

## **Community Justice korero @ Edgar Cahn Open Space**

Present: Teena, Annie, Chantal, Dave, Jocelyn, Paddy, Lucy, Sarah

Annie and Chantal are involved with the Community Justice Panel, which is an alternative to the court system for low level offenders. The “trial” takes place in a non-court setting and the “jury” are community members. They would love to try inviting people who have been through the process themselves. This may solve the issue of the Community Justice Panel often not reflecting the age or ethnicity of the offender.

Paddy works for a Not-For-Profit Trust and has worked with youth for 30 years, including youth offenders (some at more serious level of offending). Two years ago the Trust he works for partnered with the Corrections Department to work with youth offenders 18-24 years old.

Dave is from the Tindall Foundation and thought the idea of youth offenders on juries sounded worth exploring further. The Tindall Foundation has linked up with Youth Development agencies and youth court initiatives and has connections with some judge.

Lucy is from Bridge to Rocks Timebank and is moving to Ashburton soon. This topic really resonated with her as she sees it as a way of communities solving their own problems. Would be interested in seeing how it could work in Ashburton.

Jocelyn talked about a programme where the CCC youth council is working with youth in the prison system.

Discussion: It would be empowering for youth to be on panels or juries and allow them to be decision makers rather than always having decisions made for them. It was also discussed how we need to somehow integrate responsibility into choices. It lets the offender know that people trust them and know they have knowledge that would be useful for other offenders.

Problems with current justice system: it fosters dependency, it is expensive and only allows a brief glimpse at the offender.

Actions: For the Community Justice Panel offenders who have completed their sentence could perhaps first sit in the observers seat before being invited onto a panel and a mentoring programme could be built into it. Encourage schools to take it on as a way of “disciplining” students.

Resources: Celia Lashlie’s Book “He’ll be ok”.

A.S Neill “Summerhill School”

Restorative Justice system used at Tamariki School in Woolston and other schools.