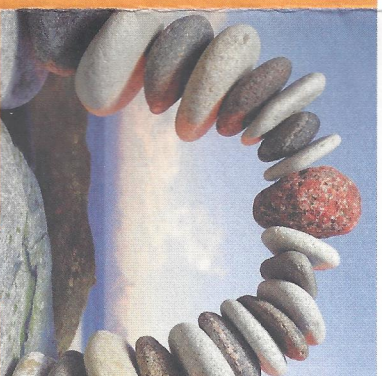
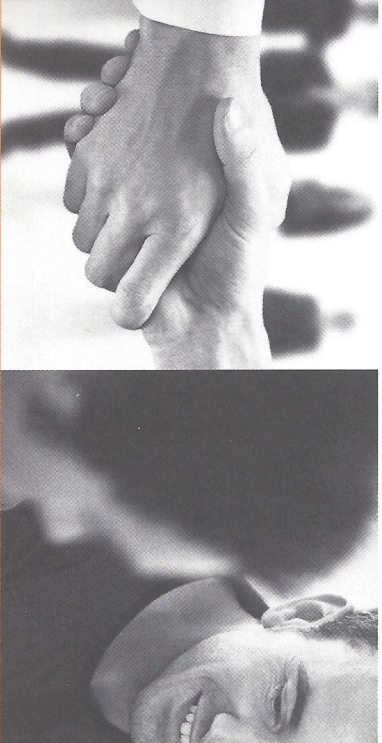


Slachtoffer in Beeld

Victim offender contact in the Netherlands



brengt slachtoffers en daders in contact

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Victim offender contact (VOC) is a mediated contact between victim and offender, which gives them the opportunity to look at the crime in a different perspective. By getting to know the consequences, motives and answers around the crime, the victim and offender may relate differently to each other and help them dealing with the consequences of the crime. The preparation and the mediation are free of charge for both parties.

Since 2007 *Slachtoffer in Beeld* is assigned by the Ministry of Security and Justice as the Dutch organisation for victim offender contact. The organisation receives by average 2000 registrations each year, mostly on initiative of the offender (75%). Most registrations come from organisations working with offenders, prisons and victim support organisations. Slachtoffer in Beeld works with more than 30 professional mediators throughout the country.

Target group

A victim offender contact is meant for anyone who has committed a crime and those who have become victims of a crime. In the case of an accident, the victim and the perpetrator can meet each other in a so called victim perpetrator contact.

A mediation between victim and offender always follows a set procedure from the beginning until the end. A victim offender contact always occurs under the guidance of a professional mediator who works for Slachtoffer in Beeld. This mediator is a neutral person who consults both victim and offender about their needs and the best way to get in contact with the other.

The actual victim offender contact can be a one on one conversation between the victim and the offender under accompaniment of a mediator. Furthermore, there is the possibility of correspondence or an exchange of messages (shuttle mediation), where the mediator transmits messages between victim and offender back and forth. Finally, a restorative conference is also an option.

Preconditions

Victim offender contact takes place under a number of important preconditions, which are the following:

Voluntariness

Victim and offender always participate fully voluntarily. Victim and offender can at all times decline to participate in the mediation.

Confidentiality

What is discussed during the mediation and in the preparatory contacts remains confidential, unless otherwise agreed between the parties.

Impartiality

The professional mediator who works for Slachtoffer in Beeld is impartial and upholds the interests of all participating parties.

Mediation in the criminal justice system

Victim offender contact, as introduced in 2007, is detached from the criminal procedures. But since its legal introduction in the Netherlands in 2012 victim offender mediation as part of the criminal justice system (VOM) is growing. VOM takes place before the trial by proposal of the public prosecutor or the judge. They are informed by means of a factual report. The factual report states whether the victim and the offender have had any contact and in what form. If both parties agree, a signed settlement agreement with more detailed information is shared. The prosecutor or judge will take into account the settlement of the mediation when deciding on a case and/or determining a verdict. All the above preconditions – voluntariness, confidentiality and impartiality – equally apply to the application of mediation in the criminal justice system. In all cases VOM is not imposed as punishment.

Information

For more information you can visit our website www.slachtofferinbeeld.nl You can also call during office days at number 0031-30 234-00 45 or write an email to: info@slachtofferinbeeld.nl