

Dave's Story

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Dave and Pat Rogers' 25 year old son, Adam, was killed on 5th July 2009. With the loss of their son, their lives changed forever. After the court case was over, Dave felt a real need to talk to the young man who'd been convicted of the killing. He wanted him to hear directly about the harm and hurt he'd caused.



Adam was killed after he'd tried to break up a fight in Blackburn town centre. He'd been out with a group of friends that evening. When they were set upon by another bunch of young men, Adam tried to isolate one of them in order to stop him from joining in the fight. This young man was so drunk and angry at being restrained that he punched Adam in the face, resulting in a head injury which was to prove fatal.

The loss of a much loved son

On that night the Rogers' life changed for ever. They describe Adam as a gentle person, a wonderful son and brother and a true friend. Over the next few months they went through the ordeal of seeing William Upton, the young man who delivered that fatal punch, arrested and tried in court. He was found guilty of causing Adam's death and was sent to a Young Offenders' Institution.

Unanswered questions

The court case left Dave and Pat with questions that they knew only William Upton could answer.

"I'd heard of the concept of restorative justice before we lost Adam, and thought it sounded like a good idea. I just never dreamed I'd ever need to seek it myself one day", said Dave.

"I made some enquiries and eventually the probation service arranged a meeting with him at the young peoples' prison where he was being held. Pat wasn't ready to be in the same room as him, but she supported me going and understood why I needed to.

Communicating the damage and hurt

"At the trial he did not appear to show genuine remorse. I really needed him to understand that what had happened was his fault.



“After I got into the room and we sat down, the first thing he did was apologise. I think the whole thing was harrowing for him. I think he knew at this point that he’d done a lot of harm.

Friends suffer too

“I also told him that it wasn’t just us – Adam’s family – who have suffered. It was his friends too. Adam’s death had a big effect on them. I don’t think he’d realised that.

“I felt it was important for him to know who Adam was – so I told him alot about my son. I showed him photos of Adam.”

Dave feels that his meeting with Adam’s killer was very worthwhile. He is now a strong advocate of restorative justice.

Anti-violence action

Since losing Adam, the Rogers family and Adam’s friends have run an anti-violence campaign called “Every Action has Consequences.” Dave is a frequent speaker in schools and is also involved in prison work.