

IMPLEMENTING TEEN COURTS A RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PEER JURY GUIDE AND MANUAL



*"Saving our future, one
teen at a time"*

<https://teencourtfoundationscc.com>

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2nd Edition
2018

Dedication

This Manual is dedicated to the St. Clair County Teen and Adult Volunteers who have made the St. Clair County Teen Court a reality by **saving our future, one teen at a time.**

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LETTER FROM THE AUTHORS

The St. Clair County Teen Court operates a peer jury restorative justice model program. In November 2017, Teen Court began its fourth year of operation. During these years, The Teen Court has gone from a pilot project to a robust operation that conducts two courts, simultaneously, one Saturday morning each month. Along the way, we have adopted forms, procedures, manuals, training agendas and informational brochures. Since we receive requests for some or all of these materials, we decided to compile and share, in book and electronic form, all our materials, so that other communities and, especially, other teens, could benefit from our efforts. We strongly recommend that you begin your teen court with a pilot project that includes an evaluation.

Teen Court, its development and its ongoing operation, has truly been a work of love. St. Clair County Teen Court is a project of the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council and has received federal funds. Without the support of the Council and State's Attorney, Brendan Kelly and his excellent team of assistants, St. Clair County Teen Court would not be a reality. Our Teen Court is located in two classrooms at the St. Clair County Jail. Without the continued support of Sheriff Rick Watson and his deputies, Teen Court could not have grown and flourished. We are grateful for their support and encouragement.

All included manuals and forms can easily be modified to fit your jurisdiction. For simplicity, we have often retained St. Clair County in the forms as well as our locations and personnel. These forms can be modified for utilization in your community by inserting your respective jurisdiction and agencies. The terms Youth Court and Teen Court are used interchangeably in many of our materials.

We sincerely hope that access to our program, forms, and procedures will encourage and assist communities in creating and providing Teen Courts, thereby helping to **save our future, one teen at a time.**

Judge (Ret.) Annette Eckert, St. Clair County Teen Court Director

Zabelle Norsigian Vartanian, St. Clair County Teen Court Administrator

ST CLAIR COUNTY TEEN COURT 2018

ST. CLAIR COUNTY



TEEN COURT
2018

Annual Evaluation of St. Clair County Teen Court

There will be an ongoing objective and subjective evaluation of Teen Court. Entry and exit interviews will be conducted with randomly selected youth, parents, and guardians. Follow-up interviews will be conducted every six months.

Statistics will be gathered regarding recidivism and any charges filed against the defendants. These will be compared to overall recidivism statistics in the County, the State, and the nation. Our goal is less than 10% recidivism. A written annual report will be provided by our teen court evaluator and available to the public.

St. Clair County Teen Court Summary

The St. Clair County Teen Court program represents an alternative approach to juvenile justice that holds the first-time non-violent youth offenders accountable through remedies imposed by their peers. The St. Clair County Teen Court emphasizes accountability and responsibility rather than traditional punitive measures, thereby focusing on balance and restorative justice which is the policy statement of the Illinois Juvenile Court Act. (705 ILCS 405/5-101) The Illinois Juvenile Court Act authorizes Teen Courts (705 ILCS 405/5-315 and 705 ILCS 405/5-301) and provides a funding mechanism 55 ILCS 5/5-1101. The St. Clair County Teen Court will operate under the peer jury model and will be a collaborative effort by the St. Clair County Sheriff's Office, the St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office and the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council.

St. Clair Teen Court Goals

- A peer jury model program that uses adult and youth volunteers will be implemented.
- Referred teens will go to Teen Court within 30 days of a referral, after a plea of guilty, and written consent (and parental/guardian consent also) to Teen Court participation. The youth will begin his or her remedies within 14 days of the hearing and complete it within 90 days. A review/program report shall be presented to the Teen Court within 90 days after the hearing.
- Remedies by the Peer Jury may include:
 - Letter of apology to victims or oral apology
 - Community service
 - Youth peer jury duty
 - Essays
 - Vision Board
 - Counseling
 - Read a book and write an essay about what you learned
 - Attend Teen Strong at the YMCA with other peer jurors and work out with mentors provided by the YMCA
 - Interview an inmate and write an essay about what you learned
 - Other creative remedies
- Successful completion of the remedies will result in charges not being filed and no finding of delinquency or conviction. If the sentence is not completed, the case will be turned over to the St. Clair County State's Attorney for filing of the charge and prosecution. Participants who successfully complete the remedies will receive a certificate of completion and attend a graduation ceremony.
- The Teen Court program seeks to make youths accountable for their mistakes without branding them with a finding of delinquency, so long as the youth completes the remedies imposed by his/her peers.

- The Teen Court also seeks to educate and motivate youth volunteers and juries, increasing their respect for the community, each other, law enforcement and the legal system.
- Teen Court seeks to be a prevention program for Teen Court respondents and Teen Court volunteers.

Process

Youth is stopped by a law enforcement officer, and the case is referred to the State's Attorney's Office. Youth is charged with a non-violent misdemeanor or felony offense. Youth has no offense background. Upon review, a determination is made by the State's Attorney's Office whether the youth is eligible for Teen Court. If eligible, the case is then referred to the Teen Court Administrator

1. Administrator contacts youth and parent and makes appointment for interview.
2. Administrator reviews the process of Teen Court with youth and parent.
3. Youth pleads guilty to offense charge (written form).
4. Youth accepts Teen Court.
5. Youth signs consent to participate in Teen Court.
6. Parent/guardian signs consent.
7. Teen is given Teen Court date at St. Clair County Sheriff's Department in courtroom.
8. Youth has appearance within 45 days of referral.
9. Peer Jury imposes remedies after peer jury hearing.
10. Remedies completed/reviewed within 90 days of the hearing.
11. No charge is filed with successful completion and no finding of delinquency. If remedies are not completed, charge is sent to St. Clair County State's Attorney for prosecution.

PLEA AND CONSENT FORM

I, _____ age _____, having been charged with the offense of _____, and having been offered a referral to Teen Court, hereby plead guilty to above-stated offense and request the opportunity to appear in Teen Court on _____ (court date). I understand that successful completion of any Teen Court remedies by my peers will mean no charge is filed and no finding of delinquency/guilty will be entered. I also understand that if I fail to complete the remedies, my case will be referred to the St. Clair County State's Attorney for prosecution.

I accept these conditions and request a referral to the St. Clair County Teen Court.

Teen

Print name

I, _____ (print name), parent/guardian consent and request that _____ (youth) be referred to the St. Clair County Teen Court. I understand my participation and presence and cooperation are necessary for _____ (print youth name) successful completion.

Parent/Guardian

Print name

Date

PEER JUROR PROCESS

Peer Juror Attributes:

- Be age 13 or in high school through age 17 or in the twelfth grade. Possess an interest in helping peers.
- Be committed to the peer jury – have willingness to work with police, other teens, and the community.
- Be of good character.
- Live in St. Clair County.
- No personal involvement with law enforcement within five months.
- Interest in program should be initiated by the teen with parent or guardian approval.
- Teen may be recommended to participate as a juror or have volunteered and been accepted by the Teen Court Officials.

Application for Teen Court:

Peer Juror Application Form

- Form is completed only by the teen
- Application is reviewed by Adult coordinator, in a timely manner, once applications are received
- Parent/Guardian consent is needed
- Understanding and support of the peer jury program is a must for the peer juror's parent or guardian
- Information about the program is provided so the parent or guardian may give informed consent for his/her son/daughter to participate as a peer juror.

Orientation/training of peer jurors:

Orientation/training is to include both peer jurors and their parent or guardian if such choose to attend. Give an overview of the Peer Jury Program including history and philosophy. Explain the expectations and responsibilities of peer jurors:

- Confidentiality.
- Appropriate behavior.
- Commitment to and serious nature of the program.
- Appropriate dress code.
- Peer jury process including applying the principles of restorative justice and using appropriate questioning and deliberation techniques.
- Role of police department and other involved agencies.

Appointment

- Peer jurors initially apply via their high schools and are ultimately appointed by the
- Teen Court Officials.
- An applicant must be between the ages of 13 or in high school and 17 or in the 12th grade.
- An applicant must live in St. Clair County.
- Applications are available at St. Clair County high schools.

Attendance

- Teen Court meets once each month or more often depending on the case load. Peer Jury sessions begin at 10:30 a.m. and are usually over by 2 p.m.
- It is essential that a Peer Juror attend as many meetings as possible. When jurors fail to attend, the program runs the risk of not having enough jurors to hear the docket of cases.
- If a peer juror is not able to attend a Peer Jury meeting, the juror should notify the Peer Jury coordinator or other designee as far in advance of the absence as possible.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY TEEN COURT CODE OF CONDUCT

Preamble

Youth Court membership is a privilege, not a right. Privileges can be lost if you fail to act in a responsible manner and within the confines of the law. As a youth court member, you are expected to serve as a role model for your peers at all times. You therefore must maintain high standards of conduct and encourage other members to do the same. You should be temperate and dignified and refrain from all illegal and morally reprehensible conduct. Because of your position, even minor violations of law may tend to lessen public confidence in the entire teen court program. Since Teen Court is designed to promote law-abiding behavior, your behavior must be consistent with that purpose.

Rules of Conduct

As a member of teen court, you must abide by the following rules:

1. You must not engage in illegal conduct. Volunteers must be offense free for five months and all cases must have a final disposition.
2. You must not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation.
3. You must not knowingly use perjured or false testimony or statements.
4. You must reveal any false statements, testimony or other evidence used, or any other fraud perpetrated, in any Teen Court hearing.
5. You must maintain the confidentiality of the Teen Court proceedings.
6. You must participate free of bias or prejudice toward any other person's age, race, sex, religion, national origin or disability.
7. You must appear promptly and prepared for all Teen Court training sessions and court appearances, unless excused.
8. You, as a teen court member, must dress appropriately when participating in a youth court proceeding.

9. You must perform your role as effectively and competently as possible.
10. You must treat with courtesy and consideration all persons involved in teen court proceedings.
11. You must not let any outside influence, such as other members, parents, fellow students or your own self-interest, affect your actions and decisions in how to proceed.
12. You must notify the teen court director immediately if you are arrested, convicted of a crime, or suspended from school.
13. You must report to the teen court staff or any board member, conduct of other members you believe to be in violation of these Rules of Conduct.
14. You must represent your education, training, experience, and competencies as they represent to your involvement in Teen Court.

Peer Juror Signature _____ Date _____

OATH OF CONFIDENTIALITY

I solemnly swear or affirm that I will not divulge, either by words or signs, any information about actual cases which comes to my knowledge in the course of my teen court experience and that I will keep secret all proceedings in which I am involved.

Further, I understand that if I break confidentiality by telling anyone else the names of the other youth court defendants or any other specific details of the case which may identify that teen, I will be terminated from the St. Clair County Teen Court Program.

Teen Court Peer Juror

Teen Court Volunteer

PERSONS OR ROLES IN YOUTH COURT

- The *bailiff* calls the court to order, announces the case, escorts individuals in and out of the courtroom, and closes proceedings.
- The *moderator* is an adult volunteer who acts as a judge. He/she guides the courtroom process by keeping proper courtroom decorum.
- The *jurors* question the respondent, parent, and other witnesses; they consider the evidence presented about the respondent's awareness of the harm caused all victims, witnesses' suggestions about how to repair the harm, and respondent's need for competency development and community involvement in the disposition; and they decide upon the disposition for the respondent.
- The *presiding juror*, sometimes called the jury foreperson, ensures that each juror has a chance to participate fully and fairly, and that the jury decides upon a disposition meeting restorative justice goals.
- The *parent or guardian* is required to participate in teen court with his or her child. He or she gives testimony about the respondent and makes suggestions about what the respondent needs, describes the impact of the crime or violation on the family, and makes suggestions of ways the respondent could repair the harm.
- The *respondent* is the teen who has been referred to Teen Court. The respondent must acknowledge responsibility for the crime in order to come to teen court and must accept the disposition.
- The *victim* includes each person who has been directly harmed by the respondent, the family of the respondent, and the community. Victims may testify at the hearing in person or by submitting a written statement. Sometimes the victim does not give a statement, but the peer jury members consider the impact of the respondent's actions on all the victims.
- The *witness* is anyone, including victim, parents or guardian, and respondent, who testifies during the hearing.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY YOUTH COURT
MASTER PROCEDURE

1. **Bailiff** “Everyone please rise. The Teen Court of St. Clair County is now in session, The Honorable Teen Court Moderator, _____, presiding.
2. **Moderator** enters and sits in chair.
3. **Bailiff:** “Please be seated and quiet in the courtroom.”
4. **Moderator:** “Good Morning. This is the opening session of the St. Clair County Teen Court. I want to thank each and every one of you for being here today and participating in our Teen Court.”

“The business of this court is very serious. The teens who appear before you today are guilty of the charges that have been made against them. They have violated a law of the State of Illinois and have voluntarily chosen to come before this court to have a jury of people their own age decide what sentence they should receive for their actions. Even though the teens have violated the law, they deserve your respect and attention. It takes certain courage for the teens to be here, and I am sure that if you were in their shoes, you would want a fair hearing. Therefore, everyone in the courtroom must remain quiet during and between proceedings and give his or her complete attention to what happens here. If you fail to do so, I will have to ask you to leave the courtroom.”

“I also emphasize that everything that occurs in this courtroom is to remain confidential; that particularly includes the names of the teens. If you discuss what occurs here today with persons who are not present, you might be subject to prosecution and will certainly not be permitted to continue to participate in the St. Clair County Teen Court Program.”

“I will call the case and swear in the jury.”

5. “The St. Clair County Teen Court calls case: _____ In the matter of _____

“Will the jury please rise.”

“Do you solemnly swear to listen carefully to all the evidence and testimony presented in this case, to determine a remedy which is fair, and to keep secret and confidential all said proceedings which may be held in your presence? If so, please answer, “I will.”

“Please be seated.”

6. **Moderator:** “You are here to decide an appropriate remedy for _____ . Will the respondent please rise?”

- “Does anyone on the jury know the respondent?”
- “Do each of you believe that you can make a fair determination in this case?”
- “Does the respondent accept this jury panel?”

7. **Moderator:** “”The Respondent is charged with:_____.”

The police report will be read.

(The moderator will ask the Respondent to come forward and deliver the oath to respondent.)

8. **Moderator:** “Stand and raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give is the whole truth so help you God?”

9. **Moderator** directs respondent to:

- a. Take a seat in the witness stand
- b. Explain the events in his/her own words

10. The **Moderator** will turn to the jury and ask if jurors have any questions for the respondent.

11. The **Jurors** will question the respondent and gain further insight into the circumstances surrounding the decision the respondent made that led to his/her actions. The jurors may also question family member/victims who are present in court.

12. The **moderator** then turns to the jury and states the following:

- a. “Ladies and gentlemen of the Jury, the respondent has admitted to the offense of _____. This offense, if committed by an adult, could be punishable by _____. You have heard the facts of this offense as stated in the police report, and the respondent’s testimony made before you during this hearing as well as the statements of family and witnesses. I now charge you with the duty of determining, on the basis of these facts and statements, what remedy should be imposed upon the respondent.”

13. The respondent and his/ her parent or guardian will be dismissed to the lobby pending the Peer Jury deliberation.

14. **Bailiff** will escort parent/guardian and respondent out of the courtroom for deliberation.

15. The recommendation is determined and applicable forms recommending the specific remedies are completed.
16. The respondent and his/her parent or guardian will return to the courtroom and the respondent stands while the **moderator** announces the Peer Jury's findings.
17. The **moderator** asks the respondent if he/she will have any problems in complying with the sentence. Then, if he/she desires, the moderator makes any necessary changes, signs forms and gives a copy to the respondent.
18. The respondent and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) are asked if they have any questions. If there are questions, the moderator and/ or jurors answer them.
19. **Moderator :** "Mr./Ms. _____ the members of the jury have done their duty here today. Their decision was a group decision.

Respect their decision just as you will want a respondent to respect your decision if you come back as a juror. On behalf of everyone here, I wish you good luck, we hope you will not be in any more trouble with the law."

(At this point moderator may wish to make comments about consequences of repeating this or any illegal act, what consequences may be as an adult with this offense, how lucky the client was to be referred to Teen Court, and or other appropriate comments).

20. **Moderator:** "At this time you may report to the Teen Court Coordinator or adult volunteer where your rights and obligations concerning the remedies will be explained."
21. The respondent and his/her parent or guardian are reminded of their responsibility to the court in carrying out work assignments and is sent to the administrator for further instructions.
22. **Moderator:** "Members of the jury and court personnel, thank you for the respect you have given to the respondent and the law. Please remember your duty to uphold the oath of confidentiality concerning these proceedings."
23. **Moderator:** "You are all excused."

24. The respondent leaves the courtroom and meets with a coordinator and administrator.
25. (Jurors will be asked to remain if there is a subsequent case.)

REMEDY OPTIONS IN YOUR TEEN COURT

- Community Service.
- Peer Jury Duty.
- Vision Board.
- Letter of Apology to Victims.
- Oral Apology to Victims.
- Counseling.
- Write an essay.
- Read a book and write an essay about what you learned.
- Interview an Inmate and write an Essay about what you learned.
- Attend Teen Strong at the YMCA with Peer Jurors and work out mentors.
- Other Creative Remedies.

PROCESS

SUMMARY OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY TEEN COURT ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS

I. Pre-Court Process

- A. State's Attorney's Office sends the Teen Court Administrator an Offender's Form of Offense, and the Teen Court Administrator sends copies to the Evaluator and Director
- B. Administrator sends a letter to the parents to make an appointment
- C. Parents may either:
 - 1. Respond (see below)
 - 2. No response
 - a. After two attempts, Teen Court Administrator sends Prosecution form to State's Attorney's Office as well as copies To the Evaluator and Director
 - b. No Response Form is found in Section 3

II. Response Procedure

- A. Parents and Teen come in for appointment
 - 1. An Intake Form is completed and Offender admits guilt and agrees to Teen Court
 - 2. Use "Intake Form" found in Section 3
 - 3. Parents and Offender sign Contract
 - 4. "Rules and Regulations Form" is given to Parents and Offender
 - 5. Appearance Notice with Date of Hearing is provided to Parents and Offender
- B. Teen Court Administrator sends "Hearing Form" to Director and Evaluator

III. Day of Court

- A. Case is Heard
- B. Hearing is Completed
 - 1. "Verdict Form" is completed by Moderator
 - 2. "Verdict Form" is brought to Teen Court Administrator by Teen Court Volunteer
 - 3. Parents and Offender come to teen Court Administrator and discuss the Verdict and Restorative Justice Sentence.
 - 4. Parents and Offender come to Teen Court Administrator (all 3) sign the form

5. Parents and Offender go to the Evaluator and Community Service Coordinator for demographic information collection and discussion of community service when appropriate

IV. Completion of Sentence Form

- A. Teen Court Administrator oversees completion by Offender of Restorative Justice Sentence
- B. Teen Court Administrator sends confirmation of completion to State's Attorney's Office, Evaluator, and Director

V. Certificate of Completion

- A. The Teen Court Administrator completes a certificate of completion
- B. The certificate is presented to the teen at a Teen Court Graduation which occurs monthly prior to the Teen Court session. Treats are provided.

COURT PROCESS

On the day of Teen Court, the peer jurors are requested to be at the Court 20 minutes prior to graduates and offenders arriving. This gives them an opportunity to socialize.

Approximately 15 minutes prior to graduation or court begins, the Director/Moderator calls the program to order. The number of graduates and cases are discussed. The Director/Moderator reviews with the jurors the importance of their presence and their responsibility to listen and ask questions, The Oath of Confidentiality and its importance are reviewed. The three rules of restorative justice are reviewed and discussed.

Finally, the Moderator selects a clerk, bailiff and foreperson for (her/his) courtroom.

All jurors and volunteers on duty that day are present for graduation. The graduates and family sit in the first row. Each graduate is called forward, introduced, given a certificate of completion, graduation diploma, St. Clair County Teen Court pin, congratulations and applause. The moderator then asks the teen graduate about his/her restorative justice sentence. The graduates describe what they did. The moderator then inquires about what remedy was important and what remedy will have the most long-lasting affect. A discussion generally follows. The peer jurors are interested and assisted by this information. It helps them formulate restorative justice sentences in future cases.

Graduation then concludes and the families and teens join the volunteers and peer jurors for snacks. Court resumes for hearings in approximately 15 minutes.

We have found that having graduations and celebrating them is beneficial for our graduates, teen jurors and volunteers. It is highly motivating and educational when held before our Teen Court hearings.

VOLUNTEER DUTIES AND PROCESS ON COURT DAYS

Hosts on Saturdays – One volunteer is assigned to each teen offender and family and mentors and guides them through the process on the court day and stays with the Offenders and Parents as they wait prior to the trial. One volunteer is assigned to each graduate and guides the individual through the graduation process and ceremony.

Greeter- One Volunteer acts as a greeter for those who appear for Teen Court and welcomes them. The Greeter can have the volunteers and peer jurors sign the confidentiality oath and direct jurors and teen offenders with their families to the appropriate room/person.

- A volunteer is needed to perform courtroom duties as needed.
- A volunteer takes charge of ordering and setting up for food and refreshments (muffins, pizza, bottled water, etc.).
- Volunteers are also assigned to act as couriers and runners to bring verdicts and relay information for the Teen Court Administrator, the Evaluator, and the Community Service Supervisor.

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS AT TEEN COURT

Courtroom Moderator

Court Day Overseer

Reception Hostess

Graduation Host

Graduation Escort

Courtroom Aid

Sign-In Director

Offender 1 Mentor

Offender 2 Mentor

Offender 3 Mentor

TEEN COURT FORMS

TEEN OFFENDER FORMS

TEEN COURT REFERRAL

TO: St. Clair County Teen Court Administrator
St. Clair County Teen Court Evaluator

FROM: St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office - Juvenile Division

RE: Referral of _____ to St. Clair County
Teen Court

CHARGES: _____

CASE NO: _____ -TC- _____

Attached please find the police reports relevant to this case.

September _____, 2018

St. Clair County Teen Court
300 West Main Street, Suite 5
Belleville, IL 62220

Dear _____,

The St. Clair County Teen Court has received a referral for your son/daughter, _____. This program is a volunteer program which permits your child to avoid being processed through the juvenile/criminal justice system. For your child's referral to be processed and to initiate participation in the St. Clair County Teen Court program, an intake needs to be scheduled. An intake is an interview with your child and you, the parent and/or guardian, to acquire an account or description of the offense committed in the words of your child. In order to participate in the St. Clair County Teen Court, your child must admit guilt regarding the offense in question. If your child or you choose not to participate in this program, your child's case will be returned to the St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office and may result in a formal petition or charge with the court. Please contact me at 618 _____ within 5 days of receipt of this letter to schedule your intake appointment. I look forward to meeting you and having _____ participate in our program.

Sincerely,

Zabelle N. Vartanian
St. Clair County Teen Court Administrator

NOTICE OF INVALID ADDRESS

TO: Assistant State's Attorney

FROM: Teen Court Administrator

TODAY'S DATE:

JUVENILE NAME:

The above-named minor cannot be contacted at the address and phone number listed in the police report.

Thank you,

Teen Court Administrator

TO: St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office, Juvenile Division
FROM: Zabelle Vartanian, St. Clair County Teen Court Administrator and
St. Clair County Teen Court Evaluator

Referral of _____ to St. Clair County Teen Court

CHARGE(S): _____

CASE NO: _____ TC _____

This is to advise you that, after being contacted by the St. Clair County Teen Court, the above youth/parent/guardian

_____ has failed to contact Teen Court for an appointment

_____ has declined the Teen Court referral

The above case is referred to your office for prosecution.

St. Clair County Teen Court
Confidential

Intake Form

Juvenile Name: _____ Case #: _____ T.C.# _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

School: _____ Year: _____ Grades: _____

DOB: _____ Age: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Home phone: _____ Parent/Guardian Work Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Offense(s): _____

Date occurred: _____

Comments about offense: _____

Victim Name: _____

Victim Phone Number: _____

Victim Statement: _____

In-School/Out-of-School Activities: _____

Future Plans: _____

Hobbies/Interests: _____

Do you use:

Alcohol: _____ Frequency: _____

Drugs: _____ Frequency: _____

Other: _____

300 West Main Street, Suite 5
Belleville, IL 62220
618- _____

St. Clair County Teen Court

Confidential

CONTRACT AGREEMENT

Juvenile Name: _____ Case# _____ T.C. _____

Address: _____ City _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ DOB: _____ Age _____

Offense(s): _____

Date Occurred: _____

I, _____, having been accepted as a participant in the St. Clair County Teen Court Program, hereby agree to the following:

1. I hereby admit, for the purpose of the Teen Court Program, that I have committed the offense(s) for which I have been referred to Teen Court.

2. I understand that my police reports and other report containing information regarding the offense(s) I committed will be shared and viewed by the Teen Court Coordinators only.

3. I agree to participate in the Teen Court Program, during which time the offense(s) I have committed will be held dormant and will not be charged by the St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office nor be returned to the referring source pending successful completion of the program.

4. I agree to be truthful with Teen Court Coordinators and the Teen Court Peer Jury.

5. I hereby agree to cooperate fully with and follow the instruction and guidelines of the Teen Court Program, Teen Court Staff, Teen Court Peer Jury, community service providers, and any other participants of the Teen Court Program.

6. I agree to attend all scheduled Teen Court sessions. I understand that a failure to appear in Teen Court when scheduled may result in my termination from the program and further result in the offense(s) being returned to the referring agency and/or result in being charged and prosecuted by the St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office

7. I understand that I am obligated to perform community service, pay restitution, write an essay, write an apology letter to the victims, verbally apologize to the victims, or any other resolution assigned to me by the Teen Court Peer Jury.

8. I understand that I may be terminated from the Teen Court Program if

- a. I fail to comply with any of the conditions and guidelines of the Teen Court Program.
- b. I commit any criminal offense.
- c. I request to be terminated from the program.

9. I understand that if I am terminated from the Teen Court Program, my offense(s) will be returned back to the referring agency and may result in prosecution by the St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office.

I HEREBY DECLARE THAT THIS TEEN COURT PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT HAS BEEN READ BY ME OR TO ME AND THAT I UNDERSTAND ITS REQUIREMENTS AND AGREE TO ITS CONDITIONS.

Parent/Guardian: _____

Juvenile: _____

The above statement was read to and signed by the juvenile and his or her parent/guardian. A copy was provided to them.

Teen Court Administrator: _____

Date: _____

APPEARANCE NOTICE

You, _____, are to appear before the St. Clair County Teen Court on Saturday, _____, at _____, at the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department at 700 North 5th Street, Belleville, Illinois, accompanied by a parent or guardian on the date and time scheduled by the Teen Court Administrator.

Instructions for Juvenile Offenders

- Please dress appropriately. Enclosed are the Rules and Regulations of Teen Court regarding dress, behavior, and general guidelines.
- Please bring this Appearance Notice with you to the Teen Court.
- Please check-in with the Teen Court Administrator or his/her representative.
- Juvenile Offender and parent/guardian will be seated in the appropriate waiting room to be called for trial.
- Juvenile offender and parent/guardian will be questioned regarding the offense.
- Juvenile offender and parent/guardian will be taken to a place to wait while the Teen Court Peer Jury deliberates and determines sanctions.
- Juvenile offender and parent/guardian will be summoned to the room for imposition of sanctions. Following sanctions, juvenile offender and parent/guardian will meet with Teen Court personnel to complete certain forms.
- Upon completion of sanctions, juvenile offender and parent/guardian will be required to reappear in Teen Court to report completion of sanctions.

THIS NOTICE TO APPEAR HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND RECEIVED BY JUVENILE OFFENDER AND PARENT/GUARDIAN.

Juvenile Offender

Parent/Guardian

Teen Court Administrator

St. Clair County Teen Court

RULES AND REGULATIONS OF TEEN COURT

The rules and regulations of the court are for the offenders and all other participants in the room. The most important thing regarding dress and behavior is to show respect for the proceedings at all times.

DRESS:

- Be neat and clean.
- Wear shoes.
- Wear appropriate attire (i.e. a nice shirt with a collar, sweater, blouse, dress, khakis). If jeans are worn, they must be free of tears, holes, and fit properly around the waist. Jeans that fit loosely around the hips so that underclothing shows will not be allowed.
- No gang colors or paraphernalia, no profane language or illustrations, and no alcohol, tobacco, or other drug references displayed on clothing.
- Skirts must be of an appropriate length. No "mini" skirts will be allowed.
- No tank, halter, or similar tops with thin straps that show one's back, cleavage or midriff. If such tops are worn, an outer shirt or sweater must cover them.
- No shorts.
- No hats.

BEHAVIOR:

- Be courteous and respectful to all participants.
- Do not display anger or lose your temper.
- Be alert and attentive.
- Be well informed and business-like.
- Speak loudly and clearly.
- Stand-up straight and keep hands out of pockets.
- Refrain from any unnecessary talking.

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

- When required to answer a questions with a "yes" or "no" response, answer "yes" or "no." No gum chewing.
- No chewing tobacco or smoking cigarettes of any kind.
- No eating or drinking in the courtroom.
- No camera or recording devices are allowed.
- No pagers, beepers, electronic tablets or cellular phones.

If your dress and behavior do not follow these guidelines, you will be asked to leave before Teen Court convenes. This dress and behavior code is for all offenders and participants, new and returning.

Report to Teen Court on time and check-in upon arrival with the Teen Court Administrator.

St. Clair County Teen Court
618-365-5158

CONFIDENTIAL REMEDIES FORM

We, the peer jury of the St. Clair County Teen Court, having heard the statement of the teen offender and having questioned the teen and heard other statements presented, find the following restorative justice remedies to be in the best interest of the youth, the parent/guardian, the victim, and the community.

Juvenile Name _____
(Offense(s)) _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Case# _____ TC _____ Court Date _____

() _____ Hours of Community Service () Location _____

() _____ and write a _____ word essay about: _____

() Write a _____ word essay concerning the offense entitled _____

() Write a _____ word apology to _____

() Verbally apologize to _____

() Counseling _____

() Serve as a juror on Saturday, _____ at the St. Clair County Teen Court.

() Create a Vision Board _____

() Read the book _____ and write a _____ word essay regarding what you learned and how it affects you.

() Interview a County Jail inmate guilty of a similar offense and write a _____ word essay on what you learned from the interview.

() Other _____

Moderator: _____
Offender: _____

ST. CLAIR COUNTY TEEN COURT

COMPLETION OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE REMEDIES

I hereby certify that _____, case number
_____TC_____ has completed his/her restorative justice remedies.

Administrator, St. Clair County Teen Court

Cc: St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office
Administrator
Evaluator
Youth
Parent
Moderator

January 27, 2016

Dear Ms. Doe,

Congratulations! Jane has completed all her assignments for Teen Court. As you know, I just finished reading her apology and essay this evening. Indeed, I was impressed.

. Most definitely, Jane is a very mature young lady, who writes exceptionally well for one her age. I especially liked her line "Staying true to yourself enhances your creativity and gives you a different outlook of life." This was very good; however, "But once you find yourself in whatever you do, creativity will start racing like a flowing river" was even better. These are outstanding ideas. There are several more that I could quote. Suffice it to say that Jane did a fantastic job with her writing, and you have every right to be very proud of her. Please share my thoughts with her. I told her my feelings, but I feel that praise can and should be repeated!

All of this said, Jane is now scheduled to graduate on February 6 before the beginning of our court sessions on that date. Graduation is a required step in the Teen Court process; once Jane receives her graduation certificate, her obligations to Teen Court will be totally completed. We shall have Jane's graduation at 10:15 A.M. Thus, please arrive at the County Jail at 10 A.M. We have moved graduation so that it commences before the court cases begin in order to avoid long wait times for the graduates as was occurring when we had graduation after the court cases concluded. Incidentally, graduation is a rather brief procedure as I explained.

Please do call me if you have any questions or concerns. My phone number is 618-365-5158. Thank you again for your excellent cooperation. Please congratulate Jane again for me.

Have a wonderful day,

Zabelle N. Vartanian
Teen Court
Administrator

Teen Court

A Project of the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

Date _____

This Award Certifies That

Has Successfully completed

St. Clair County Teen Court

St. Clair County
Teen Court
Director

St. Clair County
Teen Court
Administrator

FORMS FOR PEER JURORS

PEER JUROR GENERAL INFORMATION

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. The Administrator sends a letter to each School District Superintendent with copies to the respective high school principals explaining the program and requesting Peer Juror nominees. Each school is designated a specific number of Peer Jurors based on school population. The letter to the school officials also includes requirements for the Peer Jurors.
2. Once the names of the nominees are received from the schools, the Administrator sends the Teen Court Application Forms to the schools with a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the school official to use to mail the applications back to the Administrator. Also, included with each of the application forms are a Basic Information Sheet and a Rules & Regulations Sheet. The students are to be told to keep the latter two items.
3. The Application Form consists of three pages: personal information page, student personal comment paragraph and parent consent page, and adult recommendation page.
4. The school official has the nominees complete the applications and mails the forms to the Administrator according to the time frame established by the Administrator.

REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS AND SELECTION OF PEER JURORS

1. The Administrator reviews the applications and, for each deemed applicable, sends a letter of welcome to the prospective Teen Juror with two inserts to be returned in an enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope. These two pages are a Release of Liability and a Press Waiver. A requested return date is included. (Please note that thus far the schools have been phenomenal in their choice of nominees.)
2. In the welcoming letter, the incoming Peer Jurors are invited to attend the Annual Training for new and returning Peer Jurors.
3. At the Training Session, the Peer Jurors sign their Personal Oath of Confidentiality and are given the Code of Conduct to peruse and sign.

SERVING AS PEER JURORS

1. Once the Peer Jurors have attended the Training Session, they are able to sit on a jury. If they miss the Training, either there is a scheduled make-up session, or they must initially view a court session in action prior to participating themselves.
2. Prior to each session, Peer Jurors must sign the Group Confidentiality sheet as well as the general sign in sheet.
3. Before each session, the Judge reviews with the Peer Jurors the purpose of Teen Court and Restorative Justice, general questions to cover, and basic behavior.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY TEEN COURT
300 West Main Street Suite 5
Belleville, IL 62220

Dr. John Doe, Superintendent
Belleville Township High School District 201
920 N. Illinois Street
Belleville, IL 62220

Dear Dr. Doe:

Initially, please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Zabelle Vartanian, and I am presently serving as Administrator of the St. Clair County Teen Court, which is a project of the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council as well as a cooperative effort of the Sheriff and the State's Attorney. Judge Annette Eckert is the Director of the Teen Court, and Anne Yates is the Evaluator. It is in my capacity as Administrator that I am writing to you to seek your support.

Before I present my request for your assistance, let me provide you with a general overview of Teen Court. Basically, this is a pilot program in St. Clair County that provides an alternative approach to juvenile justice for first-time, non-violent youth offenders ages 12-17 with no criminal background. Such an individual stopped by a St. Clair County Law Enforcement Officer is offered Teen Court alternative by recommendation of the State's Attorney's Office. Following this, I, as the Teen Court Administrator, contact the teen and the respective parent and hold a meeting with same. The following steps then occur:

1. Youth accepts Teen Court.
2. Youth pleads guilty to the offense charge (written form).
3. Youth signs consent to participate in Teen Court.
4. Parent /guardian signs consent.
5. Youth is given Teen Court date on Saturday morning at 10 A.M. at the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department in the courtroom.
6. Youth has a hearing within 30 days of arrest.
7. Peer Jury imposes sentence after hearing case.
8. Sentence completed and reviewed within 90 days of arrest.
9. If successful completion, no charge filed and no delinquency. If sentence not completed, charge sent to the St. Clair County State's Attorney's office for prosecution.

Such is a succinct explanation of Teen Court. Of course, parent/guardian and teen alike have the right to refuse Teen Court from the outset if either so desires. If this occurs, the charge is sent to the St. Clair County State's Attorney's office for prosecution.

Now, returning to my request which involves your students-as you probably noted, a peer jury is included in this program. Concerning this peer jury, we wish to utilize students from the various St. Clair County high schools to serve as members for this group. Thus, we are asking for the faculty of each school to recommend five students that they feel would be best capable to serve as jurors for Teen Court.

In this regard, we are seeking students with the following characteristics:

1. Are between the ages of 13-17 or in 12th grade.
2. Rank in grades 9th through 12th.
3. Live in St. Clair County.
4. Represent good character.
5. Have a willingness to work with police, other teens, and the community.
6. Possess an interest in helping peers.
7. Display a clear record of behavior for at least the past five months.

Of course, once the names are received, we shall provide an application for the students to complete, as well as parent/guardian consent forms to have completed.

The candidates need to know that their time commitment will include jury duty one Saturday a month, usually the first Saturday of each month, from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. In addition, a training session is planned for the students and parent/guardians alike, to be held on a Saturday at the Belleville Campus of Lindenwood University.

I would very much appreciate it if you would let me know if your school district is willing to participate in the Teen Court Program. Please email me at _____ by Friday, _____ 20___. If you do choose to participate, and we truly hope you will, we would like to have the names of your five candidates sent to me by email (ZVartanian@charter.net) by Friday, _____ 20___. I shall then arrange to send the application forms to the respective individuals.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to call or email me. I am quite aware that this is a great deal of information to digest. In essence, we are attempting an extremely important and valuable program, and, fundamentally, we need your support. Most definitely, this endeavor can only succeed with your help. Thank you in advance for your time.

Sincerely,

Teen Court Administrator

cc: Jane Doe Principal
John Doe, Principal

(SUPERINTENDENT LETTER FOR SUBSEQUENT YEAR)

Dr. John Doe, Superintendent
Belleville Township High School District 201
920 N. Illinois Street
Belleville, IL 62220

Dear Dr. Doe:

Once again, I am contacting you as I am continuing to serve as Administrator of the St. Clair County Teen Court, which is a project of the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council as well as a cooperative effort of the Sheriff and the State's Attorney. Judge Annette A. Eckert is the Director of the Teen Court. It is in my capacity as Administrator of the Teen Court that I am writing this letter and once again seeking your support.

Before I present my request for your assistance, let me briefly review Teen Court. Basically, this is a program in St. Clair County that provides an alternative approach to juvenile justice for first-time, non-violent youth offenders ages 12-17 with no criminal background. Such an individual stopped by a St. Clair County Law Enforcement Officer is offered Teen Court alternative by recommendation of the State's Attorney's Office. Ensuing this, I as the Teen Court Administrator, contact the teen and the respective parent and hold a meeting with same. The following steps then occur:

1. Youth accepts Teen Court.
2. Youth pleads guilty to the offense charge (written form).
3. Youth signs consent to participate in Teen Court.
4. Parent/guardian signs consent.
5. Youth is given Teen Court date on a Saturday morning at 10 A.M. at the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department in the courtroom area.
6. Youth has hearing within 30 days of interview.
7. Peer Jury imposes a sentence after hearing case.
8. Sentence completed/reviewed within 90 days of hearing.
9. If successful completion, no charge filed and no delinquency. If the sentence is not completed, charge sent to the St. Clair County State's Attorney's office for prosecution.

Such is a succinct explanation of Teen Court. Of course, parent and teen alike have the right to refuse Teen Court from the outset if either so desires. If this occurs, the charge is sent to the St. Clair County State's Attorney's office for a determination regarding possible prosecution.

Now, returning to my request which involves your students-as was stated, a peer jury is included in this program. Concerning this peer jury, we wish to continue utilizing students from the various St. Clair County high schools to serve as members for this group. Presently, we have peer jurors from eight St. Clair County high schools, which is an increase of five from the previous year. Our goal is to increase this number yet again. At the present, Belleville East has nine jurors serving. Thus, we are asking the East faculty to recommend three students to equal the total number of 12 as allocated based on pupil population. Belleville West has six jurors presently serving. Thus, we are asking the faculty of West to recommend six students to equal the total number of 12 as allocated based on pupil population. Incidentally peer juror participation increased from 24 to 57 last year.

In this regard, we are seeking students with the following characteristics:

1. Are between the ages of 13-17 or in 12th grade.
2. Rank in grades 9th through 12th.
3. Live in St. Clair County.
4. Represent good character.
5. Have willingness to work with police, other teens, and the community.
6. Possess an interest in helping peers.
7. Display a clear record of behavior for at least the least five months.

Of course, once the names are received, we shall provide an application for the students to complete and parent or guardian consent forms to have completed.

The candidates need to know that their time commitment will include jury duty one Saturday a month, usually the first Saturday of each month, from 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. In addition, a training session is planned for the students and parents to be held on _____ at the Belleville Campus of Lindenwood University.

I would very much appreciate it if you would let me know if your school district is willing to participate in the Teen Court Program. Please email me at _____ by Friday, _____, 20____. If you do choose to participate, and we truly hope you will, we would like to have the names of your five candidates sent to me by email by Friday, _____ 20____. I shall then bring the application forms to the school.

As an update, since our inception, we have had sixty-three youngsters actually participate in our program, with forty-nine graduates at this point. Thirteen youths are in the process of working on their recommendations, and thus far, only one individual who began the program has failed to complete it, and he was a student with educational challenges. We have had 35 total individuals choose not to participate in Teen Court. We also have 39 adult volunteers helping us at the present as well as 12 deputies from the Sheriffs Department who supervise our youngsters when the youths perform their community service.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to call or email me. I am quite aware that this is a great deal of information to digest. In essence, we are attempting an extremely important and valuable program and, fundamentally we need your support. Most definitely this endeavor can only succeed with your help. Thank you in advance for your time.

Sincerely

Teen Court Administrator

cc: Jane Doe, Principal
James Doe, Principal

(Principal Letter)

Dear Mr. Doe,

Enclosed are Teen Court Application Forms for this year. Please have the peer juror candidates complete the applications. Once they have done so, I would very much appreciate it if you would place all the applications in the provided, self-addressed, stamped envelope and mail them to me. In addition, I have included an extra application as a copy for you to peruse and also to keep as an extra if needed. You may, of course, duplicate the application if needed.

Please advise the students that they need only return the application forms. They are to keep both the Basic Information Sheet and the Rules and Regulations Sheet. Also, the reference segment following the student applying and parent allowing page" may be completed by a teacher, a principal, a counselor, or an adult mentor that the student selects. In other words, it does not have to be completed by a principal only.

Since we must enact a security overview prior to our training scheduled for Oct. 29, we need a very rapid return. Thus, please ask the students to return their completed applications to you in a time frame that allows you to send the applications to me no later than **WEDNESDAY, Oct. 5, 2018.**

Thank you very much for your interest and cooperation regarding Teen Court. We look forward to working with your students once again and with you. Please feel free to call me or email with any questions or suggestions.

Have a wonderful day,

Zabelle N. Vartanian
618--- ---- (Home)
616--- ---- (Cell)
ZVartanian@charter.net

St. Clair County Teen Court
300 West Main Street, Suite 5
Belleville, IL 62220
618-____

St. Clair County Teen Court Application for Teen

Court Participation Parental Consent & Referral

Juvenile Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

School: _____ Year: _____ Grades: _____

DOB: _____ Age: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Home phone: _____ Parent/Guardian Work Phone: _____

In-School/Out-of-School Activities: _____

Future plans: _____

Hobbies/Interests: _____

Juvenile cell phone: _____

Juvenile email: _____

St. Clair County Teen Court
300 West Main Street, Suite 5
Belleville, IL 62220
618-

I, _____, apply to be a volunteer/juror in the St. Clair County Teen Court. I understand that I must attend training and follow the St. Clair County Teen Court Rules. I think I would be an asset to Teen Court because

Teen Juror's Signature

I, _____,
parent/guardian of _____, wish to allow my child to participate as a juror in the St. Clair County Teen Court which will meet on Saturdays at the St. Clair County Jail. I have reviewed and understand the St. Clair County Teen Court Rules.

Parent/Guardian Signature

St. Clair County Teen Court
300 West Main Street, Suite 5
Belleville, IL 62220
618-

I, _____, refer

_____ as a Teen Court juror. I know this youth from

I think this youth would be positive for Teen Court because _____

I think Teen Court would be positive for this youth because _____

Signature of Referring Adult

Position/Occupation

St. Clair County Teen Court
300 West Main Street, Suite 5
Belleville, IL 62220
618-

(Welcome Letter)

Dear Peer Juror,

Welcome to Teen Court! My name is Zabelle Vartanian, and I am serving as the Administrator of Teen Court. Judge (Ret.) Annette Eckert is the Director of Teen Court. I include our names to introduce you to two of the main individuals involved in this important project.

Now, I wish to thank you very much for your interest in Teen Court and your willingness to act as a Teen Court Peer Juror. I feel that this will be a valuable experience for you while at the same time providing a worthwhile community service. Definitely, we are looking forward to meeting you in person and working with you. I must admit that reading each application has only created more excitement in my wanting to meet each new peer juror. We know each new peer juror will but add more excellence to the outstanding group we already have.

Just as a repeat, we are conducting a training session on Saturday, Oct. 29, 2018. The training will be held in the Dixon Center on the Lindenwood University Belleville Campus from 9 A.M to 12 Noon with an optional lunch provided at noon in the Lindenwood Cafeteria. The training will provide, among other items, a general overview of Teen Court, especially the court procedure, of which you will be a major part.

Please note that if you cannot make the training, you do need to contact me. This is very important as we need to have a count of who will be attending. You may call me (____) ____-____, text me (____) ____-____ or email me ZVartanian@charter.net If you do text, please include your name. In addition, if you are able to attend for only a part of the training, this is acceptable.

PLEASE HAVE YOUR PARENT/PARENTS SIGN AND RETURN THE TWO INCLUDED FORMS IN THE SELF-ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE BY SATURDAY, OCT. 22. THESE FORMS ARE VERY IMPORTANT. THANK YOU.

If your parents or you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to call or email me. I mean this sincerely. I look forward to seeing you on the 29th at Lindenwood.

Thanks again for choosing to becoming a peer juror,

Zabelle N. Vartanian
Teen Court Administrator

St. Clair County Teen Court
300 West Main Street, Suite 5
Belleville, IL 62220
618-

CONFIDENTIAL

ST. CLAIR COUNTY TEEN COURT

RELEASE OF LIABILITY

Juvenile's Name: _____
Last First MI

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

School: _____ Year: _____

DOB: _____ Age: _____

Youth's health, physical, mental and specified health problems or limitations:

I/We _____, as the parent/guardian of _____' hereby agree to allow him/her to participate in the St. Clair County Teen Court Program. It is further agreed and understood that as a condition of participation in the Teen Court Program, I/We do hereby release the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council, the St. Clair County Teen Court Administrator, employees and volunteers, St. Clair County, the city of Belleville, the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department, duly authorized law enforcement officers, the St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office and any community service agency or individual assigned by the St. Clair County Teen Court from any and all liability, whatsoever, for any injuries, damages, or loss, her/she might receive or that may arise out of participation in any activities of the St. Clair County Teen Court Program.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 20_____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Juvenile: _____

Teen Court Administrator: _____

ST. CLAIR COUNTY TEEN COURT
PRESS WAIVER

Juvenile's name: _____

Last

First

MI

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

DOB: _____ Age: _____

I/we _____ (as the) parent/guardian of _____
give permission for my child to be interviewed and/or photographed for press releases regarding his or
her activities with the St. Clair County Teen Court.

OR

I/we _____ as the parent/guardian of _____
do not give permission for my child to be interviewed and/or photographed for press releases regarding
his or her activities with the St. Clair County Teen Court.

Date: _____, 20____

Parent/Guardian _____

St. Clair County Teen Court

OATH OF CONFIDENTIALITY

I solemnly swear or affirm that I will not divulge, either by words, or signs, any information about actual cases which come to my knowledge in the course of my Teen Court experience and that I will keep secret all aspects of all proceedings with which I am involved.

Further, I understand that if I break confidentiality by telling anyone else the names of Teen Court Offenders or any other details of the case which may identify that youth, I will be terminated from the St. Clair County Teen Court Program.

Signed by Teen Court Juror/ Volunteer

Print Name of Teen Court Juror/ Volunteer

St. Clair County Teen Court
300 West Main Street, Suite 5
Belleville, IL 62220
618- 365-5158

St. Clair County Teen Court

OATH OF CONFIDENTIALITY

I solemnly swear that I will not disclose, either by words or any other means, any information which comes to my knowledge in the course of the St. Clair County Teen Court sessions, and that I will keep everything that takes place during the Teen Court sessions confidential. Further, I understand that if I break confidentiality by communicating to anyone else the names of Teen Court Offenders or any other specific details of a case which may identify the person involved, I will no longer be able to serve as a Teen Court Juror/Participant and may be dropped from the program:

<u>PRINT NAME</u>	SIGNATURE	DATE

USEFUL TOOLS

Peer Juror Manual



TEEN COURT

A project of the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council



TEEN COURT

A Project of The St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council

**WELCOME
TO
ST. CLAIR COUNTY
TEEN COURT**

St. Clair County Teen Court Mission

The St. Clair County Teen Court represents an alternative approach to juvenile justice that holds first-time non-violent youth offenders accountable through a sentence imposed by their peers. The St. Clair County Teen Court emphasizes accountability and responsibility rather than traditional punitive measures, thereby focusing on balance and restorative justice, which is the policy statement of the Illinois Juvenile Court Act. (705 ILCS 405/5-101) The Illinois Juvenile Court Act authorizes Teen Courts (705 ILCS 405/5-315 and 705 ILCS 405/5-301) and provides a funding mechanism (PA 93-0892 House Bill307). The St. Clair County Teen Court will operate under the peer jury model and will be a collaborative effort administered by the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council in cooperation with the St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office and St. Clair County Sheriff's Office.

St. Clair County Teen Court Goals

- Implement a peer jury model program that uses adult and youth volunteers.
- Offenders will go to Teen Court within 30 days of a referral and after a plea of guilty and written consent (and parental/guardian consent also). The youths will begin their remedies within 14 days of the hearing and complete them within the time given by the Teen Court jury. A review/program report must be presented to Teen Court within 90 days after the peer jury hearing.
 - Remedies by the Peer Jury may include:
 - Letter of apology to victims or oral apology
 - Community service
 - Youth peer jury duty
 - Essays
 - Vision Board
 - Counseling
 - Read a book and write an essay about what you learned
 - Attend Teen Strong at the YMCA with other peer jurors and work out with mentors provided by the YMCA
 - Interview an inmate and write an essay about what you learned
 - Other creative remedies
- Successful completion of the remedies will result in charges not being filed and no finding of delinquency. If the remedies are not completed, the case will be turned over to the St. Clair County State's Attorney for filing of the charge and prosecution.
- The Teen Court program seeks to make youths accountable for their mistakes without branding them with a finding of delinquency, so long as the teens complete the remedies imposed by their peers.
- The Teen Court also seeks to educate and motivate youth volunteers and juries, increasing their respect for the community, each other, law enforcement and the legal system.
- Teen Court seeks to be a prevention program for Teen Court defendants and Teen Court volunteers.
- An annual report will be compiled which will include recidivism rates and entry and exit interviews with the teens and parents, as well as interviews with the jurors/volunteers.

St. Clair County Teen Court Process

A youth, age 9-17 is stopped by a St. Clair County Law Enforcement Officer who decides to charge the youth with a non-violent misdemeanor or felony offense. Youth has no criminal background. Youth is offered Teen Court alternative by recommendation of the State's Attorney's Office. Teen Court Administrator contacts teen and parent and has a personal meeting with them.

1. Youth accepts Teen Court.
2. Youth pleads guilty to offense charge (written form).
3. Youth signs consent to participate in Teen Court.
4. Parent/guardian signs consent.
5. Youth is given Teen Court date on Saturday morning at 10 a.m. at St. Clair County Sheriff's Department in the courtroom.
6. Youth has hearing within 30 days of referral.
7. Peer Jury imposes sentence after hearing case.
8. Sentence completed/reviewed within 90 days of hearing.
9. If successful completion, no charge filed and no delinquency. If sentence not completed, charge sent to St. Clair County State's Attorney for prosecution.

St. Clair County Teen Court
BASIC INFORMATION FOR TEEN COURT
JURORS/VOLUNTEERS

APPOINTMENT

- Peer jurors are appointed by the St. Clair County Teen Court.
- An applicant must be between the ages of 13 or in the 9th grade and 17 or in the 12th grade.
- An applicant must live in St. Clair County.
- Applications are available at the St. Clair County high schools.

ATTENDANCE

- Teen Court meets once each month or more often depending on the case load.
- Peer Jury sessions begin promptly at 10 a.m. and are usually over by 2 p.m. on the first Saturday of the month unless there is a holiday or the date is rescheduled.
- It is essential that a Peer Juror attend as many meetings as possible. When jurors fail to attend, the program runs the risk of not having enough jurors to hear the morning's docket of cases.
- If a peer juror is not able to attend a Peer Jury meeting, the juror must notify the Teen Court Administrator or other designee, as far in advance of the absence as possible.

PEER JURY JUROR SELECTION PROCESS

Peer Juror Attributes:

- Be age 13 or in the 9th grade through age 17 or in the 12th grade.
- Possess an interest in helping peers.
- Be committed to the peer jury -have willingness to work with police, other teens, and the community.
- Be of good character.
- Must live in St. Clair County.
- No personal involvement with law enforcement within five months.
- Interest in program should be initiated by the teen with parent or guardian approval.
- Teen may be ordered by Teen Court to participate as a juror or have volunteered and been accepted and trained.

Application for Teen Court:

Peer Juror application form

- Completed by the teen.
- Reviewed by Teen Court Administrator, in a timely manner, once applications are received.
- Parent/Guardian Consent.
- Understanding and support of the peer jury program is a must for the peer juror's parent or guardian.
- Provide information about the program so the parent or guardian may give informed consent for his/her son/daughter to participate as a peer juror.

Orientation/training of peer jurors:

Orientation/training is to include peer jurors who receive an invitation to the program. Give an overview of the Peer Jury Program including history and philosophy. Explain the expectations and responsibilities of peer jurors:

- Confidentiality.
- Appropriate behavior.
- Commitment to and serious nature of the program.
- Appropriate dress code.
- Peer jury process including deliberation techniques.
- Role of police department and other involved agencies.

PERSONS OR ROLES IN TEEN COURT

- The ***bailiff*** calls the court to order, announces the case, administers the oath, escorts individuals in and out of the courtroom, and closes proceedings.
- The ***moderator*** is an adult volunteer who acts as a judge. He/she guides the court room process by giving jurors advice and keeping proper court room demeanor.
- The ***jurors*** question the respondent, parent, and other witnesses; they consider the evidence presented about the respondent's awareness of the harm caused all victims, witnesses' suggestions about how to repair the harm, and respondent's need for competency development and community involvement in the disposition; and they decide upon the remedies for the respondent.
- The ***presiding juror***, sometimes called the jury foreperson, ensures that each juror has a chance to fully and fairly participate and that the jury decides upon a disposition meeting restorative justice goals.
- The ***parent or guardian*** is required to participate in youth court with his or her child. He or she gives testimony about the respondent and makes suggestions about what the respondent needs, describes the impact of the crime or violation on the family, and makes suggestions of ways the respondent could repair the harm.
- The ***respondent*** is the juvenile who is being sentenced. Generally the respondent must acknowledge responsibility for the crime in order to come to youth court and must accept the disposition.
- The ***victim*** includes each person who has been directly harmed by the respondent, the family of the respondent, and the community. Victims may testify at the hearing in person or by submitting a written statement. Sometimes the victim does not give a statement, but the peer jury members consider the impact of the respondent's actions on all the victims.
- The ***witness*** is anyone, including victim, parents or guardian, and respondent, who testifies during the hearing.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY TEEN COURT

MASTER PROCEDURE

1. Bailiff: “Everyone please rise. The Teen Court of St. Clair County is now in session, the Honorable Teen Court Moderator, _____, presiding.”

2. Moderator enters and sits in chair.

3. Bailiff: “Please be seated and quiet in the courtroom.”

4. Moderator: “Good Morning. This is the opening session of the St. Clair County Teen Court. I want to thank each and every one of you for being here today and participating in our Teen Court.

“The business of this court is very serious. The defendants who appear before you tonight are guilty of the charges that have been made against them. They have violated a law of the State of Illinois and have voluntarily chosen to come before this court to have a jury of people their own age decides what remedies they should receive for their actions. Even though the defendants have violated the law, they deserve your respect and attention. It takes certain courage for the respondents to be here, and I am sure that if you were in their shoes, you would want a fair hearing. Therefore, everyone in the courtroom must remain quiet during and between proceedings and give his or her complete attention to what happens here. If you fail to do so, I will have to ask you to leave the courtroom.”

“I also emphasize that everything that occurs in this courtroom is to remain confidential; that particularly includes the names of respondents. If you discuss what occurs here tonight with persons who are not present, you might be subject to prosecution and will certainly not be permitted to continue in participating in the St. Clair County Teen Court Program.”

5. Moderator: "I will call the case and swear in the jury." _____
"The St. Clair County Teen Court calls case: In the matter
of _____.
"Will the jury please rise?"

"Do you solemnly swear to listen carefully to all the evidence and testimony presented in this case, to determine a sentence which is fair, and to keep secret and confidential all said proceedings which may be held in your presence? If so, please answer,
"I will."

"Please be seated."

6. Moderator: "You are here to decide an appropriate sentence or remedy for
_____. Will the respondent please rise?"

- "Does anyone on the jury know the respondent?"
- "Do each of you believe that you can make a fair determination of sentencing in this case?"
- "Does the respondent accept this jury panel?"

7. Moderator: The Respondent is charged with _____.
The police report will be read.

(The moderator will ask the Respondent to come forward and deliver the oath to respondent.)

8. Moderator: “Stand and raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give is the whole truth so help you God?”

9 Moderator directs respondent to:

- a. Take a seat in the witness stand; and
- b. Explain the events in his/her own words.

10. The Moderator will turn to the jury and ask if jurors have any questions for the respondent.

11. The Jurors will question the respondent and gain further insight into the circumstances surrounding the decision the respondent made that lead to his/ her actions. The jurors may also question family members who are present in court.

12. The Moderator then turns to the jury and states the following:

“Ladies and gentleman of the Jury, the respondent has admitted to the offense of _____. This offense, if committed by an adult could be punishable by _____. You have heard the facts of this offense as stated by the police report and the respondent, and the respondent’s other statements made before you during this hearing. I now charge you with the duty of determining, on the basis of these facts and statements, what remedy should be imposed upon the respondent.”

13. The respondent and his / her parent or guardian will be dismissed to lobby pending the Peer Jury deliberation.

14. Bailiff will escort parent/guardian and respondent out of the courtroom for deliberation.

15. The recommendation is determined and applicable forms recommending the specific sentence are completed.

16. The respondent and his/her parent or guardian will return to the courtroom and the respondent stands while the moderator announces the Peer Jury’s findings.

17. The moderator responds to the sentence. He asks the respondent if he/she will have any problems in complying with the sentence. Then, if he/she desires, he/she makes any necessary changes, signs forms and gives a copy to the respondent.
18. The respondent and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) are asked if they have any questions. If there are questions, the moderator and/ or jurors answer them.
19. Moderator: "Mr./Ms. _____ the members of the jury have done their duty here tonight. Their decision was a group decision. Respect their decision just as you will want the respondent to respect your decision if you come back as a juror. On behalf of everyone here, I wish you good luck; we hope you will not be in any more trouble with the law.

(At this point, moderator may wish to make comments about consequences of repeating this or any illegal act, what consequences may be as an adult with this offense, how lucky the client was to be referred to Teen Court, or other appropriate comments).
20. Moderator: "At this time, you may report to the Teen Court Administrator and Teen Court Evaluator where your rights and obligations concerning the determined remedy will be explained."
21. The respondent and his/her parent or guardian are reminded of their responsibility to the court in carrying out work assignments.
22. Moderator: "Members of the jury and court personnel, thank you for the respect you have given to the respondent and the law. Please remember your duty to uphold the oath of confidentiality concerning these proceedings."
23. Moderator/Judge: "You are all excused."
24. The respondent leaves the court room and meets with a coordinator or adult volunteer.

Three Restorative Justice Rules

1. How can you hold the offender accountable for his/her offense?
2. How can you help the offender repair the harm to all the victims?
3. What does the offender need to become a more productive member of the community?

St. Clair County Teen Court

Questions for Juvenile Offenders during Teen Court Session

- In your own words, what happened?
- Have you ever done anything like this before?
- What was going through your mind before and during the event?
- Was peer pressure a factor in the event?
- How will you handle the situation next time?
- Were you punished at home for what you did? If so, how?
- Did you consider what the consequences might be of your actions?
- How do you feel about what you did?
- Did you make restitution (pay-back) for any damages that were done?
- How do your parents feel about what you did?
- Are you involved in any in-school and after-school activities? If so, what are they?
- What are some of your hobbies/interests?
- Is there any alcohol/drug history in your family?
- What kind of grades do you receive in school?
- What are your plans after high school?
- Is there anything else that you would like to share with us that we haven't asked you?

St. Clair County Teen Court

Questions for Parent/Guardian during Teen Court session

- How did you learn about the crimes (or problem behavior) that your child committed? What did you do when you learned about it?
- Did you talk to your child about it?
- If so, please tell us your perceptions about whether or not your child understands that what was done was wrong.
- How has this crime (or problem behavior) affected you and your family? What could your child do to repair the damage that was caused?
- How do you feel about what your child did?
- Was your child punished at home? If so, how? Is your child complying with the punishment? Has your child been in trouble before?
- What are his/her grades in school? Is that an improvement over the past year or a decline? Does the defendant have responsibilities at home? If so, what?
- Are there older siblings influencing the juvenile offender or is this juvenile offender influencing younger siblings?
- Have you told your son/daughter about how you feel over what has happened? Is there anything else you would like to tell the court?

CONFIDENTIAL REMEDIES FORM

We, the peer jury of the St. Clair County Teen Court, having heard the statement of the teen offender and having questioned the teen and heard other statements presented, find the following restorative justice remedies to be in the best interests of the teen, the parent/guardian, the victim and the community.

Juvenile Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Case#: _____ T.C. _____ Court Date: _____

Offense(s): _____

☐ _____ hours of community service.

Location: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone Number: _____

☐ \$ _____ Restitution to _____

☐ Write a _____ word essay concerning the offense entitled: _____

☐ Write a _____ word apology to _____

☐ Verbally apologize to

☐ Counseling:

☐ Serve as a Juror on Saturday, _____ at _____
a.m. at the St. Clair County Teen Court

☐ You must return to provide proof of completion of service to Teen Court on

☐ Other:

Juvenile Offender

Parent/Guardian

Teen Court Administrator

St. Clair County Teen Court

Completion of Restorative Justice Remedies

I hereby certify that _____, case number
_____TC _____has completed his/her restorative justice remedies.

Administrator, St. Clair County Teen Court

cc: St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office
Administrator
Evaluator
Youth
Parent
Moderator

St. Clair County Teen Court

OATH OF CONFIDENTIALITY

I solemnly swear or affirm that I will not divulge, either by words or signs, any information about actual cases which come to my knowledge in the course of my Teen Court experience and that I will keep secret all aspects of all proceedings with which I am involved.

Further, I understand that if I break confidentiality by telling anyone else the names of Teen Court Offenders or any other details of the case which may identify that youth, I will be terminated from the St. Clair County Teen Court Program.

Signed by Teen Court Volunteer

Print Name of Teen Court Volunteer

St. Clair County Teen Court

I solemnly swear that I will not disclose, either by words or any other means, any information which comes to my knowledge in the course of the St. Clair County Teen Court sessions and that I will keep everything that takes place during the Teen Court sessions confidential. Further, I understand that if I break confidentiality by communicating to anyone else the names of Teen Court Offenders or any other specific details of a case which may identify the person involved, I will no longer be able to serve as a Teen Court Juror/Participant and may be dropped from the program:

[illegible]

St. Clair County Teen Court

CODE OF CONDUCT

Preamble

Teen Court membership is a privilege, not a right. Privileges can be lost if you fail to act in a responsible manner and within the confines of the law. As a Teen Court member, you are expected to serve as a role model for your peers at all times. Therefore, you must maintain high standards of conduct and encourage other members to do the same. You should be temperate and dignified and refrain from all illegal and morally reprehensible conduct. Because of your position, even minor violations of law may tend to lessen public confidence in the entire Teen Court Program. Since Teen Court is designed to promote law-abiding behavior, your behavior must be consistent with that purpose.

Rules of Conduct

As a member of Teen Court you must abide by the following rules:

1. You must not engage in illegal conduct. Volunteers must be offense-free for five months and all cases must be complete.
2. You must not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation.
3. You must not knowingly use perjured or false testimony or statements.
4. You must reveal any false statements, testimony or other evidence used, or any other fraud perpetrated, in any Teen Court hearing.
5. You must maintain the confidentiality of the Teen Court proceedings.
6. You must participate free of bias or prejudice toward any other person's age, race, sex, religion, national origin or disability.
7. You must appear promptly and prepared for all Teen Court Training Sessions and court appearances unless excused.
8. A Teen Court member must dress appropriately when participating in a Teen Court proceeding. Please review the Rules and Regulations of Teen Court.

9. You must perform your role as effectively and competently as possible.
10. You must treat with courtesy and consideration all persons involved in Teen Court proceedings.
11. You must not let any outside influence, such as other members, parents, fellow students or your own self-interest, affect your actions and decisions in how to proceed.
12. You must notify the youth court director immediately if you are arrested, convicted of a crime or suspended from school.
13. You must report to the Teen Court staff or any board member conduct of other members you believe to be in violation of this Code of Conduct.
14. Accurately represent your education, training, experience, and competencies as they relate to your involvement in Teen Court.

Teen Court Juror Volunteer (Date)

Parent/Guardian (Date)

Teen Court Administrator (Date)

St. Clair County Teen Court
TEEN COURT JUROR/VOLUNTEER DUTY
NOTIFICATION

You, _____, are scheduled to serve as a Teen Court juror/volunteer at the St. Clair County Teen Court on Saturday, _____ at the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department at 700 N 5th St, Belleville, IL 62220. Please review the attached Rules and Regulations of Teen Court prior to your Teen Court service.

Teen Court Administrator

St. Clair County Teen Court

RULES AND REGULATIONS OF TEEN COURT

The rules and regulations of the court are for the offenders and all other participants in the room. The most important thing regarding dress and behavior is to show respect for the proceedings at all times.

DRESS:

- Be neat and clean.
- Wear shoes.
- Wear appropriate attire (i.e. a nice shirt with a collar, sweater, blouse, dress, khakis). If jeans are worn, they must be free of tears, holes, and fit properly around the waist. Jeans that fit loosely around the hips so that underclothing shows will not be allowed.
- No gang colors or paraphernalia, no profane language or illustrations, and no alcohol, tobacco, or other drug references displayed on clothing.
- Skirts must be of an appropriate length. No “mini” skirts will be allowed.
- No tank, halter, or similar tops with thin straps that show one’s back, cleavage or midriff. If such tops are worn, an outer shirt or sweater must cover them.
- No shorts.
- No hats.

BEHAVIOR:

- Be courteous and respectful to all participants.
- Do not display anger or lose your temper.
- Be alert and attentive.
- Be well informed and business-like.
- Speak loudly and clearly.
- Stand-up straight and keep hands out of pockets.
- Refrain from any unnecessary talking.

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

- When required to answer a questions with a "yes" or "no" response, answer "yes" or “no.” No gum chewing.
- No chewing tobacco or smoking cigarettes of any kind.
- No eating or drinking in the courtroom.
- No camera or recording devices are allowed.
- No pagers, beepers, electronic tablets or cellular phones.

If your dress and/or behavior do not follow these guidelines, you will be asked to leave before Teen Court convenes. This dress and behavior code is for all offenders and participants, new and returning.

Report to Teen Court on time and check-in upon arrival with the Teen Court Administrator.

CONFIDENTIAL

St. Clair County Teen Court Release of Liability

Juvenile's Name:

Last

First

MI

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

School: _____ Year: _____

DOB: _____ Age: _____

Youth's health, physical, mental and specified health problems or limitations:

I/We, _____ as the parent/guardian
of _____ hereby

agree to allow him/her to participate in the St. Clair County Teen Court Program. It is further agreed and understood that as a condition of participation in the Teen Court Program, I/We do hereby release the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council, the St. Clair County Teen Court Administrator, employees and volunteers, St. Clair County, the City of Belleville, the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department, duly authorized law enforcement officers, the St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office and any community service agency or individual assigned by the St. Clair County Teen Court from any and all liability, whatsoever, for any injuries, damages, or loss, he/she might receive
or that may arise out of participation in any activities of the St. Clair County Teen Court Program.

Dated this ____ day of _____, 20____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Juvenile: _____

Annual Teen Court Report

Annual Report

St. Clair County



A Project of the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council

July 2017 – June 2018

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- Teen Court Cases, Offenses, Age and Referring Police Departments
- Teen Court Remedies
- Teen Court Remedies Assigned during July 2017-June 2018 Program Year
- Teen Court Recidivism Report

Program Overview

The St. Clair County Teen Court serves as a diversion program which holds first-time, non-violent youth accountable for their actions through remedies imposed by their peers. The program emphasizes accountability and responsibility instead of applying traditional punitive measures, thereby focusing on balanced and restorative justice decisions to mitigate harm. Through this restorative approach, special emphasis is placed on restoring victims, perpetrators, and healing the broader community. As respondents assume responsibility for their actions, and through successful completion, their cases will not be charged in juvenile court. Therefore, our youth respondents have full access to apply for housing, higher education, armed forces, and other desirable supports as they transition into adulthood. Each respondent is given 90 days to complete his/her sentence to prevent the case from being referred back to the St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office. Teen Court is a collaborative effort administered by the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council in cooperation with the St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office and the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department. In 2018, Teen Court implemented a new program, "Teen Strong," to assist all program participants with pro-social activities and provides mentors in collaboration with the Gateway YMCA and the Illinois State Police Department.

The benefits of implementing a restorative justice-based diversion program

Teen Court benefits youth respondents by:

- Providing each young person with an opportunity to recognize the consequences of his/her behavior/actions and to make conscience decisions for correction and improvement.
- Allowing each young person to be held accountable and provided with a second chance to pursue future goals and aspirations.
- Granting each young person with an opportunity to repair harm to restore self, victim(s), and community.
- Diverting youth through early interventions and restorative supports, the program assist with rebuilding the whole person.
- Connecting youth to community service opportunities in partnership with area businesses and nonprofits. Youth are paired with a volunteer-mentor, most often an off-duty sheriff's deputy to reinforce restorative justice principles highlighted in Teen Court sessions.

Teen Court benefits the peer jurors by:

- Giving them an opportunity to develop a sense of empathy and compassion as they interact with young people from different backgrounds and communities.
- Increases their knowledge, skills, and abilities: civic/community engagement, youth leadership, critical thinking, communication, teamwork, and social skills.
- Allows jurors to be "change agents" within their schools and community by setting a positive example for other young people to consider.
- Prepares jurors for real life experiences.

Teen Court benefits the community by:

- Serving as a prevention and early intervention program.
- Promoting the principles of Restorative Justice and Trauma-Informed Care.
- Connecting respondents to community-based resources and services to impact positive youth development outcomes.
- Educating youth about the legal system.
- Encouraging civic engagement and responsibility.
- Supporting a reduction in recidivism while improving successful outcomes.

Teen Court program history

Program Year 1: December 2014 – June 2015

TOTAL Participants	24 Respondents
Successful Completions	12 Graduates

Program Year 2: July 2015 – June 2016

TOTAL Participants	38 Respondents
Successful Completions	35 Graduates

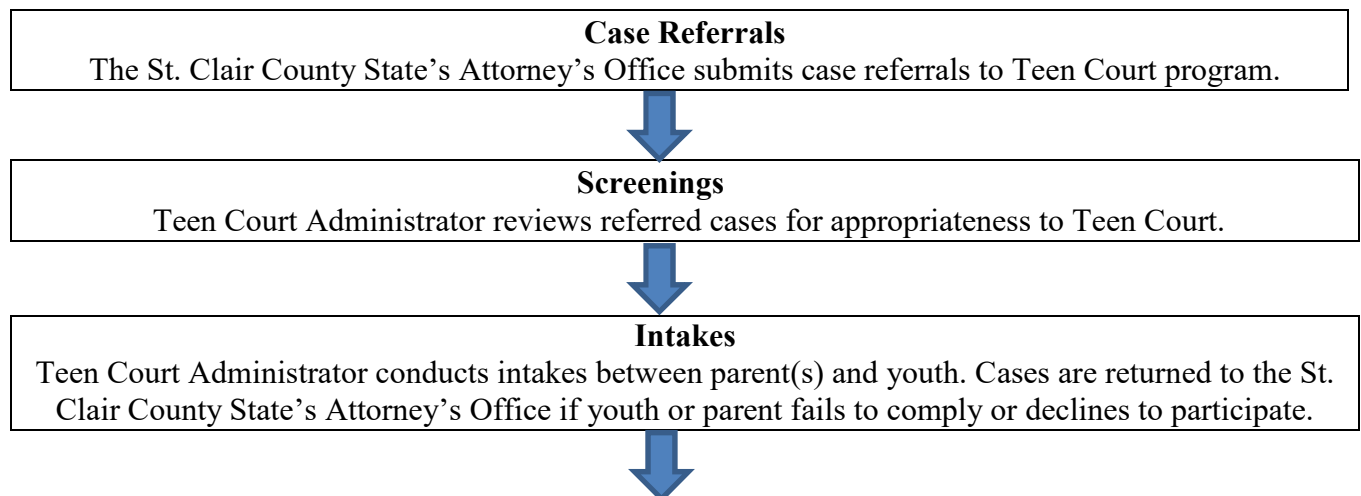
Program Year 3: July 2016 – June 2017

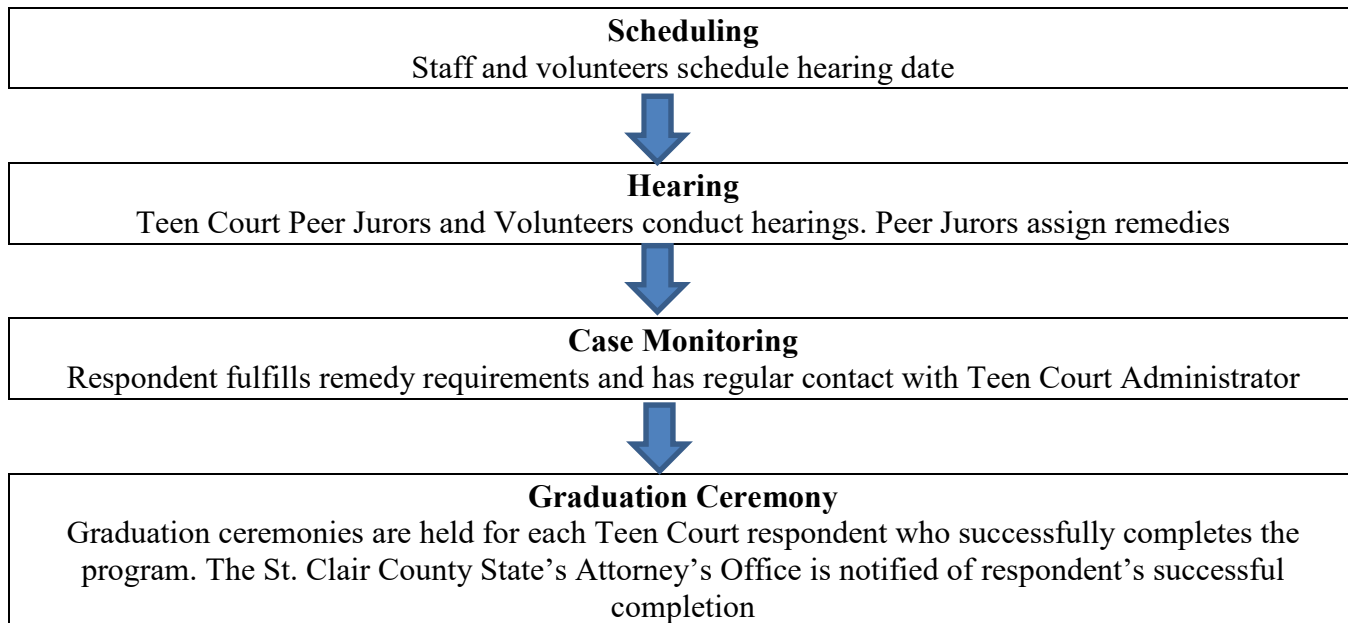
TOTAL Participants	56 Respondents
Successful Completions	41 Graduates

Program Year: 4: July 2017 - June 2018

TOTAL Participants	39 Respondents
TOTAL Declined	21 Failed to Respond
Successful Completions	38 Graduates

St. Clair County Teen Court process



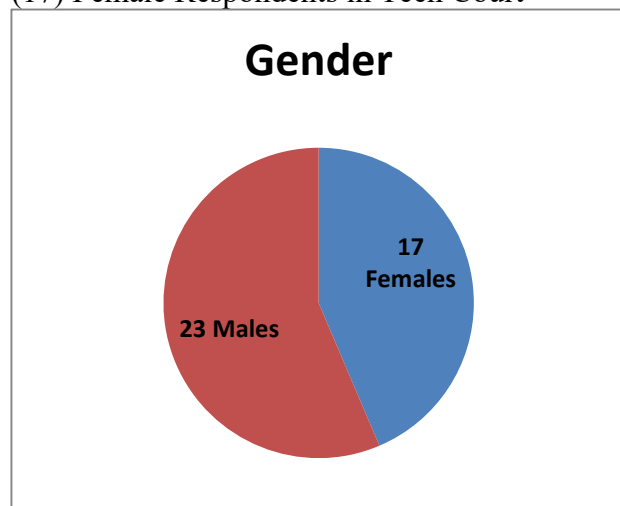


July 2017-June 2018 Annual Summary

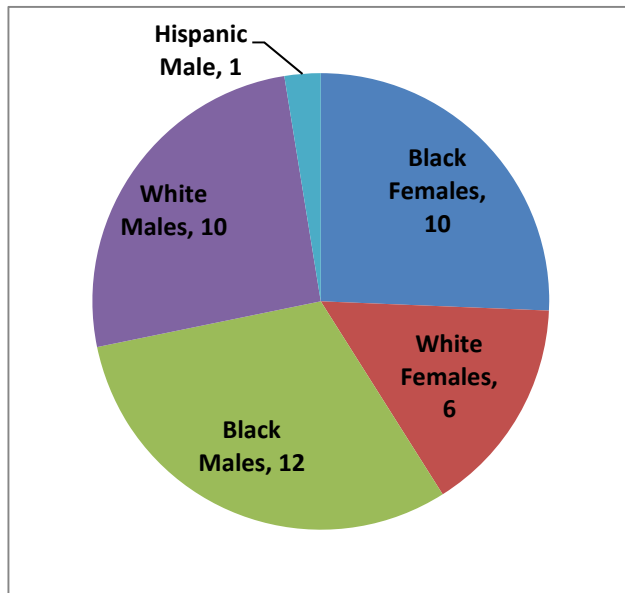
Respondents by gender

(23) Male Respondents seen in Teen Court

(17) Female Respondents in Teen Court



Respondents by race and gender

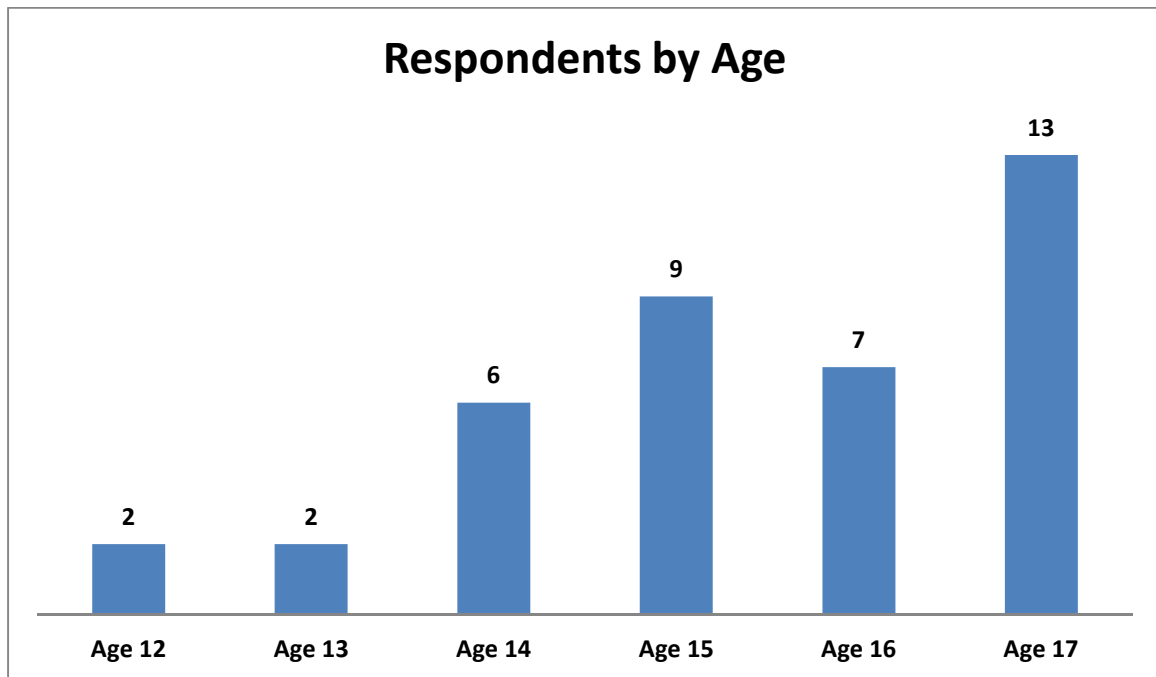


The chart below provides a breakdown of each respondent's race and gender that were seen in Teen Court during the July 2017-June 2018 program year.

Race	Male	Female	Total
Black	12	10	22
Hispanic	1		1
White	10	6	16
TOTAL	23	16	39

Respondents by age

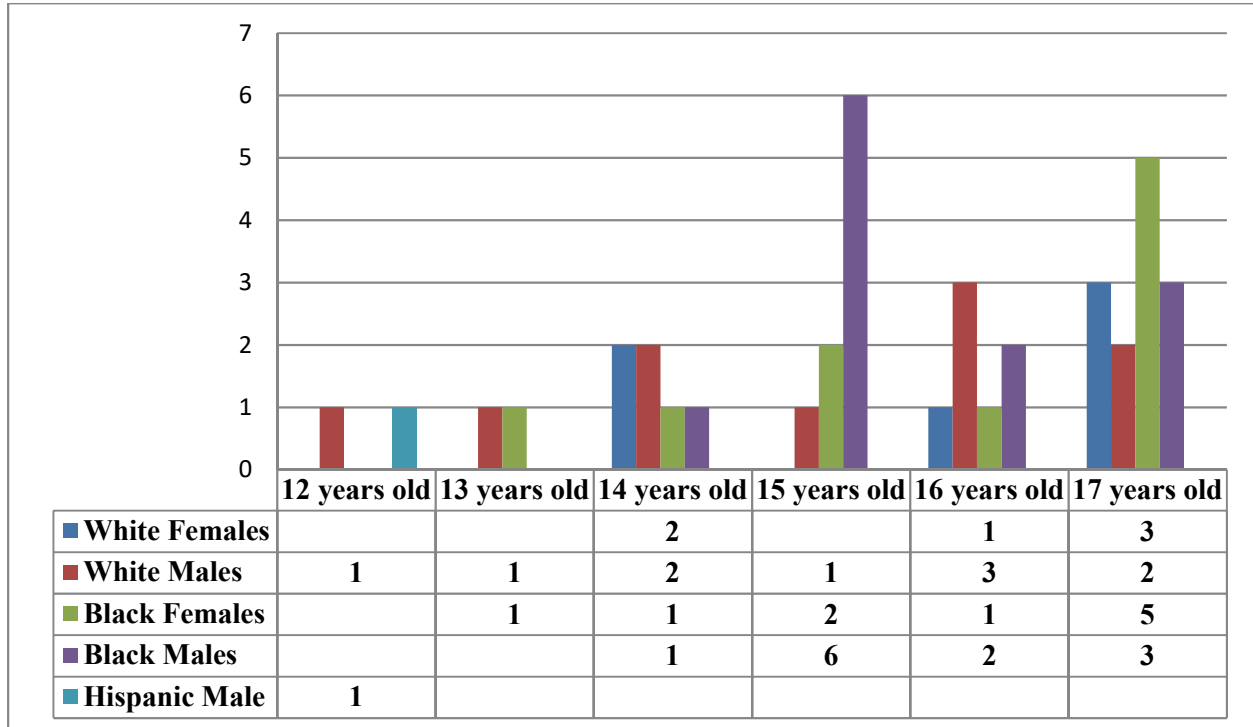
The chart below shows the age of respondents when they appeared before the Teen Court peer jurors during the July 2017-June 2018 program year.



Respondents by race and age

Ages	Black	Hispanic	White	TOTAL
12		1	1	2
13	1		1	2
14	2		5	7
15	8			8
16	3		4	7
17	8		5	13
TOTAL	22	1	16	39

Respondents by age, race and gender



Respondents by school

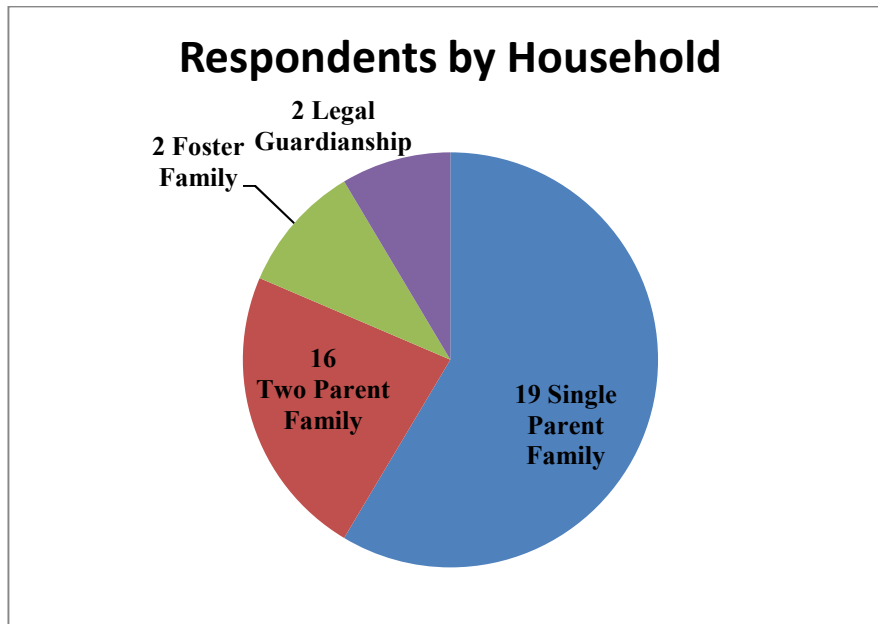
The information below displays the various schools attended by Teen Court respondents during the July 2017 - June 2018 program year.

Belleville East High School.....3
 Belleville West High School..... 4
 Cahokia High School..... 7
 Carriel Jr. High School.....1
 Collinsville High School.....1
 East St. Louis Sr. High School....6
 Edwardsville High School.....1
 Freeburg High School.....2
 Freeburg Middle School.....1
 Hillsboro High School.....1
 Jefferson Grade School.....2
 Mascoutah High School.....1
 Milburn Junior High School..... 2
 New Athens High School.....1
 O'Fallon High School.....3
 St. Mary's Alternative School.....1
 Wirth Middle School.....1
 Not enrolled in School.....1

Household Status

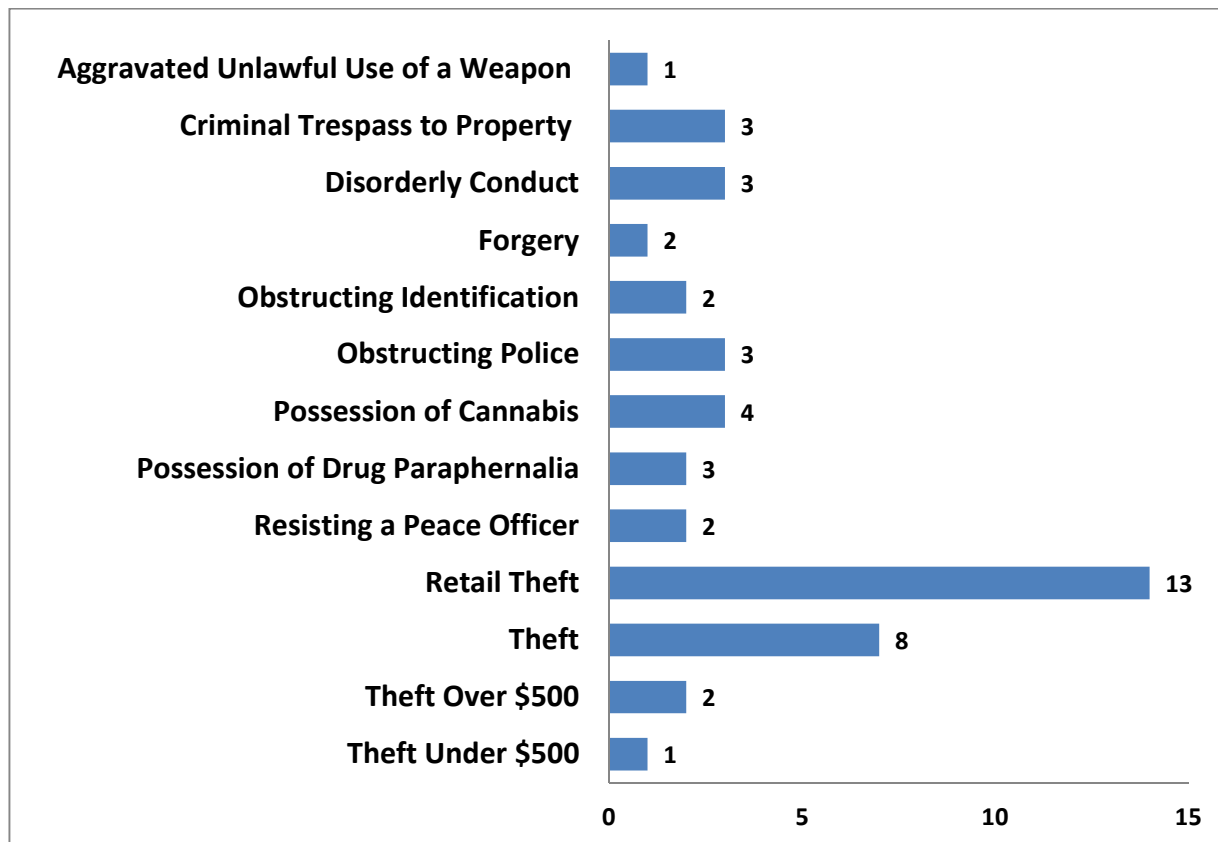
Teen Court records the household status of each respondent appearing before the Peer Jury. The information below shows the family status of respondents during the July 2017-June 2018 program year.

Single Parent Family....19
Two-Parent Family.....16
Foster Parent Family.....2
Legal Guardianship.....2



Offenses committed by Teen Court respondents during the

July 2017-June 2018 program year



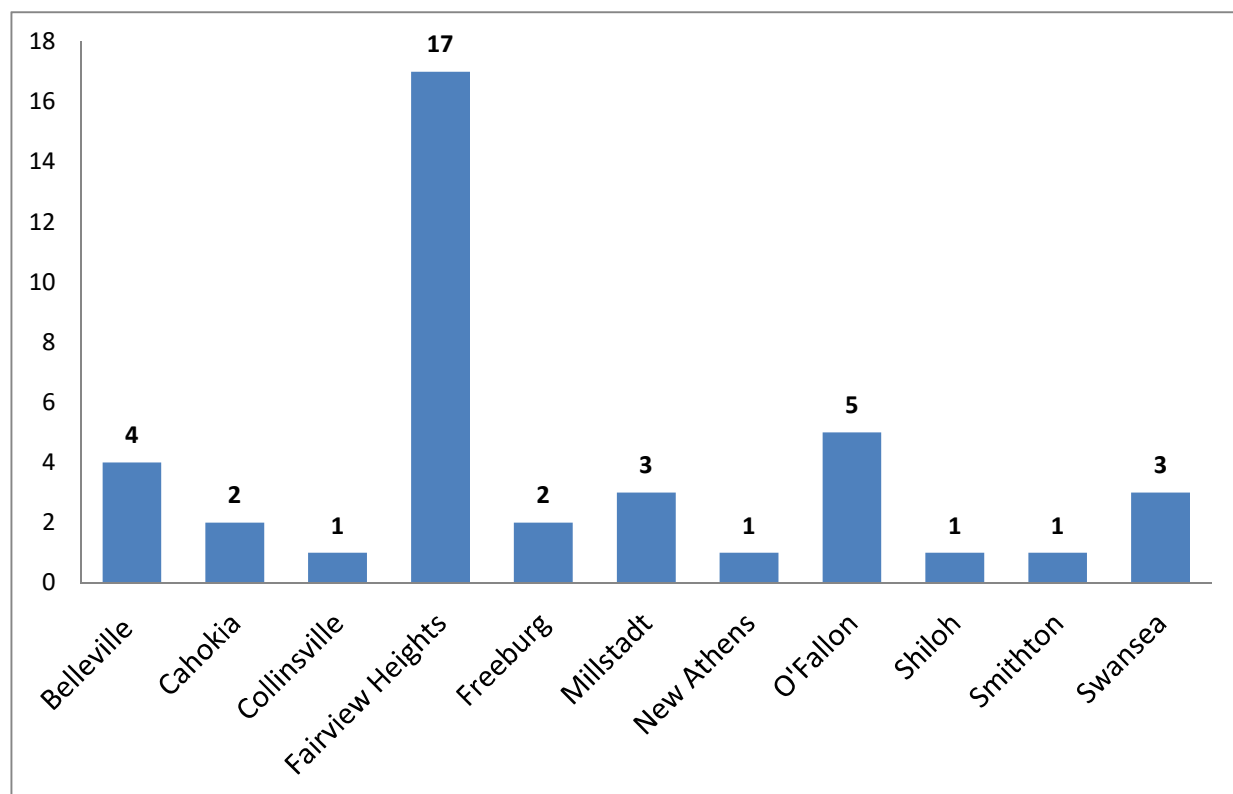
Offenses by race and gender

The chart below provides information about each Teen Court case heard during the July 2017-June 2018 program year. Some Teen Court respondents committed more than one offense.

Offense Type	Black Female	Black Male	White Female	White Male	Hispanic Male	Total
Aggravated Unlawful Use of a Weapon	1					1
Criminal Trespass to Property	1			1	1	3
Disorderly Conduct	1	1		1		3
Forgery		1		1		2
Obstructing Identification	2					2
Obstructing Police		3				3
Possession of Cannabis		1	1	2		4

Possession of Drug Paraphernalia			1	2		3
Resisting a Peace Officer	2					2
Retail Theft	4	5	4			13
Theft	1	3	1	3		8
Theft Over \$500		1		1		2
Theft Under \$500	1					1
						Total 47 Offenses

Teen Court case referrals by police departments



Teen Court cases, offenses, age, race and referring police departments

Aggravated Unlawful Use of a Weapon.....1 Case

- 1 Black Female, Age 15, Belleville Police Department

Criminal Trespass to Property....3 Cases

- 1 Black Female, Age 15, O'Fallon Police Department
- 1 Hispanic Male, Age 12, Belleville Police Department
- 1 White Male, Age 12, Belleville Police Department

Disorderly Conduct...3 Cases

- 1 Black Female, Age 16, Belleville Police Department
- 1 Black Male, Age 15, Cahokia Police Department
- 1 White Male, Age 14, O'Fallon Police Department

Forgery....2 Cases

- 1 Black Male, Age 17, O'Fallon Police Department
- 1 White Male, Age 17, Millstadt Police Department

Obstructing Identification....2 Cases

- 1 Black Female, Age 17, Fairview Heights Police Department
- 1 Black Female, Age 15, O'Fallon Police Department

Obstructing Police....3 Cases

- 1 Black Male, Age 16, East St. Louis Police Department
- 2 Black Males, Age 15, East St. Louis Police Department

Possession of Cannabis....4 Cases

- 1 Black Male, Age 15, Shiloh Police Department
- 1 White Female, Age 17, Freeburg Police Department
- 1 White Male, Age 17, Freeburg Police Department
- 1 White Male, Age 14, O'Fallon Police Department

Possession of Paraphernalia...3 Cases

- 1 White Female, Age 17, Freeburg Police Department
- 1 White Male, Age 17, Freeburg Police Department
- 1 White Male, Age 14, Millstadt Police Department

Resisting a Peace Officer....2 Cases

- 1 Black Female, Age 17, Belleville Police Department
- 1 Black Female, Age 16, Cahokia Police Department
- 2

Retail Theft...13 Cases

- 1 Black Female, Age 17, Fairview Heights Police Department

1 Black Female, Age 15, Fairview Heights Police Department
1 Black Female, Age 14, Fairview Heights Police Department
1 Black Female, Age 13, Fairview Heights Police Department

1 Black Male, Age 17, Fairview Heights Police Department
1 Black Male, Age 16, Fairview Heights Police Department
2 Black Males, Age 15, Fairview Heights Police Department
1 Black Male, Age 14, O'Fallon Police Department

2 White Females, Age 17, Fairview Heights Police Department
2 White Females, Age 14, Fairview Heights Police Department

Note: Fairview Heights includes our large county mall along with many retail stores which explains the high number of retail theft cases in comparison to other police departments.

Theft....8 Cases

1 Black Female, Age 17, Fairview Heights Police Department

1 Black Male, Age 16, Swansea Police Department
2 Black Males, Age 15, Swansea Police Department

1 White Female, Age 16, New Athens Police Department

1 White Male, Age 16, Millstadt Police Department
1 White Male, Age 15, Fairview Heights Police Department
1 White Male, Age 13, Smithton Police Department

Theft over \$500.....2 Cases

1 Black Male, Age 17, Fairview Heights Police Department
1 White Male, Age 16, Collinsville Police Department

Theft under \$500.....1 Case

1 Black Female, Age 17, Fairview Heights Police Department

Community Service Hours

Community Service hours recommended by the St. Clair County Teen Court Peer Jury is conducted in (4) hour increments at various approved St. Clair County non-profit organizations. During July 2017 - June 2018, Teen Court respondents performed (124) community service hours at the following agencies:

- Shelter Shop, Belleville
- Tapestry of Community Offerings (TOCO) Shop, Belleville
- St. Paul United Church of Christ, Belleville
- St. Vincent De Paul, East St. Louis
- House of YaYa's Fashion, Fairview Heights.

Each Teen Court respondent is accompanied by an adult mentor, most often an off-duty member of the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department of a similar gender.

Counseling Referrals to Address Trauma & ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences)

Teen Court connects youth to community-based healthcare providers in an effort to support positive youth development outcomes. Our program partners with the following agencies to address grief, trauma and other counseling needs.

- Heartlinks Grief Counseling
- Big Brothers Big Sisters

Counseling to Approved Alcohol Anonymous (AA) or Narcotics Anonymous (NA) Meeting Teen Court respondents who disclose or may be at risk of substance use may be ordered to attend a teen-friendly AA or NA meeting in St. Clair County. The Teen Court Administrator coordinates the meeting date/time with the respondent and his/her parents to ensure that an adult connected to the Teen Court program will be present to sit with the respondent for moral support.

Essays

Teen Court respondents ordered to write an essay are given a minimum amount of words required for the essay as well as a topic for the essay. The peer jury selects the topic for the respondent's essay based upon information acquired during court proceedings. Topics included Making Good Choices, Reflections on the book "Suburban Junkie," How to Make Better Friends and Better Choices, How to Join the Armed Forces and Consequences of Being Charged as an Adult. The Teen Court Administrator reviews and discusses each essay with the respondent for further reflection and possible community support.

Extra-Curricular/School Activities

A Teen Court respondent may be ordered to get involved in an extracurricular activity at school or in the community. This year, Teen Court respondent were ordered to get engaged in sporting events, music lessons, and write a 30-day journal.

Interviews with St. Clair County Jail Inmates

The St. Clair County Sheriff's Department coordinates an interview between an inmate at the St. Clair County Jail and the Teen Court respondent. The respondents have an opportunity to interview an inmate who has committed a similar offense. During these interviews, inmates provide respondents with valuable advice by encouraging them to respect their parents, stay in school, and to develop friendships with teenagers who are not breaking the law. This disposition is real and gets straight to the point. We believe the jail interviews are the most impactful because respondents get a reality check to help them avoid more delinquent behavior.

Interview Recruiter to Join U.S. Armed Forces

Teen Court respondents who have an interest in joining the U.S. Armed Forces are sanctioned to interview a recruiter to learn about the requirements needed for enlisting.

Letter of Apology

The letter of apology provides the respondent with an opportunity to work toward correcting his/her actions to reduce the harm they have caused as a result of their offense. Letters of apology are usually written to the respondent's parents, siblings, teachers, business owners, and lost prevention officers. The letter of apology is a disposition that helps respondents work toward repairing strained or broken relationships since they have time to reflect on the harm caused by their behaviors and decisions.

Teen Strong

During this program year, Teen Court implemented "Teen Strong" to assist youth respondents with developing pro-social skills. Through our partnership with the Gateway YMCA in Belleville and the Illinois State Police respondents have access to mentoring, recreational activities and other supports to help them become successful members of society. Thirteen respondents had an opportunity to engage in this new program in an effort to build stronger relationships with law enforcement officers and other peers.

Teen Court Peer Jury

Youth respondents may be ordered to serve as a peer juror at a future Teen Court hearing. The respondent serving on the peer jury is allowed and encouraged to actively participate as a juror. The respondent serving on the peer jury has a role in determining the appropriate disposition for other teen respondents appearing before the Teen Court on the date of his or required jury service.

Verbal Apology

The peer jury may request that the Teen Court respondent openly apologize to an individual in a court proceeding. The verbal apology, similar to the letter of apology, allows the respondent to take steps toward repairing the harm imposed by his/her actions.

Vision Board

A vision board is a visual art project completed by Teen Court respondents. With this sanction, respondents use visual images such as pictures, poems, quotes, words of encouragement, and other graphics to communicate their past, present, and future goals and aspirations. These images are attached to a poster board or a sheet of paper to help them really access where they are in life at the present, and where they want to be into their adulthood years. This sanction has been very instrumental in our program because it allows young people to connect with their talents, visions, and goals. During graduation ceremonies, respondents are proud to display their vision boards since they recognize their potential and purpose. Respondents are encouraged to be as creative as possible while designing their vision boards.

Dispositions	Number of Referrals	Remedies Assigned by Peer Jurors
Community Service	19	Teen Court respondents performed 124 hours at area churches, food pantries and resale shops in St. Clair County
Counseling Referrals	18	Teen Court respondents were referred to Community-Based Health Providers to increase access to counseling supports. These supports included family/individual counseling, trauma/grief therapy, substance abuse treatment, etc.
Essays	20	Teen Court respondents were given essay writing assignments for goal reflections and personal growth activities. Youth wrote essays about accessing college, understanding peer pressure, becoming leaders and making better choices.
Extra-Curricular Activities	15	Teen Court respondents were given remedies to stay engaged in extra-curricular activities. These activities included joining math and science tutoring programs, getting involved with school sporting events.
Interview for Career Development	2	Teen Court Respondents had to interview Jr. ROTC Guard and a Nurse to gain more insight about pursuing their career goals.
Interview County Jail Inmate	14	Teen Court Respondents interviewed St. Clair County Jail Inmates who have been charged and convicted for similar charges. During these interviews, the jail inmates encourage the respondents to make better choices by staying in school, refraining from using drugs, joining a gang and becoming leaders.

Letters of Apology	30	Teen Court respondents are given an opportunity to repair harm caused to members of the community by writing letters of apology. These letters have been written to local businesses, parents and other family members in an effort to restore ties.
Teen Strong	13	Teen Court respondents participated in Teen Strong to enhance relationships with law enforcement and focus on developing pro-social skills.
Verbal Apology	4	Teen Court respondents verbally apologized to business owners, parents and siblings in an effort to restore relationships and regain trust.
Vision Board	12	Teen Court respondents developed Vision Boards to assist them with setting goals academic and career goals.

Teen Court Recidivism Report

From the beginning of Teen Court through June 30, 2018, 126 youth have successfully graduated from the program. Each Teen Court graduate is assessed at the following intervals: 3 months from graduation, 6 months from graduation, 1 year from graduation and 3 years from graduation.

There are limitations on the ability to check for recidivism rates, as there is limited access to juvenile arrest data overall. This is a barrier to completing a full, comprehensive criminal records check on graduates; however, all locally-available records are included in this data. Examining “reoffending” includes reporting the number of youth who received St. Clair County charges resulting from convictions, adjudications of guilty, or an alternative disposition such as diversion or court supervision for misdemeanor offenses, a juvenile delinquency petition filed for a newly occurring offense such as DUIs or reckless homicide; minor traffic offenses, such as speeding tickets are not included in this evaluation. This report will not include pending cases, cases dismissed on the merits of the case, or uncharged allegations.

Out of the 126 youth who have successfully graduated Teen Court from program start through June 30, 2018, this recidivism report includes charges for (5) Teen Court graduates who received criminal or juvenile charges which resulted in convictions, adjudications of guilty, or another disposition other than a dismissal on the merits or findings of not guilty.

Three months post-graduation

0/120 graduates committed a new offense within three months of exiting the program.

Six months post-graduation

2/112 graduates committed a new offense within the first 6 months of exiting the program, for an approximate 2 percent recidivism rate at the 6-month point, based on locally available data.

These two graduates' offenses can be described as follows:

- **Youth 1:** Committed offenses of possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of cannabis.
- **Outcome:** Completed community service and drug prevention classes in exchange for a dismissal of the charge.
- **Youth 2:** Committed numerous offenses including: Burglary, Possession of Alcohol by a Minor, Burglary/Criminal Damage to Government Supported Property, Theft Under \$500/Criminal Damage to Property, Criminal Damage to Property/Retail Theft, Theft from a Person, Aggravated Battery
- **Outcome:** Youth was adjudicated delinquent and sentenced to juvenile probation

One year post-graduation

5/87 graduates committed a new offense at any point within the first 12 months of exiting the program, for an approximate 5.7 recidivism rate at the 12 month point, based on locally available data.

This data includes the 2 youth who committed the offenses described above as well as the following:

- **Youth 3:** Committed the offense of Theft from a Person
- **Outcome:** Juvenile Court Supervision
- **Youth 4:** Committed two unrelated series of offenses including Aggravated Vehicular Hijacking, Aggravated Battery and Aggravated Fleeing and Eluding a Police Officer, and Attempted Residential Burglary
- **Outcome:** Youth was committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice

Three years post-graduation

Since Teen Court's inception, only 12 youth graduated (3) three or more years ago; of those 12, six re-offended at some point in that 3-year period.

In an effort to reduce recidivism rates and improve youth success rates, our program has implemented the following:

- Partnering with agencies and communities to build Trauma-Informed and Restorative Circles and Conferencing
- Providing "Teen Strong" to assist youth with building pro-social skills and resiliency
- Building the capacity of Teen Court Peer Jurors, volunteers and community partners

Total number of graduates re-offending

Overall, out of all 126 total graduates to date, six have committed new offenses at any point after graduation for an overall recidivism rate of 4.7 percent. This is lower than our desired maximum goal of 10 percent.

This rate includes cases where the graduate was charged with an offense, (whether in criminal court, an ordinance violation, or a new juvenile delinquency allegation), and there was a finding of guilty. Pending allegations are not included in the final recidivism rate in order to avoid cases where youth may be found not guilty or there is not sufficient evidence to proceed with a charge.

The (five) graduates captured in the overall recidivism rate are from the following areas:

- (Two) Cahokia
- (Three) East St. Louis, O'Fallon and Swansea

Training Tools and Resources

Sample Teen Court Peer Juror Training

I. Welcome

- A. Introduction of guest and remarks from each one.
- B. Introduction of Teen Court staff and welcome comments from each one.

II. This morning we will answer two questions:

- A. What is a Teen Court?
- B. What is your role in Teen Court?

Let's start by seeing a real teen court in action! (Recommended use of You Tube video on "Youth Court" by the Learning Channel)

III. Restorative Justice:

This is the name for this type of justice proceeding. There are three goals in restorative justice (refer to manual):

- A. How can we hold the offender accountable for the offense?

- B. How can we help the offender repair the harm to all the victims?
- C. What does the offender need to become a more productive member of the community?

What Role do you as Jurors have in answering these questions?

A. You, as jurors, will listen to what the offenders have to say about their offense. You will each be encouraged to ask them questions. You may also hear from family and victims ... the family is also a victim. You will be encouraged to ask them questions ... (Refer to Peer Juror Manual for pages of questions).

B. YOU will decide the remedies. (Refer to Peer Juror Manual for Remedy Form)

You are the offender's community. You will decide how to repair the harm that's been done ... Provide accountability ... and you will decide how to help this offender be a positive member of the community by:

1. Deciding the remedies
2. By the setting an example, yourself
3. By working to help the offender make better choices

This is an awesome responsibility. Today, we are going to learn more about it by doing a mock sentencing hearing right here. Later, we will actually hear from someone who served as a peer juror for four years. Finally, we will take a bus and tour the courtroom where you will hold court at the St. Clair County jail. Then, we shall break for lunch and conversation.

Before we begin, there is one very important thing that I must discuss with you. You, as jurors, must be positive role models and live up to standards. These standards are in your Juror Manual. (Refer to Peer Juror Manual)

Take a moment to read the standards. If you want to be part of the court, we will ask you to sign these at the conclusion of the class today.

Also... confidentiality. On your tables and in your Manuals on page __ is an Oath of Confidentiality. Read it to yourself. All matters must be confidential, and what goes on in court cannot be discussed with anyone... especially an offender's name and identity. Does anyone have a problem with this?

If not, please stand and raise your right hand and I will swear you to abide by

the oath of confidentiality. (Jurors are sworn) Please sign your oath put it on the center of the table and it will be collected. Finally, if you feel comfortable, you may sign the Teen Court Code of Conduct.

Thank You.

IV. Let's have a teen court hearing. I will then take questions.

V. Q and A after hearing

VI. Peer Juror Experience

Experienced Peer Juror(s) speak about their positive experiences with Teen Court in person or video and take questions.

VII. Now we shall hear from our Teen Court Administrator regarding communication and peer juror responsibilities.

This concludes our formal Teen Court training. Let's visit our courtroom and then enjoy some lunch. THANK YOU.

Mock Trial Facts

Teen Court Mock Trial Facts:

Ann Smith was arrested by the Belleville Police Department on September 27, 2017, and charged with the offenses of minor in possession of alcohol and violation of curfew. The police report is as follows:

Officer Smith was patrolling in the area of Walnut Hill Cemetery and Lauderman Park around 11 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 27, 2014. He noticed some lights, like flashlights in the Park, which closes at dusk. He continued to observe and continued to see what appeared to be flashlight lights. He extinguished his lights on his vehicle and slowly drove into the park, pointing his vehicle towards the lights. He then turned on his lights and saw 4 or 5 individuals in the park sitting on chairs by a parked car. They appeared to be drinking alcoholic beverages, and one had a flashlight that was extinguished. The officer spoke through his squad loud speaker and advised the persons in the park to freeze, and he proceeded toward them on foot. One of the individuals was Ann Smith, age 16. She was in possession of a Bud Light beer (it was in her hand and partially consumed), and there was a bottle of tequila with a shot glass by her foot. The tequila bottle was open and partly consumed. Ms. Smith admitted to being in possession of a six-pack of beer and a bottle of tequila. She said it was her birthday, and they were celebrating.

Ms. Smith was placed under arrest for minor in possession of alcohol and curfew violation. She was taken to the station and released on a recognizance bond to her parents. The charges were referred to Teen Court by the State's Attorney's office. She has pleaded guilty to both charges and comes before the Teen Court. Ms. Smith has never had any previous charges or police involvement.

The other three minors were also charged with the above offenses, and one minor was also charged with possession of marijuana. He possessed a blunt which was in his pants pocket. The other alcohol confiscated was a 12-pack of Bud Light and a six-pack of wine cooler.

Ann is a 3.5 student at Belleville East. She lives with her parents and has one younger sibling. She is active in church and school activities.

THINGS WE HAVE LEARNED ALONG THE WAY

St. Clair County Teen Court

Participant Feedback

Teen Court Date: _____

Please check the appropriate Teen Court role below:

Peer Juror _____

Adult Volunteer _____

Offender _____

Parent _____

COMMENTS:

Thank you!

Remedies

COMMUNITY SERVICE MENTORS

A very popular restorative justice sentence is community service. Community service is done at numerous locations in the county. We have a community service coordinator on staff. Locations include churches, food pantries, not for profit resale shops, and maintenance of church meditation/walking paths. The community service hours are on Saturday mornings from 8 a.m. to 12 Noon, 9 a.m. to 12 Noon, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., or 12 Noon to 4 p.m.

Each teen doing community service is supervised by a mentor. Currently, St. Clair County Deputy Sheriffs have “volunteered” to do this supervision. Male deputies are assigned to male teens, and female deputies are assigned to female teens. However, in instances where deputy availability is an issue, female deputies will supervise male offenders. This process has been extremely positive, and some mentoring relationships continue well beyond the community service time. This relationship is beneficial to the teen and good community relations for law enforcement.

Our budget provides for payment of the deputies in exchange for their time. We hope to expand our pool of mentors.

TEEN STRONG

St. Clair County Teen Court and the YMCA partner to provide Teen Strong. The peer jurors and referred teens from court, as part of their restorative justice remedy, have free access to the YMCA on selected Sunday afternoons from 1-4 p.m. The YMCA has available activities and mentors for the participants.

“SUBURBAN JUNKY”

The peer jurors often select this book for respondents to read and write an essay about what they learned.

Graduation

Graduations are an important event for the St. Clair County Teen Court. Originally, graduations were held at the end of the peer jury court hearings. During the last year, that policy changed. Graduations are now held at the beginning of Teen Court.

Scheduling graduations at the beginning of Teen Court, before our hearings, has been a positive change. Our graduations are extremely motivating and inspirational and help prepare the peer jurors and adult volunteers for our restorative justice hearings.

Every teen who completes his or her restorative justice sentence is required to come to graduation, and each respective family is included. Every graduate is called to the front by the moderator and introduced. The moderator then asks the graduates to share what they did for their restorative justice sentence. The moderator also asks them to discuss what part of their sentence was important or helpful to them. The moderator also asks what part of the sentence they will take with them, and, finally, what they've learned from the experience. What the teens share with the peer jurors and adult volunteers is truly inspirational, insightful and motivational. Often, the teens share their vision board or a portion of an essay. We've heard musical rap, viewed vision boards and heard original poetry. We've also heard wisdom learned from lessons and heartfelt thanks. Each teen also receives a certificate of completion, a Teen Court pin and lots of applause.

At the conclusion of graduation, we take a 15-minute break and share breakfast with our graduates and their families. We have breakfast sandwiches and pastries. It is a beautiful way to begin our Teen Court session.

COMMENTS AND OPINIONS

St. Clair County Teen Court offered a unique experience that allowed me to help reform my community while simultaneously growing into a more cultured and caring individual. My position as a peer juror opened my eyes to cultural problems that sometimes go unnoticed in today's society. The largest of these issues is the stereotypical view that once a person commits a crime they will continue down the wrong path. A stigma stating that once someone is labeled as a criminal they are stuck with that label despite all the good attributes they possess. Teen Court shattered this stereotype. Teen Court was an amazing experience because it allowed me to have a more holistic view of situations. Due to the nature of Teen Court, I was not only able to hear the order of events as told by a police report, but I was also able to follow the youths' account during the events in question. This is a perspective that is so often missed because it is easy to place a label on someone without understanding the whole situation. The youth account provides a deeper understanding of not only why the youth committed the offense, but also what aspects of the youth's life may have been brought them to the point of committing an offense. There is so much to be learned from listening to these accounts, and it was from these depictions that I realized the beauty of Teen Court.

As a peer juror, I heard accounts of troubled childhoods, poor relationships, a lack of coping skills, and most importantly the lack of a proper role model throughout day-to-day life. These accounts lead to a deeper understanding of the issues brought in front of the Teen Court. These issues sometimes arise from a momentary lapse in judgment or other factors such as peer pressure, but there are some cases in which the actual cause of issues is buried deeper. It was in this that I realized how similar the individuals of the jury are to the offender. Our situations may have varied slightly, but for the most part the jurors and offenders lead similar lives. There is a certain beauty in the understanding that mistakes can happen, and forgiveness is not an option but a necessity. This is not to say the offenders should go unpunished, but rather that the offenders need the guidance and a peer group to help them make the right choices and continue down the right path. Through the sentences of the Teen Court, I have seen first hand the reformation of my peers, and these reformations are an amazing thing that I continue to carry with me.

Teen Court has allowed me numerous opportunities to learn and grow. I consider myself blessed to have been a member. I was able to directly play a role in reforming and reshaping my peers' mindset towards positive acts, and I realize now they were not the only ones to benefit. I was blessed to be a member of Teen Court because it has opened my eyes to the big picture of society. I realize now that if people set aside their differences in order to obtain one common goal, creating a functioning and peaceful society is possible.

Jonathan Powles

(Jonathan was a peer juror for two years.)

From Teen Offender 76

From: Jane Doe

Teen Court was a humbling yet beneficial experience given the circumstances of why I was on the other side of the peer jury. Teen Court helped me appreciate the importance of our community and my role as a contributor, rather than a user. Teen Court also helped me be thankful for the program because I was forgiven nor have a permanent record affect my future. This program helped my future, contributing to why I should remain a stronger and better person. All the teenage jurors were very inviting and understanding when I spoke, and that really helped the atmosphere all in all. Teen Court was a huge saving for my future and me. Most important, it also taught me forgiveness, to stand by my values, and that I should take advantage of the opportunities I have and have been given.

From Parent:

We have had a unique perspective with Teen Court. From one perspective, any event that would necessitate court is stressful enough. Teen Court allowed us, as parents, the knowledge that kids make mistakes, some more egregious than others, and that there is a channel for true redemption, opportunity, forgiveness and that their future remains in tact. Teen Court was also tough, which we also felt was necessary. Standing among your peers, the reputation consequence, is perhaps the most significant and beneficial consequence. Equally important, for the teens participating as the jury, they learn first hand that mistakes are made, and not always by "bad" people. The jurors get to see how fairness, compassion and some appropriate consequences can impact, change or save a young teen. The judgment that included both personal and community based tasks were beneficial also. Finally, the experience on both sides of the bench has been revealing, helpful, and beneficial for all in our family. We are, most of all, grateful.

Teen Court Feedback/Responses

July 2017-June 2018

“I think every high school student should be required to read the book “Suburban Junkie.” That book helped me turn my life around.” - *Teen Court Graduate*

“My son learned a lot from the Teen Court program. The Peer Jurors really did make him think about his actions. The way the other kids work as a team was heartwarming and very effective.” - *Mother of a Teen Court Graduate*

“I enjoyed the Mock Trial, the Restorative options and knowing the different backgrounds of people.” - *Peer Juror*

“The Mock Trial simulation was the best part. All actors involved were great to the point I believed that the simulation was real until Judge Eckert said it was a Mock Trial.” - *Peer Juror*

“I am so glad I was nominated to join Teen Court a couple of years ago. It has been an amazing

experience. Through Teen Court I have heard from so many people different than me and it has taught me empathy. I learned that different situations can have a great impact on a person and how blessed I am. Teen Court was something I always looked forward to because it was amazing to help out kids like me with their mistake, because they just needed guidance. The coordinators and people who ran Teen Court were always so nice to me and I was inspired by them. I will really miss Teen Court and I hope it always continues.” - *Peer Juror*

I enjoyed helping the respondents turn their lives around. I feel like I am making a positive impact in my community. It was great to see parents watch their kid’s lives being turned around.” - *Peer Juror*

“Teen Court provides a real family vibe.” - *Peer Juror*

“The (three) things I like best about Teen Court the Teen Court training was the introduction to the process about what happens in the court room. Another thing would be the information presented to the jurors. Lastly, would be the overall experience and my introduction with the law.” - *Peer Juror*

“I like getting to know the other jurors from different schools and learning about how to be able to restore a child fairly. Knowing that I am responsible to help other kids get on the right path.” - *Peer Juror*

“The (three) things I like best about Teen Court is the comfort of being around good people, hearing other’s stories to learn how their past and the good food.” - *Peer Juror*

“I enjoyed helping people, the environment and the peer jurors basically decide the process for to help the respondents.” - *Peer Juror*

“I enjoyed watching the graduation ceremonies to see I helped other teens turn their life around so they don’t go down the wrong path.” - *Peer Juror*

“Teen Court provides good information and the peer jurors are leaders. Everyone is so encouraging.” - *Peer Juror*

“In my opinion, the Teen Court program is a great way to connect with peers from other school and to get involved in the community. Through my experience, I have seen many of the teens, who went through the teen court process, return with a new found happiness it seems. Knowing that I contributed to helping other teens change their ways is something that is extremely special to me. Thank you to everyone who made this program possible!” - *Peer Juror*

Teen Court participant feedback comments/remarks from Nov. 11, 2016

“This was very helpful. It helped me change my life. This program should stay in business. It will better the Black community in a lot of ways and give us a second chance. Thanks for the second chance.” - *Program Graduate*

“I feel like this program was a great thing for my child.”- *Parent*

“Teen Court has impacted my life tremendously to a point where I am more interested in the law and in the courtroom. So therefore, this is a very special opportunity they have given me.” - *Peer Juror*

“Teen Court gives people who make poor choices second chances at life. Their poor choices in their younger years shouldn’t have to follow them for the rest of their lives.” - *Peer Juror*

“Teen Court gives youth a second chance and an opportunity for greatness. It provides a hope to those who have made poor choices and looking for a second chance at a well-rounded life. It is meaningful to participate because it makes me feel great to help others. We all make mistakes and we all deserve a chance. Teen Court provides this to all who seek forgiveness.” - *Peer Juror*

“Teen Court is a great program. It helps change kids’ lives that have come here. It has also changed me. I have learned not to judge anyone. I also know to stay out of trouble and that there is a second chance for most people.” - *Peer Juror*

“St. Clair County Teen Court has a positive impact on both the people going through the court as well as the jurors. This experience has showed me the consequences I could have if I were to act out as well as the favor given by Teen Court. I think it’s a positive program that gives people a second chance. I also think having the programs and community service option has a positive impact on the offender. I not only like they should have written sentences to think about their actions but the community service is a sacrifice as well. Teen Court has made a positive impact on me and how I look at the law.” - *Peer Juror*

“It was nice to see the impact it had on the people at graduation. I think that it is a good experience for everyone involved.” - *Peer Juror*

“My favorite part about the Teen Court program is seeing the graduation. I love to see the improvements that each of the kids has made in their lives. The sentences really do change lives for the better” - *Peer Juror*

“I love Teen Court. It think it is beneficial to not only the offenders; but for jurors as well. Offenders are given a chance to start over and learn from their mistakes. Jurors are able to help others restore the damage and become a more beneficial member of society. My favorite part is seeing graduations. You see people grow and learn and move on to a better, more successful future. Teen Court is worth every minute I put in.” - *Peer Juror*

“There was one graduate today (11-12-16) that I felt was really affected by his Teen Court experience. I hope that more people will have his attitude after completing the program.” - *Peer Juror*

“I believe that Teen Court is very effective in its purpose of giving first-time offenders an opportunity to get back on the right track without their incident having a long-lasting effect on their future. Oftentimes, we see teens make mistakes, come to Teen Court, and by the time they complete their sentence and return for their graduation, it’s very evident that their attitude and vision has changed. If it wasn’t for this program, these teens either wouldn’t learn anything from their mistakes, or it would stay on their record.” - *Peer Juror*

“I think Teen Court is something that benefits many teens because they get a second chance.

Everyone makes mistakes and I think this gives them a chance to realize their mistakes and get on a better path.” - *Peer Juror*

“My favorite part of the program is being able to see the changes in people before and after they carry out their sentences. It really shows people can change if they try and really work to be a better person. Seeing the defendant give their side of the story on the stand allows us to see the real emotions as they recount the story of what happened.” - *Peer Juror*

“Teen Court really helps people’s futures. They have a second chance at life.” - *Peer Juror*

“In the beginning today (11-12-16) there was one graduate in particular who seemed like he truly had a positive experience. Many people were praising him, his writing ability, and how he changed his life around. It seems that this program really helped as he provided positive feedback for the kids. It’s nice to see a program that works and helps kids come back from their mistakes.” - *Peer Juror*



Quincy University

Annette,

Thank you so much for agreeing to help Adams County as we plan to restart our Teen Court. It has been a few years and your help was a tremendous savings in time. Your manual was appreciated as our committee was able to see what successful Teen Courts were using and we were able to incorporate this information into our program! My first reaction when I saw the manual and realize all of the work that went into organizing it was this is a big mountain to climb. However, the organization and tools in the manual were amazing!! We should be able to start our program in Adams County a lot earlier than anticipated because of the materials in the manual that we will use as our guide.

Again, thank you for your help and I will be sending you additional information we will be using so you can make sure other Teen Courts can use it.

Dr. Roy Lantry

Director of Special Projects at Quincy University



December 9, 2016

Senior military leaders know from first-hand experience that the men and women of the United States Armed Forces are highly skilled, disciplined and dedicated; they must be, in order to do the difficult work of national defense. It is imperative that future generations are equal to the task.

But far too many young Americans reach adulthood without the basic qualifications necessary for military service. U.S. Department of Defense data indicate that a full 71 percent of all 17- to 24-year-olds are ineligible for military service, primarily because they are too poorly educated, too overweight, have a history of drug abuse, and/or have disqualifying criminal records.

The more than 600 retired generals and admirals of Mission: Readiness are deeply troubled by the long-term national security implications of this startling reality. We must take measures to help young Americans become citizen-ready-educated, healthy, and prepared to do the work of our nation, whether in or out of uniform.

Youth crime poses a challenge for every community; it also has serious implications for national security and the strength of our military. We must do everything possible to help juvenile offenders correct their course, so they may enter adulthood with a full range of options before them—including joining the workforce, enrolling in post-secondary education, or serving in the military.

While the traditional criminal justice system remains an indispensable recourse for dealing with the most serious crimes, there are better strategies to help prevent youth who commit lower-level crimes from reoffending. Teen courts are a promising strategy to reduce recidivism and get troubled kids back on track through the power of positive peer influence. We welcome rigorous research and evaluation of teen and youth court models; investigating high-potential efforts like these can lead us to a safer, stronger America.

Amy Dawson-Taggart
National Director
Mission: Readiness

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With gratitude, we would like to acknowledge the assistance of the past and present St. Clair County Teen Court staff: Dr. Thomas Trice, former Leadership Coordinator; Garen Vartanian, Community Service Coordinator; and Tamara Vaughn Walker, Juvenile Justice Coordinator and Teen Court Evaluator. We also thank Dr. Shauntey James and Anna Young, Assistant State's Attorney Bernadette Schrempp and Julie Constance Elliot. In addition, we wish to recognize Lindenwood University- Belleville for their support and assistance. Finally, we extend our gratitude to our capable editors, Neil Sechrest, Brian Arceneaux, Jessika Stiehr, William Barton, Alex Enyart, William Whicher, Garen Vartanian, and Jackie Sprehe.

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