



RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AT CSC

BACKGROUNDER

Crime is a violation of people and relationships. Restorative justice (RJ) works to repair the harm caused and promote healing and growth using processes that promote more peaceful and collaborative ways of resolving conflict in our society. RJ is about giving all parties involved in a conflict the opportunity to take an active role in a safe and respectful process that allows for open dialogue between the victim, offender, and the community.

- In 1996, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) established a dedicated unit to explore emerging trends and initiatives in the fields of restorative justice and dispute resolution. CSC now has a National RJ Division that develops training, public education activities, restorative justice programs for federal offenders, and provides victim-offender mediation services to those impacted by crime.
- The first 'Restorative Justice Week' was celebrated in 1996. Restorative Justice Week is celebrated in communities and at institutions all across Canada to acknowledge the impacts and achievements of the RJ approach and its application in the traditional criminal justice system. Each year, Restorative Justice Week takes place the third week of November.
- In 1999, CSC established an award to honour the late Ron Wiebe, former Warden of Ferndale and Elbow Lake minimum-security institutions. Mr. Wiebe was a pioneer in the field of restorative justice. The National Ron Wiebe Restorative Justice Award is given annually to recognize Canadian individuals and/or groups who model RJ principles in the service of justice and peace.
- In 2004, CSC expanded its capacity to provide victim-offender mediation services nationally through the Restorative Opportunities program; beyond the services provided solely in the Pacific Region since the early 1990's. Through this program, victims can ask questions, obtain information, describe the crime's impact to the offender and find ways to address -- where possible -- the damage caused by the offender's actions.
- CSC also explores and encourages the application of RJ in prison and community/parole operations by supporting pilot projects and initiatives that contribute to implementing RJ in the correctional environment.

The principles and values of RJ can be found in several of CSC's core values, which emphasize individual dignity, respect and potential, as well as those that recognize the importance of community connections and partnerships. The dedicated activities of CSC's Restorative Justice Division and the related work of other Branches, Sectors and Regions, has established CSC as a prominent participant in the restorative justice movement.

