

Sex Offending and Family Violence: a restorative approach

Wednesday 13th August 2008

1 – 5 pm

Sir Zelman Cowen Centre
Victoria University
Level 2

295 Queen Street
Melbourne

(entrance off Lt Lonsdale Street)



The appropriateness of restorative justice for cases of sexual and family violence has been hotly debated. Justice Marcia Neave of the Victorian Court of Appeal and former Chairwoman of the Victorian Law Reform Commission recently made public her belief that there is a place alongside current criminal justice responses for a restorative approach. Judge Neave believes that such an approach can better meet the needs of victims who are often retraumatised by conventional justice processes and rarely feel that justice has been done. Restorative justice advocates assert that restorative approaches to these kinds of offences are also likely to reduce the likelihood of future offending.

Indigenous advocates, are calling for restorative approaches to be trialed in cases of family violence and, with the recent changes in family law requiring participation in family dispute resolution prior to court action, now could be a good time to reconsider such an approach.

Can it be done? What are the risks? What are the possibilities? Who could do it? How can victims be protected? What other safeguards need to be in place?

You are invited to consider and respond to these questions and others at an afternoon of facilitated debate and discussion. Attendance is by invitation only. The facilitator will be Peter Condliffe, President, Victorian Association for Restorative Justice.

An issues paper will be prepared and released after the forum.

Other invitees will include: Childwise, Victims Support Agency, Centre Against Sexual Assault, Office of Public Prosecutions, Victims/Witness Assistance Programs, County Court, Victoria Police SOCA Unit, Dept of Justice, Sexual Abuse Counselling Prevention Program, MAPPS, Carlton Community Correctional Services Sex Offenders Treatment Program, Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault.

If you believe you or someone you know could contribute to this discussion, for or against, please have them contact VARJ:

RSVP by Friday 8th August 2008

Email: president@varj.asn.au

Telephone: (03) 9225 6888; 0408153546

For further information about VARJ go to www.varj.asn.au

Invitation