

# Someone close to me has died as a result of crime:

## Dave's Story

In the early hours of July the 5<sup>th</sup> 2009. Our son Adam lost his life to a single punch, thrown by a 16 year old who was very drunk at the time. On his way home from a night out with friends. Before his night out he took us to the airport cause we were going on holiday, it was the first day of Pat's retirement. He was really looking forward to his night out, we just said, you know really "Have a good time" and he said "Enjoy your holiday" and that was the last we ever saw him alive.

You're angry, I mean, you are so angry at what happened because of who Adam was, how it happened and stupidity of the, of when we began to piece together what had happened that night and all the trivial things that over nothing, had led to him losing his life. And obviously the anger was mostly focused on the 16 year old because he was the one who had thrown the punch, he in fact had killed Adam. The traumas of the trial, it was worse than I could have imagined because, that's where you suddenly realise that as a victim you don't have any place in that procedure. I had recently heard about Restorative Justice which was being talked about, and from what I understood of it, it seemed to me basically a good idea because it seemed a classic win win situation that everybody would potentially benefit from it. I don't know how much knowing about it was behind the fact I wanted to meet him, I just very strongly wanted to meet him. I expected it to be a positive meeting, I still wanted to hear him say certain things, I wanted some reassurance about certain matters, I wanted to find out things that didn't come out in court, and I knew he could probably help me. What to him had just been a punch on a night out had turned his life upside down completely as well. He was now facing a prison sentence and he was being labelled a killer, and he was going to live with that, the consequences of that for the rest of his life. The main thing that people should realise about RJ is that it is primarily a vehicle that gives the victim a voice, if they want it. It gives them the chance to be able to say the kind of things they really want to say and it gives them the chance to say it directly to the person.