

# Goffstown Area Juvenile Court Diversion Program

## Crispin's House Coalition for Youth

### Apology Letter Guidelines

You've been asked to write a letter of apology as a result of your inappropriate or unlawful behavior. These guidelines are designed to help you think clearly about what you've done and how it may have hurt others. Your goal is to develop a personal, sincere and honest apology. **To be acceptable to the Diversion Board, your letter, at a minimum, must:**

1. **Admit to your offense.** First things first, don't try to squirm out of this or to minimize what you did. Admit it and move on.
2. **Consider the feelings of the person(s) you affected.** Put yourself in their shoes. How would you feel if this happened to you? Would you be afraid? Would you be sad? Would you feel bad? Let them know that you would feel this way too.
3. **Consider the impact of your actions.** Include some of the ways you know you affected others. Maybe others were hurt besides just one person. Include your thoughts about "the big picture" of your actions and how they injured or affected everyone.
4. **Explain how your life will change for the better.** It is the goal of the Juvenile Diversion Program to turn this offense in a positive direction for you, and you should want this as well. Write about the changes you plan to make and what will be better from now on.
5. **Prove it won't happen again.** It is very important that you admit you were wrong, and even more important that you learn from your mistakes. Make a plan to move forward. List the steps you will take to make good changes so the person(s) you affected will feel like you're taking responsibility for your actions and turned things around.
6. **Hand written letters are best.** They show that you took personal time to begin the healing process. A good letter is at least a page long. **If this letter is to your parent(s) or guardian it must be read to them.**

**If you have any questions or need help with your apology letter, please call Crispin's House Coalition for Youth at 497-3499.**