



V.O.I.C.E. - Victim-Offender Impact Competency Education

Purpose:

Participation in VOICE will significantly impact the perspective of juvenile offenders as they reflect on the criminal offense they have committed. Through VOICE, offenders come to take personal responsibility for the harm caused by their offense and find meaningful ways to make amends.

Successful Completion of the VOICE class will enable offenders to:

- Move from a stance of feeling victimized by the community's response to their offense, to an understanding that they are personally responsible for their actions and the consequences of those actions, including the obligation to make amends for the harm caused.
- Verbally present a full account of the criminal offense they committed
- Reduce or eliminate thinking errors when they speak about their offense
- Identify thinking errors when they hear them
- State how using thinking errors, when used to explain a crime, is an avoidance of personal responsibility
- State specific impacts or feelings victims may experience as a result of the offense
- Identify specific people harmed by their offense and state how these people may have been harmed
- State reasons they have an obligation to make amends to their victims and the broader community

V.O.I.C.E. Training Outline

[3 hours]

- I. Introduction
 - a. Pre-Survey and Nametags
 - b. Read and sign class expectations as a group
 - c. Icebreaker: Tell a neighbor about something positive that you like to do. Then, introduce your neighbor and tell the group what they like to do.
 - d. Introductory handouts
 1. What is Restorative Justice?
 2. Purpose of VOICE
 3. What you can get out of VOICE
- II. Taking Responsibility
 - a. Introductions: Everyone says their name, age, crime committed
 - b. Choices/Needs (worksheet): We have many choices about how to get our needs met, and our choices can have a positive or negative consequences.
 - c. Attitudes→Behavior→Consequences
 - d. Thinking Errors (H, I)
 - i. Introduce thinking errors
 - ii. Discuss +/- of using thinking errors
 - iii. Distribute handout and explain
 - iv. Role Play/Identify thinking errors
 - v. *Thinking errors worksheet is done in class—students identify their own thinking errors.*
- III. Impact
 - a. Laws and the community exercise
 - b. Impact vignette: explores the “ripple effect” of a crime and identify the impact on the victim and community
 - c. Individual impact: each youth see how their individual crime has affected many others
 - d. Positive Impact: shows that positive actions have lots of positive impact too.
- IV. Making Amends
 - a. Making things right exercise and worksheet: demonstrates the importance of making things right for the victim, community, and the offender, and to find ideas for doing so
- V. Closing
 - a. Review/Wrap-up Worksheet
 - b. Responsibility letter is assigned as homework: This can be returned for feedback until it is free of thinking errors. This is required and must be returned to the DRC for completion of the class.
 - c. Closing circle/affirmations
 - d. Post-Survey