

The 5-part Plan

3. Restorative Justice Services

Restorative Justice is a process that focuses on the people affected by crime – the victims and the offenders – not simply the crime itself. The goal is to provide an opportunity for victims to be reconciled with offenders. The process requires an offender to take responsibility for his or her actions, seeking to make things right. It also allows victims to be heard and feel restored of their losses.

Restorative Justice has been shown to strengthen relationships – creating the opportunity for offenders to be restored back to victims, their own family and the wider community by a process of acknowledgment and seeking to repair past harms. This builds personal self-esteem, reinforces a sense of belonging, and **reduces the incidence of re-offending**.

Pathway sees the principles of Restorative Justice as foundational to re-integration. During pre-release assessment we work through a process that encourages the offender to consider who has been affected by their offending. Imprisonment serves as a punishment for past actions, but rarely provides an opportunity for healing or for relationships to be restored. Pathway will offer the following to make this possible:

- a) **Offender/victim restorative conferences.** Lead by an experience facilitator. Conference reports provided to Probation.
- b) **Family restorative meeting.** A facilitated process in which the returning family member is helped to acknowledge the effects of their imprisonment on their family and friends and to request their support to make positive changes for the future. This meeting concludes with a celebration of the safe return of the once lost family member.
- c) **Community work days.** Because offending effects the wider community, Pathway will provide supervised community work days, where released prisoners have an opportunity to give back to the community. These days involve working with other organisations such as Habitat for Humanity on building projects, or planting native trees in community reserves. An important dimension of this process is when the released prisoners' service to the community is publicly acknowledged and valued.

