

An easy read guide to

# Support for Victims of Youth Crime and Restorative Justice

**Our vision is to achieve the lowest possible level of offending and anti-social behaviour by children and young people in our community, making it a safer place for everyone.**

This booklet explains:

- what we do
- how we can support you
- how Restorative Justice works



## What is North Yorkshire Youth Justice Service?

There is a Youth Offending Team (YOT) in every local authority in England and Wales. In North Yorkshire the YOT is known as the Youth Justice Service (YJS).

North Yorkshire YJS is made of representatives from Children's Social Care, Police, Probation Service, Health Service & Education. In addition the YJS is supported by committed and skilled volunteers.

Because it is made up of representatives from a wide range of services, North Yorkshire YJS can respond to the needs of young offenders in a comprehensive way.

It assesses each young offender and identifies the specific problems that lead to the young person offending, as well as measuring the risk they pose to others. This enables the YJS to identify suitable programmes to address those needs with the intention of preventing further offending.

North Yorkshire YJS is committed to serving the needs of victims and working to the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.

## How we can support you

We want to ensure that your views are considered and that you have some say in how the young person could make amends.

**Restorative Justice** is a way of looking at the harm caused by crime. It offers those who have suffered harm the opportunity to have their harm or loss recognised. It encourages those who have caused harm to recognise the impact of what they have done, and begin to take responsibility for their actions.

Many victims of youth crime have found that becoming involved in the justice process helps them deal with the range of emotions they can experience following the crime.

Our Victim Liaison Officers (VLO) will make contact with victims of crime and wherever possible gather their views about how they have been affected. They will also provide victims with more information regarding the level of involvement with the young person who has offended against them they might wish to have.

## The Victim Liaison Officer (VLO)

The role of VLO is varied and specific to each individual and their needs. After a young person is sentenced at court, or has received a final warning, the VLO would contact the victim by sending a letter and then making a follow-up phone call to arrange a home visit.

At the home visit, the Court Order that the young person has been given will be discussed with the victim. This is to ensure they understand fully what the young person will be doing throughout their order and how they can be involved in the process.

The victim will be offered support and if they require further emotional help, the VLO can refer the individual onto other agencies.

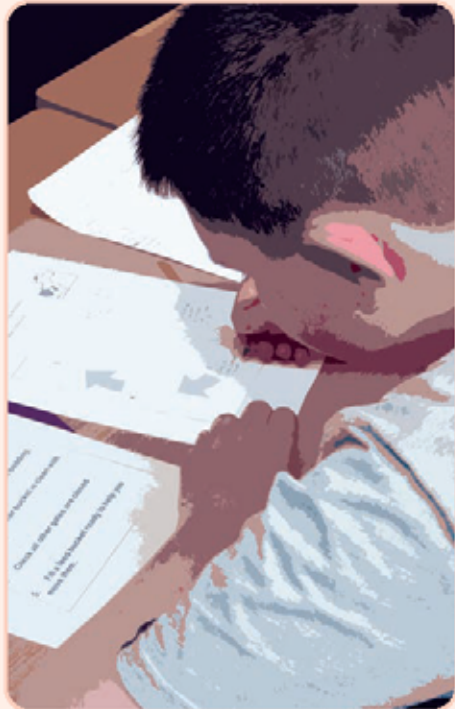


## Restorative Justice

The following are Restorative Justice processes that we use and encourage:

**Apology** - receiving an apology from the young person. This could be in the form of a letter, a verbal apology or a recorded apology (for example, taped or by video)

**Meeting** - meeting the young person face-to-face. This meeting would be in a supervised, safe, controlled, neutral environment.



The victim can tell the offender the effects of the crime and what the young person needs to do to repair the harm caused.

## Restorative Justice

**Personal impact statement** - being able to record the effects of the crime which can be relayed to the young person via the VLO.

**Direct reparation** - agreeing involvement in a project which is personal to the victim or carrying out some practical form of reparation for them.

**Community projects** - nominating community projects that young people can be involved in such as local regeneration projects or charities, in order for the young person to put something back into the community.



## **Victim Support**

Victim Support are the national charity giving free and confidential help to victims of crime, witnesses, their family and friends.

### **Help for Victims**

If you've been a victim of any crime or have been affected by a crime committed against someone you know, Victim Support can help you find the strength to deal with what you've been through.

Their services are free and available to everyone, whether or not the crime has been reported and regardless of when it happened. They are not part of the police, the courts or any other criminal justice agency.

You can contact Victim Support through their local North Yorkshire branch on **01904 550510**. Alternatively, the National Victim Support Line is **0845 3030900** or you can e-mail: **supportline@victimsupport.org.uk**

### **Help for Witnesses**

If you have witnessed a crime Victim Support can help you to cope with going to court by giving you information and support. Your family and friends who are attending court can get help too and we support witnesses for both the prosecution and defence. Comprehensive support can also be provided to children at court.

Like the rest of Victim Support, the Witness Service is free and independent of the police or courts. To get help now, contact your victim care team on **0300 303 1971**.

