

Information for Victims of Crime Committed by Young People in the South Gloucestershire Area

The 1998 Crime and Disorder Act made significant changes to the Youth Justice system, the two most important changes being the setting up of Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) and giving the victims of crime a chance to be heard.

The South Gloucestershire Youth Offending Team consists of a partnership between Police, Social Care and Health, Probation, Education, Health and voluntary agencies.

Our aim is to prevent and reduce offending by young people in our area and we believe that the best way to do this is by ensuring that young people understand the harm their behaviour has caused, take responsibility for their actions and attempt to make amends to the victim and/or the community.

What has this got to do with me?

The crime you experienced may have left you with many questions and feelings that do not easily go away. In our experience victims of crime often want to know the answers to questions like:

- Why did it happen to me?
- Does the young person realise the harm caused?
- Is it going to happen again?
- What sort of person would do this?
- What does their family think of their behaviour?

Letting the young person know how you feel about what they did and how it affected you will help them face up to the consequences of their behaviour and can help reduce the chance of them committing further offences.

Also, taking part in this scheme could play a part in helping you come to terms with the harm you have suffered. We also expect the young person to take action to make amends for the harm they have caused.

Victims of crime who decide to take part will have their needs and wishes taken into account and will be fully supported in any choices they make. Participation in the scheme is completely voluntary.

How could this be done?

There are a number of ways in which you may choose to take part in the scheme:

- Receiving a letter of apology from the young person.
- Attending a victim/offender conference where you would have the opportunity to ask questions of the young person and let them know directly how the offence affected you.
- If you do not wish to meet with the offender, you could choose to have your views passed on by one of our workers.
- You may wish to consider work for the young person to carry out on your behalf or for the local community.

What will happen next?

A member of the Youth Offending Team may contact you to let you know what is happening to the young person and to discuss any involvement you may wish to have.

If you have any questions or concerns about anything contained in this page; or if you require further information please contact the Youth Offending Team during office hours, and ask for the Restorative Justice Officer or the Duty Officer.

Contact

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