

Balanced and Restorative Justice Providers of Vermont (BARJ)

MISSION

To enhance youth-focused restorative justice across Vermont

PURPOSE

We will achieve this mission by:

- Increasing youth's quality of life
- Creating a learning environment
- Identifying skill and resource gaps
- Utilizing best practice to inform our work
- Collaborating with our peers
- Identifying restorative justice needs
- Creating consistency in restorative justice practice
- Incorporating preventative practices
- Providing collaborative and supportive services to youth and families
- Supporting youth to become productive and invested members of their community

PRACTICE PHILOSOPHY

We will utilize the following set of restorative justice principles to guide our work:

Delinquency is a violation against people and impacts relationships.

- While delinquency is a violation of law, the primary concern is the physical, emotional, and social impact it has on people and the community.

Violations create obligations.

- Each situation is complex and creates obligations to repair harm. The youth committing the delinquent act has a responsibility to make amends for the harm they've caused.
- Youth committing delinquent acts have a responsibility for their actions – to gain insight into how their actions have affected others, to make amends, and to learn ways to avoid future re-offense.
- The community has a responsibility to its members, including supporting not only the victim but also the youth committing the delinquent act.

Restorative Justice engages victims, the youth who committed the delinquent act and community members – all those affected by the crime – in an effort to make amends and repair the harm caused.

- All parties – those affected, those whose actions affected them and the community – are provided meaningful opportunities to participate, shape the process, make decisions and seek resolution.
- Those involved are in the best position to know what it means to make things right for them in their particular situation.
- Victims determine their level of participation in any restorative process.
- Victims have the opportunity to talk about the delinquency from their perspective, identify how their needs may be best met, and plan for a safe environment.