



JACKSON COUNTY

Community Justice

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As the Deputy Director for Jackson County Community Justice - Juvenile Division, I am asking for your support of SB 600 that would appropriate additional funds to the Oregon Office for Community Dispute Resolution at the University of Oregon for the purpose of increasing eviction and homelessness prevention services and restorative justice services.

Our department has had a 30-year partnership with Resolve Center for Dispute Resolution and Restorative Justice in providing restorative justice practices throughout the services we provide to the youth, families, and victims of our community. Restorative justice is an evidenced-based and trauma informed practice used to build relationships, encourage accountability, repair harm, decrease recidivism and restore community.

Resolve also partners with local schools in using the strength of relationship to build a safer school culture through prevention, intervention, and restoration after harm. Restorative Justice in schools provides a set of principles and practices that supports teachers, students and families in building relationships, strengthening community and repairing relationships and community after harm. Results from practicing restorative justice can include improved school climate; significantly lower referrals, suspensions, and expulsions; and higher attendance and graduation rates.

Prevention and interventions utilizing restorative justice practices have shown improvements within our community from acting out behaviors in our schools to a decrease in restraints in our detention facility. A focus on restorative justice practices provides for more dialogues with youth; processing actions, behaviors and harm; and providing new skills to youth to deal with situations in the future.

Investing in restorative justice is good business and good public policy as data shows its effective use to prevent at-risk youth from entering the juvenile justice system, adds capacity to work with at-risk youth in the community, holds youth accountable for the harm they have caused and yields fewer victims.

I fully support the efforts of Resolve Center for Dispute Resolution and Restorative Justice in the work they do within our community and receiving additional funding so they can continue to help to transform the way the people and our communities manage and resolve conflict and repair from harm.

Sincerely,

Joe Ferguson
Deputy Director
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