Preliminary Conclusions

Vermont is strong in its capacity for Restorative Justice. We are strong because our communities and our sense of interdependence create a citizenry willing to participate and engage with one another in solving tough problems.

We have the foundations for expanding the application of restorative justice principles and practices across the system of justice. The history over twenty years of experiment and study has demonstrated both efficacy and citizen approval.

There is substantive agreement across the existing programs on principle, purpose, vision and process.

There is substantive agreement on the need to more fully integrate restorative justice practice across the structure of our criminal justice system, providing decision-makers in law enforcement, prosecution, judiciary, and human services with viable alternative community mechanisms for encouraging offenders to be accountable, ensuring the public safety, and reducing cost.

There is also substantive agreement on the need for the establishment of a statewide restorative justice organization, integrating current networks and program components, and providing a forum for development.

There is agreement on the need to maintain the local control of neighborhood justice, while recognizing the need for statewide uniformity of the administration of justice.

There is agreement on the need for standards for training and education for community members, as well as the need for common procedures for referral.

There is agreement on the potential for expansion of restorative justice practices to provide resolution for conflicts that are not criminal, in our schools, in our workplaces, and in our neighborhoods.
Sequential Intercept Model in Vermont With Recommended Restorative Justice Opportunities

Point 0: Community Capacity
- RJ in schools
- Restorative practices embedded in government systems
- Community mediation programs
- Conflict skills training at schools, libraries, churches, etc.

Point 1: Local Law Enforcement/Community
- Police-provided restorative intervention
- Mediation for non-criminal conflict
- RJ process to be completed in lieu of citation

Point 2: Pre-Arraignment
- RJ process to be completed in lieu of charge
- RJ programs help person develop plan to present at arraignment

Point 3: Pre-Trial Services
- Defendant presents plan at arraignment
- RJ process to be completed in lieu of prosecution

Point 4: Sentencing and Disposition
- RJ process for defendant to help craft plea or in lieu of conviction—referred at any point defendant is willing
- Sentence is to complete RJ process
- Post adjudicated—RJ process to determine sentence
- RJ process in addition to or to reduce sanctions

Point 5: Offender Reentry Community Support Programs
- RJ to divert from incarceration
- RJ process to resolve violations of probation
- RJ based reentry program to facilitate reintegration

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