

Community Based Reparation

Introduction

This case study gives an example of the work done by the Community Based Reparation (CBR) service. It shows how CBR operates within Sacro's Youth Justice Service and the role the Community Based Reparation Service plays in the restorative justice process.

Background

The Children's Reporter received a report from the police in relation to an incident of vandalism at a local church. A window had been smashed at one of the church buildings. At the time the window was broken the hall was being used by a group. No-one was physically hurt by the incident but some people were left shaken. The young person that had been accused of the offence was referred to the Youth Justice Service by the children's reporter as a diversion from the Children's Hearing System.

A Youth Justice worker visited the young person and discussed the service. The young person was extremely sorry for their actions and wanted to make amends in some way to the church if they could. The case worker then approached the minister from the church and explained the aim and purpose of the service. The minister was very keen to hear why the young person had broken the window. The minister also felt it was important for the young person to do something practical to make amends. He mentioned that the church had lots of activities that the young person could volunteer with, in order to make a positive contribution.

Process

The case worker then began to organise a Restorative Justice Meeting to allow both parties to talk about the facts of what happened, the consequences for everyone involved and to agree on what needed to happen for the future to repair the harm. The caseworker approached the Community Based Reparation (CBR) Service worker at this point and discussed the case and the possibility of doing some form of voluntary work as reparation. The CBR worker co-facilitated the Restorative Justice Meeting and was able to help facilitate the action plan made at the meeting. The young person offered to help at a church fundraising event and also help with gardening and tidying up around the churchyard on two occasions. The CBR worker established exactly how much work was considered appropriate by both parties and arranged dates for this to take place.

The CBR worker then met with the minister and discussed in detail the tasks to be undertaken. The worker prepared a risk assessment for both tasks (the gardening & fundraising work) and then met with the young person and their guardian. The worker discussed the task and risk assessment with them so they had a clear concept of the task to be undertaken and the risks involved. The worker also obtained written consent, relevant medical information and emergency contact details from the young person and their guardian.

Resolution

The Community Based Reparation (CBR) Service worker provided direct support and supervision for the young person for the duration of both tasks. They helped to keep the area surrounding the church neat and tidy by sweeping the area, collecting litter and doing some light gardening. The young person also attended a church fundraising event and helped serve customers and cleared tables at their cafe.

Page 1 of 2

Comment

By meeting together and agreeing on how best to repair the harm, all the people involved could move forward, the person responsible became accountable for what they had done and the persons harmed had the opportunity to hear an explanation, apology and receive direct reparation for the harm caused.

Sacro's Community Based Reparation Service in Aberdeen can be distinguished between 'Community Reparation Orders' and 'Community Service Orders'. Individuals that undertake Community Based Reparation, do so voluntarily and in the spirit of the Restorative Justice Process. Sacro's restorative practice allows clients that participate the opportunity to make positive, practical reparation. It also promotes social inclusion by allowing clients to reintegrate back into their local communities, whilst reducing fear and encouraging community as well as personal responsibility.

"I still feel really guilty about what I did, but I think this [doing a reparative task] has helped to try to make up for it".

Person responsible YJS

"I think I have learned something from them [the person responsible] and can see they have been able to learn something about the work we do [at the church]".

Person harmed YJS

Page 2 of 2

