

WHAT IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?

Restorative justice is an approach to justice that focuses on repairing the harm caused by crime. Repair means healing for the people directly involved, and for the community at large.

According to the Centre for Justice and Reconciliation, the foundational principles of restorative justice are:

- Crime causes harm, and justice should focus on repairing that harm
- The people most affected by the crime should be able to participate in its resolution.
- The government's responsibility is to maintain order, and the community's responsibility is to build peace.

Through a restorative process, all parties are included in the dialogue of how the injustice can be healed. Those affected are brought to encounter one another, amends are made for the crime, and all parties are reintegrated into the community.

What does restorative justice look like around the world?

Restorative justice approaches have been adopted by communities all over the world. Here are a few examples:

The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission used restorative practices to dismantle the legacy of apartheid. South Africa has also used restorative models to give communities voice to address prison overcrowding.

In Europe, restorative justice has played a role in providing alternatives to paramilitary violence in Northern Ireland and addressing justice reform needs in Eastern Europe.

In North America, the Truth and Reconciliation Committee of Canada has worked to respond

to the trauma inflicted on First Nations people by the residential school system. In the United States, restorative justice is being applied to school disciplinary systems as well as the criminal justice system.

In Oceania, restorative approaches reflect indigenous practices, and are applied to address crime, school discipline, and other types of conflicts.

What does restorative justice look like at the library?

The library's Social Services and Safety team is integrating restorative processes into its work at the library. Restorative justice practitioner and Social Services Specialist Stephen Jackson hosts peace circles based on the restorative justice model with community members, and staff help create community and integrate restorative justice across all of our practices.

Join us on October 6 and 7 to learn more about restorative justice in our community. Register now at oppl.org/calendar