



2010 ANNUAL REPORT



2010 At a Glance

2010 shall be considered a year of positive change and a year in which CERA solidified its name as a leader in restorative practices in the community. With a clear strategic vision in sight the Society practiced and promoted the immensely effective principles of restorative justice. As a result the concept of restorative justice was welcomed by individuals and their communities, which in turn has not only dignified the great work the Society does, but also made communities safer, more peaceful and harmonious.

With the momentum of the positive work that the Society has done over the past decade, in addition to components of mediation, conferencing, and education in which CERA has carved a niche in, we were able to branch out into new territory and participate in innovative activities aimed at building restorative justice regionally. With the dedication of staff, volunteers and Board of Directors, CERA was able to affirm its position as a leader of restorative justice in the community.

The work of CERA would not be possible without the support of the funders and community partners. The staunch assistance from the Cities and Municipalities that provides the foundation for our services was confirmed and validated. The Police Departments and Crown's collaboration was unwavering and greatly appreciated. Their support provided the Society with renewed optimism and the opportunity to introduce new objectives.

Like each year, the stories of victims, offenders and all those involved in the resolution process exemplified the greatest reward for the Society. Seeing relationships repaired, victims having the opportunity to heal, and offenders choosing a better future, all played a fundamental role in encouraging and igniting a new energy in the Society; confirming that our work is of immense value.

Marjorie Staal
Chair, Board of Directors

Gurinder Mann
Executive Director

Overview and Accomplishments

CERA saw the departure of some outstanding individuals who dedicated commitment and energy to the operations of the Society. From the Board of Directors, we said farewell to Joel Chan, Jeff Sawers and Maxine Wilson. CERA also said goodbye to Dianne Archer, former Chair and Interim Executive Director of the Society. Following their departure, CERA was privileged to welcome Marjorie Staal, Jasmine McGinn, Rob Behrouzian, Saeid Zahoubion, and Lisa Wolfe as new members on the Board of Directors. Gurinder Mann was hired as the new Executive Director of the Society.

CERA was proud to perform as the Co-Chair for the spring 2010 Provincial Restorative Justice Conference. British Columbians throughout the Province came to attend, and it was an invaluable opportunity to inform the public on the benefits of Restorative Justice.

Funding from all Municipalities served, which include Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, New Westminster, Anmore, and Belcarra validated the financial stability and valuable services of the Society. Furthermore, CERA confirmed funding from private funders such as Coast Capital Savings and CIBC whom demonstrated their commitment to the community and the principles of restorative justice.

A comprehensive external evaluation of the Community Youth Justice Program was conducted with the aim of gathering quantitative and empirical evidence on the effectiveness of the program. The evaluation illustrated outstanding results on the efficiency and effectiveness of the program.

The Board of Directors also had an external evaluation of the organization conducted to determine any recommendations on how to improve the workings of the organization, in addition to reviving the strategic plan.

Our Program Manager, Gerry Baragar, sat as a consultant on behalf of CERA guiding the formation of "Canadian Restorative Justice Consortium."

During February, 2010, two academics from Japan were hosted by CERA. This allowed the Society to have the opportunity to share our practices, principles and vision.

The relationship with the School District was reinforced as the existence of CERA principles and programs expanded further throughout the School District. This allowed CERA to continue to educate children and youth on effective conflict resolution approaches which in turn encourage a school environment free from bullying and violence.

CERA participates in the quarterly Lower Mainland-Fraser Valley Restorative Justice Visioning Committee. This committee was started in March 2010. CERA now serves as the host agency with meetings at our facility.

2010 was a year in which CERA strengthened its connections with Post Secondary Institutions. Besides our involvement in their presentations, the Society welcomed a combined total of ten students from Kwantlen University College and Simon Fraser University, who came to CERA to gain knowledge of restorative justice and have the opportunity of job shadowing.

Programs

Our programs are well established throughout the communities we serve. The staff has devoted countless hours to promoting the advantages of restorative justice. Its results have justified itself as a truly successful method of justice, one that not only builds more peaceful and harmonious communities, but allows courts to free themselves of cases that can be both time consuming and costly in nature.

Community Youth Justice Program (CYJP)

The CYJP accepts referrals from both police and Crown Counsel on matters relating to youth offences. Based on restorative justice principles, our program provides a viable and effective alternative to the court system for offences committed by youth. We use trained volunteer facilitators and a resolution conference model to involve all parties in processes to 'right the wrong'.

2010 CYJP Activity

- The CYJP completed 2010 with 38 referrals; which was a 15% increase from the previous year.
- The most common referrals were: theft and fraud, followed by threats of harm.
- The CYJP currently has 13 active and committed volunteer facilitators who lead restorative conferences under the supervision of the Program Manager.

Key Findings in Comprehensive Evaluation of CYJP based on data from 2000 - 2009

When participants were asked, on a scale of one through 10, how satisfied they felt about the restorative conference, 81.8% participants answered an "8" or above indicating they were satisfied with the process. Of the remaining, no one answered below a "7."

Participants were overwhelmingly satisfied with the outcome and agreement of their restorative process as indicated by 91% of participants answering an "8" or higher.

95.5% of participants ranked their satisfaction with their facilitators as an "8" or higher.

Participants were asked if they would recommend an RJ process to others. 90.9% of people said that they would.

Empowering YOUth (EY) Program

Piloted in 2006 – 2007, Empowering Youth is a joint initiative between CERA and School District 43 to train and support students in the use of restorative justice principles. As an effective alternative to traditional discipline practices, restorative justice builds internal capacity within schools by equipping students with foundational life skills in conflict/dispute resolution and effective problem solving.

Through two locally designed curriculums (Talking Peace – designed for elementary students and Conversation Peace – designed for middle and secondary students), Empowering Youth equips students with skills in conflict resolution and empowers them to be actively involved as peer mediators in assisting fellow students in handling school conflicts in peaceful ways.

2010 Empowering YOUth (EY) Activity

- From 2009 to 2010, Empowering YOUth trained 124 students to be peer mediators, 24% above our target.
- In addition to educating students on restorative justice principles, 34 members of School District 43 Staff were trained in mediation, including teachers and principal.
- Over the year, the Empowering YOUth provided training in 8 Elementary, Middle, and Secondary Schools throughout School District 43.
- The vast success of the program lead to requests from School Administrators to incorporate the mediation process as an alternative to school suspensions.
- Coast Capital Savings made a generous donation to the program of \$10,000.

The collaboration between all staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, funders, referring partners, and community members allowed 2010 to become a year of growth, and a year in which the organization experienced significant development. CERA's efforts supported the concept of restorative justice becoming ever more visible in the surrounding communities. Restorative justice has proven itself as being an effective, valuable, and successful form of justice that addresses the harm done from many perspectives.

Our momentum and optimism allows us to aim to further expand our programs and aspire for the implementation of newer and more innovative approaches to incorporating restorative justice into the communities. We will continue to support victims, empower those who have been wronged, encourage offenders to take accountability, and commit ourselves to building peaceful communities.