



The Benefits of Victim-Offender Mediation

- Benefits for Victims
 - Benefits for Offenders
 - Benefits for the Community
 - Benefits for the Justice System
-

● Benefits for Victims:

- Have the offender right the wrong, in whatever way is possible and valuable to the victim
- Opportunity to confront the offender with the real human impact of the offense; express thoughts and feelings directly to the offender
- Find out what the offender is like
- Get answers to questions that only the offender can answer (Why did you do this to me? How did you get into my house? Were you watching me? Is there anything that I did to cause this? Is there anything I could have done to prevent this?)
- Allay fears (often exaggerated) about the offender (Will he come back? What kind of a monster would do a thing like this to me? Am I in danger?)
- Opportunity to ask for/receive an apology
- Opportunity to be seen as a person, instead of an object or a target
- Become empowered as a primary and valued participant in the resolution of the offense, instead of being left out or viewed as a nuisance, as commonly occurs in the traditional juvenile and criminal justice processes
- Hold the offender personally accountable to the victim
- Help determine what restitution or other restoration the offender will provide and obtain it in a form that is personal and meaningful to the victim
- Greatly increase (4 times more likely, according to research) the chance that restitution will actually be paid

- Opportunity to have a personal impact on the crime problem by decreasing the likelihood that this offender will re-offend
- May avoid the need to appear in court/typically takes fewer weeks, months or even years
- Opportunity to feel that justice has been done
- Obtain the closure that brings peace of mind

● **Benefits for Offenders:**

- Opportunity to make amends and meaningfully right the wrong, rather than just be punished
- Chance to offer an apology or an explanation
- Opportunity to truly understand the real human consequences of the offense
- Opportunity to be seen as a person, rather than a monster or a criminal
- Opportunity to participate in deciding what restitution/restoration will be given to the victim and negotiate a restitution agreement that is reasonable and do-able
- In appropriate cases where the offender is not dangerous to the community (first offenses, minor offenses), the unique opportunity to avoid prosecution, a juvenile/criminal record or incarceration, by righting the wrong to the victim instead
- Opportunity to restore self-image as a good person and a competent person

● **Benefits for Community:**

- Lessen the impacts of crime on the community by increasing restoration of losses
- Reduce the incidence of repeat crime by making offenders understand how they have hurt someone
- Increase the experience of justice in the community
- Reduce the impacts of incarceration on the community, i.e., locking up parents and breadwinners; offenders who return to the community having received an education in crime while incarcerated
- In situations where the offense is part of an ongoing interpersonal conflict or where the victim and offender are likely to come in contact in the future, provide a framework for maintaining peace in the community
- By training volunteers to resolve offenses, overcome feelings of impotence and empower the community to have a direct impact on its crime problem, rather than

looking solely to governments for problem-solving

- Trained volunteers take new skills in appropriate dispute resolution back to benefit neighborhoods and the community as a whole, in a wide variety of settings in which they interact.

● **Benefits for Justice System:**

- Meet the needs of crime victims and increase their sense of justice and satisfaction with the juvenile/criminal justice system
- Increase the public's experience of justice and increase public satisfaction with the juvenile/criminal justice system
- Greatly decrease the time generally required to process offenses in the traditional adversarial manner
- Greatly decrease the expense of processing offenses in the traditional manner by leveraging services from trained volunteers
- Reduce incarceration costs by substituting creative alternatives for offenders who are not dangerous and can usefully contribute to the community and the victim
- Reduce court dockets, reduce the caseloads of juvenile courts, prosecutors, public defenders, corrections officers, and reduce the volume of police calls, making these resources more available for the cases that most need them
- Increase the community's understanding and ownership of the criminal/juvenile justice process, as a result of victim and volunteer involvement

Top

Marty Price, J.D., an attorney and social worker turned to mediator, is the founder and director of the Victim-Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP) Information and Resource Center, in Portland, Oregon. He is the founder and former director of the VORP of Clackamas County (Oregon.) He is a current Board Member and former Co-Chair of the Victim-Offender Mediation Association (VOMA), a non-profit, international, educational and advocacy organization that promotes restorative justice and supports victim-offender mediation and reconciliation programs.

The Center provides information, training, public education, technical assistance, consulting and victim-offender mediation and reconciliation services. We serve non-profit organizations, governmental agencies and individuals. The Center specializes in juvenile justice and the mediation of drunk driving fatality cases and other crimes of severe violence.

Our mission is to bring restorative justice reform to our criminal justice system, to empower victims, offenders and communities to heal the effects of crime, to curb recidivism, and to offer our society a more effective and humanistic alternative to the growing outcry for more prisons and more punishment.

Victim-Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP)
Information and Resource Center
1007 NE 118th Avenue
Portland, OR 97220