

Program Overview

Teen Court is an intervention program for juveniles, ages 12-16, who commit ordinance violations such as retail theft, minor theft, disorderly conduct, curfew infraction, or minor property damage. First-time offenders must first admit guilt and then can voluntarily enter the Teen Court system to receive a sentence from a teen jury instead of municipal court sentencing. High school volunteers are trained to act as lawyers, clerks, bailiffs, and jurors in order to determine an appropriate sentence. The primary goal of the program is to reduce the number of second-time offenders.

Who We Serve

Teen Court assists youth, ages 12-16, who have admitted to committing a first-time misdemeanor offense. **2006: 65 cases completed.**

A Story of Success

Sara was referred to the Teen Court program for retail theft. She had stolen food from a local gas station and received a citation from the police. She admitted her guilt in this crime, and also stated that it was not the first time she had stolen. Though she had never previously been caught, she had, in the past, stolen items from local retail stores and a homeowner's garage.

When Sara came to Teen Court, she was at her breaking point. She needed guidance and some positive direction to help her make the right decisions. Through the Teen Court process, she was judged by a panel of her peers and sentenced to serve three jury duty nights, complete 10 hours of community service, and write an apology letter to her mother.

Sara followed these instructions diligently and successfully completed her sentence. She even wrote the Teen Court staff a letter thanking them for their help. One piece of her letter states, *"I just wanted to thank you for everything. I wish that I didn't have to learn the hard way. Teen Court gave me a chance of a lifetime, and I know I will never get another chance like this if I get in trouble again, so I am going to do everything that you guys have told me to do."*

Since Sara's completion with Teen Court, she has stayed out of trouble. She has now moved to another city with her father to separate herself from the friends and atmosphere that had caused her to steer in the wrong direction. Though she was once an angry, lost girl, Sara was well on her way to becoming a happy, successful young adult.

Teen Court offices are located at Family Services' downtown office, 300 Crooks Street, Green Bay.

The above story is an example of the type of children, individuals and families we serve. Names, ages, and other personal information have been changed to protect the client's confidentiality.

Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin, Inc.

300 Crooks St, Green Bay, WI 54301 (920) 436-6800 • 1810 Appleton Rd, Menasha, WI 54952 (920) 739-4226
400 Ceape Ave, Oshkosh, WI 54901 (920) 233-6630 • 827 N 8th Ave, Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235 (920) 746-9040

www.familyservicesnew.org