



If you would like to learn more about CCJ, become a volunteer, or make a donation; access our website at www.centerforcommunityjustice.org. You may also contact us to discuss Planned Giving! Please feel free to get in touch with us by mail or phone, using our contact information below:



121 South Third Street
Elkhart, IN 46516
Phone (574)295-6149
Fax: (574)522-6685

Through its various programs, CCJ served over 4,500 people in 2009-10. To assist CCJ in continuing to promote and operate community based services, please consider making a contribution, which is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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Contributions: \$ _____ Frequency (Choose One): **One-time Monthly Weekly**
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Thank you for your Contribution

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Would You Like To Share Your Story?

Are you a past employee, volunteer, client or victim that has a story about your experience with CCJ that you would like to share? We would love to hear from you. Please contact us:
CCJ
121 South 3rd Street
Elkhart, IN 46516
bwelles@centerforcommunityjustice.org

Welcome to the world **Mason James Sauder Neff**. Born January 9, 2011 weighing 7lbs 5 oz , 18 1/2 inches. Proud parents Jim and Kelly Neff and big brother Connor. Kelly is a caseworker for our Victim Offender Reconciliation Program and Program Coordinator for Community Mediation Program.



Find CCJ on:



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Mission Statement

The Center for Community Justice serves Elkhart County by providing programs, based on the principles of Restorative Justice, which strengthen community safety, provide support and compensation for victims, aid in the restoration of offenders, and promote reconciliation among victims, offenders and the community.

Community Service Restitution Program & School Suspension Program

The School Suspension Program (SSP) has been a program at the Center for Community Justice since the fall of 2004. The need to give youth a meaningful experience during the time that they are suspended or expelled from school became the motivation for starting the program. At that time we decided to utilize Community Service Restitution as an alternative for youth, rather than doing nothing during the time that they are suspended or expelled from school. We worked with the probation department and the juvenile magistrate, to determine how this project could benefit juveniles who are in the Elkhart County justice system. As a result of these discussions the SSP program was begun. It was set up so that the probation officer can require them to perform six hours of community service for every day they are suspended or expelled from school. The SSP program has had 47 students referred to CCJ thus far this year. We have also increased our client referral sources to include Concord High School, Concord Intermediate School and Baugo Elementary School. We have expanded our worksites to include Voice Ministries, Breath of Life Church as well as Susanna's Kitchen. This work has been a positive influence in the Elkhart community by providing valuable assistance to the worksites but most importantly in giving youth an opportunity to give something back to the community. We would be pleased to speak with you about how you can be involved making sure that this program can continue to grow.

Victim Offender Reconciliation Program

Between July 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010

- 146 restitution contracts have been signed.
- 81% of restitution contracts signed through VORP have been closed successfully.
- VORP staff facilitated \$60,219 in restitution to victims.
- VORP facilitated 38 face-to-face meetings between victims and offenders.
- 91% of offenders reported that after their participation, they have a better understanding of how the victim was affected by the crime.
- 90% of offenders reported that VORP provided them the opportunity to make things right.



Some Offenders who participated with VORP have said:

"Thank you for your understanding in regards to this case. Meeting eye-to-eye with the victim was of great beneficial value to me, and I know that I've become a more responsible person after this. Again, thank you for all you've done." (18yo offender)

"I'm just glad that I have a chance to do the right thing now. I'm wanting to learn from my mistakes so I can have something to teach my daughter in the future." (23yo offender)

Some Victims who have participated with VORP have said:

"This is the first crime committed to us as a small business that will actually (hopefully) result in full financial restitution. We have been in business for 37 years and had numerous small thefts. If the criminal was caught, the crime was usually plea bargained away to he was sentenced for a bigger crime [and not held responsible for the theft]. We are very happy for your VORP and hope to see restitution in full in the future." (59yo victim)

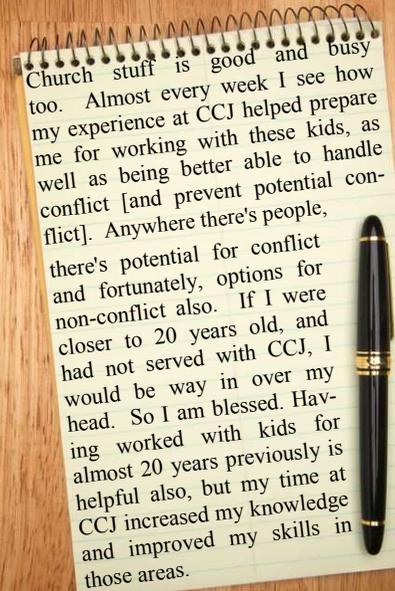
"This program seems to be very effective. I was an officer who pursued the offender, so I don't really see myself as a victim, but even in my case, it helped to have the offender apologize to me and explain why he did what he did. If I was a true victim of a crime, I think it would have helped enormously and hopefully it would give the victim a face and personality that would hopefully prevent the offender from committing the crime again." (27 y/o police officer)

"Restitution was important for offender's accountability. It assists us in paying for repairs that are not budgeted." (Chief Police Officer)

Family Mediation Program

Life is often stressful and challenging, placing strain on families. The strain may cause conflict in family relationships, possibly breaking the family apart. This is often a crisis for the family members, including children, moms, dads, siblings and grandparents. **Mediation** provides an opportunity for parents or guardians to openly address concerns and issues with one another in the presence of a professional neutral party, a mediator. The participants have the opportunity to construct an agreement that is livable, realistic and reflective of their mutual desire to protect and nurture their children. Contact Center for Community Justice if you know of anyone who may benefit from these service. Call (574) 295-6149 Ext. 200 and ask for Brittany.

A Word From Jeff Fater!



Church stuff is good and busy too. Almost every week I see how my experience at CCJ helped prepare me for working with these kids, as well as being better able to handle conflict [and prevent potential conflict]. Anywhere there's people, there's potential for conflict and fortunately, options for non-conflict also. If I were closer to 20 years old, and had not served with CCJ, I would be way in over my head. So I am blessed. Having worked with kids for almost 20 years previously is helpful also, but my time at CCJ increased my knowledge and improved my skills in those areas.

Former CCJ Employee

Connie Caicerros (CCJ VORP Coordinator) has become a member of the Advisory Board at Harrison College. The college's mission is: Building on a legacy of service since 1902, we are advocates of education dedicated to excellence in higher learning. We collaborate with students, staff, faculty, and our community to deliver student-centered education and prepare students for careers that positively impact society, both locally and globally. They have 12 campuses across the state of Indiana, one campus in Ohio, plus Online Studies and The Chef's Academy. The offer Bachelors, Associates, Certificates and Diplomas.



News From Notre Dame

On January 28, 2011, we had the opportunity to present about ways restorative justice can work within the criminal justice system to Notre Dame Law students taking a class on Criminal Justice Policy-Restorative Justice. The class professor, Susan Sharpe is Notre Dame's new advisor on Restorative Justice at the University of Notre Dame. Susan works with both the Center for Social Concerns and the Law School and has worked in the restorative justice field in Canada and in Seattle. She brings great experience to her work. Susan is the author of many writings, including the book Restorative Justice: A Vision of Healing and Change.

Randy Yohn shared his personal story with the class, as the first victim in the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP). Connie Caicerros led a discussion about ways in which defense and prosecuting attorneys can work with restorative justice programs. The class and CCJ felt honored to work together and process ways in which restorative justice can grow throughout our nation. CCJ welcomes questions from the community for more information about their many restorative justice programs, mediation trainings, and how the community can continue to support the agency.

Counselor's Corner

You know that positive feeling you get when someone pays you a compliment or does something unexpected for you? Have you thought about paying it forward? International Pay it Forward Day is April 28, 2011. The purpose of the day is to encourage hope and love in not only communities but also the world. Very often we get wrapped up in our worlds; taking the kids to school, a cumbersome to do list at work, etc. Think about a time when someone, even a complete stranger, did something to brighten your day. It could be as simple as a smile, holding the door, or even buying your cup of coffee. By paying it forward we are able to step out of our individual busy worlds and reconnect with others, even if in a very simple way. You never know when your small act of kindness may brighten another's day.