

The Teen Court process provides teachable moments for all students involved and holds youth offenders accountable for their actions to make the situation as right as possible. Currently only two school of six in Buffalo and Pepin Counties actively takes advantage of the direct referral process. Our goal is to see at least half of the schools use direct referrals. You can make a difference by helping us reach out to schools and promoting Buffalo/Pepin County Teen Court.

**Possible People to Contact:**

- Teachers, Principal, Superintendent, School Counselor, Teen Court Contact, School Board Members.

**Possible Opportunities to Connect With Above Mentioned Individuals:**

- Returning from a Teen Court case
  - *Share an exciting experience or observation (while maintaining confidentiality), skill learned, or how you felt.*
- Passing in the hallway
  - *If you are between classes, or have a spare moment, express the benefits you believe come from participating in Teen Court for you, the offender, and the school.*
- Requesting to leave for Teen Court
  - *When you notify your teacher, school administration, etc. that you have a court case, share what about the hearing you are looking forward to and why.*

**Why Should Schools Use Teen Court?**

- Restore harm created by offense.
- Offers alternatives to suspensions and expulsion.
- Sanctions are based on the needs, abilities, and interests of the offender.
- Focused on "righting the wrong" caused by the offense.

*Adapted from Implementing Restorative Justice: A guide for schools*

**Benefits of Utilizing Teen Court**

- Panelists build and develop critical thinking and problem solving skills.
- Panelists help peers, feel empowered, and are more connected to their schools.
- Offenders and panelists gain useful skills for college or the workforce.
- Offenders and panelists gain a better understanding of how to make a positive change.

**Tell Your Own Teen Court Story**

- In what ways have you, the school, and/or youth offenders benefited?
- What did it feel like to help another student?
- What skills and knowledge have you gained?
- What changes have you observed in your own or the offender's behavior/ attitude?

If additional information is requested, please have the individual contact Teen Court Coordinator Annie Lisowski at 608-685-6256, by email [annie.lisowski@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:annie.lisowski@ces.uwex.edu) or direct them to the webpage at: <http://buffalo.uwex.edu/teencourt>