

HAMILTON COUNTY YOUTH COURT MANUAL



(Updated March 2022)

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

HISTORY AND OVERVIEW OF YOUTH COURTS

Youth Courts have rapidly spread across the nation in the last 10 years. Current data indicate that over 1,050 Youth Court programs are present in 49 states and the District of Columbia.¹ The Youth Court program has been touted at the State and national levels and has been successful at diverting thousands of teens from the juvenile justice system.

Youth Courts are designed for first time misdemeanor offenders. The process begins with a referral from Juvenile Court. In order for a case to be heard by Youth Court, the child must first admit responsibility for his/her actions and both the parents and the child must consent to participating in Youth Court. The victim is not required to attend but is encouraged to participate.

Youth Courts train local teenagers to serve as jurors, handling real-life cases involving their peers. The goal of a Youth Court is to use positive peer pressure to ensure that young people who have committed minor offenses pay the community back and receive the help they need to avoid further involvement in the justice system. Each Youth Court varies in response to the needs and resources of its community, but typically Youth Courts handle cases involving young people, ages 13-17, who have been cited for low-level offenses such as vandalism, shoplifting, disorderly conduct, assault, and curfew violation.

Youth Courts pursue multiple goals at the same time. First, they hold young people accountable for their actions by requiring them to accept responsibility and repay the community. The sanctions that are imposed in Youth Court emphasize restoration, encouraging Respondents to make amends through such actions as performing community service and writing letters of apology. Second, Youth Court provides participants with experiential learning that is designed to complement classroom lessons about government. High school students learn first-hand how courts work, stepping into the role of jurors. Law students gain courtroom experience when they fill the roles of prosecutors, defense counsel, and bailiff in a trial setting.

A Respondent must accept responsibility for committing the offense to participate in Youth Court. The Respondent's story does not need to match the referral sources exactly, but the Respondent must admit to being involved in the incident.

¹ For more information, please see the National Association of Youth Court website at: <https://www.youthcourt.net/about/facts-and-stats>

OFFENSE TYPES

Youth Court will hear the following cases:

Section	Description	Degree
2151.022	Curfew violation	NA
2152.02	VCO Curfew	NA
2909.06	Criminal damaging/endangering	M2, M1
2909.07	Criminal mischief (tampering)	M3, M1
2911.21	Criminal trespass	M4
2911.211	Aggravated Trespass	M1
2913.02	Theft	M1
2913.21	Misuse Credit Card	M1
2917.11	Disorderly conduct	MM M4
2917.11	Discovery conduct (Persist; near school)	M4
2917.13	Misconduct at emergency	MM, M4
2921.31	Obstruction of official business	M2
2923.24	Possession of criminal tools	M1
3767.32	Littering	M3

GOALS

The Hamilton County Youth Court is intended to serve as: (1) an early-intervention program for young people charged with low-level offenses (“Respondents”); (2) a leadership development program for the youths who serve as jurors (“Jurors”); (3) an oral advocacy and professional development opportunity for law students and; (4) an opportunity to integrate a variety of groups (juvenile court, local volunteer attorneys, law students, and high school students) to advocate for positive change in our legal system.

We work to achieve these goals through the following:

Service

For Jurors our goal is to teach the value of civic duty through volunteering and service to our community.

For Respondents our goal is to prevent future contact with the justice system and repair the harm done to the community.

Accountability

Our goal is to teach Respondents the importance of accepting responsibility and being accountable to the community and to themselves. The focus is on reflection and choice.

Professionalism

Our goal is to improve law students’ job readiness skills such as interviewing, public speaking, and oral advocacy.

Leadership

For Respondents our goal is to assist Respondents in making better choices for themselves in the future.

For Jurors our goal is to develop leadership skills.

ROLES

Coordinators: The Coordinators of Youth Court will manage the program and ensure operability of the program.

Hearing Captain (Lead Judge): The Hearing Captain will be the point person at each hearing date, where four cases will be heard. Individuals interested in serving as Hearing Captain will be required to volunteer first as a Judge.

Judge: A Judge will preside over two of the four hearings on each hearing date (alternating with the Hearing Captain/Lead Judge). Upon the conclusion of each hearing, the Judges will be required to meet with the child and his/her parents to review the sanctions. The Judge will have the opportunity to observe the Hearing Captain preside over a hearing before having to preside over a hearing themselves.

Bailiff: The Bailiff will open and close Court and maintain order. The Bailiff is a law student

Clerk Interns: Occasionally, jurors who have graduated from high school may return to serve as Clerk of Court during the hearings. The Clerk will greet volunteers, youth offenders, and their families as they arrive and will direct individuals to their assigned rooms/law student. Additionally, the Clerk may take juror attendance, help set up the courtroom, collect the jurors' paperwork, and assist the Hearing Captain as necessary.

Jurors: The Jurors are the high school students (aged 14-18) who commit to serve at a minimum of three Youth Court hearings for each session (Fall, Spring, and Summer). The jury will be comprised of no less than six and no more than twelve students. Jurors must view a training video prior to serving. A juror must reside or attend school in Hamilton County.

Respondents: Respondents are those young people whose cases are referred to Youth Court for a hearing. These youths typically interact with Youth Court immediately before, during, and after the hearing until they have completed their assigned sanctions.

Advocates/Attorneys: Law students will serve as the prosecutor and defense counsel. The prosecutor will preside over two to four cases on a hearing date. Each defense counsel, who work in teams of two, will preside over two cases (alternating with the other defense counsel), so that they can spend 30 minutes talking to their "client" before the hearing.

Law Student Intern: The Law Student Intern will work with the coordinators of Youth Court to perform administrative tasks necessary to the operation of Youth Court.

CONFIDENTIALITY

What type of information is considered confidential?

All Youth Court records are sealed and may only be accessed by the Juvenile Court. Sealed court records/proceedings will be treated as though they never took place. If someone asks about a sealed record, the law requires the answer: “We have no such record of that matter.”

Youth Court hearings are closed to the general public. Only Youth Court volunteers, Jurors, the Respondent and his/her parents/guardians may participate. Everything that happens during a hearing and deliberation is confidential.

Who is bound to confidentiality?

Everyone. The only party not bound by confidentiality is the Respondent and his/her parents/guardians.

SANCTIONS

- **Community Service:** The Respondent is asked to provide some benefit to the local community in service. The Respondent will be referred to various nonprofit sites/organizations and it is up to the Respondent to coordinate her/his service. The jury can recommend a specific service task based on restorative justice.
- **Chores:** The Respondent can be asked to provide a certain number of hours of chores to their family. Chores can include but are not limited to, dishes, helping with younger siblings, cleaning, pet services, etc. Chores are to be determined by the Respondent's parent/guardian who will confirm with Youth Court that they have been completed.
- **Mandatory School Attendance:** This disposition should be used in all cases where the Respondent is truant or has missed a significant number of school days.
- **Essay/Written Reflection:** Essay topics should be relevant to the issues brought forth in the courtroom. Respondents should be provided with guidelines such as page length.
- **Reflection Worksheet:** The jury may assign a guided reflection worksheet for completion by the Respondent. Developed worksheets include, Theft, General, Bullying, Curfew, and Peer Pressure. *Included later in this manual. (Additional worksheets may be created as the coordinators see fit.)
- **Letter of Apology:** Respondents should be provided with guidance as to whom to direct the Apology Letter. Apology Letters will be provided to Hamilton County Youth Court.
- **Verbal/Personal Apology**
- **Restitution**
- **Parental House Arrest:** The parents enforce limiting the Respondent to leaving his/her home or yard only when accompanied by a parent or legal guardian – the Respondent is permitted to attend school, job, or work detail by going directly from home and returning immediately afterwards.
- **Parental Driving Suspension:** The parents enforce limited driving privileges to school and work for a period of time as determined by Youth Court.
- **Good Behavior in Home, School, and Community:** The Respondent must follow her/his parents' rules and abide by all laws and conditions within the community. The jury can order this along with other dispositions.

- **Stay Away Order:** The jurors feel the Respondent should stay away from a specific person or location. This should be related to the case or issues presented in the courtroom.
- **Curfew:** The parent/guardian enforce a curfew on a daily basis for a period of time to be determined by the jurors.
- **Admonished:** The jurors feel the offense is minor and the Respondent has been appropriately dealt with by his/her parents/guardians.
- **Youth Court Jury Duty:** The jurors believe the Respondent is an appropriate candidate to return and serve as a member of the jury. *This may be used as a suggestion but not a requirement for completion of the Respondent's case.

**Unless there is a good reason for extending the deadline, it should be 30 days from the date of the hearing. Written sanctions and parent/guardian confirmations should be e-mailed to hamiltoncountyyouthcourt@gmail.com.*

II. JURORS

CURRENT PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS IN THE JURY POOL

Aiken Tech	Northwest
Butler Tech	Oak Hills
Cincinnati Country Day	Oyler
Clark Montessori	Riverview East
Colerain	St. Ursula Academy
Elder	St. Xavier
Finneytown	Seven Hills
Hughes	Summit Country Day
Indian Hill	Sycamore
Law and Leadership Institute	Turpin
Mercy McAuley	Ursuline Academy
Moeller	Walnut Hills
Mt. Healthy	Winton Woods
Mt. Notre Dame	Wyoming

JUROR INFORMATION

Criteria for Participation as a Juror

Aside from age (13 to 18 years old) the only other specific requirement for Youth Court participation is residence or school attendance in Hamilton County Ohio. Youth Court accepts nominations from the participating schools and continues to expand its jury pool.

Youth Court Jurors are Expected to:

1. Attend all assigned Youth Court Sessions
2. Follow the Code of Conduct
3. Be respectful of other Jurors, Respondents, parents, lawyers, and volunteers
4. Maintain the Oath of Confidentiality

All Youth Court members are required to sign member contracts and confidentiality agreements, obtain parental consent, complete an emergency medical authorization, and abide by the code of conduct. Members must also watch a juror training video which can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1nuUrjvkCA&feature=youtu.be>

Attendance policy:

The overall goal of our attendance policy is to keep all Jurors in the program through clear and consistent expectations and consequences.

If a Juror is confirmed for a particular hearing date, they must attend that hearing date. If an emergency arises and a Juror cannot attend on that date, they must notify Youth Court coordinators, either by e-mail, text, or phone, before the hearing or within 48 hours after the hearing. They may e-mail hamiltoncountyyouthcourt@gmail.com. Each juror will be permitted two absences, for whatever reason, over the course of the school year and the following summer—from September through the following August. If a juror exceeds this limit without contacting a Youth Court coordinator, they must meet with a coordinator to continue to participate as a juror. When committing to a date, jurors should consider their school and work schedules, extracurricular activities, and any family events or vacations that may conflict with the hearing dates.

On their assigned date, jurors must arrive at the Hamilton County Youth Center no later than 5:10 p.m. and are expected to stay until the conclusion of all four hearings at approximately 8:00 p.m. Late arrival may preclude participation.

YOUTH COURT CODE OF CONDUCT

Participating in Youth Court is a privilege, not a right. This privilege can be lost if a participant fails to act in a responsible manner and within the confines of the law. A Youth Court Juror is expected to serve as a role model for their peers at all times. And, therefore, must maintain high standards of conduct and encourage other jurors to do the same. Jurors must be temperate and dignified and refrain from all illegal and morally reprehensible conduct. Even minor violations of the law may tend to lessen public confidence in the entire Youth Court program. Most importantly, since Youth Court is designed to promote law-abiding behavior, a juror's behavior must be consistent with that purpose.

Listed below are a number of **RULES OF CONDUCT** that jurors must follow. Failure to follow these rules may lead to suspension from the Youth Court program.

As a member of Youth Court, a juror must abide by the following rules:

1. Must not engage in illegal conduct.
2. Must maintain the confidentiality of Youth Court proceedings.
3. Must not violate the rules and regulations adopted by the juror's school district.

4. Must participate free of bias toward a person's age, race, gender, religion, national origin, or disability.
5. Must appear promptly and prepared.
6. Must perform the role as effectively and competently as possible.
7. Must not engage in undignified or discourteous conduct during any Youth Court session.
8. Must not ask any question that is intended to harass or degrade the Respondent.
9. Must not let any outside influence, such as parents, fellow students, or own self-interest affect actions and decisions in how to proceed.
10. Must treat with courtesy and consideration all persons involved.
11. Must dress appropriately.
12. Must notify the Youth Court Coordinator immediately if arrested or suspended from school.

***Violation of these rules will result in repercussions which may include: a hearing before the Youth Court, probation (with clearly defined expectations of improved behavior), or dismissal from the program.**

Each New Juror will receive a packet which includes:

- (1) Code of Conduct
- (2) Student Contract
- (3) Emergency Medical Authorization
- (4) Training Video Confirmation Form
- (5) Confidentiality Agreement
- (6) Juror Information

STUDENT CONTRACT

This contract must be signed and on and on file before I can participate in the Youth Court. I understand that being a Youth Court Juror is a privilege, not a right, and that privilege can be lost if I fail to act in a responsible manner and within the confines of the law. As a Youth Court Juror, I am expected to serve as a role model for my peers at all times. I must therefore maintain high standards of conduct and encourage others to do the same. I understand that I must attend at least four Youth Court sessions to be recognized as a Youth Court Juror in good standing.

CHEMICAL ABUSE POLICY: I shall not at any time possess, use, sell, offer to sell, deliver, conceal, consume, or be under the influence of any drugs of abuse including alcoholic beverages or any substance that is directly or indirectly represented to be a drug of abuse. I shall not possess, use, sell, offer to sell, deliver, any instruments or paraphernalia for use with drugs of abuse.

HEARING CAPTAIN’S RULES: I agree to abide by the Hearing Captain’s rules, which include that I shall not violate the law or discredit the school or myself.

Violation of this contract may result in disciplinary action that may include warning and/or denial of participation from the Youth Court program.

Student’s Name (Print) _____

Student’s Signature _____ Date _____

I have read and understand the policy stated above and am a witness to my son/daughter’s signature.

Parent/Guardian’s Signature _____ Date _____

I have reviewed this policy and my rules with the above named student.

Youth Court Hearing Captain _____ Date _____

EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION

Purpose: To enable parents and guardians to authorize the provision of emergency treatment for children who become ill or injured while participating in Youth Court when parents or guardians cannot be reached.

NAME OF CHILD _____
(Print)

Consent: The Youth Court Hearing Captain and/or Coordinating Volunteer: _____ **Has _____ Does Not Have My Permission**

if he/she considers it necessary to call a physician or emergency care assistance for my son/daughter in case of sickness or accident. I understand that in the event of a serious emergency, I will be notified immediately for further instructions. I also understand that I am responsible for any medical expenses related to my child’s care.

In the event reasonable attempts to contact me at the numbers given on this form have been unsuccessful, I hereby give my consent for:

(a) The administration of any treatment deemed necessary by our family practitioners:
Dr. _____ (preferred physician) at _____ (phone)

Dr. _____ (preferred dentist) at _____ (phone) OR

(b) in the event the designated practitioners are not available, by another licensed physician or dentist.

I also grant permission to transfer the child to the nearest medical facility.
Hospital of choice _____ (Hospital name)

This authorization does not cover major surgery unless medical opinions of two licensed physicians or dentists concurring in the necessity for such surgery are obtained prior to the performance of such surgery.

Emergency Contact (PRINT) and Phone Number

Alternate Emergency Contact (PRINT) and Phone Number

Information concerning the child’s medical history including medical allergies, medication, or impairments to which a physician should be alerted.

Parent/Guardian Name (PRINT) Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

The importance of honoring the Confidentiality Agreement cannot be overstated. The business of appearing in any court is a personal matter. All aspects of a Youth Court hearing are **CONFIDENTIAL**. Failure to respect this agreement can result in dismissal from participation in the program.

“I solemnly declare that I will keep confidential any information that comes to my knowledge in the course of a Youth Court case presentation. I will not identify, directly or indirectly, either audibly or in writing, any person participating as a Respondent in the Youth Court Program.”

Youth Court Juror’s Signature

Date

Print Name

CONFIDENTIALITY TRAINING

What type of information is confidential?

Any information that would identify the Respondent. For example: name, parent's names, or school.

Example One:

Sara, a Youth Court Juror learned during a Youth Court hearing that her best friend was involved in the drug-related offense, but not charged. Sara had no clue that her best friend was involved. Sarah talks to her friend later that night and asks her about what happened. Is this okay?

Example Two:

Brandon, a Youth Court Juror, recently heard a case about a child who had been molested when he was younger. Brandon is very concerned about this and goes home and talks with his dad about the case. Is this respecting the Respondent's confidentiality?

Example Three:

Juan and Amber are at a birthday party for their cousin Joe. Juan notices that Joe's friend Bob was a Respondent in one of the Youth Court Sessions that he participated in. Amber politely asks Bob how things are going and if he had straightened up since that day in court. Is this right?

Example Four:

Lexi is a Youth Court Juror and knows one of the kids who is being tried in Youth Court. The kid, Krishna, is very disrespectful in Court and the case is sent back to the Juvenile Court. Lexi goes to school the next day and tells her best friend what happened.

Example Five: Connor gets back from serving as a Youth Court Juror and is asked about the hearing by the school principal who knew the Respondent and the case. Connor informs the Principal about the details of the case.

Example Six: After a Youth Court session, Braden's dad picks him up. His dad is curious about his involvement in Youth Court and wants to know what happened when he served. Braden tells his dad in detail what the cases were like and who the offenders were.

Example Seven: Andre, a Youth Court Member is asked by a friend how Youth Court went that day. The friend had heard someone he knows was in trouble and asks if that person was in court. Andre tells the friend who was there and what the sanctions were.

Example Eight: Another Youth Court Member asks you how Youth Court was that day. He asks how many cases you heard and how it went. You describe in detail what each case was and explain some of the sanctions delivered.

****It is okay to speak with people about a case, just don't mention anything that would identify the Respondent.***

What are the consequences for breaking confidentiality?

- Suspension from the Youth Court Program
- Hearing before a disciplinary team
- Hearing before the Youth Court

ETHICS TRAINING

Rule One: Be Respectful of Everyone in the Court

Do not make faces or gestures during hearings. The environment that you create in the courtroom must be serious or the Respondent will not take you seriously.

Rule Two: Be A Positive Role Model

This can be as simple as being at Youth Court on time and attending when you are scheduled. You are a role model to the Respondents, so you cannot engage in unlawful behavior.

Rule Three: Maintain Confidentiality

You signed a confidentiality agreement and you will take an oath before each hearing.

Rule Four: Speak Up When You Have A Conflict

When you feel that you cannot give a fair, unbiased opinion, do not participate in the jury deliberation. If you recognize the Respondent or his/her parents, let the Judge know **AFTER** the hearing but before the jury deliberates.

SENTENCING TRAINING

General Considerations:

- 1. Deterrence of the Respondent:** punishes the Respondent so as to discourage him/her from committing offenses in the future.
- 2. Deterrence of Others:** punishing those who violate the law is a deterrent to others who might be so inclined from committing similar offenses.
- 3. Rehabilitation:** punishment may be fashioned so as to assist the offender to learn to modify his/her behavior in the future.
- 4. Retribution:** When an offender violates the law and, in the process, causes harm to a victim or to the community in some way, that sense of wrong is avenged by punishing the offender.

Any fair sanction must also consider Respondent's individual factors:

- **Age** (was the respondent of sufficient age that he/she should have known better)
- **Health** (did the Respondent suffer from any health problems which contributed to the offense)
- **Family Circumstances** (did the Respondent's home life encourage or discourage lawful conduct)
- **Prior Incidents** (did the Respondent have prior arrests/problems at school)
- **Academic Record** (has the Respondent demonstrated a reasonable dedication to schoolwork)
- **Extracurricular Activities** (has the Respondent demonstrated a reasonable dedication to schoolwork)
- **Employment Record** (has the Respondent held any jobs and if so what is her/his employment record)
- **Punishments Already Imposed** (has the Respondent already received some punishment for his/her conduct by parents or school officials)
- **Intent** (did the Respondent display an intent to commit the offense or did they act recklessly or in the heat of the moment)
- **Motive** (did the Respondent commit the offense to help another person or himself/herself or to injure another person)
- **Victim** (is the victim especially vulnerable or did the victim provoke the offense)
- **Role in the Offense** (if the Respondent participated with others in the offense was he/she an organizer or leader of the illegal activity or was he/she a minor participant)
- **Acceptance of Responsibility** (does the Respondent acknowledge responsibility and demonstrate remorse or does the Respondent excuse, minimize, or attempt to avoid responsibility)

WHAT TO EXPECT

Function: The function of the jury is to decide the appropriate sentence of the Respondent after hearing the evidence and the argument of the prosecutor and defense counsel. One of the purposes of Youth Court is to allow Respondents to be judged by a jury of their peers. The right to have a jury of one's peers sit in judgment is one of the basic constitutional rights in our democracy.

The jury will pick a foreperson who will be the leader of the jury and guide deliberations. The foreperson's vote on a particular sanction is entitled to no greater weight than that of the other jurors.

The foreperson has the following duties and obligations:

1. Lead the jury's deliberations by stimulating discussion among the jurors;
2. Maintain order in the jury room, insuring an open discussion of the facts and the appropriate sanction;
3. Require each juror to state his/her views as to what the Respondent's sanction should be and why;
4. Call for a vote during the deliberations as to the appropriate sanction;
5. Stand in open Court and read the jury's verdict and offer encouraging words.

The hearing will proceed as follows:

1. The Respondent will admit guilt.
2. The prosecutor and defender will both make statements and argue for particular sanctions.
3. The Respondent will be given an opportunity to make a statement.
4. At the conclusion of the hearing you will stay in the hearing room while the Respondent returns to the lobby and you will deliberate as to what sanction is appropriate. The Judge will stay with the jury to answer any questions. The jury will have approximately 10 minutes to deliberate.
5. The Respondent will return to the courtroom.
6. The foreperson will stand in open court and read the sentence.
7. The jury will remain in the courtroom to hear the next case. (The jury will hear two 30-minute hearings back-to-back, have a 15-minute break and hear two more 30-minute hearings. We will take 5-10 minutes to debrief and will conclude for the night).

III. RESPONDENTS

SCHEDULING (INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOUTH COURT COORDINATOR)

1. Introduce yourself and explain the Youth Court's connection to the Juvenile Court. Emphasize that a successful completion of Youth Court will obviate the need to proceed in Juvenile Court.
2. Highlight the positive elements of Youth Court: hearings are in the evening, you will have a scheduled time, and most importantly, if the Respondent successfully completes Youth Court the incident will not go on his/her official record.
3. Explain the expectations that will be placed on the Respondent and family (i.e., your child may be asked to do community service or complete other sanctions).
4. Explain that the Youth Court does not determine guilt or innocence, but is intended to help the Respondent reflect upon the experience and limit recidivism.
5. Emphasize that this is not a fact-finding court, and that the Respondent must accept responsibility for the incident to participate.
6. Ask if the parent and Respondent consent to participate in your court. (Verbal consent is sufficient until the youth appears for his/her hearing at which time the Respondent and parent/guardian provide written consent).

If the youth/parent agrees to participate in Youth Court:

1. Schedule the hearing
2. Confirm the Respondent's address, phone, and email (if applicable) and explain that the Hamilton County Juvenile Court will mail and/or email a letter to confirm the hearing and information about the process ("Participant Information"), and you or their advocate (a law student) will call the week of the hearing to remind them about the process.
3. Explain that you will try to arrange a phone conversation between the Respondent and the advocate who will be representing the Respondent on the day of the hearing.
4. Notify (e-mail) Juvenile Court of the docket for each completed youth court hearing date and the times that you have scheduled for each Respondent/family. Juvenile Court will mail each Respondent a confirmation letter with the date, time, and location for their hearing.
5. Two weeks prior to the date, e-mail the Respondent's files to the advocates who will be representing them (defense counsel, the volunteer judges for that date, bailiff, and the prosecutor).

If a Respondent youth does NOT agree to participate in Youth Court: Notify Juvenile Court.

RESPONDENT INFORMATION

The purpose of the Youth Court is not punitive, but to help teens appearing before the court to refocus their efforts in a positive direction.

The child will be represented by an advocate (a volunteer law student). Instead of being sentenced by a Judge, a jury comprised of peers (high school students aged 14-18) will hand down a sanction.

All Youth Court hearings and proceedings are confidential.

The complaint and Youth Court process does not establish an official Juvenile Court record for the child. The record of the charge and proceeding will be immediately sealed upon completion of the disposition. However, the Juvenile Court will retain information to identify your child as having participated in a Youth Court hearing for a period of five years. Any additional charges will prevent the opportunity to participate in additional diversion programs in that five-year period.

If the parents, child, or the victim are dissatisfied with the result of the hearing, they may request that the matter be referred back to Juvenile Court. In the event the child does not complete the sanctions, the child and parents may be brought back for further hearings or the case may be returned to Juvenile Court for further action.

YOUTH COURT NOTICE LETTER

RE: _____

Dear Parents: _____

On _____, a complaint was filed with the court alleging that your son/daughter was involved in an offense. As a result of this complaint, the case has been referred to the Youth Court program.

Youth Court is a program designed for first time misdemeanor and status offenders who have no official court record. A description of the program is enclosed for your review.

During a phone call with Youth Court personnel, you verbally consented to your son/daughter's participation in the Youth Court program. Your court date is _____ at _____. If you do not arrive by _____, your child will forfeit their opportunity to participate and your case will be sent back to Juvenile Court for formal adjudication.

The Youth Court hearing will be held at the Juvenile Court Youth Center located at 2020 Auburn Avenue, Cincinnati Ohio 45219. The Youth Center is easily accessible by public transit and there is ample parking available.

**If you have any questions, please e-mail the coordinators at:
hamiltoncountyouthcourt@gmail.com.**

YOUTH COURT CONSENT FORM

I acknowledge receipt of the unofficial complaint and an explanation of the Youth Court program.

1. I admit the allegations contained in the complaint. Yes _____ No _____
2. I want my case to be heard by Youth Court. Yes _____ No _____

In order to participate in Youth Court, we agree and understand that:

1. Youth Court is a voluntary, pre-court diversion program for first-time and minor offenders where the offender has taken responsibility for his/her actions. It provides the juvenile with an alternative to Juvenile Court involvement. If we decide not to participate in Youth Court, the case will be sent back to Juvenile Court.
2. I (the juvenile) admit my participation in the incident that has been referred to Youth Court. I understand that I must take responsibility for my actions in order to qualify for participation in Youth Court. Youth Court will not engage in a determination of "guilt or innocence," but will consider factors surrounding the offense in determining an appropriate sanction.
3. I (the juvenile) agree to abide by the sanction of the Youth Court and understand that if I fail to abide by the conditions of the sanction, this matter will be referred to Juvenile Court for further action.
4. We (juvenile and parents) understand that Youth Court has no authority to compel our appearance or participation in Youth Court. It is totally voluntary.
5. We (juvenile and parents) understand that the Youth Court will be comprised of juveniles who have been sworn by an oath of confidentiality regarding the proceedings.
6. We (juvenile and parents) understand that upon successful completion of the terms and conditions imposed by Youth Court, this case will be destroyed from the official records.
7. We (juvenile and parents) understand that I/our child is being represented by a volunteer advocate who is a law student. We understand that this representation does not create an attorney-client relationship and we cannot hold the advocate liable for his/her actions or inactions related to this case.

8. Any questions regarding Youth Court have been explained to our satisfaction.

Youth Name (Print)

Youth Name (Signature)

Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

Parent/Guardian Name (Signature)

Date_____

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Mt. Healthy Alliance (Food Pantry)

www.mthealthyalliance.org

Contact Person: Kathy Lorenz, Coordinator

Address: Mt. Healthy Christian Church, 7717 Harrison Avenue, Mt. Healthy, OH 45231
Phone: (513) 551-8036

Keep Cincinnati Beautiful

<http://www.keepcincinnatibeautiful.org/how-to-help/overview.html> Contact Person: Megan Beck

Phone: (513) 352-4380

Matthew 25: Ministries

<http://m25m.org/>

Contact Person:

shelly@m25m.org Phone: 513-793-6256

Paeslee Neighborhood Center

<http://peasleecenter.org/volunteer/>

Contact Person: Jennifer

Arons Phone: 513-621-5514

Volunteer Match

<https://www.volunteermatch.org/search/index.jsp?r=msa&l=47060>

St. Francis Seraph Ministries

<http://www.sfsministries.org/volunteer/>

Contact Person: Theresa Diersen

Phone: (513) 549-0542 (extension 289)

Elderly Persons in Community, Inc. (EPIC House)

<http://elderlypersonsincommunity.com/about.html>

Contact Person: Marlene Hamilton (Executive Director)
Phone: (513) 241-7979

**HAMILTON COUNTY (OHIO) YOUTH COURT
SANCTION FORM**

We the jury find the Respondent, _____, has admitted his/her involvement in Youth Court case number _____

We sentence the Respondent to complete the following disposition(s):

This sanction is to be completed by _____

Failure to comply with the above sanction by the agreed date will result in this case being reassigned to the Official Docket of the Hamilton County (Ohio) Juvenile Court.

I have read and understand the above sentence as handed down by the jury and agree to complete the same. I further understand the consequence of not completing the sentence is to return to the Hamilton County (Ohio) Juvenile Court system.

Respondent

Parent/Guardian

Youth Court Judge

Parent/Guardian

Date

PLEASE EMAIL COMPLETED SANCTIONS TO:
hamiltoncountyouthcourt@gmail.com.

Questions? Contact Youth Court at the gmail above or at 513-268-6988.

POST HEARING MEETING

Immediately after the hearing, the Judge meets with the Respondent and parent(s)/guardian(s) in the courtroom for a private meeting.

1. Ask and answer questions.
2. Assess their experience of the process (Example: Was the hearing what you expected?)
3. Recap the jury's decision and review the sanctions in detail. Fill out the Sanction Form, copy it, keep one for our files and give the other form to the Respondent/parent.
4. Discuss with the parent/guardian how the Respondent can successfully complete the sanction, and enlist his/her help addressing any possible barriers to successful completion.
5. Remind the Respondent that if s/he successfully completes all sanctions, the offense will not go on his/her official record.
6. If parent/Respondent asks questions you cannot answer, make a record and tell them that a Youth Court representative will contact them.
7. The Youth Court Coordinators will follow-up to ensure compliance.

If the Respondent fails to complete some assigned sanctions, the case may be considered successful or unsuccessful based on the determination of the Juvenile Court:

1. Immediately after a missed sanction assignment, a coordinator will attempt to contact the Respondent and parent and reschedule the sanction.
2. If the Respondent or parent cannot be reached, the coordinator will contact the Juvenile Court for direction on how the case should then be handled. Often, the Juvenile Court will contact the family directly.

PARENT SURVEY

Please take a moment to fill out this survey honestly and completely. Your answers will be confidential. This survey will only be used to evaluate the program. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

1. Your child is Male Female In what grade? _____
2. What was your child's violation/offense? _____
3. Has your child had previous violations? Yes No How many? _____
4. Did you feel your Son/Daughter's hearing:
 - a. Increased his/her understanding of who was harmed? Yes No
 - b. Helped him/her repair the harm caused? Yes No
 - c. Helped him/her learn and grow from the experience? Yes No
5. What was your Son/Daughter's sanction? _____
6. Do you think your Son/Daughter's sanction was:
 Too Lenient Fair Too Harsh Please explain. _____

7. Did Youth Court explain what they expected of you? Yes No
If no, please tell us what was unclear to you. _____

8. Were you happy with your child's advocate? What could they have done better? _____

9. What did you like about Youth Court? _____

10. What changes could we make to improve Youth Court? _____

STUDENT SURVEY

Please take a moment to fill out this survey honestly and completely. Your answers will be confidential. This survey will only be used to evaluate the program. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

1. Are you Male Female What grade are you in? _____

2. What was your offense/violation? _____

3. Did you feel your hearing:
 - a. Increased your understanding of who was harmed? Yes No
 - b. Helped you repair the harm you caused? Yes No
 - c. Helped you become more involved in the community? Yes No
 - d. Helped you learn and grow from this experience? Yes No

4. Did Youth Court explain what they expected of you? Yes No
In no, please tell us what was unclear to you. _____

5. Do you think your sanction was: Too Lenient Fair Too Harsh
Please explain. _____

6. What was your sanction? _____

7. Were you happy with your advocate? What could they have done better?

8. What did you like about Youth Court? _____

9. What changes could we make to improve Youth Court? _____

IV. ATTORNEYS

ROLE OF THE PROSECUTOR

I. Function

The function of the prosecutor is to represent the interests of the community. All crimes affect not only the victim in each case, but the community as a whole.

II. Duties and Obligations

The prosecutor has an obligation to recommend that a specific sanction be imposed and to offer evidence in support of that recommendation. A prosecutor in Youth Court must evaluate the facts of each case and determine what sanction is appropriate in order to:

1. Punish the Respondent for what he/she did;
2. Deter the Respondent from committing future criminal acts;
3. Deter others from committing similar crimes;
4. Compensate the victim for any harm suffered;
5. Rehabilitate the offender

More specifically, the prosecutor has the following duties and obligations:

1. Investigate the circumstances of the offense by reviewing the file.
2. Review the statute violated.
3. Decide what sanction to recommend.
4. Prepare for a sentencing hearing.
5. Present a final argument or summation to the jury as to why the recommended sanction is appropriate.
6. Act fairly and in the interest of justice.

PROSECUTING ATTORNEY CHECKLIST

1. This is not an adversarial process. The role of the “prosecutor” is to present the facts both positive and negative. The goal of the program is to assist the Respondent in understanding their mistakes and helping them move forward in a positive direction.
2. You will receive your cases approximately two weeks in advance. The case information is confidential. Please make sure that you secure this information so that it is not accessible to anyone but you. All documents must be returned to the Hearing Captain (Lead Judge) on the day of the hearings.
3. Read the police reports and witness reports and pick out the important details. There may also be a Victim Impact Statement.
4. Prepare your presentation to the court (4 minutes or less).
5. Appropriate Questions to ask the victim (if applicable)
 - a. What happened?
 - b. How did it make you feel?
 - c. What damage was caused?
 - d. How would you like to see the damage repaired?
 - e. How did the Respondent behave toward you?
 - f. Did the Respondent take any steps to repair the harm that was caused?
 - g. What affects has this had on your life – emotionally, physically, and financially?
 - h. What would you like to see happen?
6. Suggested Opening to the Court: Your Honor, Opposing Counsel, (Respondent’s Name) and Family, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury. Good evening, my name is _____ and I represent the State of Ohio. Before the Court is (Respondent’s Name) on a charge of _____.
 - Name of the Defendant
 - Age of the Defendant
 - Date of the Offense
 - Nature of the Offense
7. Be prepared to present a recommended sanction to the Jury.

ROLE OF THE DEFENSE ATTORNEY

I. Function

The function of the defender is to represent the Respondent—the person who committed the offense.

II. Duties and Obligations

The defense attorney must evaluate the facts and the Respondent's background and determine what sanction is appropriate to recommend to the jury.

More specifically, the defense attorney has the following duties and obligations in Youth Court:

1. Investigate the circumstances of the offense by interviewing the Respondent and reviewing the file.
2. Review the statute violated.
3. Investigate the background of the Respondent.
4. Decide what sentence to recommend.
5. Prepare for a sentencing hearing.
6. Disclose certain information to the prosecutor.
7. Present a final argument or summation to the jury as to why the sentencing recommendation is appropriate.
8. Act fairly and candidly.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY CHECKLIST

1. This is not an adversarial process. The role of the "Defense Attorney" is to present the facts in a positive light. The goal of the program is to assist the Respondent in understanding his or her mistakes and help them move forward in a positive direction.
2. You will receive your cases approximately two weeks in advance. The case information is confidential. Please make sure you secure this information, so that it is not accessible to anyone. All documents must be returned to the Hearing Captain (Lead Judge) on the day of the hearings.
3. Read the police reports and witness reports and pick out the important details. There may also be a Victim Impact Statement.

4. Prepare your presentation to the Court. Your job is to argue mitigation to the jury. You are not arguing the facts of the crime.
5. Check in with the Hearing Captain and proceed to interview your first client. Introduce yourself to the Respondent, his/her parents, shake hands and explain your role as the “Defense Attorney.”
6. Follow the “Attorney Checklist” on the next page for each client. If you already interviewed your client over the telephone, use the time for follow-up questions, interview the parent(s), and explain the hearing process.
7. Listen to the Prosecutor’s presentation. Listen for any differences between his/her description and the Respondent’s version of the offense.
8. Suggested Opening to the Court: Your Honor, Opposing Counsel,(Respondent’s Name), and Family, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury. Good evening, my name is _____ and I represent _____.
9. Make your presentation to the jury. (7 minutes or less)
 - Clear up any differences
 - Provide the information you gathered from the checklist and interview
10. Be prepared to present a recommendation for disposition to the Jury before deliberation.
11. Accompany the Respondent when he/she is asked to return to the courtroom for disposition.
12. **Stand with your client** when the disposition is read. Shake his/her hand and wish him/her good luck.
13. Exit the courtroom and begin interviewing your next client.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY INTERVIEW LIST

A. Personal Information

1. Name _____
2. Age _____
3. Phone number (include cell number) _____
4. Who do you live with? (names/ages)
5. Occupation of parents?
6. Any significant problems at home? (E.g., both parents work at night, leaving the child at home unsupervised)
7. What school do you attend? What grade?
8. What classes are you taking? Grade point average? (this year v. last year)
9. Favorite class?
10. Involved in Committees/School organizations/sports?
11. What do you think of your school?
12. What are you doing this summer?
13. Any problems at school (harassment/bullying)?
14. Have you ever had a job? (lawn mowing and babysitting count)
Where? How long? Position?
15. Involved in any volunteer or community activities?
16. Find out **at least two positive attributes** of the Respondent (i.e., helps grandma take out garbage, is a good friend to others, etc).

B. Incident

1. When and Where?
2. What happened?
3. Who was involved?
4. Your conduct?
5. Conduct of others?
6. Why did you commit the crime?
7. Are you sorry?
8. If the crime involved a victim, what would you say to that person now?
9. What have you learned from this experience?
10. Were you punished at home? What was your punishment?
11. Have you been asked to pay, and/or have you paid any restitution?
12. Have you apologized to the victim?

C. Other

1. Future plans? College? (where) Employment? (where) Military?
2. Have you ever been arrested before?
3. What have you learned from this experience?
4. What would you do if the same circumstances were to arise?
5. (In peer pressure cases) Are you still associating with the other individuals involved?
6. How can we assure the jury that you will not reoffend?
7. Are there other things about you that will help the jury decide this case?

D. Respondent's Statement

- Encourage the Respondent to make a statement. However, this is not required. Make sure you explain that any statement should be short (less than 3 minutes) and from the heart – apologizing, taking responsibility for his/her actions, and explaining why it won't happen again.

E. Questions for Parent/Guardian (if time permits)

1. How is he/she at home?
2. Does he/she help around the house?
3. How would you describe his/her general attitude?
4. Has he/she ever been in trouble before?
5. If so, for what?
6. Did his/her conduct surprise them in this case?
7. If so, why?
8. How did you react when you learned of this conduct?
9. Did you punish your child?
10. If not, why not?
11. If so, what is the punishment?
12. Does he/she appear remorseful?
13. Anything else I should know about him/her?

V. BAILIFF

Focus: The function of the bailiff is to help ensure the orderly operation of the court. The bailiff is a neutral participant.

Duties and Obligations:

1. Advise the Respondent/family of the rules before entering the Courtroom. (*See* Hearing Process at Section VII).
2. Escort the Respondent and his/her family in and out of court proceedings.
3. Call the Court to Order. (*See* Hearing Process at Section VII).
4. Administer the oath. (*See* Hearing Process at Section VII).
5. Render general assistance during the court sessions as requested by the Judges.
6. Help maintain order in the courtroom (i.e., proper conduct in court by the participants).
7. Close proceedings (“There being no further matters before this Court, the Court stands adjourned”).

VI. JUDGE

Focus: The function of the judge is to preside over the hearings. The Judge, in a sense, is like a referee who ensures that the correct procedures are followed in all cases.

Duties and Obligations:

1. Be fair and impartial.
2. Preside over jury deliberations, answer juror questions.
3. Take jury attendance and collect all required forms from the new Juror(s) (unless a Clerk intern is present to assist and perform these duties—see Section I—Roles).
4. Preside over the hearing. (*See* Hearing Process at Section VII).
5. Explain the sanctions to the Respondents, parents, and guardians and answer any questions.
6. After hearings are complete, return all Juror paperwork, sanction forms and consent forms to the Youth Court Coordinator.

VII. YOUTH COURT PROCEDURES

HEARING SCHEDULE

4:45 p.m.: Hearing Captain arrives

5:00 p.m.: Defense Counsel I and first Respondent arrive and meet in conference room. Second Judge, Defense counsel, and Bailiff also arrive

5:10 p.m.: Jurors arrive

5:15 p.m.: Defense Counsel II arrives

5:30 p.m.: First hearing begins

5:30 p.m.: Second Respondent arrives with parent/guardian and meets with Defense Counsel II

6:00 p.m.: Second hearing begins

6:15 p.m.: Third Respondent arrives with parent/guardian and meets with Defense Counsel I

6:30 p.m.: Hearing Captain, Judge, Jury, Prosecutor, Defense Counsel Team take 15 minute break for dinner

6:45 p.m.: Third hearing begins

6:45 p.m.: Fourth Respondent arrives with parent/guardian and meets with Defense Counsel II

7:15 p.m. Fourth hearing begins

7:45 p.m.: Hearings concluded. Jury debriefed. Clean up and dismissal.

HEARING PROCESS

On the Day of the Hearing:

Respondent and parent(s) are required to arrive 30 minutes before their scheduled hearing. Defense Counsel I and II meet with their clients until the hearing is called. The prosecutor will meet with Defense Counsel and the Respondent and parents after Defense Counsel has finished conferring with the Respondent, about 5 minutes before the hearing time.

At the time of the hearing, the Bailiff enters the conference room and advises Respondent/parent(s) before entering Courtroom:

In Youth Court, we require the same level of decorum as in any other judicial forum in Hamilton County. There will be no gum chewing, smoking, tobacco chewing, eating or drinking. No cameras, recording devices, or cell phones are allowed. No laughing, talking or other inappropriate behavior is permitted when court is in session.

If there is any improper behavior, the Judge will stop the proceedings and ask that the behavior cease. If verbal warnings continue, the case will be sent back to the Juvenile Court for disposition.

Bailiff escorts Respondent, parents, and lawyers into the courtroom; directs to seating.

Bailiff calls the court to order, announces the Judge/case:

- a. **ALL RISE**
- b. **Hamilton County Youth Court is now in session;**
- c. **Docket Number 00-000, Respondent's Name, on a charge of _____.**
- d. **_____ (Respondent's Name) has admitted his/her involvement with the offense and is before the Court for a dispositional hearing.**
- e. **He/She is being represented by _____ and the Prosecutor is _____.**

Bailiff swears in all the parties:

- a. Addressing everyone in the courtroom: **“Would everyone please raise their right hand and repeat after me: ‘I swear, or affirm,**

(stop while everyone repeats) -- that everything I see or hear in Youth Court today (stop)-- will be kept confidential.”

- b. Addressing the Jury: “Jurors, do you solemnly swear that you will objectively weigh the issues in this case and render a sanction according to the guidelines of Youth Court?”**
- c. Addressing the Respondent by last name (Mr. or Ms._____): “Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?”**

Judge reads the following statement: Is the Prosecutor prepared to present the facts of the case?

Prosecutor (4 minutes or less)

- d. Read the charge and the statute violated.**
- e. Read the facts of the violation.**
- f. Read the victim’s impact statement (if provided).**
- g. Makes a recommended sanction to the jury.**

Judge reads the following statement: Is defense counsel prepared to present facts in mitigation?

Defense counsel (6 minutes or less)

- h. Offers mitigating facts**

Judge reads the following statement: Would the Respondent like to make a statement? You are not required to make a statement. (3 minutes or less)

Judge reads the following statement: Does the jury have any questions for the Respondent?

Judge reads the following statement: The hearing is concluded.

Would the bailiff please escort everyone out of the courtroom so that the jury can deliberate?

Bailiff escorts everyone (except jury and Judge) from the courtroom and returns to courtroom to aid Judge with deliberation. (Note: deliberations should not take more than 10 minutes, so the Respondent/parents should be told not to leave the waiting room).

Jury deliberates, and Jury Foreperson is selected to announce the sanctions (See Sanctions at Section I and Sanction Form at Section III)

Bailiff escorts Respondent, parent(s), and counsel back into the courtroom where they remain standing.

Judge states: **Will the foreperson please stand and read the sanction.**

Jury foreperson reads the sanction.

Foreperson or other jurors may offer encouragement if appropriate.

Judge states: **The jury has spoken, and the sanctions are final.**

Judge may want to comment on the Jury's determination (For example, "I think that this sanction is fair and appropriate for the offense(s) committed. We all have to understand that society has rules to protect us, and that, even though we are young, we have obligations to follow those rules.").

Judge may want to recognize the Respondent's acceptance of responsibility (For example, "I listened carefully to your testimony this evening and I believe that you are truly sorry for your actions and that you have learned a valuable lesson from this experience").

Judge may want to make a further expression of support for the Respondent (For example, "Based upon what occurred here, I am confident that you will complete your community service and fulfill the special conditions imposed upon you and that you will contribute in a positive way to the community).

Judge concludes as follows: The jury is going to stay in the courtroom to hear the next case,* and the Bailiff is going to escort the Respondent and his/her parents to a conference next door to complete some paperwork for me.

***Omit this part if it is the last case of the evening.**

Bailiff escorts the Respondent/parents into an available conference room.

Defense counsel leaves the courtroom to meet with their next client. Prosecutor prepares for next case.

Judge makes a copy of the sanction and then goes over the sanction paperwork with the Respondent/parents. The Judge gives one sanction form to the Respondent/parent and keeps the other for the Youth Court file. (*See* Post-Hearing Meeting at Section III). The Judge asks the Respondent and parent to complete exit surveys before leaving (*See* Parent and Student Surveys, Section III).

JURY DELIBERATIONS

Jurors must select sanctions that fit the offense before the Court (not previous offenses or other behavior shared during testimony). Jurors may select any combination of sanctions and may decide to not assign any sanctions at all (although this is rare and must be clearly justified by the evidence). It is extremely important that jurors work as a team and come to an agreement and that those in minority opinions feel that they have been heard and are supportive of the group's decision.

The jury foreperson's goal is to create a list of sanctions that all of the jurors can agree on, even if individual jurors have differences of opinion on specific sanctions.

If the votes for a specific sanction are not unanimous, the foreperson or Judge asks jurors to state why they think the sanction is or is not appropriate, reminding them to base their reasons on the case review and the goals of Youth Court. The foreperson or any other Juror can suggest a modification to the sanction so that the majority of the jurors agree with it.

After all sanctions have been voted on and discussed, the foreperson reads the proposed sanction(s) to jurors and calls for confirmation.

Jurors verbally confirm the sanction(s).

Once jurors confirm the sanction, it is documented on the Sanction Form and considered locked.

The Judge does not intervene in the jury deliberation with the following exceptions: to clarify/correct case facts, to instruct the foreperson to focus the group if they go off topic, to clarify information about available sanctions, or to answer questions that arise. If the jury is unable to reach a sanction, the judge should work with the foreperson and jurors to reach the best decision possible and discuss the challenges during the debriefing later.

It is very important that the hearings stay on schedule, so the Judge/Hearing Captain may need to help expedite the deliberation process.

VIII. VIRTUAL HEARING PROCESS

In the event Youth Court needs to operate virtually, such as due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, the below procedures will be implemented by Youth Court.

Zoom Hearing Juror Instructions

Zoom General Information:

For virtual participation in Youth Court you will be required to use Zoom. Please use Zoom from a computer or laptop rather than a phone if possible.

How to Download Zoom:

If you have not already done so, go to “zoom.us”. In the upper right corner there will be an orange “SIGN UP, ITS FREE” button. Please click this and follow the steps until you have an account.

Joining Zoom for Youth Court Session:

Please log in to your account at 5:10 pm on your assigned date. Click “join a meeting”. You will then enter the Meeting ID below. Once the Meeting ID is entered the zoom client will prompt you for a passcode. Enter the passcode provided below. You will then be entered into the meeting. You will be placed in the “Waiting Room” until the Host admits you into the hearing. **Do not share** this ID or passcode.

Meeting ID: 730 643 7150

Passcode: 8002020

After you log in to the Zoom meeting, rename yourself as follows: Full name (Juror).
Example: Brenda Gallagher (Juror).

When you log on, be sure you are on mute and have your video ON. You should remain on mute throughout the hearing except when the Judge or Host instructs you to unmute.

Confidentiality: Remember that these hearings are strictly confidential. If the Judge or Host observes anything that may be considered a breach of this confidentiality, the Host will place you in the Waiting Room while the situation is resolved. We understand that the breach may have been unintentional so you may be readmitted into the hearing after the situation is resolved. This will be entirely within the Host’s discretion.

Hearings are Recorded: Each virtual hearing will be recorded and confidentially maintained by the Hamilton County Juvenile Court.

Questions During the Hearing: If you have any questions about the process during the hearing, send a Chat message to the Host. If your question is urgent, please unmute and

ask the Judge for permission to speak.

Deliberations: Jurors will be placed in separate Breakout room with the Judge to deliberate the **Sanction**. You will see a pop-up invitation to the Breakout Room during the hearing, but do not click on this invitation until the Judge instructs you to do so. You may unmute after you enter the Breakout Room. These deliberations will be the same as with our in-person hearings. You will select a Foreperson, who will read the Sanction after you return to the Courtroom. If you are selected or volunteer to be the Foreperson, write down the Sanction that the jury decides so that you will have it when everyone returns to the Courtroom. Please read the Sanction **SLOWLY AND CLEARLY** so that it will be picked up on the Zoom recording.

Be sure to click “Leave the Meeting” to disconnect at the conclusion of the last hearing.

Prosecutor and Defense Zoom Guide

Zoom General Information:

For virtual participation in Youth Court you will be required to use Zoom. Please use Zoom from a computer or laptop rather than a phone for your role.

How to Download Zoom:

If you have not already done so, go to “zoom.us”. In the upper right corner there will be an orange “SIGN UP, ITS FREE” button. Please click this and follow the steps until you have an account.

How to Set-Up A Meeting:

1. Open your Zoom client and sign in to Zoom.
2. Click on the **Schedule** icon.



Schedule

This will open the scheduler window.

3. Select your meeting settings.
 - **Topic:** Enter a topic or name for your meeting.
 - **Date & Time:**
 - **Start:** Select a date and time for your meeting.
 - **Meeting ID**
 - **Generate Automatically:** Generate a random unique meeting ID.
 - **Personal Meeting ID*:** Use your Personal Meeting ID.
 - **Security**
 - **Passcode:** Enter a meeting passcode. Joining participants will be required to input this before joining your scheduled meeting.
 - **Waiting Room:** Enable Waiting Room for the meeting.
 - **Video**
 - **Host:** Choose if you would like the host's video on or off when joining the meeting. Even if you choose off, the host will have the option to start their video.
 - **Participants:** Choose if you would like the participants' videos on or off when joining the meeting. Even if you choose off, the participants will have the option to start their video.
 - **Audio*:** Allow users to call in using **Telephone** only, **Computer Audio** only, **Both**, or **3rd Party Audio** (if enabled for your account).
 - **Dial in From:** If **Telephone** or **Both** is enabled for this meeting, click **Edit** to select the dial-in countries to include in the invitation. By

default, this includes your **Global Dial-In Countries** listed in your meeting settings.

- **Calendar:** Select a calendar service to add the meeting to and send out invites to participants.
 - **Other Calendars:** Open a new window, where the meeting text can be copied pasted into the user's preferred communication method. You can also download an ICS file which can be opened in most email applications.
- 4. Click **Save** to finish, and open the selected calendar service to add the meeting.

Note:

- Choosing **Other Calendars** will allow you to copy and paste the scheduled meeting information such as date, time, and meeting URL.

The Online Zoom Help Center provides video tutorials if you need any further assistance.

Joining Zoom for Youth Court Session:

When you are ready to join a youth court session please click “join a meeting”. You will then enter the Meeting ID below. Once the Meeting ID is entered the zoom client will prompt you for a passcode. Enter the passcode provided below. You will then be entered into the meeting. You will be placed in the “Waiting Room” until the host admits you into the hearing.

Meeting ID: 730 643 7150

Passcode: 8002020

Upon entering the “Courtroom” please rename yourself as follows:

Bailiff – Case Number Full Name (Bailiff)

Prosecutor – Full Name (Prosecutor)

Defense – Full Name (Defense)

Examples: Case U/21/444 Caitlin Burgess (Bailiff), Leah Castelaz (Prosecutor), Ryan Ragland (Defense).

If you are in the 1st Group of Attorneys, please join the Zoom Meeting at 5PM. If you are in the 2nd Group of Attorneys, please join the Zoom Meeting at 6:30PM.

Pre-Trial Conferences:

When the Youth Court sessions are heard via zoom, the Prosecutor and Defense will not have an opportunity to conduct any pre-trial conferencing the night of the hearing. All conferencing must be conducted prior to the scheduled court hearing, as follows:

Defense Pre-Trial Conference:

Defense should set-up a zoom meeting with the client to conduct the initial pre-trial conference. (See Scheduling a Meeting Zoom Instructions above.) This will also give the respondent practice utilizing zoom prior to the hearing. (The respondent will be required

to use zoom with video for the hearing session. A phone dial-in will not be permitted.)

Communication with Respondent and their family will be key to setting up this initial meeting and ensuring their presence for the Youth Court Proceeding. This pre-trial information can also be gathered over the phone but it suggested that you attempt a Zoom meeting.

Things to go over:

1. Introduce yourself and your role to the respondent and his/her family.
2. Gather personal information about respondent. (See Defense Counsel Checklist in Youth Court Manual)
3. Gather information about the incident. (See Defense Counsel Checklist in Youth Court Manual)
4. Gather any other relevant information. (See Defense Counsel Checklist in Youth Court Manual)
5. Encourage the respondent to make a statement. (This is not required but encouraged. Can be short, less than 3 minutes, from the heart, apology, taking responsibility, and explaining why it won't happen again.)
6. Gather information from the parent/guardian. (See Defense Counsel Checklist in Youth Court Manual)
7. Answer any questions from the respondent and parent/guardian.
8. Go over appropriate conduct during zoom hearing. (i.e. courtroom decorum)
9. Go over appropriate attire for zoom hearing. (As if attending court in person.)
10. Advise the respondent and family of the Youth Court rules. (This was previously done by the Bailiff but will be necessary for the defense to provide when hearings are conducted virtually.)
 - a. In Youth Court, we require the same level of decorum as in any other judicial forum in Hamilton County. There will be no gum chewing, smoking, tobacco chewing, eating or drinking. No cameras, recording devices, or cell phones are allowed. No laughing, talking or other inappropriate behavior is permitted when court is in session.
 - b. If there is any improper behavior, the Judge will stop the proceedings and ask that the behavior cease. If verbal warnings continue, the case will be sent back to the Juvenile Court for disposition.
11. Provide the Zoom information to the Respondent and their family for the Youth Court Session. (This will be provided in a letter but reinforcement of this information is important.) Your respondent will be scheduled to join the zoom meeting at 5:30, 6:00, 6:45, or 7:15.

Meeting ID: 730 643 7150

Passcode: 8002020

Joint Attorney Pre-Trial Conference:

The joint attorney pre-trial conference (Respondent, Defense, and Prosecutor), if desired,

will also need to occur prior to the scheduled hearing sessions. Defense and Prosecutor will be responsible for communicating with each other to accomplish this conference. If Defense and Prosecutor wish for the respondent to be included in the meeting it is suggested that this occur at the conclusion of the Defense pre-trial conference with the respondent. The prosecutor may join the zoom when the Defense has finished all other aspects of the meeting. Defense will be responsible for communicating with the prosecutor when able to join the meeting or keeping the prosecutor in the “waiting room” until the appropriate time for the joint conference. The Defense and Prosecutor could also conference together separately from the meeting with respondent. (This could be done in whatever medium desired, phone, zoom, etc.)

Attorney Scripts:

*See the Youth Court Manual for additional guidance.

Prosecutor

Opening: Your Honor, Opposing Counsel, (Respondent’s Name) and Family, Ladies and Gentleman of the Jury. Good evening, my name is _____ and I represent the State of Ohio. Before the Court is (Respondent’s Name) on a charge of _____.

Presentation to the Jury (4 minutes or less)

- Read the charge and the statute violated
- Date of offense
- Read the facts of the violation
- Read the victim’s impact statement (if provided)

Recommended Sanction.

Defense

Opening: Your Honor, Opposing Counsel, (Respondent’s Name), and Family, Ladies and Gentleman of Jury. Good evening, my name is _____ and I represent _____.

Presentation to the Jury (6 minutes or less).
(Mitigating Facts)

Recommended Sanction.

Zoom Hearing Judges' Instructions

1. Follow the Zoom Hearing Process step by step so that nothing is omitted.
2. Generally, everyone except the presiding Judge, Host, and current speaker should be on mute and have their video ON throughout the hearings. The only exceptions are:
 - a) during the swearing in
 - b) when the jurors are in the breakout room to deliberate
 - c) when jurors are posing questions to the respondent and sharing words of encouragement
 - d) when defense counsel and the prosecution are presenting their cases.
3. The non-presiding judge may sit in on the hearing, but with video and audio off.
4. **Enforcing Confidentiality:** After the jurors are renamed and before they are moved back into the Waiting Room (see Hearing timeline), remind them that the ENTIRE hearing is confidential and that no one else may listen or observe. Explain to the jurors that, if at any time the judge suspects that confidentiality is being breached, i.e., if another person enters a room where a juror or attorney is participating, the Judge or Host will immediately move the juror or attorney to the Waiting Room and the Host will begin a Chat with the participant to discuss the circumstances.

If you observe such a breach, immediately send a Chat message to the Host, who will assist the Judge with moving the participant to the Waiting Room and start a private chat with the participant to evaluate the situation. It will be within the Host's discretion to determine if that participant should be removed from that hearing or readmitted after resolving the suspected breach. It may be completely unintentional, i.e., a sibling may come in the room with no knowledge of the hearing, and the Host will consider this as long as it may be corrected. Any sanctions for breaching confidentiality will be discussed by the Youth Court Administrators and decided after the hearing.

5. Each hearing will be recorded and confidentially maintained by the Hamilton County Juvenile Court.
6. If you have any questions about the process during the hearing or during the post-hearing conference, send a Chat message to the Host.
7. **Consent Form:** A consent form will be sent to each judge along with these instructions and the complaints prior to the hearing. You will have a form for each respondent and will review the statements and questions with the respondent after the jurors are placed back in the Waiting Room prior to the hearing (see Hearing Process timeline). We are recording the respondent's and parent's answers in place of a hard copy of their consent so their answers must be clear. The form is self-explanatory but if

you have any questions, contact Brenda or Caitlin. After the hearings, please complete the PDF fillable form and e-mail it to the Youth Court gmail: hamiltoncountyyouthcourt@gmail.com.

8. Sanctions and Sanction Form: Unless there is a reason to extend the deadline, please make it 30 days after the hearing date. You will have a list of suggested sanctions that will be more easily completed during COVID. Explain the sanction to the respondent and parent and have them e-mail it by the deadline to the Youth Court gmail: hamiltoncountyyouthcourt@gmail.com. This address is also on the form. If the respondent has an e-mail, we will e-mail them a copy after the hearing. If they do not have e-mail, we will mail it to their street address. Before you dismiss them from the meeting, be sure you get current contact information: e-mail, street address that matches the one on the complaint, and phone number. Please complete the Sanctions Form (PDF fillable) and e-mail it to the Youth Court gmail as soon as possible after the hearing.

Feedback and suggestions: Because we will not be collecting a “survey” from the respondent and parent/guardian to complete post-hearing, please ask them if they were satisfied with the process and if they have any suggestions for improving the process. Please e-mail us with their responses after the hearing.

Judge’s Post-Hearing Checklist

_____ Complete Consent Form and e-mail to Youth Court

_____ Complete Sanctions Form and e-mail to Youth Court

_____ E-mail to Youth Court any comments or suggestions from the Respondent and Parent/Guardian

ZOOM HOST CHECKLIST

1. Follow Zoom Hearing sheet for cues.
2. Make sure Chat setting allows the participants to chat only with the Host and the two Co-hosts (the judges).
3. Have all judges and attorneys rename themselves immediately after you admit them into the Courtroom (if they have not already done so according to their pre-hearing instructions). Immediately CHECK the ROSTER to be sure all are present with no other participants. You may not know this until they rename themselves if they have other login or screen names.
4. Frequently check your incoming chat messages for questions.
5. BEGIN RECORDING after you admit the respondent/parent into the Courtroom and rename them.
5. Breakout Rooms—Prepare these while the Judge is going over the Consent Form with the Respondent. Create Breakout Room 1 for all the jurors and the presiding judge. Create Breakout 2 for the respondent/parent/guardian and the presiding judge. Because of the Zoom software, you will have to wait until the judge reenters the Courtroom after the deliberation to “move” that Judge to Breakout Room 2.
6. Don’t forget to PAUSE RECORDING during juror deliberations and RESUME RECCORDING after they return and before the Bailiff calls court back into session.
7. When the Foreman reads the Sanction, write it down as you understand it and compare it with the Sanction submitted by the Judge for that respondent.
8. After the Judge and Respondent leave for the post-hearing conference in Breakout Room 2, move the jurors into the Waiting Room and admit the second respondent/parent into the Courtroom and rename them so that the second judge can begin reviewing the Consent Form with the second Respondent.
9. At the conclusion of each post-hearing conference with the judge, make sure the Respondent has disconnected from the Breakout Room.

Zoom Process Timeline

Youth Court Zoom Hearings

Zoom Rooms and General Information: When participants log in, they will remain in the **Waiting Room** until the Judge or Host admits them into the hearing. The MAIN meeting room will be referred to as the “**Courtroom.**” The jurors will be placed in **Breakout Room 1** (renamed “Jury Room”) when it is time for them to deliberate. After the hearing, the judge and respondent/parent will be placed in **Breakout Room 2** (renamed “Conference Room”) for the judge to explain the sanctions. At any point, if someone is disconnected from Zoom, they can log in again and will be admitted from the Waiting Room. The **Host** will make both the Judges Co-Hosts.

Virtual Hearing Process Step-By-Step

Host: Admits the Judges and Attorneys from the Waiting Room into the Courtroom.

Host instruct everyone to rename themselves as follows: Judges— Full Name (Judge 1) or (Judge 2)

Bailiff— Case Number Full Name (Bailiff)
Prosecutor Full Name (Prosecutor)
Defense Full Name

(Defense) Examples: Brenda Gallagher (Judge 1). Case U/21/444
Caitlin Burgess (Bailiff). Leah Castelaz (Prosecutor). Ryan Ragland (Defense).

Host admits Jurors from the Waiting Room into the Courtroom. **Host** instructs Jurors to rename themselves as follows: Full Name (Juror).

Host explains: 1) everyone should remain muted but with video on for the entire hearing EXCEPT when instructed by Judge or Host to unmute; 2) Jurors will see an invitation pop up on their screen to leave for the Jurors Breakout Room but they should NOT click on this to leave until they are instructed to do so; 3) do not click on “Leave the Meeting” until the hearing is completed because this will disconnect you from the meeting (you will then have to log on again and be readmitted from the Waiting Room); 4) if anyone has questions during the hearing, they should use the Chat function (bottom of screen) and ask the Judge or Host; 5) if a juror has an urgent question, they should unmute and ask the Judge for permission to speak; and 6) jurors may all unmute during deliberations.

Judge introduces self and takes Juror attendance. Judge reads the name of each Respondent and the school they attend to see if any juror knows them or attends the same school. If so, that juror will be placed in the Waiting Room during that Respondent’s hearing. Judge explains that Jurors may take notes, but they must either shred or discard

them after the hearing in a way that they cannot be read or deciphered. Remind them that the hearing is confidential and that they may be temporarily placed in the Waiting Room if a Judge observes a breach of this confidentiality. (See Judge’s Zoom Instructions on Confidentiality).

Host places all the Jurors back into the Waiting Room.

Host admits the Respondent/Parent from the Waiting Room and renames them as follows: Respondent’s Full Name (Respondent). **Host begins recording the hearing at this point.**

Judge introduces self to Respondent and explains that they will see a “Conference Room” invitation pop up on their screen, but they should NOT click on this to enter the Breakout until the Judge instructs them to do so. Judge then explains that: 1) the hearing will be recorded; and 2) the Judge is required to go over the Consent Form before the hearing may begin. Continue with the Consent Form statement and questions.

Host creates the Breakout Rooms while Judge is going over the Consent Form. Breakout 1 is all of the Jurors, the Judge, and any shadowing observers. Rename this “Jury Room.” Breakout Room 2 is the Respondent/Parent and Judge. Rename this “Conference Room.” Host will have to wait to assign the Judge to the Conference Breakout Room until after the jurors’ deliberation by “moving” the Judge from Room 1 to Room 2 in the Breakout function.

Host admits the jurors back into the Courtroom from the Waiting room after the Consent is completed.

Judge asks Bailiff to read the Courtroom Rules of Decorum.

Bailiff reads the Courtroom Rules as follows:

In Youth Court, we require the same level of decorum as in any other judicial forum in Hamilton County. There will be no gum chewing, smoking, tobacco chewing, eating or drinking during this virtual hearing. No cameras, recording devices, or cell phones may be used during the hearing except as necessary to participate in this virtual hearing. If there is any improper behavior or interruptions, the Judge will stop the proceedings and ask that the behavior or interruptions cease. If verbal warnings continue, the offending participant will be removed from the hearing, or the case may be returned to Juvenile Court for disposition at the Judge’s discretion.

Judge asks the Bailiff to Open Court.

Bailiff calls the Court to order:

- a. **Hamilton County Youth Court is now in session;**
- b. **Docket Number 00/U/000. (Respondent’s Name) on a charge of _____**

- c. (Respondent's Name) has admitted their involvement with the offense and is before the Court for a dispositional hearing.
- d. This Respondent is being represented by _____ (Defense Counsel's Name) and the Prosecutor is _____ (Prosecutor's Name)

Judge instructs everyone to UNMUTE for the swearing in.

Bailiff swears in all the parties:

- a. Addressing everyone in the Courtroom: **“Would everyone please raise their right hand and repeat after me: I swear or affirm (pause for them to repeat), that everything I see or hear in Youth Court today (pause), will be kept confidential.”**
- b. Addressing the Jurors: **“Jurors do you solemnly swear that you will objectively weigh the issues in this case and render a sanction according to the guidance of Youth Court?”**
- c. Addressing the Respondent. **“_____ (Ms. or Mr. and last name), do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?”**

Judge instructs everyone to please MUTE again.

Judge: “Is the Prosecutor prepared to present the facts of the case?”

Prosecutor: (4 minutes or less). Read the charge and statute violated. Read the facts of the violation. Read any victim impact statement (if provided). Make a recommended sanction to the jury.

Judge: “Is Defense Counsel prepared to present facts in mitigation?”

Defense Counsel: (6 minutes or less). Presents mitigating facts.

Judge: Would the Respondent like to make a statement at this time? If so, please unmute and give your statement. You are not required to do so.

Judge: “Does the jury have any questions for the Respondent? If so, please raise your hand and I will call on you to ask your question.”

Judge: “The hearing is concluded. Jurors at this time, please click on “Leave for the Breakout Room” so that you may deliberate. All others, please remain in this Courtroom with your audio on and we will return in about five or ten minutes.”

Host: PAUSE RECORDING until Jurors return to Courtroom.

Bailiff: Remind Host to pause recording.

Deliberation in Breakout Room: Jurors and Judge unmute and deliberate in Breakout Room 1. **Host** remains in Courtroom to answer any questions. Judge should limit deliberation time to 10 or 12 minutes to keep hearings on schedule. When Jury decides the Sanction, both the Foreperson and Judge should write it down because the Judge will need this to discuss it with the Respondent post-hearing. Judge, please remind the **Foreperson to read the Sanction SLOWLY and CLEARLY** in the Courtroom. **Judge** should ask if anyone would like to provide the Respondent with words of encouragement. **Judge** then instructs jurors to leave the Breakout Room and join Courtroom on **mute** (except for the Foreperson).

Jurors and Judge return to Courtroom after deliberation.

Host: RESUME RECORDING

Bailiff: Remind Host to resume recording.

Bailiff: (Wait for everyone to re-enter the Courtroom) **Court is now back in session.**

Judge: “**Will the foreperson please read the Sanction?**”

Foreperson: The Jury has decided that the Sanction in this case will be

(reads the sanction).

Judge: Invites the jurors to give the Respondent any words of encouragement as appropriate.

Judge: (May provide additional comments or words of encouragement if appropriate). “**The jury has spoken and the Sanctions are final.**__ (Respondent’s name and parent) **please click on the Conference Breakout Room invitation on your screen and I will join you to discuss the Sanction and other final matters.**” Judge and Respondent/parent meet in Conference Breakout Room 2. After this post-hearing conference is complete, Respondent must click on “Leave the Meeting” from the Breakout Room. Judge ensures that Respondent disconnects and, if necessary, removes the respondent from the meeting. Judge returns to Courtroom on mute and with video off to observe second hearing.

Host: Ends Recording.

Second Hearing:

Host: Admits Second Judge (if not already there) into the Courtroom. Places Jurors in the Waiting Room. Admits Second Respondent/Parent into the Courtroom and renames. Second Judge proceeds with Consent Form as outlined above. **Host** creates Breakout Rooms—these will already be set up from the first hearing, but will need to add Judge 2

to Juror Room and add the second respondent to the Conference Room. Remove Judge 1 from the Juror Room and Conference Room. Continue as outlined above for first hearing.

Break between Second and Third Hearings. First law student team leaves meeting and **Host** admits second law student team into Courtroom from Waiting Room. **Host** instructs attorneys to rename themselves. Continue with third and fourth hearings as outlined above.

IX. Appendix of Sanctions Worksheets

THEFT REFLECTION WORKSHEET

1. Describe the incident that led to your appearance in Youth Court. Give a brief summary of the events that led up to the theft.
2. Why did you decide to steal the item(s) instead of purchasing them? Did you have enough money to purchase the item(s) on your own, or could you have asked for the item(s) as a gift?
3. How did feel about stealing the item(s)? Would you have stolen the items if it was in neighbor's house or a family member's house?
4. How do you think the theft affected the store and the people who run it? How do you think it made them feel?
5. If you were running the store, how would you have handled the situation of someone stealing in your store? What punishment would you want for the person that stole?

REFLECTION WORKSHEET

1. Describe the incident that led to your appearance in Youth Court. Give a brief summary of the events that led up to the incident. Why did you act the way that you did?

2. What were you feeling as the incident took place? Did you hesitate to act in the way that was considered wrong and resulted in a charge? Why or why not?

3. How did this incident affect you? What were the consequences at home and at school?

4. If you could have a re-do of the incident, what would you do differently that would result in a better outcome? What would the outcome be?

5. What do you think kept you from acting that way (your answer to question 4) the first time around? Was there any peer pressure, emotions, or thoughts that pushed you into your negative actions?

6. In the future, how do you plan to stop any negative influences and choose actions that will lead to a better outcome for you and the people around you?

REFLECTIONS ON “BULLYING” WORKSHEET 1

1. Who was involved in the circumstances that led to your appearance in Youth Court?
How do you know them?
2. Explain what this person or persons did or said to you that provoked you to fight back or retaliate. How did they make you feel?
3. If this person or persons harassed you in the past, how did you try to deal with that? How did that help, if at all?
4. Did you do any of the following to deal with the bullying: 1) Talk to a teacher or counselor or parent? 2) Block the person(s) on social media? 3) Avoid the person? If you did any of these things, what was the result?
5. If you had not tried one of the methods above, explain what method you plan to use in the future. Which one do you believe would work best in your situation?
6. If the same incident happened again, how would you react differently now? What positive methods would you use now against bullying and what is your plan to deal with it in the future?

REFLECTIONS ON “BULLYING” WORKSHEET 2

1. Who was involved in the circumstances that led to your appearance in Youth Court?
How do you know them?
2. Explain what this person (or persons) did or said to you that made you start the fight.
How did it make you feel?
3. What history have you had with this person that led to the relationship you have with them today? Was there any history of verbal or physical fighting before this incident?
4. Did any of your friends tell you to target this person and provoke the fight, or was this something that you decided to do on your own?
5. Have you considered the other person’s perspective in the situation? If you have, what do you believe their viewpoint of the situation is? What effect do you think you had on them?
6. If the same incident happened again, how would you react differently now? What positive methods would you use to deal with the other person in the future?

CURFEW REFLECTION WORKSHEET

1. Describe the incident that led to your appearance in Youth Court. Give a brief summary of the events that led up to the curfew violation.
2. Were you aware that there was a curfew where you lived? If you weren't, what is the curfew for your area?
3. Why do you think the city has a curfew law in the first place? What do you think the importance of it is?
4. Based on your answer to the previous question, what do you think could happen if you were out past curfew hours?
5. How do you plan to avoid curfew violations in the future? Will you plan to be at a friend's house instead of a public place? Describe your plan.

Peer Pressure Worksheet

1. Who was with you during the incident that led to your appearance in Youth Court?
How long have you known them?

2. How did that person or persons affect the decisions that you ultimately made during the incident? How did they have a good influence on you, if any, and how did they have a bad influence?

3. Would you have made the same decisions you did that day if that person or persons had not been with you? Why or why not?

4. What people in your life would you consider to be good influences? Why? Have you ever talked with them about the friends or people you know who you believe are a bad influence?

5. If the same incident were to happen again, how would you respond to the people that you believe pushed you into acting the way you did?

6. How you plan to stand your ground against negative peer pressure in the future?