



ACT
Government

Justice and Community Safety

Restorative Justice



I Harmed a Person

ACT Restorative Justice Unit



Easy English

Hard Words



This book has some hard words.

The first time we write a hard word

- the hard word is in **blue**
- we will write what the hard word means.

You can get help with this book



You **can** get someone to help you

- read this book
- know what this book is about
- find more information.



About this book



This book is about **restorative justice**.

Restorative justice is a way to make things better after a crime.



The **ACT Restorative Justice Unit** made this book.

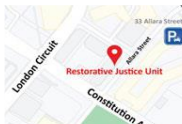


The **ACT Restorative Justice Unit**

- is part of the ACT Government



Our contact information is on page **26** of this book.





Restorative justice is for

- the person **responsible** for a crime

A person **responsible** for a crime is the person who

- did the crime

and

- **harmed** a person



Harmed is when a person or property is hurt. For example -

- something is stolen from a person
- a person is hit
- a person is made to feel unsafe
- damage is made to property.





Restorative justice is also for

- the person harmed by a crime.

A person **harmed** by a crime is the person who was hurt by the crime.

We sometimes call a person harmed by a crime the **victim of crime**.

This book is for people who



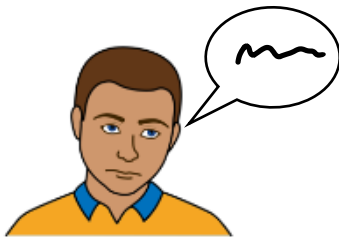
- did a crime and
- harmed a person.

What is **restorative justice**?



Restorative justice means talking with the person you harmed.

We also call restorative justice **RJ**.



RJ is a safe way for you

- to say sorry and
- try to fix the harm you did.



RJ is a safe way for the person you harmed to

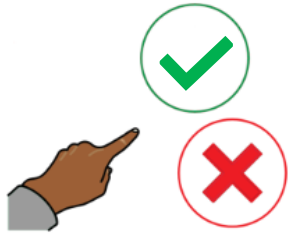
- tell you how they feel about what happened



- ask you questions about what happened



- tell you what you can do to make things better.



Doing RJ is a choice for everyone.

You can

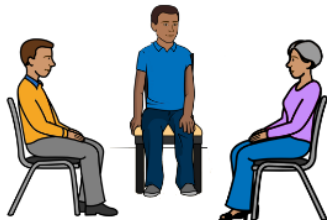


- say **no** to doing RJ.
- change your mind at any time.



The person you harmed can

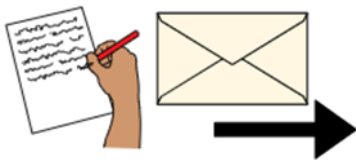
- say no to doing RJ.
- change their mind at any time.



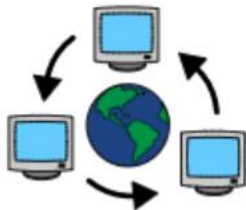
RJ can be done in different ways like,

- **direct** - where everyone sits together

or



- **indirect** - where you do not need to see each other and through the RJ process can
 - send letters or messages



- use video link.

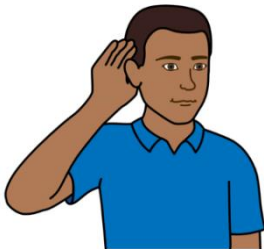


How does RJ work?

A **convenor** from the Restorative Justice Unit runs the RJ process.

A **convenor** is a person who

- prepares everybody for the RJ process
- guides everybody through the RJ process
- makes sure everybody feels safe and heard.



The convenor will

- listen to you
- support you.



The convenor will stop RJ if they think

- it is **not** safe
- it is **not** helpful for you or the person you harmed.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

RJ has **3** parts.

Part 1 What happened



The convenor will ask you questions, like

- what led you to do the crime



- what happened

- during the crime

- after the crime

- for you



- how you think you harmed others.

Part 2 How the crime harmed people



The convenor asks everyone how they think and feel about the crime.



The person you harmed can tell you how the crime made them feel.

Part 3 How to make things better



The convenor asks the person harmed what they think needs to happen to make things better.



You and the person you harmed may agree on

- what you need to do to help make things better.

Who can take part in RJ?



Every RJ process is different.

People who take part in RJ can be

- you
- a family member
- a friend.



Other people can support you, like

- case manager
- police officer
- carer
- teacher
- counsellor
- other people who care for you.



Why should I do RJ?

There are some good reasons for you to RJ.



RJ gives you the chance to

- feel better about yourself



- explain what happened



- tell people how you feel about the crime now



- say sorry to the person you harmed



- help the person you harmed feel better



- tell the person how you will make sure it will not happen again.

RJ also gives the person you harmed the chance to talk about



- what happened

- how the crime made them feel



- how the crime made their friends and family feel



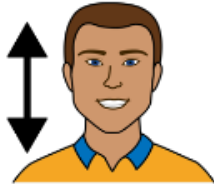
- what you can do to help make things better.



RJ is a safe a supported process for everyone.

Things to know

You do **not** have to do RJ.



You can

- start RJ at any time

and



- stop RJ at any time.



You can talk to a lawyer at any time about RJ.



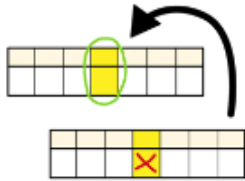
RJ does **not** mean you have to **plead guilty** in court for some crimes.

Plead guilty is when you say you did the crime in court.



RJ can happen at different times, like

- **instead** of going to court, for some crimes



- **before** you go to court



- **when** you go to court

or



- **after** the court **sentenced** you.

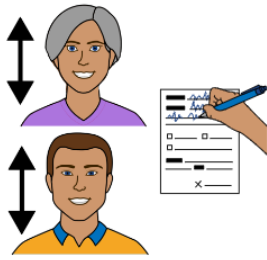
Sentenced is when the court

- finds you **did** do the crime
- gives you a punishment for the crime.



Your sentence will **not** change if you decide

- **not** to do RJ
- you want to stop RJ.



Restorative Justice agreements

Sometimes you and the person you harmed make an agreement.

Every RJ agreement is different.

You agree to do things to help fix the harm you did, like



- get a job
- do volunteer work



- take part in community programs and activities
- do a course to learn new ways to behave



- get help for drug and alcohol use

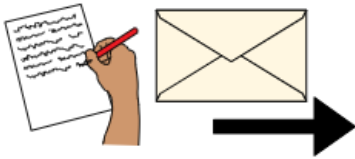


- pay back money to the person harmed

- get help for any issues that might lead them to do crime



- stay away from people and places that might lead to crime.



- write an apology letter.

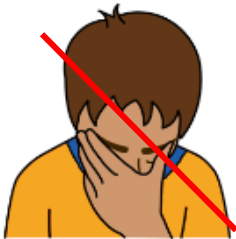
Agreements must



- be fair and something you can do

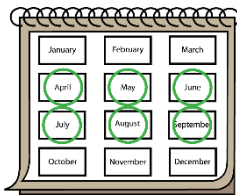


- **not** be against the law



- **not** make you feel embarrassed or worthless

- **not** make you feel scared or upset



- be no longer than **6** months from the date you both agree on



- be in writing

- signed by you and the person you harmed.

Things to know about agreements



You do **not** have to sign an agreement.



You can ask a lawyer about a RJ agreement.

The convenor gives a copy of the agreement

- to you
- the person you harmed and
- the **referring agency**



A **referring agency** is the people or place that told the Restorative Justice unit about the crime.

The convenor



- checks if you are following the agreement and

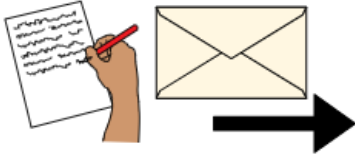


- lets the referring agency know.

Agreements can only change if



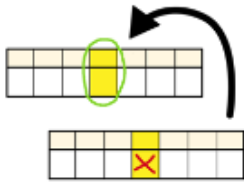
- you can **not** complete the original agreement because of a change in your life.



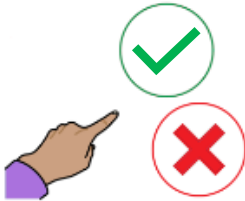
Writing a letter

A letter is a way to tell everyone

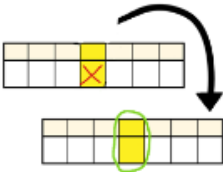
- you understand that the crime you did was wrong
- you are sorry.



Sometimes you write a letter **before** you meet the person you harmed.



The letter may help the person you harmed decide if they want to meet you or **not**.



Sometimes you write a letter **after** you and the person you harmed meet with the convenor.

The letter shows the person you harmed

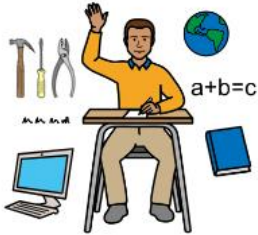
- you understand how the crime harmed them and
- you are sorry.





Your letter

- should be in your own words
- may tell people how you feel about the crime after you did RJ
- may tell people what you are doing with your life now.



You can get help to write your letter from

- your convenor or
- a support person.



Inclusion and access



We respect people of all identities.



We respect people of all ages.



We make sure all people we work with feel safe and welcome.

Let the convener know how we can support you.

Cultural support



We offer a safe space for people of all cultures.

We can organise

- interpreters
- other cultural support.

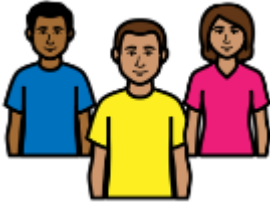


First Nations Support

We have a First Nations Guidance Partner and First Nations Convenor to support First Nations clients.

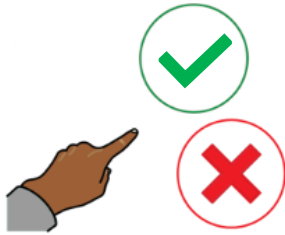
They can

- help you understand the RJ process
- help you get positive outcomes
- refer you to other services.



General Support

We support all people to make **informed decisions** when they do RJ.



Informed decisions are choices you make when you understand the information about

- the positives of the choice and
- the negatives of the choice.

You can then decide which choice is best for you.

Guardians can also sometimes take part in the RJ process.



Contact Us



Call **(02) 6207 3992**



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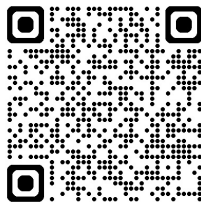
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Website
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restorative-justice-service](https://www.act.gov.au/law-and-justice/restorative-justice-service)



This QR code will link you to the website for more information



You can use Google translate to translate information into other languages

Advocacy for Inclusion made this Easy English document on behalf of the ACT Restorative Justice Unit.

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