



THE TALKING PIECE

You're Hired!

We've all seen the boardroom scene of *The Apprentice* where tycoon Donald Trump declares, "You're fired!" to a defeated competitor. Well, here's a scene from C4RJ that ends very differently.

Anna had risen to a level of trust within her youth club. The club's leader, Ned, invited Anna to staff the canteen where she managed inventory and cash. Later, it became clear that she was pocketing cash and snacks for herself and to share with friends to win favor. Ned was disappointed but didn't want this mistake to mar Anna's life forever. He talked with the local police and the case came to C4RJ.

During the restorative justice process, Ned said that Anna's actions had been a betrayal. Her mother said she was crestfallen to learn how her parenting had failed so miserably; she worried that Anna would be kicked out of the club. The police officer assured her that, while this was a big mistake, Anna had a chance to make right. Anna felt ashamed but was eager to learn how she could make it up to everyone. Her repair included paying Ned back and interviewing local shop owners about hiring practices, asking among other things, "How do you know you can trust someone?" We recently learned from Ned that Anna is "super excited" because she landed a job with one of the shop owners she'd interviewed. And Anna has been welcomed back to the youth club.

Restorative justice is often described as an effort to repair a tear in the fabric of community. As this story demonstrates, the fabric seems stronger than ever.



By the By...

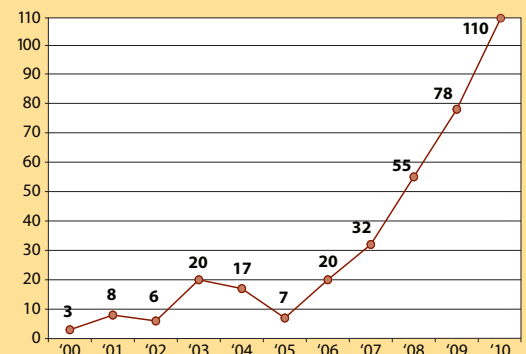
- **Restorative justice legislation** has been proposed for the Commonwealth! Sen. Jamie Eldridge of Acton submitted the draft legislation early in 2011. Stay tuned!
- Shout-outs to **Foundation for MetroWest** and **First Church Unitarian in Littleton** for supporting our response to bullying. Thanks to **Middlesex Savings Charitable Foundation** for funding a database and to **Debra's Natural Gourmet** for hosting us at the **W. Concord Give Back Day** on March 26.
- We welcome Acton resident **Charlie Kadlec** as a new C4RJ Board Member.

Up for a Challenge?

The Cahn Funds for Social Change is offering a dollar-for-dollar match up to \$6,000 for every gift to C4RJ until April 15, 2011. As Trustee Marjie Cahn reflects, "My late husband said to make sure the money makes more money, so that's what I'm trying to do. We want other people to step up to the plate." Read more at <http://c4rj.com/documents/CahnFundDescriptionFinal.pdf>. With two weeks left in the challenge, call 978.318.3447 or donate by visiting www.c4rj.com and clicking on "Giving."

By the Numbers: An Update

Our Summer 2010 *Talking Piece* charted caseload through 2009. Well, we've spiked again. In 2010, we saw 110 cases, 35% growth over 2009. With Cambridge and Everett having joined C4RJ recently, demand will continue to grow. Thanks for all the ways *you*—volunteers, donors, moral supporters—help make restorative justice possible in the region!





COMMUNITIES FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

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- RJ legislation, thank yous, new board member



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About C4RJ

Communities for Restorative Justice (C4RJ) is a community-police partnership that offers restorative justice to those affected by crime. Restorative justice recognizes that crime is a violation of people and relationships, not just a violation of law. Police refer cases to us. In the aftermath of wrongdoing, our "circle" process includes in the decision-making those affected by crime: victims, offenders, loved ones, supporters, community members, and law enforcement officials.

This newsletter, *The Talking Piece*, is named for an object (often a river stone) passed around the circle to engage individuals in the deliberations. The person holding the talking piece speaks while others listen. With this newsletter, we are passing the talking piece to you and would love to hear your views on our work. Contact us at info@c4rj.com or by calling 978.318.3447 to relay your thoughts.

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