

# RESTORATIVE JUSTICE CONFERENCING

## INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS

### PRE-COURT CONFERENCING



## WHAT VICTIMS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

### Your participation is entirely voluntary.

If you don't want to participate in the conference, you don't have to. You can withdraw from the process at any time, including during the conference.

### Your safety is paramount.

The conference convenor will ensure that the conference is conducted in a safe and impartial manner. You will be seated near an exit should you wish to leave at any time. You will arrive after and leave before the offender.

### You will be supported throughout the process.

A Victim Support Officer from Victims of Crime NT will support you throughout the process. You are also encouraged to bring along a support person to the conference.

### You can choose to send a representative.

Participating in a conference is often a personally beneficial and restorative experience as a victim. However, coming face-to-face with your offender and talking about your experience can be confronting. If you would like to nominate someone you trust to attend the conference on your behalf, you can do this.

*"I feel that a huge burden has been lifted off me after telling my story."*

*"I feel so relieved – it's the best outcome that there could be – all my questions were answered."*

## VICTIMS SUPPORT SERVICE

Victims of Crime NT (VoCNT) is a community organisation working to assist people and communities impacted by crime across the Territory. We are committed to supporting and guiding victims who decide to participate in a youth justice conference throughout the process. Our Victim Support Officers can also provide other services, including:

- 24-hour Freecall service 1800 672 242
- Crisis counselling, information and advocacy
- Referrals to additional services
- Assistance to complete applications for financial assistance (CVSU), where applicable
- Assistance with preparation of documentation such as victim impact statements
- Court support
- Property Crime support including financial assistance for residential and business resecures and vehicle resecures, and free home security assessments

**For more information about the support available to victims please contact:**

### Darwin/Katherine

08 8941 0995

24/7 Freecall: 1800 672 242

### Alice Springs/Tennant Creek

08 8952 4466

[www.victimsofcrime.org.au](http://www.victimsofcrime.org.au)



# MORE ABOUT THE RESTORATIVE YOUTH JUSTICE CONFERENCING PROCESS

## Before the Conference

A Victim Support Officer will meet with you to help you prepare. They will help you frame your answers to the questions you will be asked in the conference about the harm that has been done and what you think the young person could do to repair this harm. The convenor will either attend this meeting or be in touch at another time.

A Police Officer from the Youth Diversion Unit will convene the conference. The convenor will meet several times with the young person to prepare them to meet you and any other victims of the incident. The convenor will ensure that the young person understands the process, is willing to discuss what happened, accepts responsibility for their actions and admits it was the wrong thing to do.

The convenor may also meet with other people directly impacted by the young person's behaviour, such as their family or community members, to understand the impact of behaviour on them and get their thoughts on what can be done to repair the harm caused.

## The Conference

The conference will take place in an informal setting such as a youth service or community hall. Where possible, all participants will sit in a circle, next to their support people.

The convenor leads the conference, using a script which asks exactly what happened, what harm was caused and how that harm can be repaired.

Firstly they will ask the young person:

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking at the time?
3. What have you thought about since?
4. Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
5. What do you think you need to do to make things right?

They will then ask you:

1. What did you think when you realised what happened?
2. What impact has this incident had on you and others?
3. What has been the hardest thing for you?
4. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

You will have the chance to speak openly, and directly to the young person, about how the crime has affected you and those around you.

## After the Conference

The Victim Support Officer will continue to be available to support you if needed and will keep you up to date on the young person's progress if you choose.

You will be asked to provide feedback about your experience of the conference process and the support that VoCNT has provided. This assists our service to improve the experience of victims in the future.