

POLICE REFORM, RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND RESTORATIVE POLICING

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INTRODUCTION

When it has not been focused on addressing corruption and allegations of bias, harassment, and brutality, much police reform since the 1960s can be characterized as a slow movement away from the professional model of policing (Kelling and Moore, 1988). Specifically, much of this reform can be seen as an attempt to escape the rigidity associated with the paramilitary organizational structures, and to overcome the limits these bureaucratic structures have imposed on flexible, effective, long-term solutions to crime. A significant focus has also been an effort to promote greater citizen participation and community partnerships in crime resolution and prevention. In essence, a new relationship between police departments and the communities they serve (Skolnick and Bayley, 1986; Bayley, 1994). Such reform has moved along two separate but related problem-oriented and community-oriented policing tracks.

In the 1970s, ‘team policing’ first appeared to challenge the idea that guided officer discretion was a bad thing. This innovation promoted the view that decentralized decision making offered benefits to police effectiveness in addressing real problems at the community level. While team policing contained some of the seeds of what was to later become known as ‘problem-oriented’ policing (Eck and Spellman, 1987; Goldstein, 1990), the commitment to localized problem-solving processes grounded in close relationships with community members also paved the way for the more potentially revolutionary visions of ‘community policing’ (Kelling and Moore, 1988; Rosenbaum, 1994). Specifically, problem solving offered officers discretion to develop tactical response alternatives that rejected incident-driven ‘911 policing’ (Sparrow, Moore and Kennedy, 1990). However, though problem-oriented officers sought input and information from community members and also to some degree took their problems and opinions seriously, problem-oriented policing for the most part left key decisions in the hands of police professionals.

In contrast, at least some visions of community policing were arguably more radical in their implications for a true ‘co-production’ of safe communities (Kelling and Moore, 1988;

Skogan, 1990), and in the most ambitious statements, for a democratization of decision-making authority that could result in a shift of power to neighborhood groups and citizens (Skolnick and Bayley, 1986; Bayley, 1994). There is much debate in the field today about the extent to which such power-sharing ever really occurred (Buerger, 1994), whether the community was willing and able to assume responsibilities for social control in the absence of substantial and systematic community building (Rosenbaum, 1994), and whether the vision of community policing was ever more than just a vision (Taylor, Fritsch and Caeti, 1998). In addition, numerous questions remain about the extent to which community policing was truly understood in the deeper sense of the community/police partnerships, and whether such conceptualizations were linked logically to implementation strategies and practice consistent with such an understanding (Maguire and Katz, 2002).

Even the most optimistic assumptions about a widespread understanding of this vision, and the will to move forward with the potentially transformative reforms implied in some community policing literature, are not, however, sufficient for effective implementation. Reformers must still confront police agency organizational structures and cultures that present significant barriers to implementing such reform (Taylor *et al.*, 1998; Mastroski and Ritti, 2000). Moreover, the continuing focus on community policing as a programmatic rather than systemic reform, and the apparent fear of sharing power with communities, arguably continue to provide barriers to the vision that remain difficult to overcome.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND RESTORATIVE POLICING

In this context, 'restorative policing' (McCold and Wachtel, 1998; Nicholls, 1998) appears to offer new hope for reform, new tools, a new value framework, and new challenges. Though sharing some values and strategies with those associated with community justice generally (e.g., Clear and Karp, 1999) and community policing specifically (Pranis and Bazemore, 2001), restorative justice as an international movement operates from a distinctive normative theory and prioritizes new intervention strategies and practices (Van Ness and Strong, 2001; Braithwaite, 2002). Specifically, restorative justice values offer a challenge to the traditional goals of intervention – punishment and treatment of the offender after completion of a court-based, adversarial process. In doing so, restorative justice advocates may thereby raise questions about one unspoken primary goal of most policing strategies, including those informed by problem-oriented and community-oriented values: to turn all lawbreakers over to such a process.

First, the principled focus on doing justice by repairing the harm of crime, rather than simply punishing or treating the offender (Van Ness and Strong, 1997, 2001), gives a new meaning to intervention objectives. This focus in turn has implications for critical perspectives on what is likely to be achieved as a result of an adversarial process whose end result is often unsatisfying to victims, offenders, and communities. Though courts and the adversarial system have their place, such a result is also in direct conflict with assumptions linked to a second core principle of restorative justice, that the plan for repairing harm (or for any resolution in the aftermath of a specific crime) is best developed with maximum input from victim, offender, and their supporters through a nonadversarial process. This process, in turn, has value in its own right as, among other things, a means of promoting stakeholder ownership of the problem created by the crime in question. The principles of repairing harm and maximizing involvement of those harmed in the decision-making process concerned with how to do this also have implications for what the police might do if invested in the goal of

allowing offenders to make amends, or of seeking to rebuild relationships harmed by crime by giving stakeholders a voice and meaningful role in crafting the solution.

While such approaches do not seem inconsistent with community and problem-oriented policing, they are not spelled out or even necessarily assumed in these models. There are, for example, many ways to involve the community in prevention and public safety activities, and approaches to problem solving that do not call for involvement of citizens in case decision making. Restorative obligations that repair harm to victims and communities have not been spelled out as objectives of community policing intervention, though informally officers may engage stakeholders in processes that allow the offender to make amends and/or seek to repair relationships that have been damaged by crime.

Ultimately, what some view as the third core principle of restorative justice (Van Ness and Strong, 1997; Bazemore and Walgrave, 1999) comes closest to full compatibility with the vision of community policing in its most ambitious form. This principle suggests a need for a transformation in the relationship between the government/criminal justice system and the community which places the community in a much more active role in promoting both public safety and justice. In this new relationship, the justice system is acknowledged as playing a vital role in preserving *order* while the community is viewed as promoting *peace* (Van Ness and Strong, 1997). To support the community in assuming this role, police committed to this vision and to restorative principles would focus significant attention on 'community building' aimed at mobilizing and enhancing citizen and community groups' skills and confidence in informal responses to crime, harm, and conflict. More generally, community building of this type is aimed at promoting the exercise of informal social control (Hunter, 1985) and social support (Cullen, 1994; Bazemore, 2001) grounded in social capital as relationships of trust and reciprocity based on shared norms and values (Putnam, 2000). It is also focused on the skill sets associated with informal social control. Tapping into, revitalizing, or rebuilding such social capital and 'collective efficacy' (Sampson, Raudenbush and Earls, 1997) after years of telling communities to 'leave crime control to the experts' is of course no easy task. The level of difficulty, coupled with past failures of most community policing efforts to focus strategically on community capacity building, is moreover no doubt one of the reasons for the conclusion of some critics that community policing has failed to deliver on its promises (see generally, Rosenbaum, 1994; Taylor *et al.*, 1998).

At the level of specific practice, what restorative justice brings to community and problem-oriented policing is a set of tools or 'levers' for building social capital and efficacy around the direct response to specific incidents of crime, conflict, and harm. Whereas generic community policing offers opportunities for citizen participation in determining police priorities and invites community involvement in organized group events (e.g., neighborhood watch, clean-ups), restorative policing provides at the case level a decision-making role for citizens in informal sanctioning and the effective resolution of individual incidents of crime that has traditionally been the province of courts and professional court group decision makers (e.g., prosecutors, defenders). Specifically, through application of restorative conferencing techniques (Bazemore and Umbreit, 2001), affected parties – and police officers as facilitators, conveners, or participants – develop agreements that outline offender obligations such as community service, restitution, or other informal reparative sanctions, apologies, peacemaking pacts, and relationship building approaches that allow for concrete repair of harm without recourse to adversarial processing. Such agreements are developed using a process that promotes collective community ownership of the resolution, as well as individual stakeholder (e.g., victim and offender) satisfaction, and ultimately builds or rebuilds community skills.

Police involvement in such functions has raised concerns among some observers of a conflict of interest or a kind of inappropriate role stretch or 'boundary erosion' (Friel, 2000) that places police in the role of prosecutor and judge, as well as law enforcer. Some restorative justice advocates have also raised questions about police involvement in decision making that – when not handled formally by court group professionals – should be left to juvenile justice professionals with more of a social work orientation (White, 1992; Umbreit and Stacey, 1996). Some have questioned whether police can be useful facilitators or even participants in restorative processes, or raised cautions that officers might quickly revert to the law enforcement role (e.g., using conferences to gather evidence) (Young, 2001). Others, however, find that police can be effective facilitators and may even help participants reach decisions and resolutions more consistent with community views (and hence more sustainable) than those driven by social work perspectives (see generally, Moore and O'Connell, 1994; McCold and Wachtel, 1998). In any case, *some* primary police role in restorative decision making appears to be essential if restorative justice is to truly mean returning conflict resolution to relevant communities (Christie, 1977).

How well might police do in the general role of returning crime prevention and conflict resolution to communities? How will they function in the variety of new specific roles consistent with restorative justice? Taking account of the fact that officers who participate most actively in restorative justice processes are almost always those that choose to do so, police have thus far shown a great deal of competency in several roles. Viable options for police agency involvement in restorative decision making and other restorative programs include: taking an active role as primary sources of referral to free-standing restorative conferencing programs; sponsoring such programs themselves inside the police agency, whether or not they use officers as facilitators; asking officers to convene or participate in conferences facilitated by others; or designing and operating other in-house restorative programs focused on victim needs, youth reparation, or meeting other special needs (e.g., Schwartz, Hennessey and Lavitas, this issue).

Perhaps the least noticed and most important role for individual police officers in restorative justice practice is an informal one. Specifically, when officers apply restorative justice principles in response to harm and conflict on the street, with a family in their homes, or at a school or workplace, they expand application of restorative solutions and expose more community members to these practices than would ever be possible through reliance on a single program. In addition, such street level application is likely to minimize use of more formal and expensive court and other diversion resources. It should also promote more appropriate and cost-effective use of formal restorative programs – especially when officers are encouraged not to send cases to the program when they can accomplish restorative objectives and principled problem solving less formally (see Hines and Bazemore, this issue).

Finally, police executives and law enforcement organizations appear to be at least as effective as other criminal justice decision makers (e.g., judges, prosecutors, corrections professionals) in leadership roles that require them to initiate and win broader system and community support. Along with this, it must be said that law enforcement leaders face many of the same and some unique dilemmas when it comes to implementing and sustaining these programs. On the one hand, given the traditionally rigid, paramilitary structures that continue to characterize police bureaucracies, leadership may confront even great organizational and inter-organizational obstacles to implementing restorative programs. On the other hand, with regard to sustainability, police may also have some unique advantages as a result of their generally closer connection to community and local agents of informal social control.

THEORY TO PRACTICE AND PRACTICE TO THEORY: LEARNING FROM CASE STUDIES OF IMPLEMENTATION AND EXPANSION OF RESTORATIVE POLICING

Emerging literature in restorative justice (O'Brien, 1999; Carey, 2001; McLeod, this issue) has recently become concerned with what for years have been referred to as the Achilles heel of policy reform, implementation (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973). To one degree or another, the case studies presented in this issue also address the problem of moving from policy, or vision, to practice. While some describe the very beginning of an implementation process, others address implementation primarily as an effort to add a new component to a well-established restorative initiative, to expand restorative practices and principles to new parts of the criminal justice system, or to take steps to ensure sustainability by promoting greater community ownership of the program or initiative (see Hines and Bazemore, this issue).

There is no reason therefore for the editors to address specific issues of implementation. However, we do propose one general implementation principle and suggest several levels or domains of implementation that police administrators will need to consider in any effort to move forward with restorative justice reforms. First, we defend the value of case studies as a vital learning tool in the development of better implementation strategies – as well as improvements in practice, theory, and research.

THE VALUE OF CASE STUDIES: PRACTICE TO THEORY

In addition to a shared focus on implementation issues in restorative policing,¹ the contributions in this issue may all be viewed in the broadest sense as 'case studies.' According to Yin (1994), a case study is a research design that examines a contemporary social phenomenon in context, using multiple sources of evidence. The goal of a case study is to answer 'how' and 'why' questions about the phenomenon in question. While much research seeks to generalize to statistical populations, the goal of case study research is to generalize to theory. Some of the papers in this issue are certainly *more than* case studies; McCold, for example, also provides a significant amount of impact data from a controlled evaluation study of restorative policing. However, each contribution for our purposes provides important lessons about the implementation and experience of restorative policing that can be generalized to other contexts. In so doing, they contribute to the effort to develop principled rather than programmatic criteria for replication, as well as to theory building about restorative policing. That is, we believe these experiences, though somewhat unique, are more than just descriptive accounts. Indeed, even the most exploratory and tentative of the findings presented in this issue have important implications for other implementation contexts. As a case study, each paper also emphasizes one or more specific domains of influence in policy implementation, and hence also provides conceptual material for improving understanding about why and how some things work, and/or about how restorative justice 'fits' within various policing and community contexts.

¹The final notable commonality between the case studies in the issue is that all but one of the restorative policing programs described (the San Francisco Sheriff's Office study) deal only with cases in which juvenile offenders are the perpetrators. Although the authors have no data on numbers of juvenile vs. adult restorative policing programs internationally, thus far in the USA and Canada, restorative policing appears to be focused almost exclusively on youth crime.

THE VALUE OF SYSTEMIC REFORM: THEORY TO PRACTICE

Based on lessons learned from community policing (e.g., Rosenbaum, 1994; Taylor *et al.*, 1998), as well as from restorative justice thus far (Bazemore and Schiff, 2001), our general principle of implementation is by no means original. However, it remains a neglected feature of strategic reform efforts, both in restorative justice and community policing. This principle is that successful implementation of restorative justice reforms requires a systemic vision and focus. The converse of this is that sustainable restorative justice cannot be built on programs alone. Put another way, while a restorative justice vision alone will not produce restorative policing, the *absence* of a restorative vision is virtually guaranteed to lead to practice and policy that have little to do with restorative justice.

Restorative justice programs are of course essential to demonstrate what restorative policing 'looks like.' One lesson of community policing, however, is that programs alone are not sufficient. Indeed, as tactics or special programs such as foot patrol, citizen advisory groups, neighborhood watch programs, specialized police officers, and neighborhood police centers came to be seen as the *equivalent* of community policing, a once holistic reform agenda became viewed in many police departments as having little implication for the policing mission (Maguire and Katz, 2001). Like programmatic efforts in other sectors of criminal justice systems such as community corrections that provide small case examples of what reform might look like but do not spill over to impact mainstream practice (e.g., Maloney, Bazemore and Hudson, 2001), community policing as a program or tactic simply was not viewed in many jurisdictions as having any implications for what most police officers did. And in reality, community policing practice in many jurisdictions effected some small fraction of cases in a few targeted neighborhoods (see Rosenbaum, 1994).

Systemic Reform and Restorative Policing

Systemic reform on the other hand begins with a vision of change in all sectors of the criminal justice system and a change in professional roles. At the agency or organizational level, when police leaders implement restorative justice reform systemically, they envision transformative change that begins at the departmental level and moves outward (Nicholls, 1998). The *goal* of systemic reform if restorative policing is the vision, is to conceptualize a response to all incidents of crime based on restorative principles and to then ensure that a full menu of restorative options is available for police – and community members and groups who bring them cases. This of course implies program development and great attention to program quality that is hopefully assessed by adherence to principles that allow for adaptation to different police functions, to different neighborhoods and so on. Indeed, a systemic vision *includes* programmatic reform, with the difference being that programs/tactics serve to achieve the goals of the mission and vision, rather than displace these goals with no overarching value framework. The vision ensures that one or a few restorative programs will not suffice; however, saturating communities with a range of restorative practices is an important means of supporting and expanding a systemic vision.

The second feature of systemic reform is the idea that restorative policing should change not only the way officers think about conflict resolution, sanctioning, and community involvement (as in restorative conferencing programs), but such reform should change the way they think about and perform *all* police functions. In essence, one could envision a more or less 'restorative justice approach' to crime prevention, order maintenance, service functions, surveillance, conflict resolution, and law enforcement. The

core concept at play in such a vision is perhaps best captured by the warden of a correctional facility who had committed to systemic reform in his facility by agency-wide training in restorative justice principles that included janitors, cooks, transportation staff, and clerical workers as well as professional correctional officers and treatment staff. The systemic goal of changing agency functions, as he expressed it, was to: “build restorative justice into the bricks.”

There are no guarantees that the systemic vision will bring success in implementing restorative policing. Indeed, the danger of ‘loose coupling’ (Weick, 1976) between an ambitious vision and actual practice has recently been documented in the community policing movement in studies that indicate in some cases sweeping changes in mission and vision, with little accompanying implementation of practice. For the most part, however, in the USA at least, widespread implementation of a range of COP practice options according to one recent national study does appear to be closely linked to general visionary claims expressed in mission statements (Maguire and Katz, 2002). In other words, with a few exceptions in the arena of mid-level management changes, it appears that police organizations whose leaders support the mission of community policing are more likely to implement practices that support this mission and vision. In addition, it is rare to see the full array of community policing practices in departments not committed to the vision and mission.

Domains of Action for Systemic Change and the Current Contributions

To support the systemic vision and mission of restorative policing, we suggest four domains or sectors critical to effective implementation and sustainability.

Legislation/Policy Domain

Restorative justice reform should never be envisioned as a top-down strategy that is implemented only because it is required by legislation (which most often also implies access to funding). However, internationally, those governments that can boast widespread use of restorative practices, including adoption of these practices by police agencies and their participation in multiple aspects of practice and implementation for use in cases beyond those involving low-level offending, are characterized by clear legislation (Morris and Maxwell, 2001; Braithwaite, 2002). Such policy statements either give preference to, mandate, or make certain funding contingent on use of restorative practices. In this regard, the USA – with the exception of a few states that have loosely tied eligibility for certain federal funding streams to implementation of restorative practices – stands as important case study in how the absence of any specific legislation is associated with comparatively minimal implementation of restorative practices. While the US case studies discussed in this issue and a few other local jurisdictions provide notable exceptions, the reality they reflect is that development and even referral to restorative programs requires a change in thinking, practice, and incentives that is not often forthcoming in the absence of policy and statutes.

In their contribution, Chatterjee and Elliott specifically address the vital role of legislation in the successful early implementation of restorative policy. A prominent feature of the federal Canadian Youth Justice Act is that it directs that all means should be explored in an attempt to reduce the numbers of youth being sent to custody. This provides the framework within which the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other police forces across the country can become more extensively involved in restorative policing practices, although the specific

nature of this involvement has yet to emerge. The authors make the important point that the increased involvement of the police as front-end referral agents to restorative programs, and in police-sponsored restorative practices, marks a return to the original role of the police as peacekeepers.

Organizational Domain

Broadly, two dimensions of organizations require attention in restorative justice reform: structure and culture. The structural dimension includes job descriptions that reconfigure policing role definitions, incentive structures that support restorative practice, and management/leadership structures that facilitate the discretionary decision making required for restorative problem solving and widespread application of principles. Organizational culture is considered even more important by a number of restorative justice advocates at this stage in what remains a relatively new movement (Carey, 2001). This dimension is concerned with agency-wide values that prioritize peacemaking, conflict resolution, and community building over aggressive patrol and coercion. More subtly, departmental artifacts and symbols as exemplified by informal interaction, jokes officers tell, attitudes toward various community members and groups are important indicators of a culture supportive of, or incompatible with restorative policing values.

Although it is possible to identify conceptually the stages of organizational reform required for a police department to develop the capacity for restorative practices, the specific form that such practices take will necessarily be dependent upon the specific environment and community within which the police deliver services. Griffiths, Parent and Whitelaw (1999: 42) note, for example, that the determination of how to best implement community policing, how to measure whether objectives have been achieved, and what specific initiatives are required on the part of the police and the community are best determined on a community-by-community basis, "depending upon the needs and requirements of the community in question and the outcomes of the dialogue between the police and community residents." So should the implementation and assessment of police restorative practices be measured within the framework most sensitive to the specific environments and contexts within which the police operate.

The empirical and theoretical importance of attention to the organizational level is illustrated first by the contribution by Colleen McLeod. In this paper the author presents a review of the contemporary literature of organizational theory and an analysis of the organizational requirements for a police service to develop the capacity to effectively carry out restorative practices. As McLeod notes, this will require that the department make a transition from a traditional police bureaucracy to a restorative community model of police organization. The experience of community policing over the past two decades has indicated quite clearly that, in the absence of organizational reform, it is very difficult to alter the manner in which police departments carry out their mandate and line level officers exercise their discretion. McLeod (this issue) makes the important point that, for a police department to become a restorative organization, "leadership in the agency must clearly understand what restorative justice is, what the commitment to change is, and what the change process requires." This places the onus on the police leader to create the organizational structure and environment within which police officers have the authority and autonomy to explore alternatives to dispute resolution, to experiment with various restorative practices, and to take the necessary risks and assume ownership of restorative practices and outcomes.

The research findings presented by Paul McCold, provide several important lessons for restorative policing efforts at multiple levels of analysis, but provide special insights in the organizational domain. First, they illustrate quite conclusively that it is possible for police officers to conduct restorative conferences that require accountability on the part of the offender and are also viewed as fair by victims, offenders, and other relevant parties. Further, police-sponsored conferencing can gain acceptance in the community while at the same time producing outcomes as or more favorable than other restorative approaches such as victim-offender mediation. At the organizational level, McCold's department-wide survey findings also raise cautions about overly optimistic expectations that even highly successful programs may have little impact on the attitudes and culture of the department as a whole.

Individual Officer Domain

Traditional police officers who become restorative advocates often report a kind of conversion experience that produced a significant, self-identified, transformation in their thinking about the job of policing. Such transformation in the authors' experience is almost never from 'tough cop' to 'social worker' – and indeed, personality types highly invested in restorative policing run the gamut of policing and personal styles. For most officers committed to restorative policing, such commitment does not mean, as a community policing officer recently told one of us, "that we are wimps." What it does mean is commitment to a more holistic vision of policing that prioritizes certain principled goals – e.g., resolving conflict by repairing harm in a way that maximizes stakeholder involvement and builds community. Part of the basis for what may begin as difficult persuasion effort in the case of some resistant system professionals is best characterized as a kind of experiential theory of change. That is, anecdotally, many restorative justice practitioners and activists have become convinced that the easiest way to persuade resistant criminal justice professionals of the value of restorative practices (especially key decision makers such as judges, prosecutors, and police) is to convince them to participate in a restorative conferencing or other decision-making process. On this personal level, reportedly hardened police chiefs and resistant judges may soon become zealous advocates.

In this collection, the exploratory look at early implementation of restorative policing in an RCMP unit in Canada by Abramson indicates that, despite the ongoing efforts of the staff of a restorative justice program, police officers in one department who were reluctant to refer cases to conferencing and other programs were still uncertain as to the principles of restorative justice. This suggests that either the learning curve or conversion challenge for these officers may not yet be being fully addressed by leadership at least in some jurisdictions. To what extent can these officers be expected to support restorative policing effectively if basic principles are only vaguely understood?

The contribution by Nielsen and Gould expands on the notion of peacekeeping in restorative policing. Their paper provides an insightful look at the dynamics that surround the interface between National Police and the Navajo Nation Peacemakers and revisions to the Navajo Criminal Code that incorporated more traditional justice practices. Also at the individual level, a key issue is how Navajo police officers view their role and how individual officers address and reconcile the inherent conflict between European-style law enforcement taught at the police academy with the traditional healing approach of the peacemakers.

Community Domain

The community domain of restorative policing provides both the greatest challenge and greatest opportunity for transformative systemic impact. Community involvement and

community building are in essence a key part of the solution to many of the other implementation problems noted above. A prominent emergent theory of change in restorative justice writing is that the community, when involved and engaged, brings the system along with reform efforts and helps to sustain commitment (Stuart, 1996; Pranis, 2001). This implies involvement of community members and groups beyond the level of participation in a restorative process as victim, offender, or community member/supporter. It also implies strategic use of volunteers and community building strategies that enable community members and groups to demonstrate their competence in these tasks and their willingness to exercise acquired skills in efforts to provide ongoing informal social control in the response to neighborhood crime.

While relevant to the organizational domain in its emphasis on systemic organizational reform aimed at both cultural change and changes in the role of sheriff's deputies, the case study of the San Francisco Sheriff's office experience with restorative justice in a jail setting also has implications for the community domain. In their account of this transition to a restorative mission for the jail and its programs, Sunny Schwartz and her colleagues describe a holistic approach to engaging the community in a highly focused response to violence. Although one missing link in the reform effort thus far has been widespread implementation of restorative conferencing (plans for moving forward with conferencing programs at the neighborhood level are currently on the drawing board), the agency-wide commitment to core principles and the focus on interface with community in reentry programming offers great promise for community building.

Finally, perhaps most relevant to the community domain in restorative policing is the contribution by Hines and Bazemore. In this account of the first author's experience in implementing and expanding what is now one of the more longstanding police-based restorative conferencing programs in the USA, the authors describe how Hines was able to strike a vitally important agreement with the local prosecutor that allowed the police department to choose the cases they wanted to divert into the conferencing program. Effectively this agreement meant that the program was able to include a significantly greater portion of more chronic and serious young offenders than is typical of conferencing in the USA (e.g., a rate of 75% felony referrals in a recent year). Taking the program to the next level, and sustaining what was already a high level of commitment within the department and county criminal justice system, has meant expanding community involvement implemented in recent years through a variety of uses of volunteers. Most notably, moving the program forward meant beginning to pay attention to often serendipitous incidents of community building as outcomes of restorative group conferences. This in turn, led to a more strategic focus on maximizing opportunities to use these processes both to build trust and relationships, as well as competencies in community groups and citizens for exercising informal social control. Future learning from this case study should be based on examination of the extent to which more strategic efforts to increase community capacity (rather than simply program capacity) become the true key to the sustainability of restorative policing.

SUMMARY

Restorative policing appears to represent the next logical step in community policing and police reform generally. The restorative justice model offers both new tools and new principles of intervention that assist police in the tasks of engaging community, forming meaningful partnerships, and building community capacity.

Although there have been many success stories in the short history of restorative policing, challenges to implementation abound. Effective, principled implementation of restorative policing depends on a holistic, systemic vision that seeks to incorporate restorative justice principles in all aspects of policing. Goals for this systemic vision include developing restorative resolutions to crime and harm to the greatest extent possible, and to promote community ownership of crime and conflict.

As case studies generalizable to other efforts to implement community policing, the papers in this issue move us closer to effective strategies for implementation of restorative policing. They also provide practical examples of the promises and challenges presented by these promising approaches.

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