IMPLEMENTING TEEN COURTS
A RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PEER JURY GUIDE AND MANUAL

"Saving our future, one teen at a time"

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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.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Letter from the Authors ..................................................1

II. St. Clair County Teen Court Pilot Project .................................2

III. Process .............................................................................20

IV. Forms ...............................................................................25

V. Useful Tools
   A. Peer Juror Manual .........................................................58
   B. Sample Annual Report .....................................................86
   C. Training Tools and Resources .........................................103

VI. Things Learned Along the Way ............................................109
   A. Participant Survey ........................................................110
   B. Community Service Mentors .........................................111
   C. Graduation ....................................................................112

VII. Comments and Opinions ...................................................113

VIII. Acknowledgments............................................................119
Letter from the Authors

The St. Clair County Teen Court operates a peer jury restorative justice model program. In November 2016, Teen Court began its third 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.

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. Many of our older forms have formatting errors due to the computer age of their production. We apologize for this.

We sincerely hope that access to our pilot 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
PILOT PROJECT
2014
Evaluation of Youth Court Pilot Project

There will be an ongoing objective and subjective evaluation of the pilot project. 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.
St. Clair County Youth Court Summary

The St. Clair County Youth Court pilot program represents an alternative approach to juvenile justice that holds the first-time non-violent youth offenders accountable through a sentence imposed by their peers. The St. Clair County Youth 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 Bill 307). The St. Clair County Youth 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 Commission.

St. Clair Youth Court Goals

• A peer jury model program that uses adult and youth volunteers will be implemented.

• Offenders will go to Youth Court within 30 days of a referral, after a plea of guilty, and written consent (and parental/guardian consent also) to Youth Court participation. The youth will begin his or her sentence within 14 days of the hearing and complete it within the time given by the Youth Court jury. A review/program report must be presented to the Youth Court within 90 days after sentencing.

• Sentences by the Youth Peer Court Jury may include:
  . Letter of apology
  . Community service
  . Youth peer jury duty
  . Financial restitution
  . Essay
  . Vision Board

• Successful completion of the sentence 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. Participant who successfully completes the sentence will receive a certificate of completion.

• The Youth 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 sentence imposed by his/her peers.
• The Youth 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.

• Youth Court seeks to be a prevention program for Youth Court defendants and Youth 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 Youth Court. If eligible, case is then referred to the Youth Court Administrator

1. Administrator contacts youth and parent and makes appointment for interview.
2. Administrator reviews the process of Youth Court with youth and parent.
3. Youth pleads guilty to offense charge (written form).
4. Youth accepts Youth Court.
5. Youth signs consent to participate in Youth Court.
6. Parent/guardian signs consent.
7. Youth is given Youth Court date at St. Clair County Sheriff’s Department in courtroom.
8. Youth has appearance within 45 days of referral.
10. Sentence completed/reviewed within 90 days of the appearance.
11. No charge is filed with successful completion and no finding of delinquency. If sentence is 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 Youth Court, hereby plead guilty to above-stated offense and request the opportunity to appear in Youth Court on __________________________ (court date). I understand that successful completion of any Youth Court sentence 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 sentence, 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 Youth Court.

____________________________
Youth

____________________________
Print name

I, ________________________________ (print name), parent/guardian consent and request that ____________________________ (youth) be referred to the St. Clair County Youth 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 Youth Court:

Peer Juror Application Form
  o Form is completed only by the teen
  o Application is reviewed by Adult coordinator, in a timely manner, once applications are received
  o Parent/Guardian Consent is needed
  o Understanding and support of the peer jury program is a must for the peer juror's parent or guardian
  o 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 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 twelfth grade.
An applicant must live in St. Clair County.
Applications are available at various 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 2:00 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 YOUTH 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 youth court program. Since youth court is designed to promote law-abiding behavior, your behavior must be consistent with that purpose.

Rules of Conduct
As a member of youth 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 Youth Court hearing.

5. You must maintain the confidentiality of the Youth 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 Youth Court training sessions and court appearances, unless excused.

8. You, as a youth court member, must dress appropriately when participating in a youth court proceeding. No denim, hats, shorts, T-shirts or tank tops.
9. You must perform your role as effectively and competently as possible.

10. You must treat with courtesy and consideration all persons involved in youth 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 youth 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 Youth 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 youth 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 identity that youth, I will be terminated from the St. Clair County Youth Court Program.

________________________________
Youth Court Peer Juror
Youth Court Volunteer
PERSONS OR ROLES IN YOUTH 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 court clerk keeps the records of the case.

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 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 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. 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.

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 Youth Court of St. Clair County is now in session, The Honorable Youth Moderator, _____________________, presiding.

2. **Moderator** enters and sits in chair.

3. **Bailiff**: "Please be seated and quiet in the courtroom".

4. **Judge**: "Good Evening. This is the opening session of the St. Clair County Youth Court. I want to thank each and every one of you for being here tonight and participating in our Youth Court.

"The business of this court is very serious. The defendants 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 defendants have violated the law, they deserve your respect and attention. It takes certain courage for the defendants 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 defendants. 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 to participate in the St. Clair County Youth Court Program."

"Will the Clerk please call the first case and swear in the jury?"

5. **Clerk**: "The St. Clair County Youth Court calls case number_____ -YC- ____

   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."

"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 direct Clerk to deliver the oath to respondent.)

8. **Clerk**: “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.

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 by 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 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 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 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 tonight. 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 Youth Court, and or other appropriate comments).

20. Moderator: "At this time you may report to the Youth Court Coordinator or adult volunteer where your rights and obligations concerning the detained 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, and the offender is given a return date for his/her possible court release.

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 court room and meets with a coordinator or adult volunteer.

25. (Jurors will be asked to remain if there is a subsequent case.)
DISPOSITION OPTIONS IN YOUR YOUTH COURT

Community Service
Jury Duty
Education Classes
Mediation
Vision Board
Letter of Apology
Oral Apology
Counseling
Peer Discussion Groups
Other Creative Dispositions
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 twenty 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 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 ________, 2014

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:________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
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 VERDICT 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 sentence 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 SENTENCE

I hereby certify that__________________________, case number _____TC____ has completed his/her restorative justice sentence.

______________________________
Administrator, St. Clair County Teen Court

Cc: St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office
   Administrator
   Evaluator
   Youth
   Parent
   Moderator
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 10:00 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 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
This Award Certifies That

Has Successfully Completed

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

A Project of the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council
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.
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 10:00 A.M. at the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department in the courtroom
6. Youth has a hearing within 30 days of arrest
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 twelfth grade
2. Rank in grades 9 through 12
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 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 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
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 10:00 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 9 jurors serving. Thus, we are asking the East faculty to recommend 3 students to equal the total number of 12 as allocated based on pupil population. Belleville West has 6 jurors presently serving. Thus, we are asking the faculty of West to recommend 6 students to equal the total number of 12 as allocated based on pupil population. Incidentally peer juror participation increased from twenty-four to fifty-seven last year.

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

1. Are between the ages of 13-17 or in twelfth grade
2. Rank in grades 9 through 12
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 last 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 Sheriff’s 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
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 October 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, October 5, 2016**.

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)
ZVarlanian@charter.net
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: ____________________________
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
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, October 29, 2016. 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, OCTOBER 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
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______________________________________________________________
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

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:

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Peer Juror Manual
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 pilot program 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 sentence within 14 days of the hearing and complete it within the time given by the Teen Court jury. A review/program report must be presented to Teen Court within 90 days after sentencing.

- Sentences by the Youth Peer Court Jury may include:
  . letter of apology
  . community service
  . Teen Court peer jury duty
  . financial restitution

- Successful completion of the sentence will result in charges not being filed and no finding of delinquency. 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.

- The Teen Court program seeks to make youths accountable for their mistakes without branding them with a finding of delinquency, so long as the youths complete the sentence 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 is stopped by a St. Clair County Law Enforcement Officer who decides to charge the youth with a non-violent misdemeanor 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.
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 ninth grade and 17 or in the
twelfth 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 10:00 a.m. and are usually over by 2:00 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 ninth grade 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.
- 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.
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 **court clerk** keeps the records of the case.

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 disposition 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.

**witness** is anyone, including victim, parents or guardian, and respondent, who testifies during the hearing.
1. Bailiff: "Everyone please rise. The Teen Court of St. Clair County is now in session, the Honorable Teen Court Moderator/Judge,______________________________, presiding."

2. Moderator/Judge enters and sits in chair.

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

4. Moderator/Judge: "Good Evening. 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 tonight 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 sentence 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 defendants 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 defendants. 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."

"Will the Clerk please call the first case and swear in the jury".
5. Clerk: "The St. Clair County Teen Court calls case number _-TC-_ __. 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/Judge: "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. The Respondent is charged with _________________________________.

The police report will be read.

(The moderator will ask the Respondent to come forward and direct Clerk to deliver the oath to respondent.)
8. Clerk: "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.

12. The Moderator/Judge 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/Judge: "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/Judge: "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/Judge: "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 VERDICT 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 sentence to be in the best interests of the youth, 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 Sentence

I hereby certify that ____________________________, case number
______TC _____has completed his/her restorative justice sentence.

___________________________________________
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**

**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:

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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 Sunday, ____________________________ 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:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

1/We, ___________________________ as the parent/guardian 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, 1/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:_________________________
Sample Annual Report
Program Overview

The St. Clair County Teen Court pilot program 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 Bill 307). The St. Clair County Teen Court operates under the peer jury model and is a collaborative effort administered by the St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Commission in cooperation with the St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office and the St. Clair County Sheriff’s Office.

Features of the St. Clair County Teen Court

- Development and implementation of St. Clair County Teen Court manual, including court documents and verdict form.

- Teen Court training conducted at Lindenwood University-Belleville on Saturday, October 18th, 2014. Peer jurors, Lindenwood student and adult community volunteers, interested law enforcement officers and parents were welcomed by St. Clair County State’s Attorney Brendan Kelly and Sheriff Richard Watson. Judge (ret.) Annette Eckert, Teen Court Director, led the training seminar which highlighted restorative justice practices and Teen Court policies and procedures.

- Teen Court meets the first Saturday of the month at the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department.

- 29 active peer jurors from the following schools: Althoff Catholic High School, Belleville East High School, Belle Valley Junior High, Belleville West High School, Collinsville High School, East St. Louis Senior High School, and O'Fallon Township High School

- 19 active adult volunteers that work at Teen Court sessions

- Plain-clothes St. Clair County Sheriff's Deputies supervise and work side-by-side in small groups with Teen Court offenders as they complete assigned community service hours in St. Clair County. The chosen community service sites, as well as this unique law enforcement-offender interaction, reinforce restorative justice principles highlighted in Teen Court sessions.

- A Teen Court summer picnic is planned on Saturday, July 11th, 2015. Teen Court peer jurors, graduates, parents, and adult volunteers will enjoy a barbeque and a demonstration from a K-9 officer. Peer jurors will receive their Teen Court pins.
Success Rate

The first St. Clair County Teen Court session was conducted on December. Subsequent SCC Teen Court sessions in 2015 have been held in January, February, March, April, May and June.

Below is a breakdown of how many teen offenders have successfully completed the St. Clair County Teen Court program to date, how many have unsuccessfully completed the program, and the number of teen offenders who are in the process of completing the program.

92.3% of all offenders who entered Teen Court successfully completed the program¹

7.7% of all offenders who entered Teen Court did not successfully complete the program.

Successfully completed......12 offenders
Did not complete...........1 offender
In progress....................11 offenders
TOTAL..........................24 offenders

¹ Percentages are taken out of 13 offenders and not 24 offenders because 11 offenders have cases still in progress.
**Race/ Gender**

Male offenders seen by Teen Court................................. 14
Female offenders seen by Teen Court................................. 10
TOTAL..................................................................................... 24

![Gender Pie Chart]

Black offenders............................... 10
White offenders............................... 11
Biracial offenders......................... 3
TOTAL....................................................... 24

![Race Pie Chart]

- Black
- White
- Biracial
Race/Gender

Race and gender breakdown of all teen offenders that were seen by the Teen Court between December 2014 and June 2015.

- Black males: 8
- White males: 5
- Black females: 2
- White females: 6
- Biracial males: 2
- Biracial females: 1
- TOTAL: 24
Race/Gender

The graph below shows the percentage of teen court offenders by race and gender. These offenders were seen by the Teen Court between December 2014 and June 2015.
Teen Court records the age of offenders appearing before the peer jury at the St. Clair County Teen Court. The chart below shows the ages of offenders when they appeared before the Teen Court at a date between December 2014 and June 2015.

13 years old........2
14 years old........1
15 years old.........3
16 years old.........7
17 years old.........8
18 years old.........3

Average age of a Teen Court offender at Teen Court date: 16 years old
The graph below shows the percentage of Teen Court offenders by age at the time of the Teen Court date. These offenders were seen by the Teen Court between December 2014 and June 2015.
Age / Race / Gender

The graph below breaks down the number of offenders in each age category by race and gender. The age categories are based on the offender's age at the time of the Teen Court date. These offenders were seen by the Teen Court between December 2014 and June 2015.

Offenders by Age, Race and Gender

Offenders by School

The graph below displays the various schools attended by teen court offenders at the time of the offender's Teen Court date. These offenders were seen by the Teen Court between December 2014 and June 2015.

Belleville East High School
O'Fallon High School
Belleville West High School
SIUE East St. Louis Charter School
Collinsville High School
Lincoln Junior High School
Worth Middle School
Belleville West Night School
Mascoutah High School
Pathways High School
Not Enrolled in School
Offender Household

Two Parent Household ............. 11
Single Parent ....................... 12
Other ................................. 1

Offender Household

Offenses

Retail Theft ....................... 15
Possession of Cannabis ............ 4
Poss. of Cannabis/ Poss. of Drug Paraphernalia .......... 2
Possession of Drug Paraphernalia ..................... 1
Trespass to a Railroad ............... 1
Unlawful Consumption of Alcohol by a Minor ............ 1
Offenses by Age at Teen Court Date

Retail Theft....................15 cases
  18 years: 1
  17 years: 5
  16 years: 6
  15 years: 1
  14 years: 1
  13 years: 1

Possession of Cannabis...............4 cases
  17 years: 1
  16 years: 1
  15 years: 2

Poss. of Cannabis/ Poss. of Drug Paraphernalia...............2 cases
  18 years: 1
  17 years: 1

Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.................1 case
  18 years: 1

Trespass to a Railroad...............1 case
  13 years: 1

Unlawful Consumption of Alcohol by a Minor...............1 case
  17 years: 1
Referrals by Police Departments

The following police departments submitted cases that were heard by the Teen Court peer jury between December 2014 and June 2015.

Fairview Heights......... 9
Belleville.................. 7
O'Fallon.................. 5
Swansea.................. 2
Cahokia.................. 1

Possible Dispositions in St. Clair County Teen Court

Community Service Hours: Community service hours imposed by the St. Clair County Teen Court Peer Jury are performed in 4 hour increments at various St. Clair County non-profit organizations. From December 2014 to June 2015, teen court offenders were assigned community service hours to be performed at the Belleville Interfaith Food Pantry, the Shelter Shop, and New Life Community Church. All community service hours are completed under the supervision of a St. Clair County Sheriff's Deputy in plainclothes that is the same gender as the offender performing community service. The Sheriff's Deputy supervises the community service and often works alongside the offender during the service hours. St. Clair County Teen Court community service creates a positive one-on-one experience between the teen offender and a law enforcement officer and thus, it reinforces the restorative justice principles discussed at the Teen Court date.

Vision Board: A vision board is an art project completed by the teen offender in which the youth is to communicate his or her past, present and future on a poster board or sheet of paper by drawing pictures, writing words, or pasting magazine clippings. The teens are encouraged to be as creative as possible in creating the vision board. For example, it was discovered in a Teen Court session that a teen offender before the peer jury was a talented poet. In crafting its disposition for this particular offender, the peer jury requested that teen offender incorporate poetry into the vision board project. Upon completion of the vision board, the Teen Court administrator meets with the offender to discuss the vision board and the ways in which the teen can realistically achieve the goals listed on the vision board.

Letter of Apology: The letter of apology allows the teen offender to communicate in writing an apology to someone harmed by the offender's crime. This year letters of apology were distributed to the following types of people: mothers, fathers, siblings, and loss prevention officers. The letter of apology is a disposition that requires the offender to reflect upon the harm caused by behaviors.

Essay: Offenders 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 offender's essay based upon information acquired in Teen Court proceedings. Topics included the effects of drug and
alcohol, the requirements to enter into each branch of the United States military, the influence that the teen's significant other has had on the teen's life, and the importance of making good choice and setting goals. The Teen Court administrator reviews and discusses each essay with the teen offender.

**Service on a Teen Court Peer Jury:** Teen offenders may be ordered to serve as a peer juror at a future Teen Court date. The teen offender serving on the peer jury is allowed and encouraged to actively participate on the jury. The teen offender serving on the peer jury has an impact in determining the appropriate disposition for other teen offenders appearing before the Teen Court on the date of his or her required jury service.

**Inmate interview:** Officer Annette Tim of the St. Clair County Sheriffs Department coordinates an interview between an inmate at the St. Clair County jail and the teen offender. The interview allows the offender an opportunity to interview an adult who has committed a similar offense. The interview allows the teen offender to understand the choices leading up to and the consequences of adult criminal behavior.

**Attendance at a TC approved AA or NA meeting:** Teen Court offenders at risk or struggling with substance abuse may be ordered to attend teen-friendly AA or NA meeting in St. Clair County. The Teen Court Administrator coordinates the meeting date/time with the youth and his or her parent(s) to ensure that an adult connected with the SCC Teen Court will be present to sit with the youth during the meeting.

**Verbal Apology:** The peer jury may request that the teen offender apologize to an individual in the presence of the peer jury in the Teen Court courtroom. This apology, like the letter of apology, allows the teen offender to consider the harm caused to others by his or her choice to engage in criminal behavior.

**Involvement in Extra Curricular/School Activities:** A teen offender may be ordered to sign-up for an extracurricular activity at school or in the community. The Teen Court administrator will follow up with the youth to see if the youth is able to find an activity that suits his or her interests and schedule.

**Number of Cases in which Disposition was Imposed**

- Community Service Hours .......................... 15 cases
- Vision Board .............................................. 14 cases
- Letter of Apology ....................................... 14 cases
- Essay ....................................................... 11 cases
- Service on a Teen Court Peer Jury ............... 9 cases
- Inmate interview ......................................... 5 cases
- AA or NA meeting ......................................... 4 cases
Verbal Apology........................................ 2 cases

Extra curricular/School Activities....................... 1 case
Recidivism Rate

The St. Clair County Teen Court held its first Teen Court session on December 6, 2014. Teen Court offenders are given 90 days to complete the ordered Teen Court disposition. Given the short time that the St. Clair County Teen Court has been in operation, recidivism data is limited.

However, the short term recidivism data is positive. 12 graduates have completed the Teen Court program since December 2014. These graduates have been awarded Teen Court Certificates of Completion before the peer jurors, teen court volunteers and family at Teen Court graduation ceremonies. As of June 25, 2015, the St. Clair County State’s Attorney’s Office had not received any requests for any new charges against any of the Teen Court graduates. Thus, the recidivism rate of the offenders that have successfully completed the St. Clair County Teen Court is currently zero.

One February Graduate -- 4 months since completion, no new charges

Five March Graduates -- 3 months since completion, no new charges

One April Graduate – 2 months completion, no new charges

Five June Graduates- 1 month completion, no new charges

12 TOTAL GRADUATES SINCE DECEMBER 2014 – AS OF JUNE 25th 2015, NO NEW CHARGES FOR ALL 12

Teen Court Feedback

Throughout the inaugural year of the St. Clair County Teen Court, feedback has been received via questionnaires and surveys from parents, offenders, peer jurors and adult volunteers. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. The feedback is reviewed by the St. Clair County Teen Court to aid in future changes to the St. Clair County Teen Court program.

The majority of parents of recent graduates and graduates surveyed believed the sentence imposed by the Teen Court to be fair. The majority of Teen Court graduates surveyed indicated that Teen Court helped them learn and grow from their experiences. The majority of Teen Court offenders and parents found the Teen Court experience to be a positive one. Numerous Teen Court offenders have reported to the Teen Court evaluator that peer jury service has been a particularly positive disposition. Parents, offenders and Teen Court volunteers have all indicated that they appreciate the opportunity to allow youth to be held accountable for criminal behavior without formal charges and formal processing through the traditional juvenile justice system.

Likewise, the peer jurors and volunteers indicated that the program has been a positive experience. All volunteers surveyed indicated they were very satisfied with how the Teen Court training in October 2014 prepared them for their teen court service. Volunteers and peer jurors surveyed have found the teen court staff to be very helpful and were very satisfied with their involvement with the St. Clair County Teen Court.
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 3 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?
IV. 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 sentence. (Refer to Peer Juror Manual for Verdict 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 sentence
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 4 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.

V. Let’s have a teen court hearing. I will then take questions.

VI. Q and A after hearing

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

VIII.  Now we shall hear from out 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, 2014, 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 11:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 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!
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 8:00 a.m. to Noon or 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 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. 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.
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 vision boards and viewed original poetry vision boards. Each teen also receives a certificate of completion, a Teen Court pin and lots of applause.

At the conclusion of graduation, we take a fifteen-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
PEER JUROR LETTER

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 Participant Feed-back
Comments/Remarks
(Collected on Saturday, November 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 is 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 seem 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
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
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