

NOVEMBER 2011 RESTORATIVE JUSTICE WEEK

## ABOUT US

John Howard Society, Central Region is one of eight Community Justice Societies in Nova Scotia that are contracted with Department of Justice to deliver the Restorative Justice Program. Our mandate is to provide service delivery to youth ages 12-17 that have come in contact with the law.

## WHAT IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?

Restorative justice is not a particular practice or type of program, but rather a philosophy, or a set of principles. <http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/rj/>

The Nova Scotia Restorative Justice Program is not intended to replace the current criminal justice system. Restorative Justice offers a more demanding, active, and clear opportunity for offenders to be held directly accountable to the victim and the community rather than to the state. Instead of being soft on crime, restorative justice requires the offender to behave more responsibly by making amends to the people they have harmed.

### Four Goals of Restorative Justice

- Reduce Recidivism
- Increase Public Confidence
- Victim Satisfaction
- Strengthen Communities

### A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

"Often, I am presented with these questions, "does restorative justice work, or is the program successful"? I certainly welcome these conversations as it allows an opportunity to share the many success stories and speak about the great work we do. The John Howard Restorative Justice program has helped many youth deal with underlying issues that contributed to their wrong doing and has offered support to those who they have victimized. I am pleased to report that our agency has been very successful in maintaining approx. 92% compliance rate. This in itself demonstrates we are meeting the goals and objectives of the Nova Scotia Restorative Justice Program.

On a final note, I would like to thank Brianna Crowe, a dedicated volunteer for her assistance with the first edition of our newsletter.

*Christina King, Director*

## NEW PILOT PROGRAM

In February of this year John Howard Society, Central Region, began accepting referrals of adult offenders as part of a two year pilot project. The Integrated Adult Restorative Justice Pilot Project, IARJPP is an integrated program with Community Corrections. At this time, the IARJPP is being offered in two sites, the northern and central part of the province, with the anticipation of the program being offered province wide by 2012.

### MEETING THE NEEDS OF OFFENDERS

**Meaning** – gives opportunity to learn of the harm done.

**Connectedness** – allows the restoration of relationships.

**Security** – allows the chance to return to community as a member.

**Action** – participation in one's own redemption.

**Recognition** – repair sense of dignity and self-worth.

### MEETING THE NEEDS OF VICTIMS

**Meaning** – meeting with offender provides closure and the opportunity for vindication.

**Connectedness** – opportunity to restore relationships.

**Security** – get answers to questions; "Why me?"

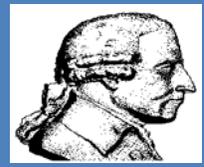
**Action** – participate in the justice-making process

**Recognition** – sense of satisfaction

## VOLUNTEER PERSPECTIVE

*"For the past two summers, I have been volunteering with the John Howard Society. I have had the opportunity to work alongside the dedicated and well-trained staff in the Truro office. I whole-heartedly believe that restorative justice is a much more effective way to deal with offenders and in turn reduce the recidivism rates in our community. I wish that more people knew about the amazing work of this organization."*

*Brianna Crowe (Volunteer)*



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## WEBLINKS

<http://www.ns.johnhoward.ca/programs/central/>

[www.ns.johnhoward.ca](http://www.ns.johnhoward.ca)

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*"Restorative justice puts a human face on the handling of crime and violence. Rather than being purely punitive in approach, restorative justice involves the entire community."*

## WHO IS JOHN HOWARD?

"He dived into the depth of dungeons, plunged into the infection of hospitals, surveyed the mansions of sorrow and pain, depression and contempt remembered the forgotten, attended the neglected, visited the forsaken, and compared and collated the distressed of individuals in all countries". – Edmund Burke. John Howard lived during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and his biggest goal was to promote the most efficient means of punishment and crime prevention. Today, we are still practising the restorative practice of Mr. Howard and changing the lives of victims, offenders and the community.