Aspects of the Criminal Justice System: Restorative Justice (RJ)

Teacher's notes
What is the true impact of crime on victims, their families and communities - and how do we reduce this impact?

Introduction
Ideally this session should be taught as part of a general series on young people and crime, exploring the criminal and youth justice systems and how they work; and putting them in context for young people. The individual parts of this lesson can be combined to make up a lesson of 1.5 – 2 hours or broken down as required.

To understand Restorative Justice (RJ) and how it works read the attached summary and follow the link to our film, Repairing the Harm
http://www.why-me.org/how-does-it-work/
You may also wish to read the case studies on our website at http://www.why-me.org/victims-stories/

Session duration 60 - 120 minutes

Aims:
To explore the far reaching effects of crime on individuals, families and communities
To identify and challenge pre-conceived concepts of victim and perpetrator
To draw young people’s attention to the incidence of their involvement in crime as perpetrator or victim
To introduce the concept of Restorative Justice (RJ) and its potential for reducing the impact of crime and resolving conflicts.

Learning Outcomes:
- Students understand the physical, social and psychosocial impact of crime as well as the economic factors - beyond the processes of the criminal justice system and into society
- Students’ stereotypes of victims and perpetrators of crime are challenged and they understand the extent to which young people are affected by/initiators of criminal activity
- Students are aware of the steps that can be taken to alleviate the impact of crime outside the established criminal justice system and how this can contribute to long term health and well-being; they understand the concept of restorative justice (RJ) and how this can be accessed and utilised.

Curriculum Areas: Citizenship KS 3 & 4, (+ PSHE Core theme 1: Health and Well-being).
Summary of Activities

Starter: What sorts of people are involved in a crime? 10 minutes

Picture exercise and discussion: What does a victim of crime look like?

What does a person who commits crime look like? 15 minutes

Offenders and victims: True or False 10 minutes

Discussion of results and myth busting 10 minutes

Storyboard exercise – what is it like to be a victim? 20 minutes

Introduction to restorative justice 20 minutes

Starter: Looking at Crime: What sorts of people are involved in a crime?

When a crime happens there are two sides to the story:- Someone commits a crime; someone is affected by it. How do we normally see these two, very different, types of people? What kinds of people are they?

Two flipcharts:
- Flip chart one: People who commit a crime
- Flip chart two: The people who are affected

Either: Ask students to do a post-it-note activity where they write words down and stick them on the relevant flipchart

Or: Hand out a set of word cards (see suggested words below and add common words they can relate to) and ask students to put them in buckets corresponding to the relevant heading.

Suggested words:
1: burglars, robbers, muggers, murderers, killers, dealers, criminal
2: young people, old people, kids, shop keepers, bankers, etc

Look at the answers students have come up with and remind them that, in general, there are collective words for these groups of people – ask students to identify them.

There are lots of collective words for group 1 – although a widely-used one is Offender

There is often only one collective word for group 2 it is usually the word Victim

Look at the word victim. Can you think of anything else to describe people affected by crime? What does the word victim mean to you? What does it make you think of?
Who is an offender and who is a victim?
The dictionary definition of the word offender is very straightforward; “An offender is someone who has committed an illegal act”.

The dictionary describes the word victim as follows, “A victim is someone who is hurt or injured by something or someone.”

Offenders and victims are, simply, people. Do you think there are specific types of people who are likely to be victims and people who are likely to be offenders?

Look at these pictures (provided) and rank them either 1 or 2

1= they look like a typical offender

2= they look like a victim of crime

Why did you choose those people as number 1?
(get students to discuss the kind of qualities offenders have, in their view; what age group they might be; what they might do for a job)

Why did you choose these people as number 2?
(Ask students if they think the majority of victims are this kind of person? What makes them more likely to be a victim of crime? What do victims wear, where do they work, are there any particular ways you’d describe a victim (look at negative, positive adjectives))

Ask students to look at the pictures of victims again and rank them according to who is most likely to be a victim of crime and who is least likely.

Finally take all the pictures and lay them out together – explain that any of these people can be victims or perpetrators of crime – refer back to dictionary definitions.

Clarify that a victim can be anyone and that they can be hurt emotionally and affected socially as well as physically. Clarify that people can suffer just as much if they are on the receiving end of non-criminal activity e.g. bullying, threatening.

Take out the picture of the young man in a hoodie and explain that he is the most likely to be a victim of crime.

True or false quiz (provided)
Given students’ answers, challenge their perceptions in a True or False quiz sheet with stats (provided). Take this a step further with headlines/news stories and ask which are real (provided).

Recap that both people affected by crime and people who commit crimes can be anyone and the boundaries are blurred.
What is it like to be a victim?

*Have you ever been a victim? What happened? Who was involved? How did you feel? Did you report it?*

Break into groups and create a storyboard about a young person who is a victim of a crime. Who do they tell? How do they feel? What would they like to happen to the person who hurt them? What would they say to that person?

Restorative Justice

*Introduce the concept of RJ.* You can explain it like this:-

**Restorative**: something that returns health, strength or well-being to how it was before

**Justice**: just or fair treatment in law or society.

*How does RJ work?*

If you have been affected by crime your views and feelings are important. RJ gives you the chance to get your views and feelings heard, so you have a voice in the process.

RJ can be arranged through your victim liaison officer who will explain the different options available to you. These can range from receiving a letter of apology, to a face to face meeting which could involve all the people affected by the crime getting together. You can bring family or someone else you're close to to the meeting to support you in giving your views. If you don’t want to be there someone else might be able to represent you.

*Why get involved?*

Taking part in the RJ process gives you the chance to:

- tell your side of the story
- get your questions answered, especially questions about your safety
- help the person who has committed the crime understand the effects of what they have done
- encourage them not to do it again
- get the person who has hurt you to make amends for what they’ve done - have a say in what happens next
- feel better about what you have gone through.

The RJ process is voluntary for everyone involved, so you can withdraw, or change your mind, at any time. In the same way, the person who has committed the crime may also withdraw or change their mind; if this happens you will be informed and advised about what happens next.

Describe how it works and tie in to current procedures in your learning environment. Talk about RJ conferences/meetings and how they work in school.

Show film


Role play of a meeting.
Use these questions in a True or False quiz for students

*Use the tables provided as a question sheet.*

### Offenders and Victims: True or False?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>True/False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Old people aged 65 – 85 are most likely to be victims of robbery and violence</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Young people aged 16 -24 are most likely to be victims of violent crime and theft</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. More women in their 50s are arrested for shoplifting than any other age group</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Women over 75 are more than doubly likely to be victims of crime than men over 75</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. In 2012/13 young people aged 10 – 17 accounted for nearly 12% of all arrests for crime</td>
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<td>6. Young people aged 10 - 17 are least likely to be affected by crime in the UK</td>
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<td>7. Two thirds of murder victims are women</td>
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<td>8. In the year ending March 2015, there were an estimated 709,000 crimes experienced by children aged 10 to 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. A dog solved a major sporting robbery in 1966</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Crime headlines: True or False?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headline</th>
<th>True/False</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Four thousand police killed while on duty</td>
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<td>2. International Fraud ring run from Nottinghamshire Catholic Church</td>
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<td>3. Japanese pensioners are committing more crimes than teenagers</td>
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<td>4. Woman convicted for stealing £75,000 worth of welding equipment</td>
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<td>5. Police hunt ‘Mrs Doubtfire’ suspect after man wears women’s clothes during bank robbery</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Schoolboy who committed his first crime when he was 10 is sent to young offenders’ institution for terrifying armed robbery</td>
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<td>7. Pensioner attacked in London Street for making ‘dodgy’ drug deals</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Answers on next page.
Answers to True/False

Offenders and Victims
1. False
2. True – Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics
3. False
4. True – Source: Office for National Statistics quarterly crime bulletin
5. True – Source: Youth Justice Board annual statistics
6. False
7. False (it’s actually women)
8. True – Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics
9. True – Pickles the mongrel tracked down the stolen World Cup Trophy, it was under a hedge in South London

Crime headlines
1. True – Source: BBC News online October 2015. According to the National Memorial Day organisation, more than 4,000 police officers have been killed since 1792, when the first salaried constables went on duty.
2. False
4. False
5. True – Source: The Daily Mirror online April 2015
6. True – Source: Mail Online November 2013
7. False