

TEEN COURT OF GREATER BATON ROUGE

What is Teen Court?

Teen Court of Greater Baton Rouge is a voluntary diversion program in which teens sentence their peers for first-time misdemeanor offenses such as shoplifting, school altercations and damage to property. Teen volunteers perform the roles of prosecuting and defense attorneys, bailiff and jurors.

Why Teen Court?

The philosophy of Teen Court is to use peer pressure as a positive force that holds the teen offenders accountable for their actions. In Teen Court, the emphasis is on restorative justice, seeking to repair the harm done to the victim and the community.

How Does Teen Court Work?

Teen Court hearings are held at Juvenile Court. Licensed attorneys serve as judges. Defendants are questioned by both the teen defense and prosecution attorneys to determine the circumstances of the offense.

After careful consideration of the facts and circumstances, the teen jury determines a fair and constructive sentence, which may include community service and participation in future teen court sessions, counseling, attending educational programs and writing essays and letters of apology to the victim.

What is the Participation Criteria?

- Must be a first-time misdemeanor offense
- Offender must admit involvement/guilt
- Offender must be between ages 12 and 17 at the time of the offense
- Offender and parent must agree to participate in the program



Teen Court of Greater Baton Rouge is funded by a grant from the Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice (formerly the Office of Youth Development). The project is also supported in part by Grant No. 2009-JF-FX-0059 awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

What are the Benefits of Teen Court?

- Positive peer pressure sends a clear message to the offenders about their behavior. Teen Court reduces the likelihood of repeat offenses and serves as a positive learning experience.
- The teen offenders are held accountable for their actions.
- Both teen offenders and teen volunteers contribute to their community.
- Teen Court offers the teen volunteers a remarkable leadership opportunity.
- Both teen offenders and teen volunteers learn about due process, restorative justice and the benefits of volunteering to improve their community.

Teen Volunteer Criteria

Teen volunteers must be in middle or high school, complete a training session, desire to improve their community, and be dependable and serious about volunteering.

Teen Volunteer Roles

BAILIFF

Administers the oath to the jury and all people who testify; delivers the verdict form to the judge.

JUROR

Listens to evidence presented in the case; determines constructive sentence for offender.

TEEN ATTORNEY

Both prosecution and defense review case facts; defense interviews and prepares defendant. Both prepare opening and closing statements and conduct direct and cross examination.

Adult Volunteer Positions

Committee Member • Judge
Teen Attorney Assistant • Jury Monitor
Training Session Presenter
Workshop Presenter



**A PROGRAM OF THE
BATON ROUGE BAR FOUNDATION**

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE:
Competency Development
Public Safety • Accountability

*For more information or to volunteer,
please contact one of our coordinators:*

Donna Buuck
225-214-5556 • donna@brba.org

R. Lynn S. Haynes
225-214-5564 • lynn@brba.org

www.BRBA.org