



**THE CONSENSUS
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Consensus Council Adopts LSSND Restorative Justice Program

BISMARCK — Consensus Council, a Bismarck-based nonprofit, announced a new partnership with the Restorative Justice program formerly administered by Lutheran Social Services of ND (LSSND). Consensus Council has hired former LSSND staff to continue Restorative Justice implementation and client services, absorbing the existing ND Court System contract to facilitate statewide Restorative Justice referrals.

“Consensus Council acknowledges the huge loss our state has experienced with the closure of Lutheran Social Services, yet we are honored to secure the legacy of this highly effective program,” said Ann Crews Melton, Consensus Council executive director. “Restorative practices build consensus between community members as an alternative to punitive criminal justice measures, so this program finds a natural alignment with our vision of ‘every voice at one table pursuing good.’”

Restorative Justice practices seek to restore those harmed by an offense, to encourage accountability from the person who committed the offense, and to promote safe, secure, and peaceful communities. The restorative processes developed by LSSND and now administered through Consensus Council are geared specifically for clients referred by North Dakota Juvenile Court and Division of Juvenile Services.

“We are committed to carrying on the Restorative Justice program that was built at LSSND over the course of the past 22 years,” said Joel Friesz, who formerly served as LSSND Youth Interventions director. “We look forward to this new chapter and to continuing to provide these services for youth and families across the state.”

Consensus Council, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, seeks to facilitate conversations and build agreements that empower people, transform communities, and advance the public good. Learn more about Consensus Council at agree.org.

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