

# Restorative Approaches in Youth Justice – is there space for FGC's?

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When young people offend it causes a multiple of fractures in their relationships on individual, family, community, social and political levels.

Restorative approaches were introduced into youth justice intervention in the UK initially in the Youth Justice and Evidence Act 1999 with a focus on 'repairing harm' with the communities and victims of offences.

Typically this was in the remit of approaches at the time as being being 'tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime' (Blair, 1999) using an individual-reformist approach (Payne 2014 ).

Contextual safeguarding approaches encourages a broader view of the causes of behaviours young people might display. Similarly, Johns et al (2017) advocate for an ecological approach when working with young people who offend which is much more aligned to the ethos and value base of FGC's.

So, what does the research say about using the FGC model when working with young people who offend?

McKenzie (2002) found in their Hampshire Project of using FGC's as a restorative approach, families felt empowered, in what had previously been typically disempowering processes in the youth justice setting.

Mutter et al (2008) reflected on the use of FGC's in restorative approaches with emphasis on the importance of the 'private family time' element, often missing from other RJ approaches.

Henry et al (2014) used a case study approach to identify that approaches which combine the control (accountability) and care (well-being) involving young people and their families are more likely to engage young people and reduce re-offending.

Winokur et al (2013) concluded that family focused resettlement services can help to re-engage the family and there is evidence that they can successfully reduce reoffending.

Adler et al (2016) concluded that restorative approaches were more likely to have positive impact on re-offending rates than punishment orientated approaches



## Addressing the fractures?



Is there benefit in using FGC's in youth justice intervention more?

In October 2019 the Criminal Justice Youth Inspection Report was published citing that nearly 65% of young people leaving custody go on to re-offend. The recommendation being that more planning for release and re-integration needs to take place.

What are the benefits and challenges of using an FGC approach when working with young people who offend?

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