

CASE STUDY

A young person was referred to the Restorative Youth Justice Service having been charged with several accounts of wilful fire-raising, one charge of housebreaking with intent and one of theft.

From the onset he took responsibility for his actions and appeared to show remorse. He was always open and honest about his behaviour and was willing to work with Sacro to make amends.

A Restorative Justice Conference was organised in connection with the theft. The young person had stolen a camera from the side of a house. The persons' harmed were willing to participate, as they wanted to meet the young person face to face to inform him of the consequences of his actions and also as a way of moving on from the offence in a positive way.

The young person explained what had happened, offered an explanation as to why he had stolen the camera and to offer an apology. The persons' harmed appeared to be overwhelmed by his response and took his comments on board and thanked the young person for his honesty. The persons' harmed wanted to convey to the young person they wished to move on and by meeting him had reinforced this. They also wanted to inform the young person as to why the camera was there, which the young person had not been aware of.

Another Restorative Justice Conference with a local primary school was organised for the young person's involvement in the housebreaking with intent charge. The school was willing to participate in the conference, seeing it a positive step forward for the young person and also the school wanted to inform the young person of the affects the offence had on the school pupils. The young person explained his reasons for committing the offence and offered an apology, which the Head Teacher accepted on behalf of the school. The Head Teacher went on to inform the young person of the consequences of his actions and he appeared to take on board this and said he would not do this again. The Head Teacher asked the young person if she could pass on to the pupils the positive outcome of the conference and to inform them that the young person had apologised for his actions. He stated that this would be acceptable.

The young person's mother attended both conferences and was very positive about her son, saying that whilst his behaviour was unacceptable she would fully support him through this difficult time. She further stated that her son had gone through several family upheavals and this may account for his actions.

The young person also participated in Awareness work focusing on the fireraising offences. He was also upfront about his behaviour in this matter stating he would not do this again. He appeared to be remorseful and stated that he would stay out of trouble and had not been aware of the impact his offences had on his family, community and the persons' harmed.

Sacro received positive feedback from all parties concerned and they appeared relieved to be able to put the episodes behind them. They stated they thought it was a worthwhile initiative for both person responsible and person harmed.

Lanarkshire Youth Justice Service

