



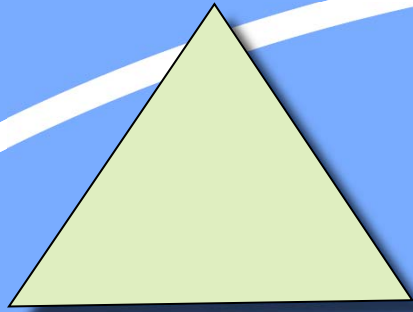
Youth Justice
Agency

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Journey so far

- 1990's – Quaker organised meetings
- 1998 – Good Friday Agreement & Review of Justice
- 2002 – Justice Act
- 2003 - 2006 Pilot project
- 2006 – Queens University of Belfast
- 2008 – Republic of Ireland RJ Commission recommends a YC model
- 2009 – Criminal Justice Inspectorate
- 2009 – Prison Reform Trust
- 2010 – Independent Commission on Youth Crime

Community



Victim

Young person

The balanced approach



Youth Conference Service

A Youth Conference gives young offenders the opportunity to understand and make amends to their victims for the effects of their offences and to take steps to stop offending. It involves families, victims, community and the young person in making a decision on what can be done to put right the harm caused.



LEGISLATION JUSTICE {NI}ACT 2002



PPS

COURT

**YCS co-ordinator, young person,
Appropriate adult, police officer,
lawyer, victim, victim
supporter, appropriate others**

To date: approximately 8500 referrals for all areas

On completion of a Conference a young person will be subject to a Youth Conference Plan (PPS) or a Youth Conference Order (Court).

Conference Process: Legislative Powers



- The young person may be required to:
- Apologise
- Make reparation to the victim, any person affected, or to the community
- Make a payment to the victim not exceeding cost of replacing or repairing any damage
- Submit to the supervision of an adult
- Perform unpaid work or service in or for the community
- Participate in activities to address her/his offending
- Submit to restrictions on conduct or whereabouts
- Submit to treatment for a mental condition or for alcohol/drugs dependency

Referrals



- **Court 55% PPS 45%**
 - **Male 85% Female 15%**
- (This figure has been consistent since 2004)**
- **95% reach full conference**
 - **10% of plans amended in court**

What makes a good conference

- Robust Preparation
- Safety for all parties
- Range of options to engage victims
- Facilitation not mediation/interpretative listening
- Those affected by the crime are the owners of whether there is remorse from a young person
- Enabling of storytelling
- Reparation is restorative
- No condemnation of young person by participants



Findings from Practice

- 74% attendance by victims
- 78% of plans are reparative
- 84% of young people made an apology
- 94% of young people were satisfied with the process
- 90% of victims satisfied with the outcome

Content of plans



- **Activities 81%**
- **Apology 51%**
- **Service to the community 21%**
- **Education 1.5%**
- **Restitution 17%**
- **Reparation 47%**
- **Restriction 19%**
- **Supervision 4%**
- **Treatment 1.5%**

Reoffending



- **2005 & 2006 cohorts**
- **Offending base rate in 2006 for community sentences 52.1%**
- **Youth Conference 38.4%**
- **Court = 47.4%**
- **Diversionary = 28.3%**
- **Other sentences (Probation Order 58.6%, CRO 50%)**

Cont...



- **Reoffending rate for violent offences is 22%**
- **Lower rates of reoffending when a victim is present in court ordered sample (12.6% differential)**

Challenges



- **Justice expert tensions**
- **Outcomes must be proportionate to the offence**
- **Involves devolved decision making to those effected by the crime**
- **The perception of repeat youth conferences**
- **Repeat offenders find it too difficult compared to traditional model**
- **The conference reaches a consensus on the Action plan content**
- **Inter professional tensions**
- **Maintaining Integrity of RJ model**