

St. Clair County



Teen Court

Annual Report

A Project of the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council

July 2018 – June 2019

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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 taking steps toward broader community healing. 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 more opportunities 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 for prosecution. 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 early 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 375th Security Forces from Scott Air Force Base. .

In September 2018, Illinois Balance and Restorative Justice (IBARJ) facilitated the Restorative Justice Conferencing Training for stakeholders from St. Clair and Monroe-Randolph counties to continue embedding restorative justice principles. The training cohort included representatives from the St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office, St. Clair County Sheriff's Department, St. Clair Regional Office of Education, Monroe-Randolph County Regional Office of Education, Children's Home and Aid - Redeploy, Big Brothers Big Sisters and New Life Community Church.

Teen Court established a partnership with R3 Development as a new community service site in 2019. Our respondents have been referred to R3 Development to connect them with other caring adult mentors, developing construction skills to rehab houses and offering other positive interventions to improve more positive youth development outcomes.

Our Teen Court exemplifies how cross-sector groups can work together by reimagining restorative responses to juvenile justice. Thank you for your support and willingness to impact the lives of young people and families in St. Clair County.

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 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

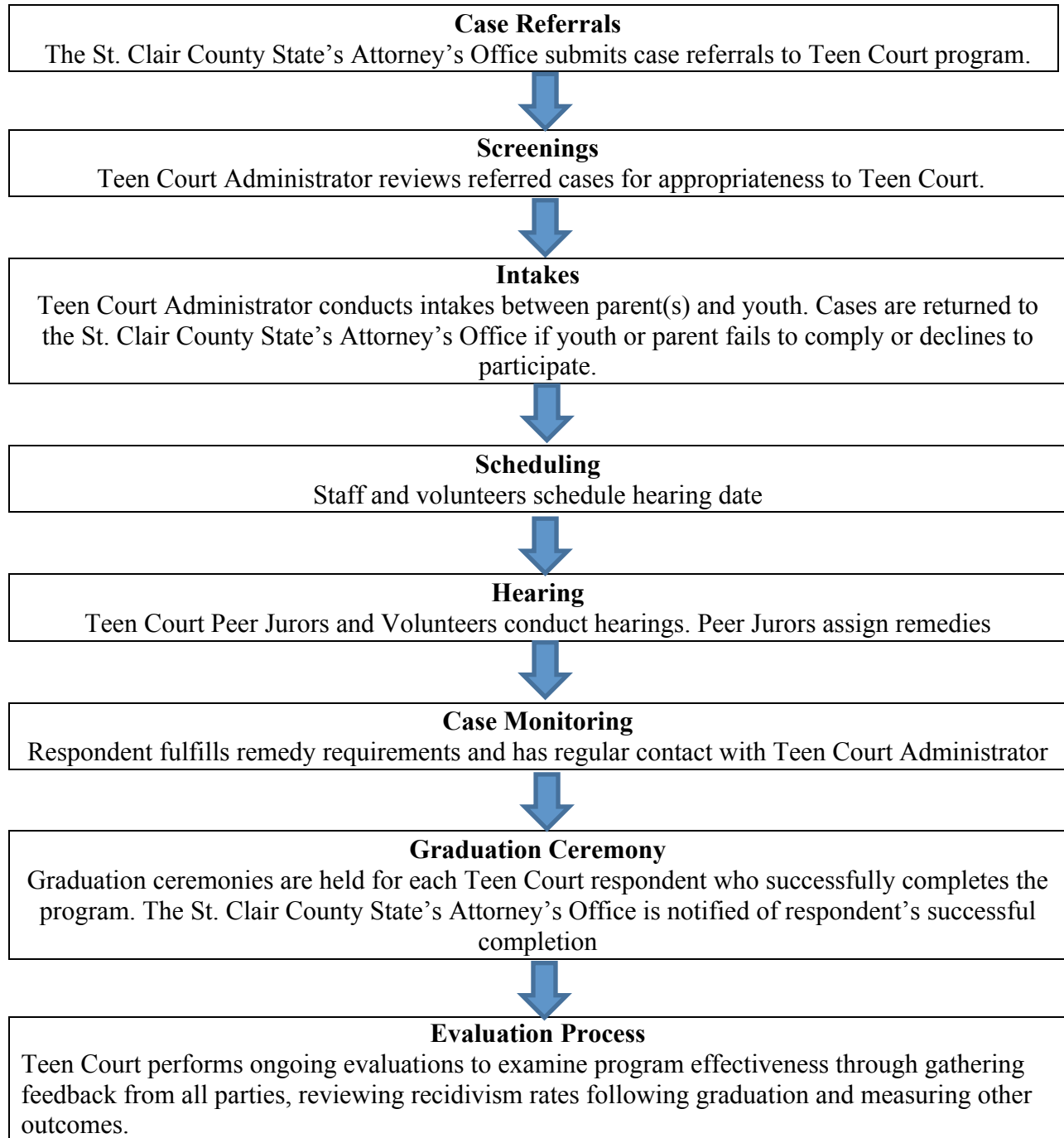
Program Year: 4: July 2017 - June 2018

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

Program Year 5: July 2018 - June 2019

TOTAL Participants	34 Respondents
TOTAL Declined	15 Failed to Respond
Successful Completions	36 Graduates

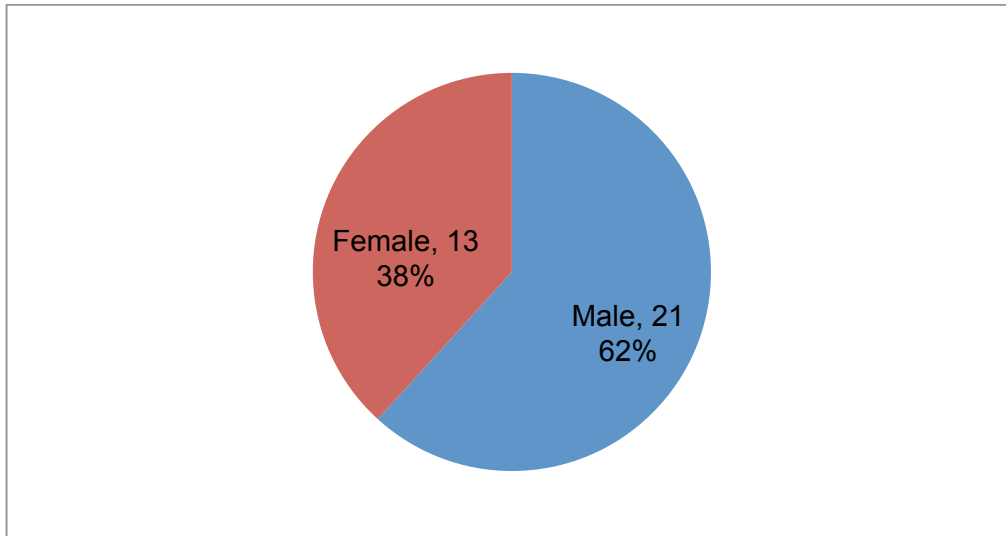
St. Clair County Teen Court Process



July 2018 - June 2019 Annual Summary

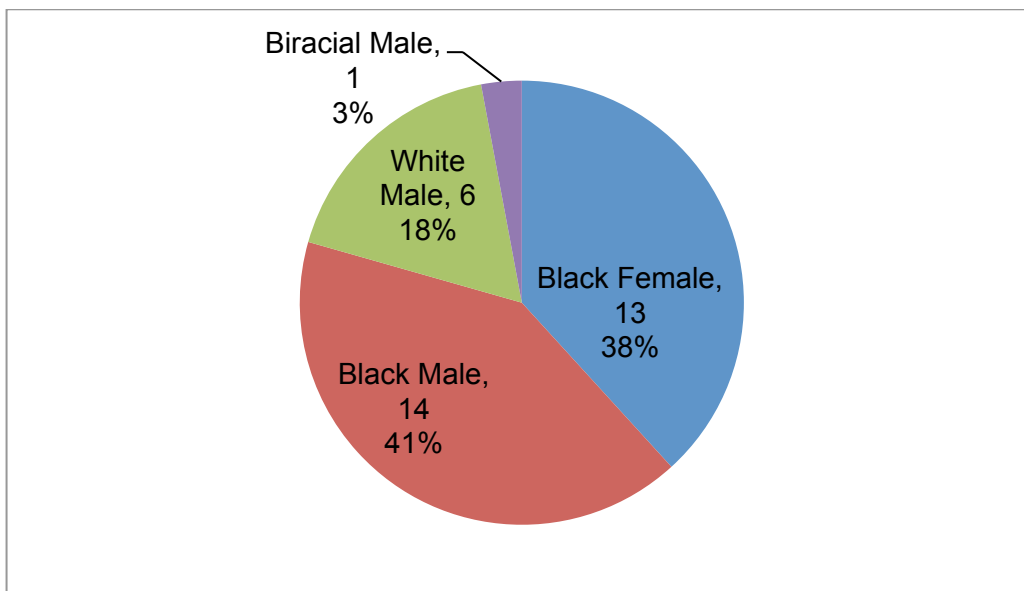
The chart below provides a breakdown of each respondent's gender who made an appearance in Teen Court during the July 2018 - June 2019 program year.

Figure 1. *St. Clair County Teen Court Participants by Gender*



The chart below provided a breakdown of each respondent's gender and race who made an appearance in Teen Court during the July 2018 - June 2019 program year.

Figure 2. *St. Clair County Teen Court Participants by Gender and Race*



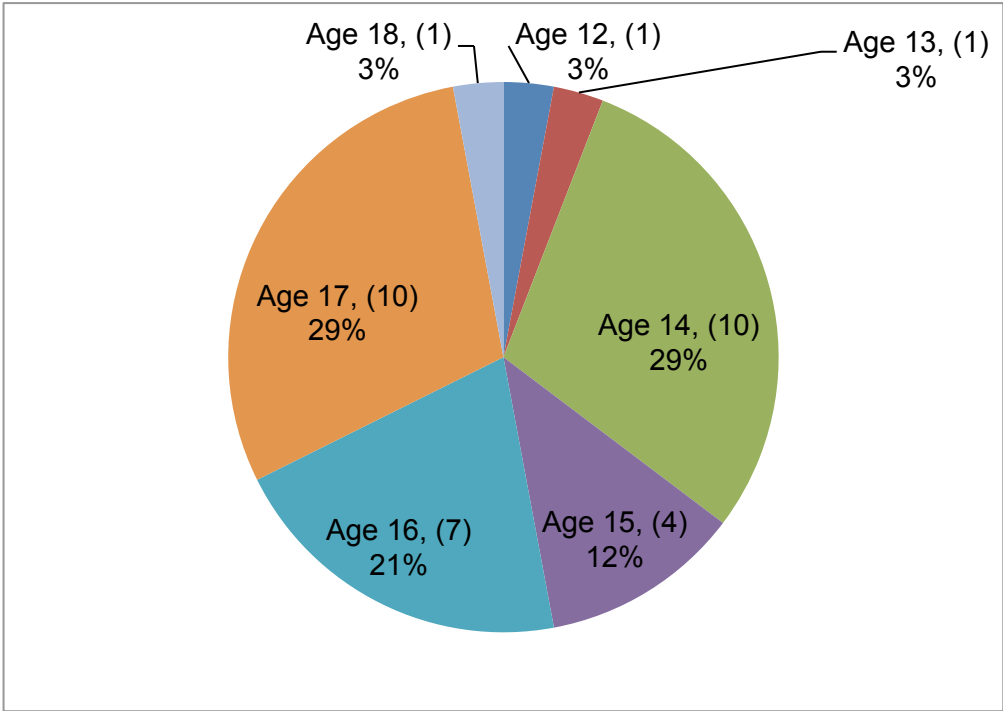
The chart below provides a breakdown of each respondent's race and gender who was seen in Teen Court during the July 2018 - June 2019 program year.

Figure 3. *St. Clair County Teen Court Participants by Gender and Race*

Race	Male	Female	Total
Biracial	1		1
Black	14	13	27
White	6		6
TOTAL	21	13	34

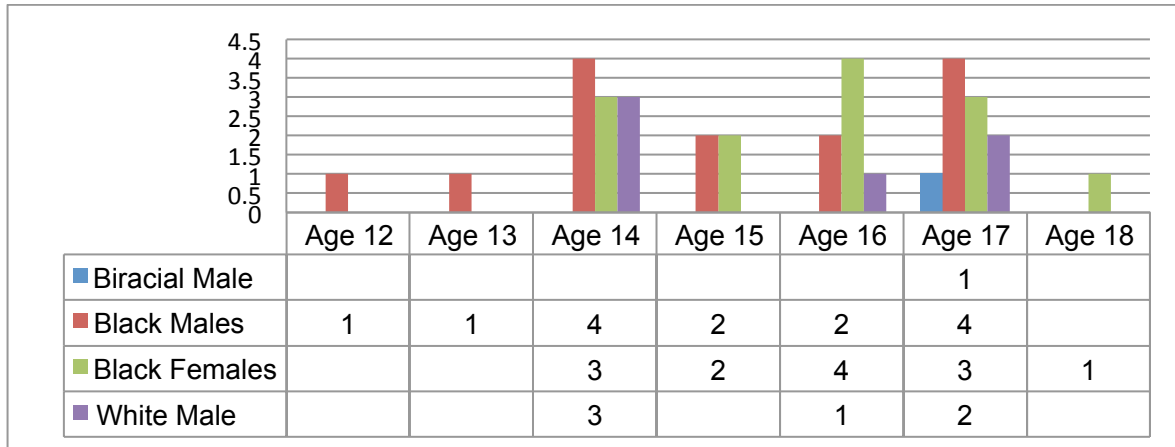
The chart below shows the age of respondents when they appeared before the Teen Court peer jurors during the July 2018 - June 2019 program year.

Figure 4. *St. Clair County Teen Court Participants by Age, (Total) and Percentage*



The chart below provides a breakdown of each respondent's gender, race and age who were seen in Teen Court during the July 2018 - June 2019 program year.

Figure 5. *St. Clair County Teen Court Participants by Gender, Race and Age*



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

Figure 6. *St. Clair County Teen Court Participants by Schools*

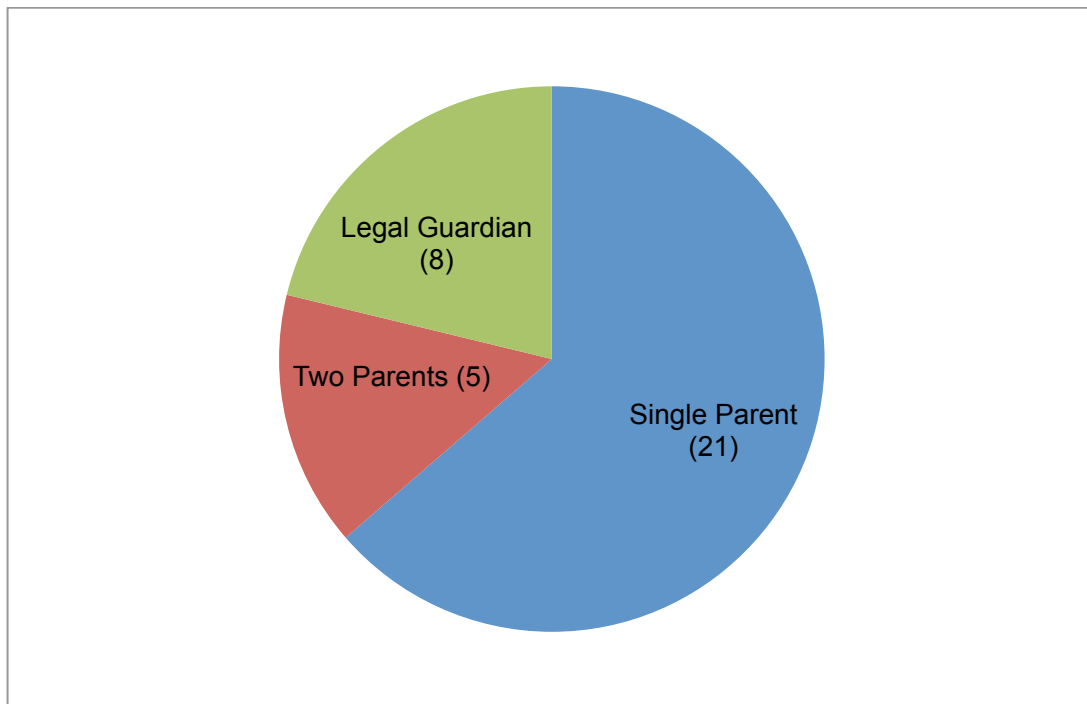
School	# of Students Attending
Belle Valley School	1
Belleville East High School	4
Belleville West High School	1
Brooklyn Love Joy School	1
Cahokia High School	4
Dupo Jr. High School	1
East St. Louis Sr. High School	6
JCT Academy	1
Lincoln Middle School	1
Mascoutah High School	1
Mason-Clark Middle School	1
Millburn School	1
New Athens Jr. High School	1
O'Fallon High School	1
Pathways School	1
St. Mary's	1
Unity Lutheran School	1
Wirth Middle School	2
Wyvetter Younge Alternative Center	3

Not Currently Enrolled in School	1
Total	34 Students

Household Status

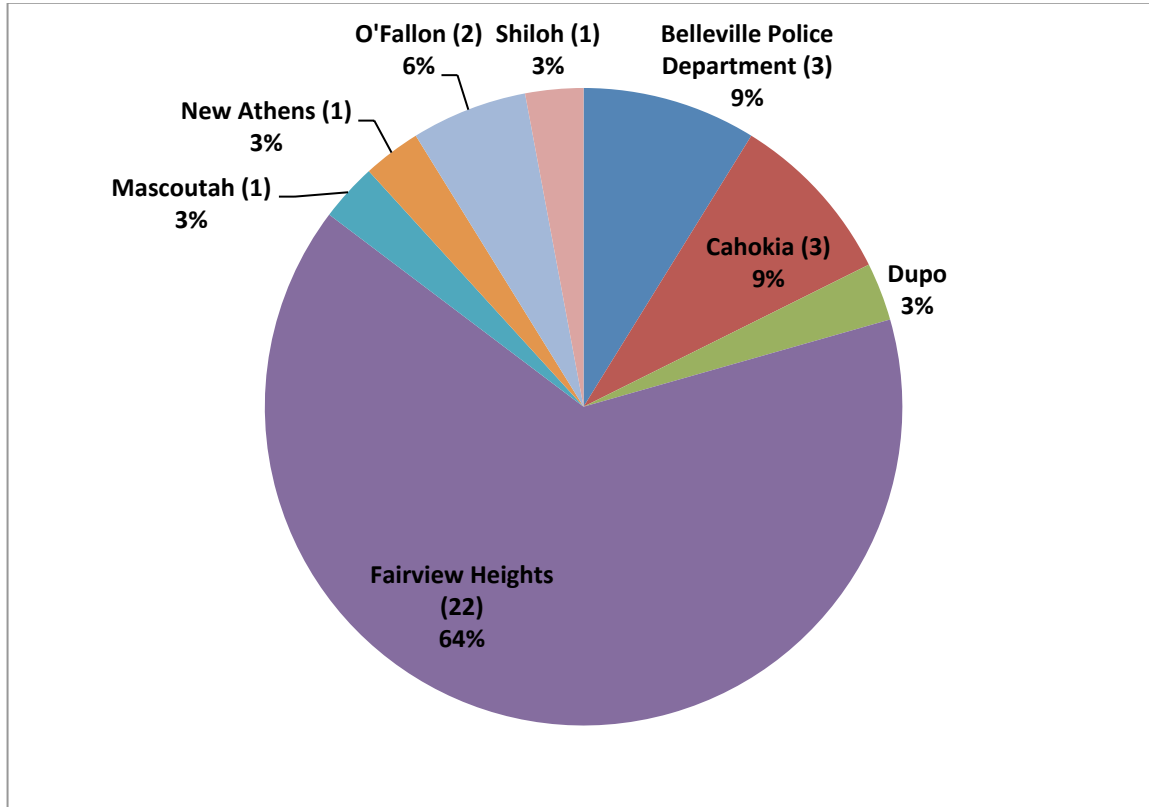
Teen Court collects the household status of each respondent appearing before the Peer Jury. The information below provides the family status of each respondent seen during the July 2018 - June 2019.

Figure 7. St. Clair County Teen Court Participants by Households



The chart below provides a breakdown of each police department that was involved with referring cases to Teen Court during the July 2018 - June 2019 program year.

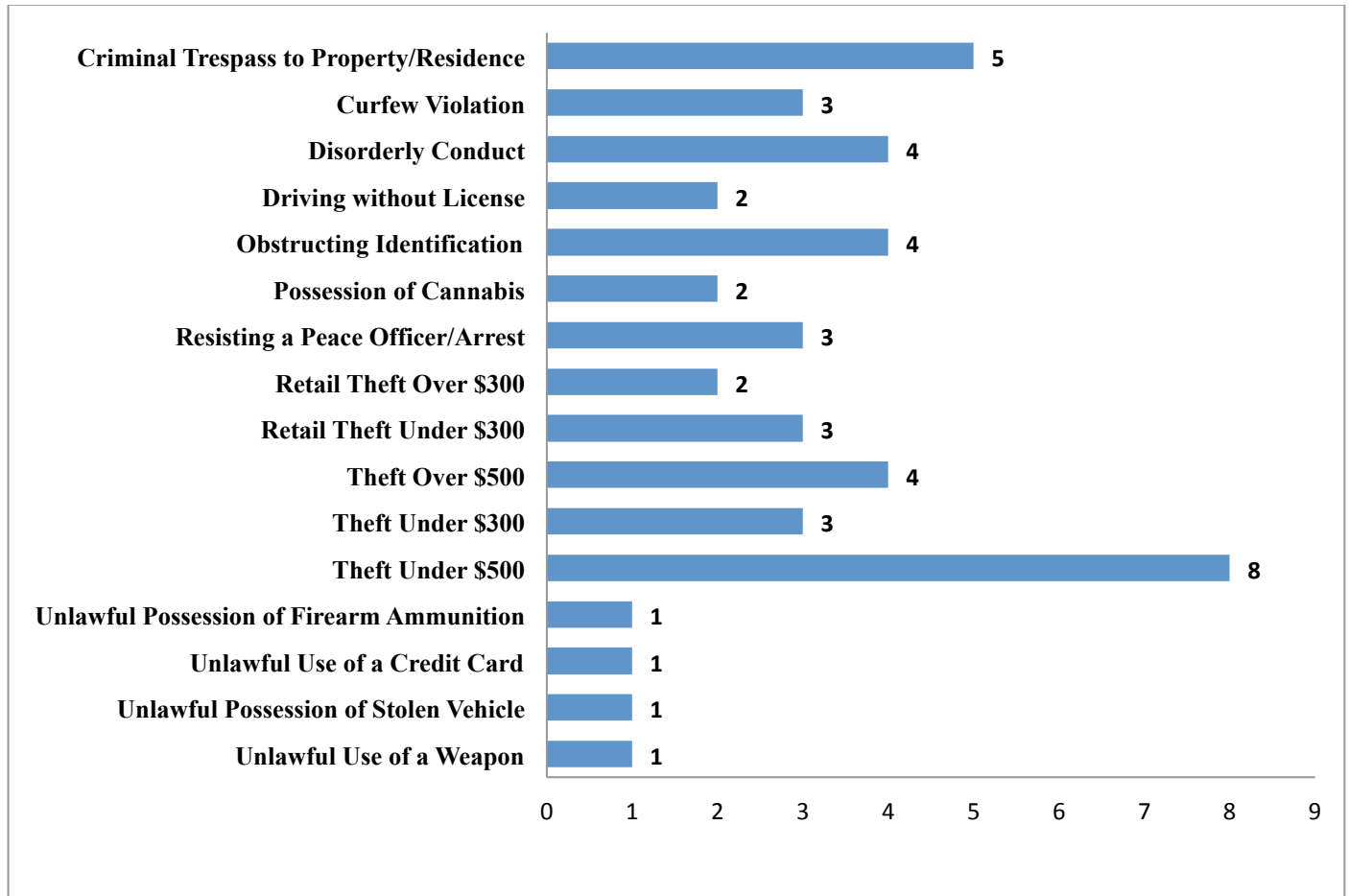
Figure 8. St. Clair County Teen Court Referrals by Police Department



Please note: Fairview Heights includes our large county mall along with many retail stores which explains the high number of referrals related to theft and retail theft in comparison to other police departments.

The chart below provides a breakdown of all the offenses committed by Teen Court Respondents at the time of their July 2018 - June 2019 appearance.

Figure 9. *St. Clair County Teen Court Referrals by Offenses Committed*



Offenses by Race and Gender

The chart below provides a breakdown about each Teen Court offense committed during the July 2018 - June 2019 program year. Some Teen Court respondents committed more than one offense.

Figure 10. *St. Clair County Teen Court Offense Chart*

Offense Type	Black Females	Black Males	White Males	Biracial Male	Total
Criminal Trespass to Property/Residence		2	3		5
Curfew Violation		1	2		3
Disorderly Conduct		4			4
Driving without License		1	1		2
Obstructing Identification		4			4
Possession of Cannabis		2			2
Resisting a Peace Officer/Arrest		2		1	3
Retail Theft Over \$300		2			2
Retail Theft Under \$300	2	1			3
Theft Over \$500		4			4
Theft Under \$300	1	2			3
Theft Under \$500	4	3	1		8
Unlawful Possession of Firearm Ammunition			1		1
Unlawful Use of a Credit Card	1				1
Unlawful Possession of Stolen Vehicle			1		1
Unlawful Use of a Weapon	1				1
Total Number of Offenses	9	29	9	1	47

Teen Court Cases, Offenses, Age, Race and Referring Police Departments

Figure: 11 *The chart below provides a breakdown of each offense and referring police department*

Criminal Trespass to Property/Residence...5 Cases

2 Black Males - (1) Cahokia Police Department, (1) Mascoutah Police Department
3 White Males - (1) Cahokia Police Department, (1) O'Fallon Police Department, (1) New Athens Police Department

Curfew Violations...3 Cases

1 Biracial Male - (1) Belleville Police Department
2 Black Males - (1) Mascoutah Police Department, (1) Fairview Heights Police Department

Disorderly Conduct...4 Cases

4 Black Males - (4) Fairview Heights Police Department

Driving without License...2 Cases

1 Black Male - (1) Mascoutah Police Department
1 White Male - (1) Dupou Police Department

Obstructing Identification...4 Cases

4 Black Males - (4) Fairview Heights Police Departments

Possession of Cannabis...2 Cases

2 Black Males - (1) Fairview Heights Police Department, (1) Shiloh Police Department

Resisting a Peace Officer/Arrest...3 Cases

1 Biracial Male - (1) Belleville Police Department
2 Black Males - (1) Fairview Heights Police, (1) Mascoutah Police Departments

Retail Theft Over \$300...2 Cases

2 Black Males - (1) Cahokia Police Department, (1) Fairview Heights Police Departments

Retail Theft Under \$300...3 Cases

2 Black Females - (2) Fairview Heights Police Department
1 Black Male - (1) Fairview Heights Police Department

Theft Over \$500...4 Cases

4 Black Males - (4) Fairview Heights Police Department

Theft Under \$300...3 Cases

1 Black Female - (1) Fairview Heights Police Department
2 Black Males - (1) Cahokia Police Department, (1) Fairview Heights Police Department

Theft Under \$500...8 Cases

4 Black Females - (4) Fairview Heights Police Department

3 Black Males - (2) Fairview Heights Police Department, (1) O'Fallon Police Department

1 White Male - (1) Fairview Heights Police Departments

Unlawful Possession of Firearm Ammunition...1 Case

1 White Male - (1) Belleville Police Department

Unlawful Use of a Credit Card...1 Case

1 Black Female - (1) Cahokia Police Department

Unlawful Possession of Stolen Vehicle...1 Case

1 White Male - (1) Dupou Police Department

Unlawful Use of a Weapon...1 Case

1 Black Female - Cahokia Police Department

Teen Court Restorative Remedies

Community Service Hours

Community Service hours recommended by the St. Clair County Teen Court Peer Jury is conducted in 3-4 hour increments at various approved St. Clair County non-profit organizations. During the July 2018-June 2019, Teen Court respondents performed (81) community service hours at the following agencies:

- Shelter Shop, Belleville
- Tapestry of Community Offerings (TOCO) Shop, Belleville
- St. Vincent DePaul, East St. Louis
- R3 Development, East St. Louis

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.

Individual & Family Counseling Referrals

Teen Court connects youth to community-based counseling services in an effort to support positive youth development outcomes. Our program partners with the following agencies to assist youth and families with addressing trauma, grief, rebuilding trust and other counseling needs. We have made referrals to the following community partners:

- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Chestnut Health Systems
- Children's Home and Aid Society of Illinois
- Heartlinks Grief Counseling
- Hoyleton Youth & Family Services

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 and 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 How to Join the Armed Forces, How to Become a Police Officer, The Value of Honesty, Making Better Decisions and Better Friends and How Peer Pressure Affects What I do in Life. The Teen Court Administrator reviews and discusses each essay with the respondent for further reflection and possible community support.

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.

Interview Recruiter to Join United States 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 respondents with an opportunity to work toward correcting his/her actions to reduce the harm they have caused as a result of his/her offense. Letters of apology are usually written to the respondent's parents, siblings, teachers or the business owners, or lost prevention officers who were impacted by the offense. The letter of apology is a remedy 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.

R3 Development

Teen Court launched a partnership with R3 Development in early 2019. Teen Court respondents have been referred to R3 Development to gain skills with rehabbing houses, social enterprise and gaining job readiness in East St. Louis.

Teen Strong

Teen Strong assists youth respondents with developing pro-social skills. Through our partnership with the Gateway YMCA in Belleville and the 375th Security Forces from Scott Air Force Base, respondents have access to mentoring, recreational activities and other supports to help them become successful members of society. During this program year, sixteen respondents engaged in Teen Strong to build stronger relationships with peers and service personnel.

Teen Court Peer Jury

Youth respondents may be recommended and requested to serve as a peer juror at a future Teen Court hearing. The respondent serving on the peer jury has an opportunity to actively participate as a peer juror to help a fellow teen in a similar situation. The respondent serving on the peer jury has a role in determining the appropriate remedies for other teen respondents appearing before the Teen Court on the date required for juror service.

Verbal Apology

The peer jury may request Teen Court respondents to openly apologize to another person during a court proceeding. The verbal apology, similar to the letter of apology allows the respondent to take accountability and other steps toward repairing the harm imposed as a result of his/her actions or behavior.

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, quotes and words of encouragement to community 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 would like to be in adulthood. Teens have also used the vision board as an opportunity to express their thoughts in music expressions and poetry. 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. Respondents are encouraged to be as creative as possible while designing their vision boards.

Teen Court Remedies Assigned during the July 2018-June 2019 Program Year

Remedies Category	Number of Referrals	Remedies Assigned by Peer Jurors
Community Service	15	Teen Court respondents performed (81) hours of community service at area food pantries, resale shops and a construction site in St. Clair County.
Counseling Referrals	18	Teen Court respondents and members of their families were referred to community-based health care providers to increase access to counseling services. In addition, respondents accessed counseling services through school-based counseling services within Cahokia and East St. Louis School Districts. These supports included individual/family counseling, grief therapy, substance use and trauma recovery.
Essays	9	Teen Court respondents were given essay writing assignments for goal reflections and personal development. Youth wrote essays about making healthier decisions, choosing better friends, attending college, peer pressure and becoming leaders in their families and community.

Extra-Curricular Activities	9	Teen Court respondents were given remedies to connect with programs and services offered within their schools and communities. These activities included joining the 21 st Century After-School Program, math clubs, sports leagues and academic enrichment programs.
Interview for Career Development	4	Teen Court respondents had to conduct interviews to learn about enrolling into Lincoln’s Challenge Academy, becoming a welder and joining the United States Army.
Interview County Jail Inmate and Write Essay about the Experience	12	Teen Court respondents interviewed St. Clair County jail inmates who have been charged and convicted for a similar offense. During these interviews, the jail inmates encourage the respondents to make better choices by staying in school, making better choices, refraining from substance use, joining a gang. Instead, they are encouraged to become productive youth leaders.
Letter of Apology	31	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 including retails stores, parents and other family members in an effort to restore ties.
Teen Court Peer Jury	5	Teen Court respondents are oftentimes selected to serve on the peer jury. This process allows the respondent to experience the Teen Court process and engage in

		assigning remedies.
Teen Strong	16	Teen Court respondents participated in Teen Strong to enhance relationships with law enforcement and focus on developing pro-social skills.
Verbal Apology	3	Teen Court respondents verbally apologized to their parents, caregivers and other family members in an effort to restore relationships and regain their trust.
Vision Board	12	Teen Court respondents developed Vision Boards to determine their talents, skills and other abilities connecting them with personal goals and future aspirations.

Teen Court Recidivism Report July 2018 - June 2019

From the beginning of Teen Court through June 30, 2019, 162 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 changes 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 162 youth who have successfully graduated Teen Court from program start through June 30, 2019, this recidivism report includes charges for (10) 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

1/155 graduates committed a new offense within 3 months of exiting the program, for an approximate .006% recidivism rate at the 3-month point, based on locally available data.

Youth 1: Committed offenses of Unlawful Possession with Intent to Deliver Cannabis
Outcome: Juvenile Court Supervision

Six Months Post-Graduation

5/149 graduates committed a new offense within the 6 months of exiting the program, for an approximate 3.4% recidivism rate at the 6-month point, based on locally available data.

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

Youth 2: Committed offenses of Possession of Drug Paraphernalia and Possession of Cannabis.

Outcome: Youth successfully completed community service and drug prevention classes in exchange for a dismissal of the charges.

Youth 3: Committed numerous offenses including: Burglary, Possession of Alcohol by 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

Youth 4: Leaving the Scene and Theft from a Person

Outcome: Youth received juvenile court supervision

Youth 5: Unlawful Possession of Cannabis and Unlawful Possession of Drug Paraphernalia

Outcome: Youth successfully completed supervised supervision and received credit for employment

One Year Post-Graduation

10/125 graduates committed a new offense at any point within the first 12 months of exiting the program, for an approximate 8% recidivism rate at the 12-month point, based on locally available data.

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

Youth 6: 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

Youth 7: Aggravated Fleeing, Attempting to Elude Police, Aggravated Unlawful Use of a Weapon

Outcome: Youth was adjudicated delinquent and sentenced to probation

Youth 8: Possession of Cannabis

Outcome: Youth received alternative disposition of Risk Education Classes

Youth 9: Unlawful Possession of Cannabis

Outcome: Youth successfully completed community service.

Youth 10: Retail Theft Under \$300

Outcome: Youth successfully completed supervised supervision and community service.

Three Year Post-Graduation

Since Teen Court's inception, only 42 youth graduated 3 or more years ago; of those 42, 9 youth reoffended at some point in that 3 year period.

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

- Partnering with community agencies to embed Trauma-Informed and Restorative Justice principles, practices and policies
- Referring youth and families to service providers to address grief, youth mental health needs and counseling supports
- Offering "Teen Strong" to assist youth with developing pro-social skills to restore youth resiliency
- Building the capacity of Teen Court Peer Jurors, volunteers and community partners through ongoing training efforts

Total Number of Graduates Re-Offending

Overall, out of all 162 total graduates to date, 10 have committed new offenses at any point after graduation for an overall recidivism rate of 6.2%. This is lower than our desired maximum goal of 10%.

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 (10) graduates captured the overall recidivism rate are from the following areas:

- (3) Belleville
- (1) Cahokia
- (2) East St. Louis
- (2) O'Fallon
- (1) Shiloh
- (1) Swansea

Teen Court Feedback/Responses

July 2018 - June 2019

“Teen Court has provided me with a second chance to pursue my goals.” - *Teen Court Graduate*

“The inmate interview made me realize I do not want to end up in jail.” - *Teen Court Graduate*

“I will do a better job of picking friends and being aware of peer pressure.” - *Teen Court Graduate*

“Through Teen Court, I have gained skills such as public speaking, critical thinking and empathy towards others. I gained skills through Teen Court that have been made me comfortable and confident as a leader. These skills will translate into my life later on, and help me in careers and college. Through this program I have been able to see a glimpse into the lives of others in my community, which has allowed me to make connections through similarities and differences in our lives. I truly value this.” - *Teen Court Peer Juror*

“I enjoy coming to Teen Court. I feel it is beneficial to both the peer juror and the respondent. It is worth your Saturday morning!” - *Teen Court Peer Juror*

“Teen Court is a great experience for everybody to be a part of. I’m glad I get to experience this.” - *Teen Court Peer Juror*

“The program is nice because we are helping other teenagers who have made some wrong decisions. I would recommend this program for anyone my age.” - *Teen Court Peer Juror*

“Teen Court has been really influential. I am happy to be a part of it. It’s helped shape my views and has given me another perspective about the Criminal Justice field.” - *Teen Court Peer Juror*

“I love this program. I enjoy getting the email saying that there is a court date! I am really anxious to come and help out the kids have a better life. I also enjoy the breakfast that is provided as well.” - *Teen Court Peer Juror*

“I like feeling like I’m making a difference in my community. I like meeting new people. I look forward to coming here every other month. This is a good program for people looking to go into law. Also, the breakfast sandwiches are amazing! - *Teen Court Peer Juror*

“I love Teen Court! It’s has been a lot of fun throughout the years. I love helping the respondents. I would recommend this program to anyone who wants to do it!” - *Teen Court Peer Juror*

“Teen Court is a really nice experience. I feel as if this program can change the community to give teens my age another chance. I really love being a peer juror! - *Teen Court Peer Juror*

