides opportunities for those most directly affected by crime—the victim, the offender, their families, and representatives of the community—to be directly involved in responding to the harm caused by the crime. Restorative Justice is based upon values which emphasize the importance of providing opportunities for more active involvement in the process by offering

- support and assistance to crime victims
- holding offenders directly accountable to the people and communities they have violated
- restoring the emotional and material losses of victims (to the degree possible)
- providing opportunities for dialogue and strengthening public safety

In the traditional court system, victims often feel left out of the process, but with this alternative process they have the opportunity to express their feelings, experience justice and have a say in determining how their needs can be met. The community plays a vital role in supporting and assisting the victim(s), holding the offender(s) accountable and the offender(s) has the opportunity to make amends.



The Process

Community Group Conferencing can be used as an alternative form of conflict resolution or as a diversion from court. Participation of the victim(s) is voluntary, and participation of the offender(s) is based on his or her readiness. The offender(s) must first admit guilt and then a meeting between the victim(s), offender(s), and their support people will be established. Families involved in Community Group Conferencing must sign a release form allowing a referral to Restorative Justice. Through the conference, the group will discuss and determine the best way to repair the harm.



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