

Education Opportunities

Along with in-court experience, the Teen Court program also offers classes on :

- ◆ Substance Abuse
- ◆ Conflict Resolution
- ◆ Theft
- ◆ Know the Law

We also give referrals for counseling around the county for a variety of needs.

Attorney Program

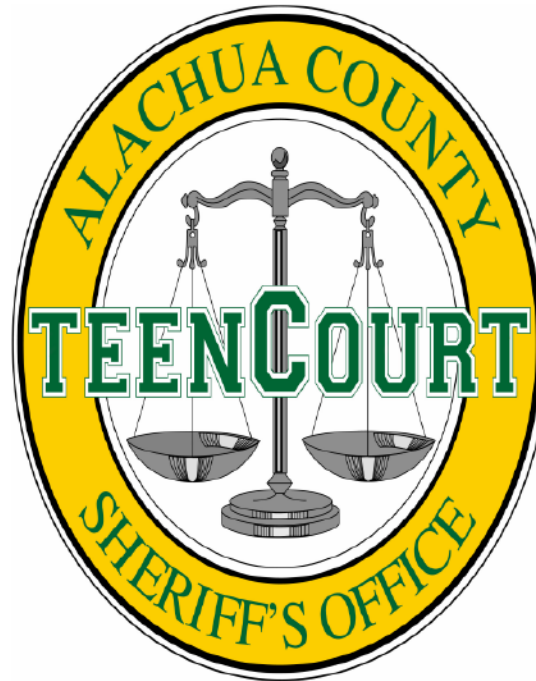
The Teen Court program wants to encourage youth to explore and educate themselves about the judicial system and the law. The attorney program gives teens tools and experience to exercise in the Teen Court courtroom. We invite local to federal level attorneys to come speak and answer questions to help develop the teen attorney's own style and voice when presenting themselves. The techniques learned in the attorney program will help develop confidence in public speaking, critical thinking, listening skills and problem solving.

Contact Olivia Hollier, Teen Court Coordinator, to sign up for the Teen Attorney program.

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**Alachua County Sheriff's Office
Teen Court Program**

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Alachua County Sheriff's Office

TEEN COURT

What is Teen Court?

Who are we?

Teen Court is a diversion/alternative sentencing program. This program is provided by the Alachua County Sheriff's Office. Teen Court offers juveniles throughout Alachua County an opportunity to earn an important second chance while teaching them the value of personal integrity and responsibility to their community.

Why we do it :

According to the Florida Association of Teen Courts, teen courts are based on the philosophy that a youthful law violator is less likely to continue to be an offender when a jury of their peers decides the punishment . Giving a juvenile the chance to face their peers on both sides of the courtroom will allow them to fully understand the weight of their own action, by being apart of sentencing as well as being sentenced.



Process



Teen Court is a sentencing hearing heard at the Alachua County Courthouse, 220 S Main St, Gainesville, FL 32601 in Courtroom I-A. Teen Court is held on Tuesday's from 4:00-7:00pm.

Local Judges, Attorneys, and prominent community leaders volunteer their time to hear the cases as the Teen Court Judge. Other participants include middle and high school volunteers, as well as juveniles in the Teen Court program.

Teen Court : Traditional Cases

In the traditional courtroom setting of Teen Court, the defendants (who have already admitted to being guilty of the charge) are represented by teenage defense attorneys. In turn ,there are also teenage prosecuting attorneys. The teenage attorneys present the mitigating circumstances surrounding the charges, and also the defendants motives and degree of sincerity.

Teen Court : Master Jury Cases

In the master jury courtroom setting, defendants have the opportunity to tell a jury of their peers their version of the circumstances surrounding the charge(s).

In both courtrooms, the teenage jury has the opportunity to ask questions of the defendant. After deliberation, the jury presents their sentencing recommendations to the judge.

Get Involved

Teen Court is always looking for volunteers. There are different opportunities for adults and youth.

Teen Court Youth Volunteer Roles & Responsibilities

Jurors: Must decide appropriate sanctions based on the number and type of offense(s). May render their verdict based on attitude of the defendant, testimony presented and circumstances presented during the trial.

Clerks: Must announce the case name and number at the start of each trial, read the police report to the jury when prompted by the judge, and accurately record the sentence as read by the jury foreperson.

Attorneys: Represent the defendant or the State of Florida during Teen Court Trials. Attorneys must be comfortable speaking in public and must hold themselves to a higher standard of behavior. If you are interested in this position, please contact the Teen Court Coordinator.

Teen Court Adult Volunteer Roles & Responsibilities

Jury Room Facilitator: Monitor the behavior of jury members both during trial and while in the deliberation room, encourage prompt discussion about cases while maintaining a neutral presence in the jury room, serve as a mentor for volunteers and defendants.

Case Facilitator: Serve as legal mentors for attorneys during the preparation of their cases; critique attorney performance during and after the cases.