



Research in Restorative Justice

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Restorative Justice Research Outcomes

The European Forum for Restorative Justice (EFRJ) is committed to promote research exploring various aspects of restorative justice to find out why and how it works, under what circumstances, with which target groups, and what are the its best practices. The EFRJ not just circulates important research outcomes, but has **engaged in multiple research projects** in the past continues to do so. Our website offers abundant **resources of research reports and other academic and relevant publications.**

In the following section we summarise the key findings that emerge from previous studies. These describe the most important features of restorative justice practices. To learn about the source of these findings check **our article**



Researchers have frequently studied the effectiveness of restorative justice practices. They examined how and when the different parties participate, how they experience the process and what the outcomes of the process are.

Victims and perpetrators of harm and the community generally want to participate in restorative justice

- Victims will meet those who have offended against them for many reasons including to ask questions, to seek reparations, to advance their healing. In some cases victims hope that they can prevent reoffending and lead to a safer society.
- Most offenders to repair the harm that they have caused.6 they wish to express their remorse. In some cases the offender may want to avoid prosecution.
- The community's understanding of the crime which can result in the reintegration of offenders and more support for victims. The participation of people from the community may persuade the offender to take responsibility.

Victims and offenders have a much more satisfactory experience of justice.

- Restorative processes engage the participation of victims and perpetrators more effectively than the traditional justice system. Victims' needs and interests are taken into account. Offenders also believe that they are treated more fairly than through traditional justice. Both parties associate restorative justice with fair treatment. Offenders appreciate the opportunity to meet the victim, to actively participate and to express remorse. They have been found to have a more positive attitude towards police and law. Restorative justice often helps to strengthen relationships with their friends or relatives, encouraging the desistance processes.

Restorative justice saves money



by taxpayers.

Restorative processes result in positive outcomes

- Research has found that restorative justice was more successful in improving victim and offender satisfaction, decreasing recidivism of offenders and increasing offender compliance with restitution when compared to more traditional criminal justice programmes. Studies consistently state that restorative processes achieve at least 85% satisfaction among victims and reduce the fear of further harm to the victim.
- Studies confirm that restorative justice stimulates desistance from offending. This is due to feelings of remorse, not being made to feel a bad person, feeling involved in decision making, agreeing with the outcome; and meeting and apologising to the victim. This process confirms a pro-social identity.

To achieve these outcomes restorative practices must be of a high standard

- Restorative justice offers another way of dealing with crime that takes the needs of victims, offenders and their communities into account. There is no evidence that certain types of offences or offenders are more or less suitable for restorative justice. It is crucial that RJ professionals continuously work towards a high quality practice. This includes providing a safe, neutral and confidential setting and attention for the wellbeing of all participants. Practitioners should be well trained and qualified for the job. They should also provide clear and honest information that allows involve parties to make an informed choice about participation. Good practices allow victims to use their victimisation to a constructive end, thus finding meaning in adversity. If standards are held high, restorative justice offers a more humane approach to dealing with crime by putting the recovery of victims and the desistance of offenders first. It is also important to ensure that the justice system does not distort the restorative process. When victims are not satisfied by the process, this is usually due to a lack of attention to their needs, often because more attention is given to offenders.



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