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NEWSLETTER

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Victim Offender Interventions in 2007

OFFENCE TYPES:

- **MURDER**
- **DRIVE MANNER DANGEROUS OCCASIONING DEATH**
- **AGGRAVATED ROBBERY**

MURDER

The wife of the deceased referred to the Restorative Justice Unit wanting to tell the offender about the impact of the loss of her husband on her and her children. At the Victim Offender Conference the offender acknowledged full responsibility for his actions and answered all of the wife's questions about the offence and what he has done in custody to address his offending behaviour. An outcome agreement was reached. The offender reported that he was honest in the conference, probably for the first time and that now he can begin to forgive himself. As a result of the Victim Offender Conference the wife reports that she was able to make the offender understand how her family has been affected by his actions, had all her questions answered and feels the best she has since the offence.

MURDER

Following a successful Victim Offender Conference in 2005, the son of the deceased met the offender again in a Victim Offender Meeting to discuss how the offender was addressing his offending behaviour in custody. An outcome agreement was reached and the offender will complete further programs. The son reports that he feels pleased at the outcome as the offender will be less likely to re-offend on release following completion of programs. The offender reported that he now feels an obligation to never offend again.

SEXUAL ASSAULT & MURDER

A close friend of the deceased referred to the Restorative Justice Unit wanting to hold the offender accountable for his actions and hear his account of the offence. At the Victim Offender Conference the offender gave an account of the offence and what he had done in custody since. As a result of the Victim Offender Conference the friend has decided to meet the offender again to further discuss the offence to increase the offender's understanding of the impact of his offending behaviour on the deceased's family, peers and broader community. The offender reported that he is willing to make himself available to the friend of the deceased as that is the least he can do.

DRIVE MANNER DANGEROUS OCCASIONING DEATH

The mother of the deceased referred to the Restorative Justice Unit wanting to tell the offender about the impact of the crime in the hope that he developed an understanding of the impact of his offending behaviour. Before the parties were ready to meet the offender was deported and died overseas. We exchanged information about the offender's attitude to the offence. The mother reported that she was relieved to hear that the offender did take personal responsibility for the offence.

MURDER

The wife of the deceased referred to the Restorative Justice Unit wanting the opportunity for herself and her children to hear from the forensic patient found not guilty on the grounds of mental illness. The forensic patient wrote a letter acknowledging the family's loss as a consequence of his actions. The wife is pleased to have received the letter and the Restorative Justice Unit will be involved in discussing its contents with her children when she feels the timing is right.

MURDER

The sister of the deceased referred to the Restorative Justice Unit wanting to meet the offender to discuss his behaviour since the offence and his plans for the future. The offender agreed to write a letter addressing these issues. The offender wrote a letter responding to a series of questions the sister had about the offender's understanding of the impact of the crime and his future plans when released.

MURDER

The father of the deceased referred to the Restorative Justice Unit wanting to meet the offenders to find out why his son was murdered and the facts of how he was murdered. A Victim Offender Conference was facilitated with one of the offenders who gave a full account of why his son was murdered and the specific facts. The offender acknowledged that the derogatory statements about the deceased presented at court were a fabrication. An outcome agreement was reached and a video of the Victim Offender Conference will be shown to other family members of the deceased. The offender reported that she felt so small before the father of the deceased however answering all his questions openly was important as she can now stop living behind all the lies. The father reports that his faith in his son has been

restored and that he has no outstanding questions about the offence. The father feels that he can now move on.

MURDER

The daughter of the deceased referred to the Restorative Justice Unit wanting to meet the offender so that the offender would have an understanding of the consequences of his actions. The daughter wanted also to let go of the negative emotions she was carrying since her father's murder. At the Victim Offender Conference the offender took personal responsibility for the offence. An outcome agreement was reached where the offender has agreed to undertake a workshop to be facilitated by a prison psychologist. The offender reported that telling his story was hard but that the process has lifted him personally and brought him closer with his father. The daughter reports that she feels free as a result of the Victim Offender Conference and has let go of all the negative emotions.

AGGRAVATED ROBBERY

The offender referred to the Restorative Justice Unit wanting to be held personally accountable to the victim of his offence. The victim agreed to meet. At the Victim Offender Conference the offender took full personal responsibility and told the victim about programs in custody and his obligations on parole. An outcome agreement was reached where the parole officer will report to the victim on the offender's progress. The victim reports that he feels better for participating in a Victim Offender Conference.

6 other interventions were also facilitated across the course of 2007, which did not involve bringing together a victim of crime and the offender responsible for causing the harm.