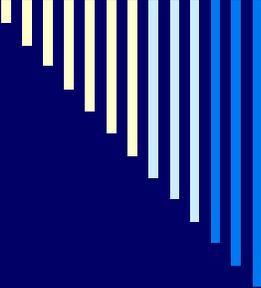


Introduction to Restorative Justice

**A Critical Closure and
Accountability Tool for Our
Neighborhoods and Communities**

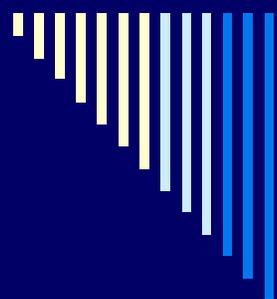
Neighborhood Mediation & Conflict Resolution Workshop
2012 Prince William Neighborhood Conference
Woodbridge, VA

Dr. James Peal
Prince William County Office of Dispute Resolution



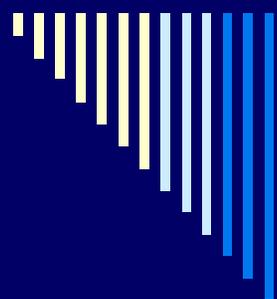
Restorative Justice Defined

- Restorative justice is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused or revealed by criminal behavior. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes that include all stakeholders.
 - In Prince William County, this tool is being used to achieve better results with young first offenders. Neighborhood quality of life offenses such as graffiti, vandalism, trespassing, littering, loitering are among the issues resolved through restorative justice processes.
 - Practices and programs reflecting restorative purposes will respond to crime by:
 - identifying and taking steps to repair harm,
 - involving all stakeholders, and
 - transforming the traditional relationship between communities and their governments in responding to crime.
-



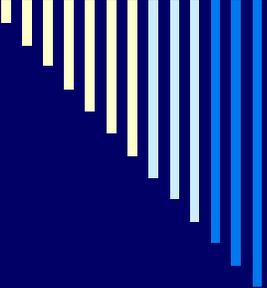
How RJ Differs from Traditional Justice Processes

Beliefs of the Current Justice System	Beliefs of Restorative Justice
Crime is an act committed against the state, a violation of law.	Crime is an act committed against another person or against the community.
The offender is accountable to the state.	The offender is accountable to the victim and the community.
Accountability equals punishment and suffering.	Accountability is defined as the offender taking personal responsibility for repairing harm.
Victims are not primary participants in the process.	Victim involvement is essential in the justice process.
The community is not involved in the crime.	The community is a major stakeholder in the resolution of crime.
Punishment is effective because: a) the threat of punishment deters crime, b) punishment changes behavior.	Punishment is only effective for short-term behavioral change. Relationships and education are more effective for long-term behavioral change.



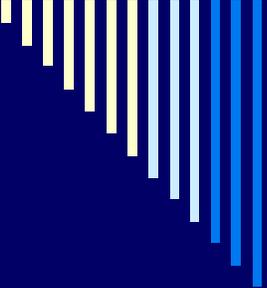
Goals of the PWC RJ Program

1. How can we best serve the victims of juvenile crime in Prince William County?
2. How can we involve the community in the justice process?
3. How can we hold the offender(s) accountable to the victim(s) and the community and educate him/her about the effects of crime in order to reduce re-offense?



RJ Principles Seek To:

1. **Empower** victims by giving them a voice in the process.
 2. **Strengthen** community safety and responsibility of offenders.
 3. **Promote** full and direct accountability from offenders.
 4. **Educate** offenders about how their actions have affected others.
 5. **Reduce** recidivism among offenders.
 6. **Prevent** further harm to the victims of crime, the offenders and their families, and to the community.
-



Some Outcomes of RJ

- Techniques such as the “VIP” classes and the “Conference” process allows offenders to:
 - Face the real consequences of their actions.
 - Recognize how they have harmed others.
 - Apologize sincerely to the victim.
 - Provide reparation for the harm they have caused.
 - Start the process of restoring trust to victims, families and the community.
-