



Greene County Teen Court

*** http://www.greencountymo.org/juvenile/teen_probation.php ***

Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Greene-County-Teen-Court/257475797601341>

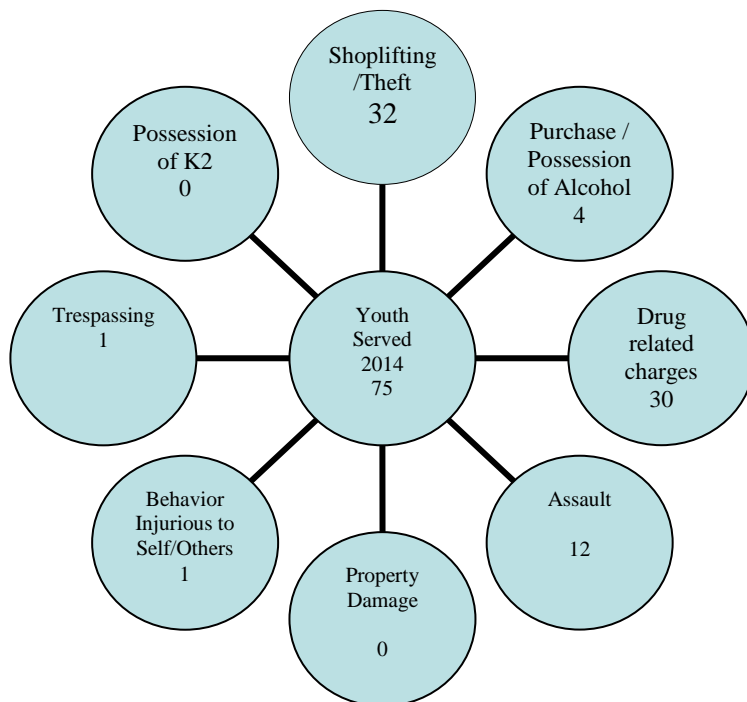
YouTube Page: *** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjYCNX2dXw8> ***

Greene County Teen Court is an informal alternative sentencing program for juveniles.

Once a week, Teen Court hearings are held at the Greene County Juvenile Justice Center. In Teen Court, juveniles between the ages of 12 and 16 who have committed a misdemeanor offense are given the chance to go before a jury of their peers. Here, they accept a constructive and meaningful response for their behavior determined by the jury rather than have it determined by a Deputy Juvenile Officer or the Juvenile Court Judge. Each defendant must accept responsibility for his/her actions to participate in Teen Court since juries do not decide innocence or guilt. The jurors' only job is to determine the appropriate sentence.

Everyone in Teen Court, jury, bailiff, court clerk and attorneys are juveniles. Eight total Judges volunteer time to preside over Teen Court; four Missouri Court of Appeals Judges from the Southern District, two Associate Circuit Court Judges from Greene County, and two Municipal Court Judges from Springfield.

In 2014, 75 youth were served in this alternative sentencing program.



Once sentenced these youth are expected to volunteer time both in the Teen Court process as jurors and in the community with service hours. During the year 515 community service hours and 174 jury duties were assigned to youth participating in Teen Court. Additionally, youth from Greene County high schools, adult volunteers and Judges volunteer in this process. Over 450 adult and youth volunteer hours were logged in the operations of Teen Court. Teen Court has proven to be successful in providing families and youth resources to aid in their self improvement 70% of the time in 2014. Over a four year review of youth participating in Teen Court, only 7% of youth having participated were re-referred to our office for another offense.

Please include some of these quotes in the margins of this section:

What was your overall experience in the courtroom during your trial? (A sample of answers)

"Good, everyone treated me with respect and made it clear what I was supposed to do."

"Good, I got what I deserved."

"I realized that what I did was a mistake and I shouldn't have done it."

"I was very nervous, but I understood fairly well."

"It wasn't as bad as I thought it would be."

"Everything was very professional and I was treated with a large amount of respect."

Which part of your sentence did you feel you learned the most from? (A sample of answers)

"When I did my CAPS with my family, I realized what I could lose, who I would hurt and how disappointed my Mom was."

"VIP program and jury duty."

"Jury duty because I saw and dealt with what a couple of them had to go through and I know how hard it is on the parents and the teen."

"All of it!! But out of all of the two that most helped me were family communication workshop and anger management classes."

"From RADAR events I learned the most about facts needed to know about drugs and the effects on your body."

"Responsibilities at home."

2014 Parent Exit Interviews

Comments/Suggestions: (A sample of comments)

"My child very much enjoyed the experience and I think will certainly affect her future decisions!"

"Thank you for taking the time to have a system like this."

"Very thankful for this program and also gave my child time to learn more about himself."

"Teen Court opened my eyes to alternative ways of dealing with teens and appreciate what the court does for families."

"I hope they keep the program and I think it helps wake those teens up to what can happen if they keep breaking the law."

Volunteering

Teen Court is a wonderful experience and a great opportunity to discover the judicial system. It offers a unique and fun way to give back to the community through a truly rewarding program. Become a volunteer TODAY!!!