

North County Teen Court

A PROGRAM FOR TODAY'S YOUTH:

Teen Court is designed to develop respect for authority and the community and to stop potential delinquent behavior in teens. The program capitalizes on positive peer influence. Teen Court's jury members, bailiffs and clerks are all teens.

"Adolescents crave peer acceptance and peer approval. The teen court process takes advantage of this naturally powerful incentive. Just an association with deviant or delinquent peers is commonly associated with the onset of delinquent behavior, pressure from pro-social peers may propel youth toward law-abiding behavior." [January 2011 NYSBS Journal](#)

Benefits

- Provides early intervention and new opportunities for juveniles
- Volunteers gain exposure to the legal system
- Community service can help juveniles learn responsibility
- Victims know the defendant is being held accountable

Interested teens must submit a North County Teen Court (NCTC) application to be considered. The applications will be reviewed by the coordinator and the teen will be contacted to join the court. Teen Court

members also need to complete a Media Release. New jurors are typically added at the start of the school year.

Training sessions are held each year in August.

For additional questions, please read the FAQ sheet on our website at www.northcountyteencourt.com

PROGRAM GOAL:

Through the Teen Court program, our goal is to fully implement a model program using youth and adult volunteers as a continuing alternative to formal juvenile probation processing and formal juvenile court proceedings.

Teen Court represents a positive alternative to the juvenile justice system and holds juvenile offenders accountable for a sentence imposed by a jury of their peers. By offering this alternative system, we allow youth who have made poor decisions an opportunity to recognize their mistakes and learn valuable lessons. At the same, time participating youth increase respect for themselves, schools, law enforcement, the community and the legal system.

Our biggest goal is to educate youth who make unfavorable decisions to be accountable for their actions to prevent any further involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Our purpose is also to educate and motivate teen volunteers. Teen volunteers participate in an actual court setting and have a positive impact on their peers, while providing a valuable service to the community, and in doing so, gain valuable experience for their

futures. Teen Court serves as a prevention program for teen volunteers as well as Teen Court defendants.

PROGRAM FUNDING:

NCTC is a member of the Illinois Youth Court Association sponsored by the Illinois Attorney General. The NCTC is NON-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION, a 501(c)(3), and IL Sales Tax Exempt. NCTC is administered by the Executive Board made up of five Police Departments, court moderators and community members from partnering communities.

The NCTC is funded by the generosity of the local communities Village Boards, various organizations and individuals who believe in our mission and our vision. These donations have allowed for the purchase of items necessary to operate the NCTC for the past 13 years. Items such as: computers, printers and office supplies, Teen Court uniform shirts and meals for the Teen Court members prior to Court hearings, as well as scholarships.

As a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization, NCTC qualifies to receive tax deductible bequests, devices, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. Please consider supporting our vision to divert teens from the juvenile justice system and to be a strong voice for troubled youth and families by donating. Your gift will go a long way toward helping us help youth.



PROGRAM HISTORY:

North County Teen Court (NCTC) was founded in 2006 by Sherman resident Mr. Robert Hoffek and Mr. Philip Brown, retired Police Officer.

Mr. Hoffek believed in working with youth and volunteered as a Youth Mentor prior to the creation of the NCTC. Besides being instrumental in creating the NCTC, Mr. Hoffek served as the first Executive Director of the NCTC Board of Directors from 3/2006-3/2012.

Mrs. Kristi Martin followed Mr. Hoffek as Executive Director from 3/2012-9/2014. Mrs. Karen Hoffek served as Executive Director from 9/2014 to 2/2019. Mr. Philip Brown served as Executive Director from 2/2019-1/2022. Ms. Elena Holler accepted the position of Executive Director 1/2022 along with Anne Rayhill as the Deputy Director.

The Executive Board meets annually to discuss policy and procedures regarding Teen Court operations and additionally on an "as need" basis. The Board is assisted by a Citizens Advisory Board also made up of community officials and citizen volunteers. There are no paid positions.

The NCTC currently serves three communities in Sangamon County, IL: Williamsville, Riverton, and Spaulding. Police Departments from the communities work with the program.

NCTC began taking cases in August 2006. Teen Court is a volunteer program comprised of high school students who serve as jurors, licensed attorneys who serve as moderators, parent coordinators who serve as liaisons for

the Executive Board and mentors who assist students as needed. The Teen Court meets monthly to hear cases brought before the Teen Court.

NCTC has processed over 800 juveniles ranging in age from 10-18. Juvenile offenders have completed over 7,000 community service hours.

Offenses for which juveniles have come to the Teen Court are reckless driving, underage drinking, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, controlled substances, battery, and assault, criminal damage to property, vandalism, burglary, runaways, criminal trespassing, curfew violation, truancy, traffic violations and disorderly conduct.

A parent must accompany the juvenile in court. Each juvenile who goes before the Teen Court pays a fee of \$30 to \$50 depending on the offence. This money goes into the scholarship fund. The Scholarship program began in 2007 with awards of \$250 to a senior court member. Since 2007 the NCTC Scholarship program has provided Scholarships to 24 well deserving students totaling \$14,000. Applicants must have served at least two years on the teen court to apply.

www.northcountyteencourt.com

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