

Find out more

Victim Support currently runs a number of RJ services across England and Wales. Our services and RJ facilitators are trained to national standards and are able to deliver safe and effective restorative justice interventions.

We support the right for all victims to be made aware of restorative justice and how they can take part. To find out more, you can contact your local VS team – see details on the back of this leaflet.

We have a RJ guide on our digital support platform called My Support Space. Sign up for a free account at

www.mysupportspace.org.uk/moj

How we can help

Victim Support is a free, independent, and confidential charity dedicated to supporting anyone affected by crime and traumatic incidents. We will listen with compassion and tailor our support to you.

There are many ways that we can help you and we will work with you to help you understand your rights and the support available to you.

Diversity matters and we value it

We are committed to supporting the needs of the diverse communities we serve. We can provide interpreters and information in alternative formats. If you have additional needs please let us know so we can put the right support in place.

Supportline: 08 08 16 89 111

Your local Victim Support/RJ provider:

We are an **independent** charity offering **free, confidential** support to people affected by crime and traumatic incidents.

For information and support, contact us by:

- calling: Supportline **08 08 16 89 111**
- using our 24/7 live chat service: victimsupport.org.uk/live-chat
- using BSL: victimsupport.org.uk/bsl
- Online: victimsupport.org.uk

To find out how you can help us, visit victimsupport.org.uk/get-involved

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WHAT IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?

victimsupport.org.uk

INFORM

What is Restorative Justice?

Restorative Justice (RJ) brings together those harmed by crime, and those responsible for the harm. This enables everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward.

RJ gives those that have been harmed the chance to have their say, to get answers to their questions, and to move on with their lives.

RJ gives the person that caused harm an insight into the real impact of their behaviour, and an opportunity to make amends.

Types of RJ

- **Restorative conference** – a planned meeting where the harmed person is able to ask the harmer questions in a safe venue.
- **Restorative shuttle** – a facilitator will carry messages back and forth between the harmer and the harmed.
- **Letters** – a facilitator arranges for both parties to exchange letters.
- **FaceTime/Skype** – a facilitator can arrange for harmer and harmed to talk through social media, and will sit in with them.
- **Video message** – a planned video message will be shared between the harmer and harmed.

The process

A trained facilitator will arrange to meet with the person that has been harmed, to talk about the impact of what has happened, the consequences this might have, and what could be done to make things better. The person that has been harmed will be asked if they would like the facilitator to arrange a meeting, or some other type of communication, with the

person who has caused the harm. The facilitator will talk to the person that has caused harm about what happened, their understanding of the harm they have caused, and what they think they could do to make things better. The harmer will then be asked if they would like the opportunity to meet the person they have harmed, or to have some other type of communication with them.

RJ is a voluntary process that requires consent from both parties to proceed.

The facilitator

Facilitators undergo specialist training in restorative justice. They provide a completely confidential and impartial service and their aim is to be supportive and to make the experience positive for everyone involved.

The conference

If everyone agrees – that the harmed, the harmer and two trained facilitators – a face-to-face meeting, called a conference, will be arranged. The meeting will be guided by the facilitators, held in a safe place and probably last for up to an hour and a half. In the meeting, everyone will get to have their say. Both the harmed and the harmer can have someone with them for support. A robust assessment of risk will have taken place prior to the meeting. Alternatively, if everyone agrees, the facilitator can arrange another type of communication between both parties.

What are the benefits of RJ?

Those that have been harmed often want to understand why the crime happened to them. They also want to play some part in the

process of what happens to the person who committed the crime. The conference gives them the opportunity to tell the person that has committed the crime their thoughts and feelings about what happened. They can ask any questions they have, and agree what the harmer could do to make things better.

Evidence shows that over 85% of victims who have taken part in RJ processes have come away from conferences feeling satisfied because they have had their say, because it has helped them move on from what has happened, and because the experience has reduced their fear of crime.

Being involved in a restorative process can give you a chance to:

- Have your say
- Explain to the person who harmed you, and family and friends, what the real impact and consequences of their behaviour has been on your life
- Get answers to questions
- Have the opportunity to move forward positively with your life
- Help to prevent the same thing happening to somebody else.

The harmer has the opportunity to listen to the person they have harmed, and can answer any questions that person might have. They might apologise for what they have done, and can agree with the person they have harmed what they can do to personally make things better for them.

Offenders who have taken part in RJ processes have said that the experience has helped them understand how their actions affect others, to address their feelings of guilt and remorse for the harm they have caused.