

St. Clair County



Teen Court

Annual Report

A Project of the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council

July 2019 - June 2020

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Acknowledgements

The St. Clair County Teen Court Foundation is made possible by the support and contributions of many dedicated community partners. With gratitude, we would like to acknowledge the assistance of past and present St. Clair County Teen Court staff, volunteers, peer jurors along with program respondents and their families. Special thanks to the St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office, St. Clair County Sheriff's Department, St. Clair County Regional Office of Education, Monroe-Randolph County Regional Office of Education, Lindenwood University - Belleville, Gateway YMCA - Belleville, 375th Security Forces - Scott Air Force Base, Children's Home and Aid - Redeploy, Chestnut Health Systems, Big Brothers Big Sisters, New Life Community Church, Heartlinks Grief Center, St. Vincent DePaul, Shelter Shop, TOCO Shop, MindsEye Radio and Ameren Illinois. We thank Ms. Zabelle Vartanian for her years of service to Teen Court. Finally, we extend our condolences to the families of Mr. William Whicher and Mr. Dick Vartanian.

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 pursue 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 March 2020 as a result of COVID-19, Teen Court had to make several program adjustments in an effort to prioritize the health and safety of all participants, volunteers and staff. Due to the pandemic, our Teen Court sessions for March, April and May were canceled. In June, we held a small Teen Court session at the St. Clair County Regional Office of Education since we were unable to host sessions at the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department. Despite the challenges amid COVID-19, Teen Court has continued to manage our connections with respondents, peer jurors, volunteers and community supporters.

In this report, you will learn more about our COVID-19 responses and protocols as we continue to support respondents with restorative justice principles. Teen Court also cultivated a new partnership with MindsEye Radio in Belleville. Our Peer Jurors and Administrator had the opportunity and platform to share information about Teen Court with members of the visually impaired community allowing us to diversify our audiences.

St. Clair County Teen Court Program Updates

- I. Enhanced Training: Each year we train our new peer juror at a day-long training. The training consists of a video of a teen court peer jury case, a mock trial, a lecture on restorative justice, a lecture on trauma and a panel of seasoned peer jurors discussing the Teen Court experience. During this program year, we enhanced the training on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Youth Trauma. In addition to a more detailed lecture, the jurors were given materials on childhood trauma to review and include in the Teen Court Training Manual.
 - II. Teen Court received a \$25,000.00 grant from Ameren Illinois. As part of their assistance, Ameren also arranged for a presentation about Teen Court on four radio station broadcasts in the Metro-East.
 - III. In October 2019, our staff, an Assistant State's Attorney and several of our volunteers received training on restorative justice conferencing. We are prepared to add restorative justice conferencing as a remedy where the cases have victims who consent to participate. However, due to the pandemic, we were not able to do any conferences. We look forward to proceeding to offer restorative justice conferencing in the next year.
 - IV. Due to the pandemic, we were not able to have Teen Court hearings in March, April, or May. However, Teen Court resumed in June with hearing (3) cases. We are proceeding under a Pandemic Protocol that we established. The protocol is provided on page 7.
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- I. During the pandemic, the teens were invited to do four programs on Teen Court for MindsEye Radio. MindsEye Radio is a radio station for people with a visual disability. During the pandemic, those with vision impairments are particularly isolated because they cannot use their sense of touch. Additionally, the station had to operate remotely and lost volunteers. They also lost programming opportunities because they could no longer broadcast entertainment programs because they were cancelled. MindsEye asked if Teen Court could put on four programs about Teen Court and those programs were completed by our teens and was broadcast nationally. If you would like to hear the MindEye Radio broadcast, please visit <https://teencourtfoundationscc.com> for more information.

Teen Court Program Schedule on MindsEye Radio Station via Zoom

Week One: Saturday, May 9, 2020 from 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.

Attendees: Moderator: Judge Annette Eckert (Ret.) and Peer Juror participants

Discussion Topic: Introduction of Teen Court and Peer Jurors:

- Program History, Purpose, Peer Jury Model and Restorative Justice Principles
- Peer Juror Reflections: Experiences working with program implementing peer jury model and restorative justice principles

Week Two: Saturday, May 16, 2020 from 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.

Attendees: Moderator: Judge Annette Eckert (Ret.) and Peer Juror participants

Discussion Topic: Peer Juror Selection:

- How were peer jurors selected for the Teen Court program?
- Why did they want to be a peer juror in Teen Court?
- What was their training?
- Was Teen Court what they expected or something different, and if so, how was it different? Would they recommend Teen Court to others?

Week Three: Saturday, May 23, 2020 from 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.

Attendees: Moderator: Judge Annette Eckert (Ret.) and Peer Juror participants

Discussion Topic: Discuss restorative justice rules and how using them is different from punitive rules:

- Which do peer jurors prefer and why?
- Discuss hearings, deliberations, remedies and graduations.

Week Four: Saturday, May 30, 2020 from 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.

Attendees: Moderator: Judge Annette Eckert (Ret.) and Peer Juror participants

Discussion Topic: Lessons Learned through Teen Court program:

- What have peer jurors done for their community by participating in Teen Court?
- What have peer jurors learned from their Teen Court experience?
- If there is one thought they want their audience to take from the discussion about Teen Court, what is it?
- What is the most important lesson they will take away from their Teen Court experience?

Note: All MindsEye Broadcasts were performed virtually on Zoom and the recordings were done in advance and sent to MindsEye Radio.

COVID-19 Teen Court Response
St. Clair County Teen Court Pandemic Operating Protocol

During the pandemic health and safety restrictions of 2020, the St. Clair County Teen Court will operate according to the following protocol, which is consistent with the State of Illinois health and safety guidelines:

1. All persons must wear a mask at all times. Temperatures will be taken before admittance to the building. Anyone with a temperature of 99.9 or above will not be allowed admittance.
2. No more than 10 persons shall be in a room together.
3. Seating/standing must be with a minimum of 6ft. distance between persons.
4. No one shall enter the building until their assigned time as a peer juror, referred teen and family or volunteer.
5. Court hearings shall take place at the Regional Office of Education, 1000 S. Illinois Street, Belleville, IL.
6. All parties must abide by the directions given by any Teen Court Protocol Supervisor regarding masks, movement to rooms and seating/standing.
7. Failure to comply will result in removal from the building and termination of proceedings.
8. Five peer jurors will be asked to participate and one alternate will be designated in addition to the 5 jurors. If any peer juror cannot be present, they are to contact the Administrator. From there, an alternate juror will be advised to be present for the hearing.
9. No more than 3 hearings will take place at each Teen Court session. The peer jurors will be dismissed upon conclusion of the final hearing. Teen Court will begin at 10:00 a.m. and jurors are asked to arrive at 9:45 a.m.
10. Staff will conduct an exit meeting with the referred teen and family immediately after the hearing concludes.
11. The Teen Court will use (3) rooms: 1) the lobby/reception area, 2) the hearing room and 3) the exit hearing meeting room.
12. A volunteer will be assigned to each family and the protocol supervisor will be an additional volunteer in charge of the rooms and traffic.
13. Seating will be designated in each room according to the guidelines stated above. No one will sit in the same seat as a previous person. Each person will have designated and labeled seats in each room.
14. Hand sanitizer shall be used entering and exiting each room.

This protocol is provided to ensure that all parties, peer jurors, adult volunteers, and referred teens and their family members are advised of the guidelines to be followed at Teen Court hearings during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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 responsible 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 other 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 from December 2014 - June 2020

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

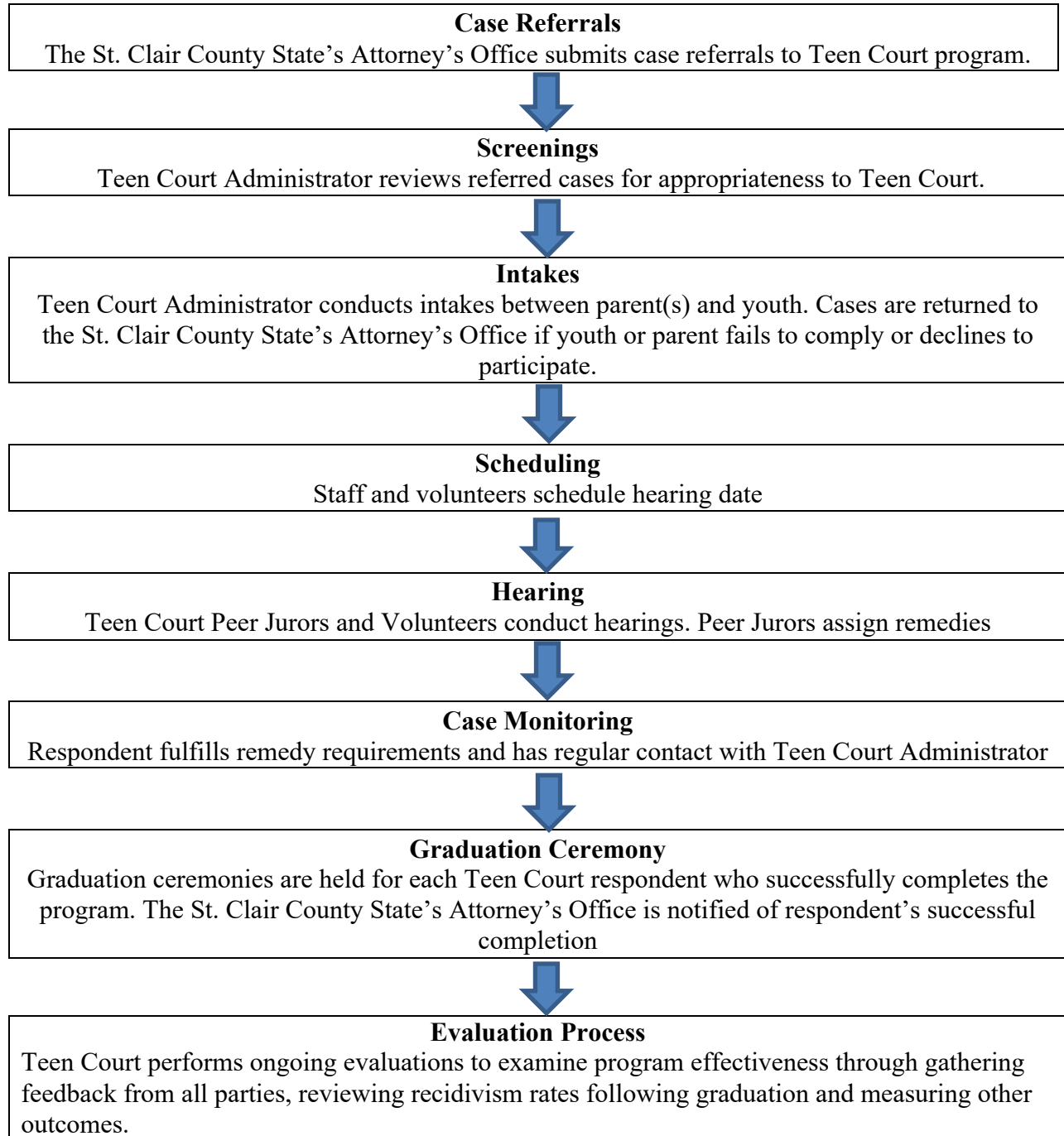
Program Year 5: July 2018 - June 2019

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

Program Year 6: July 2019 - June 2020

TOTAL Participants	27 Respondents
TOTAL Declined	10 Failed to Respond
Successful Completions	32 Graduates

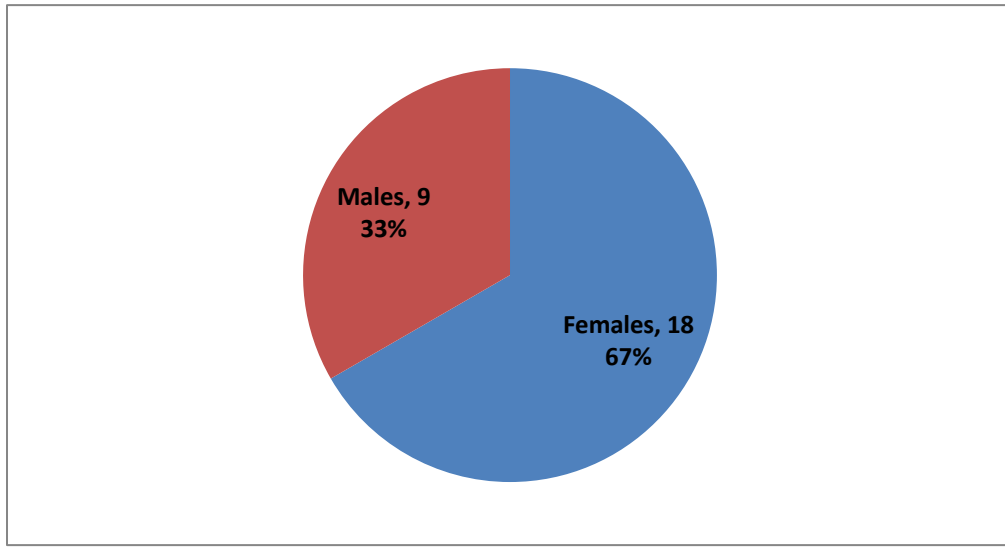
St. Clair County Teen Court Process



July 2019 - June 2020 Annual Summary

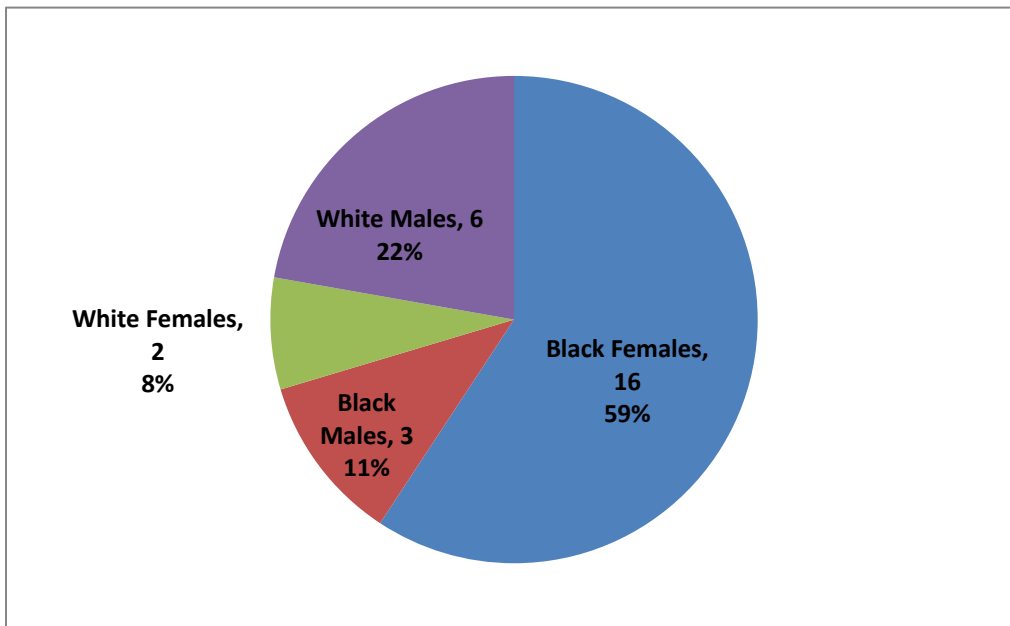
The chart below provides a breakdown of each respondent's gender who made an appearance in Teen Court during the July 2019 - June 2020 program year.

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



The chart below provides a breakdown of each respondent's gender and race who made an appearance in Teen Court during the July 2019 - June 2020 program year.

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



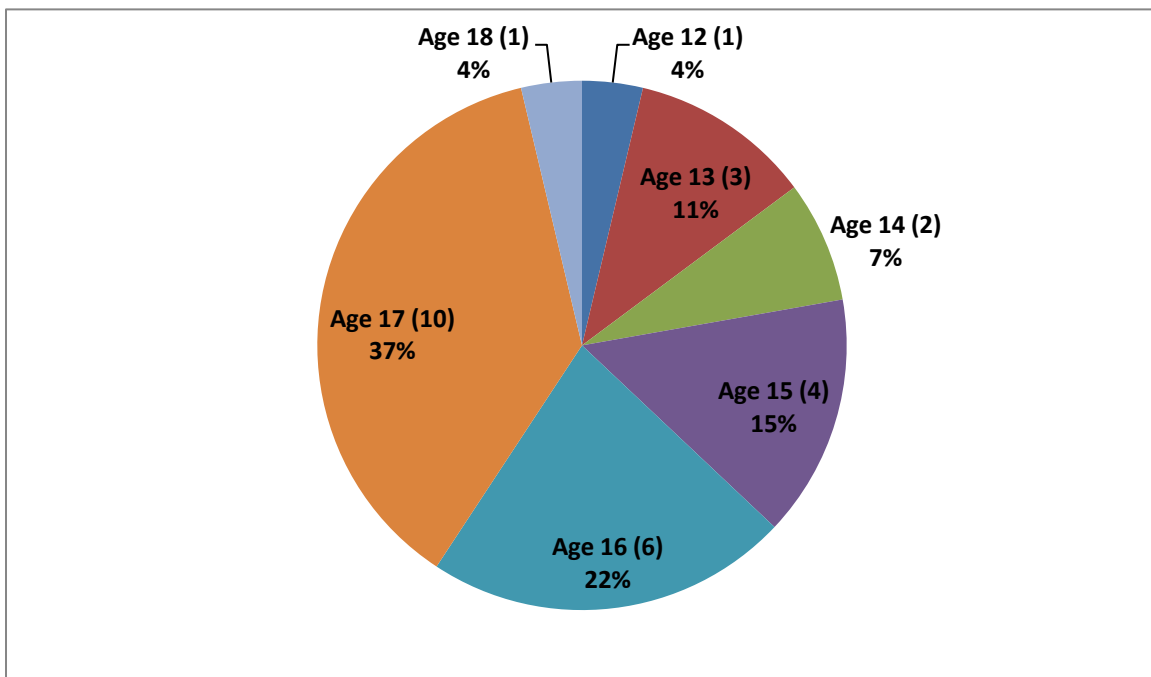
The chart below provides a breakdown of each respondent's race and gender who was seen in Teen Court during the July 2019 - June 2020 program year.

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

Race	Male	Female	Total
Black	3	16	19
White	6	2	8
Total	9	18	27

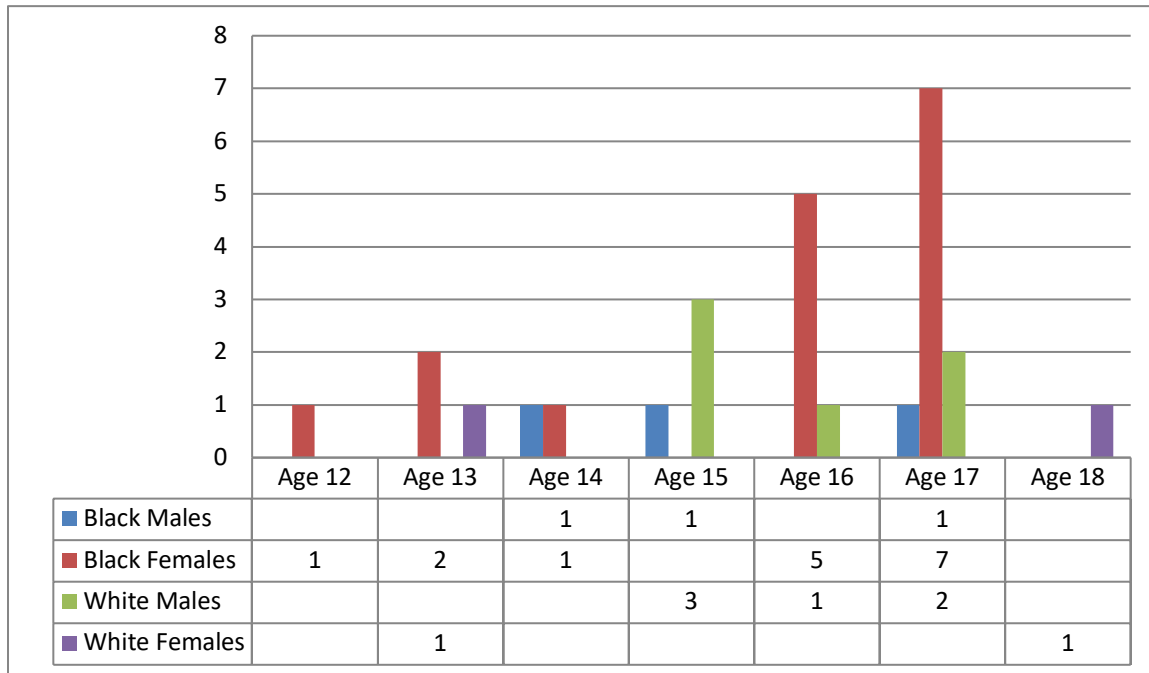
The chart below shows the age of respondents when they appeared before the Teen Court Peer Jurors during the July 2019 - June 2020 program year.

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 was seen in Teen Court during the July 2019 - June 2020 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 2019 - June 2020 program year.

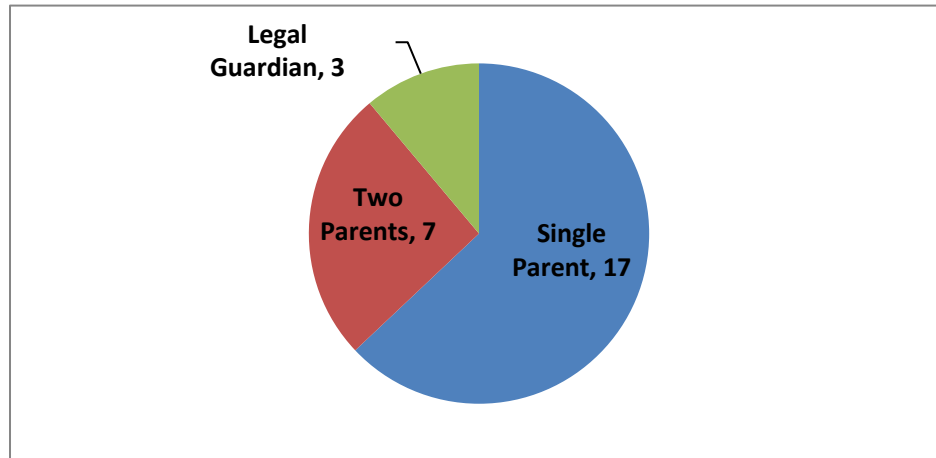
Figure 6. St. Clair County Teen Court Participants by Schools

School	# of Students Attending
Belle Valley	1
Belleville East High School	8
Belleville West High School	3
Cahokia High School	2
East St. Louis Sr. High School	3
Freeburg High School	4
Lebanon High School	1
Mason-Clark Jr. High	1
Whiteside Middle School	2
Wyvetter Younger Alternative School	1
Not Currently Enrolled in School	1
Total	27 Students

Household Status

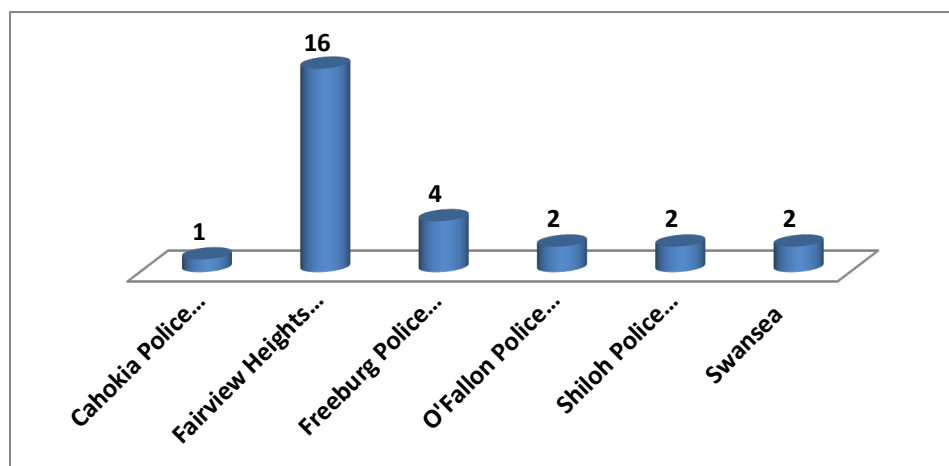
Teen Court collects the household status of each respondent appearing before the Peer Jury. The information below provides the family status of each respondent seen during the July 2019 - June 2020 program year.

Figure 7. *St. Clair County Participants by Household*



The chart below provides a breakdown of each police department that was involved with referring cases to Teen Court during the July 2019 - June 2020 program year.

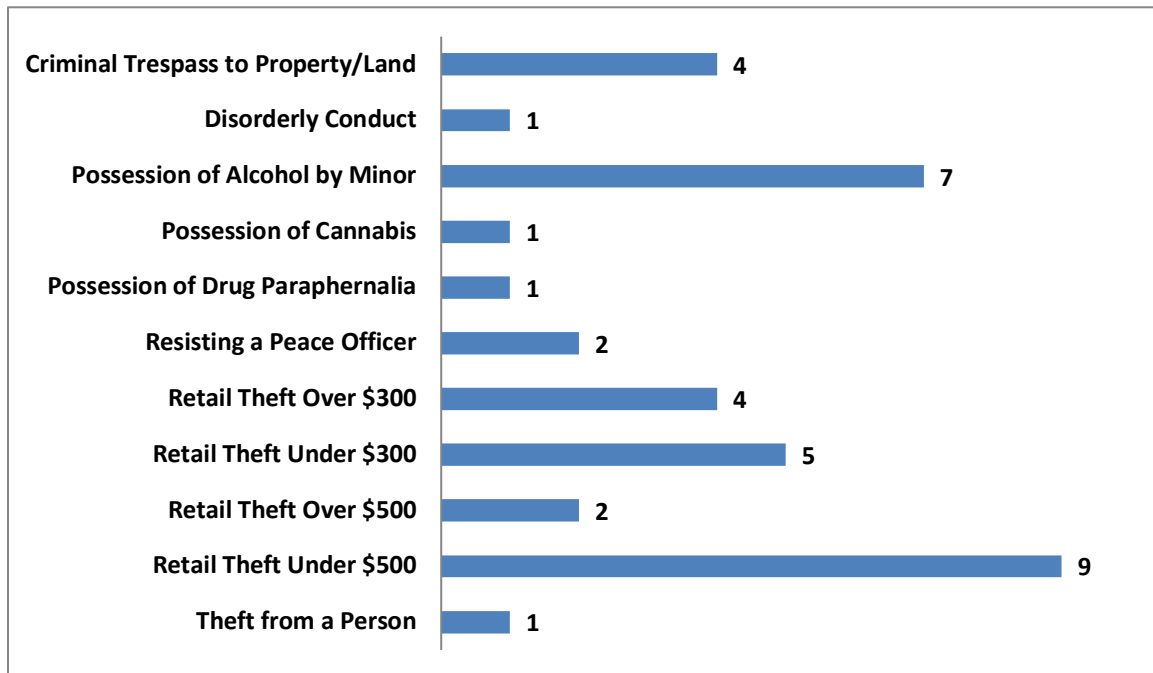
Figure 8. *St. Clair County Teen Court Referrals by Police Departments*



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 2019 - June 2020 appearance.

Figure 9. St. Clair County Teen Court Participants by Offenses Committed



Offenses by Race and Gender

The chart below provides a breakdown about each offense committed by Teen Court respondents during the July 2019 - June 2020 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 Females	White Males	Total
Criminal Trespass to Land/Property	3	1			4
Disorderly Conduct	1				1
Possession of Alcohol by Minor		1	1	5	7
Possession of Cannabis	1				1
Possession of Drug Paraphernalia	1				1
Resisting a Peace Officer	1	1			2
Retail Theft Over \$300	3			1	4
Retail Theft Under \$300	2	1	2		5
Retail Theft Over \$500	1			1	2
Retail Theft Under \$500	9				9
Theft from a Person		1			1
Total Number of Offenses	22	5	3	7	37

Teen Court Cases, Offense Type, Race, Gender and Referring Police Departments

The chart below provides a breakdown of Offenses, Race, Gender and Referring Police Departments during the July 2019 - June 2020 program year.

Figure 11: *Cases, Offenses, Race, Gender and Referring Police Departments*

Criminal Trespass to Property/Land...4 Cases

3 Black Females - (3) Fairview Heights Police Department

1 Black Male - (1) O'Fallon Police Department

Disorderly Conduct...1 Case

1 Black Female - (1) Fairview Heights Police Department

Possession of Alcohol by Minor...7 Cases

1 Black Male - (1) Swansea Police Department

1 White Female - (1) Swansea Police Department

5 White Males - (1) Fairview Heights Police Department (4) Freeburg Police Department

Possession of Cannabis and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia...1 Case, 2 Offenses

1 Black Female - (1) Shiloh Police Department

Resisting a Peace Officer...2 Cases

1 Black Female - (1) Fairview Heights Police Department

1 Black Male - (1) O'Fallon Police Department

Retail Theft Over \$300...4 Cases

3 Black Females - (3) Fairview Heights Police Department

1 White Male - (1) O'Fallon Police Department

Retail Theft Under \$300...5 Cases

2 Black Females - (2) Fairview Heights Police Department

1 Black Male - (1) Swansea Police Department

2 White Females - (1) Shiloh Police Department (1) Swansea Police Department

Retail Theft Over \$500...2 Cases

1 Black Female - (1) Fairview Heights Police Department

1 White Male - (1) Fairview Heights Police Department

Retail Theft Under \$500...9 Cases

9 Black Females - (9) Fairview Heights Police Department

Theft from a Person...1 Case

1 Black Male - (1) Cahokia Police Department

Teen Court Restorative Justice 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 2019 - June 2020, Teen Court respondents performed (35) community service hours at the following agencies:

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

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 with community-based counseling services in an effort to support positive youth development outcomes. Our program partners with the following to assist youth and families with addressing behavioral/mental health, trauma, grief, rebuilding trust and other counseling needs. During this program year, referrals were made to the following agencies:

- Children's Home and Aid Society of Illinois
- Chestnut Health Systems (School-Based and in Office Counseling)
- Heartlinks Grief Center

Counseling to Approved Alcohol Anonymous (AA) or Narcotics Anonymous (NA) Meetings

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 dates and times with the respondent and his/her parents to ensure that an adult connected to the young person will be present to sit with the respondent for moral and emotional 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 customizes the topic for the respondent based upon information acquired during the court proceedings. Topics during this program year included How to join the Army, Peer Pressure and How to Avoid It, Reflection on "Suburban Junkie", Dangers of Drunk Driving, Becoming a Better Student and Role Model, Managing Stress and Changing my Life, How to Start a Cosmetology Business, Consequences of Stealing, Future Goals and How to Handle Difficult Situations in the Future.

Extra-Curricular Activities

During this program year, (5) respondents received remedies to connect with the following programs for pro-social development:

- Connect with ROTC
- Enroll in Lincoln's Challenge Academy
- Participate in Writing Project

- Seek Tutoring 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 Sheriff's Department 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, complete their education and establish friendships with teenagers who are not getting into legal trouble.

Interview Recruiter to Join United States Armed Forces

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

Interview a Nurse

Teen Court respondents who have an interest in joining the healthcare industry receive a remedy to interview a medical professional. During this program year, a respondent interviewed a nurse to learn more about the educational requirements and other career information.

Letter of Apology

The letter of apology provides our respondents with an opportunity to work toward correcting his/her actions in an effort to reduce harm as result of the offense(s) committed. 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 remedy that helps respondents work toward repairing and healing strained relationships.

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 the program year, (8) 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 respondents serving on the peer jury has an opportunity to actively participate as a peer juror to help a fellow teen in a 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 responsibility for his/her actions. This is another way to mitigate harm and moving parties involved toward healing.

Vision Board

A vision board is a visual art project completed by Teen Court respondents. Through this remedy, respondents use visual images of pictures, quotes and words of encouragement to express their goals and aspirations. The creation of vision boards gives respondents an opportunity to create poetry, art, music, business plans and other creative ideas.

Teen Court Remedies Assigned during the July 2019 - June 2020 Program Year

Remedies Category	Number of Referrals	Remedies Assigned by Peer Jurors
Community Service	6	Teen Court respondents performed (35) hours of community service at area food pantries and resale shops in St. Clair County.
Counseling Referrals	11	Teen Court respondents and members of their families were referred to community-based health care providers to increase access to counseling services. These services were recommended to address behavioral/mental health, trauma, bereavement, substance use and school guidance counseling.
Essays	17	Teen Court respondents were given essay writing assignments for setting goals, self-reflection and personal development.
Extra-Curricular Activities	4	Teen Court respondents were given remedies to connect with additional activities to encourage pro-social activities. These activities include academic enrichment and career development with Lincoln's Challenge Academy, ROTC and school related supports.
Career Development Interviews	2	Teen Court respondents had to conduct interviews to learn about joining the U.S. Armed

		Forces and what it takes to become a nurse.
Interview County Jail Inmate and Write Essay about the Experience	3	Teen Court respondents interviewed St. Clair County jail inmates who have been charged and convicted for a similar offense. During the essay, respondents write about their desire to make better decisions and not disappointing themselves and their families.
Letter of Apology	35	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 family members, teachers, and business owners in an effort to restore ties.
Teen Court Peer Jury	2	Teen Court respondents are oftentimes selected to serve on Peer Jury. This process allows the respondent to experience the Teen Court process and engage in assigning remedies.
Teen Strong	8	Teen Court respondents participated in Teen Strong to develop relationships with members of the 375 th U.S. Armed Forces.
Verbal Apology	5	Teen Court respondents verbally apologized to their family members in an effort to rebuild trust and restore relationships.
Vision Board	8	Teen Court respondents developed vision boards to focus on their aspirations and goals. During graduation ceremonies, respondents typically present their vision boards and share what inspired them by siting

		quotes, artwork and other forms of creative expression.
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Please note: Due to COVID-19, many of our program referral categories for this reporting period are significantly lower than previous years due to public safety, closures and shelter in place orders.

Teen Court Recidivism Log
Program Year July 2019 - June 2020

Three Months Post-Graduation

2/184 graduates committed a new offense at any point within 3 months of exiting the program, for an approximate 1% 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: Youth received Juvenile Court Supervision

Youth 2: Committed offense of Retail Theft Under \$300
Outcome: Youth was adjudicated delinquent and sentenced to juvenile probation

Six Months Post-Graduation

8/174 graduates committed a new offense at any point within 6 months of exiting the program, for an approximate 4.6% recidivism rate at the 6-month point, based on locally and available data.

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

Youth 3: 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 4: 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 and Aggravated Battery
Outcome: Youth was adjudicated delinquent and sentenced to juvenile probation

Youth 5: Committed offenses of Leaving the Scene and Theft from a Person
Outcome: Youth received juvenile court supervision

Youth 6: Committed offenses of Unlawful Possession of Cannabis and Unlawful Possession of Drug Paraphernalia
Outcome: Youth successfully completed supervised supervision and received credit for employment

Youth 7: Committed offenses of Retail Theft Over \$300
Outcome: Youth was adjudicated delinquent and sentenced to juvenile probation

Youth 8: Committed offenses of Aggravated Battery and Criminal Trespass
Outcome: Youth was adjudicated delinquent and sentenced to juvenile probation

One Year Post-Graduation

16/166 graduates committed a new offense at any point within the first 12 months of exiting the program, for an approximate 9.6% recidivism rate at the 12 month point, based on locally available data.

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

Youth 9: Committed two unrelated series of offenses including Aggravated Vehicular Hijacking, Aggravated Battery, Aggravated Fleeing, Eluding a Police Officer and Attempted Residential Burglary

Outcome: Youth was committed to the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice

Youth 10: Committed offenses of Aggravated Fleeing, Attempting to Elude Police, Aggravated Unlawful Use of a Weapon

Outcome: Youth was adjudicated delinquent and sentenced to probation

Youth 11: Committed offense of Possession of Cannabis

Outcome: Youth received alternative disposition of Risk Education classes

Youth 12: Committed offense of Unlawful Possession of Cannabis

Outcome: Youth successfully completed Community Service

Youth 13: Committed offense of Retail Theft Under \$300

Outcome: Youth successfully completed Supervised Supervision and Community Service

Youth 14: Committed offenses of Aggravated Battery and Unlawful Possession of a Weapon

Outcome: Youth was adjudicated delinquent and sentenced to juvenile probation

Youth 15: Committed offense of Unlawful Possession of a Firearm

Outcome: Youth received juvenile court supervision

Youth 16: Committed offense of Criminal Trespass to Residence

Outcome: Youth was adjudicated delinquent and sentenced to probation

Three Year Post-Graduation

Since Teen Court's inception, 103 youth graduated 3 or more years ago; of those 103, 10 youth reoffended at some point in that 3-year period.

In an effort to reduce recidivism rates and improve positive youth outcomes, Teen Court is committed to continuing the following:

- Reviewing annual reports to reduce racial and ethnic disparities through ongoing community collaboration with our Juvenile Justice Council and other community stakeholders

- Partnering with community agencies to embed Restorative Justice principles and practices to mitigate harm and restore relationships
- Working to ensure youth programs are responsive to trauma and other Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Referring youth and families to service providers to address grief, youth socio-emotional wellness and other counseling supports
- Offering “Teen Strong” to assist youth with developing pro-social skills to restore youth resiliency and positive relationships
- Building the capacity of Teen Court Peer Jurors, volunteers and community partners through ongoing training and program updates

Total Number of Graduates Re-Offending

Overall, out of 194 total graduates to date, 16 have committed new offenses at any point after graduation for an overall recidivism rate of 8.3%. 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 (16) graduates captured in the overall recidivism rate are from the following communities:

- (3) Belleville
- (5) Cahokia
- (2) East St. Louis
- (1) Fairview Heights
- (2) O’Fallon
- (1) Shiloh
- (2) Swansea

Teen Court Feedback/Responses

July 2019 - June 2020

“I had a wonderful experience with Teen Court. I learned many new things, such as, how to discover more about someone's personality and character by asking questions. I also learned how to communicate better with someone who is more closed off. Teen Court was a great pleasure to work with and everyone was amazing. I greatly appreciate Teen Court and everything that comes with it. Teen Court helps so many teenagers who normally would not get a second chance. Teen Court helps those of us in the program as well with new opportunities and the ability to gain better skills to help us as we go along.” - *Teen Court Peer Juror*

“My first year of Teen Court was a great experience. Even though it was cut short due to the pandemic, I was able to have an impact on a young person's life so they can move forward in a positive direction. I was able to be vocal when it came time for discussing the best solution that would allow the respondent to grow as a person and better our society. I had so much fun meeting the different Teen Court members who either went to my school or one of the local schools. It was a very enlightening experience and I hope I'll be able to participate this upcoming school year!” - *Teen Court Peer Juror*

“This was my first year as a member of the St. Clair County Teen Court Program. I loved being able to help people go in the right direction. I also was able to learn and understand why people act the way they do in bad situations. Teen Court has also prepared me for jury duty if I was to ever get picked. I am sad that our time got cut short due to the pandemic, but I will take what I have learned and pass it on to keep others on the right path. I am thankful to have this experience and for the people that created Teen Court.” - *Teen Court Peer Juror*

“Overall, I had a very good experience during my unfortunately short time in the St. Clair County Teen Court program. It allowed me to learn about and help other teens who just needed a nudge in the right direction. Hopefully, the program has helped them and that they go on to help others as we helped them. I hope to help more teens in the future and am thankful for the amazing work put in by the organizers for this amazing program.” - *Teen Court Peer Juror*