



939 Harris Street, Eureka, CA 95501    phone: 707-444-0153    text: 707-362-1514    email: hcteencourt@bgcredwoods.org

## **TEEN COURT HEARINGS** **Parent Information and Consent Form**

In response to criminal offenses or school violations, Teen Court functions as a restorative justice diversion opportunity to traditional punitive sanctions.

The Teen Court program provides an opportunity for youth to learn from their mistakes, take responsibility for their actions, repair the harm they caused to any victims and the community, re-integrate into the community in a positive way, and avoid penalties that keep them disengaged.

Research demonstrates that many teens are more likely to listen to feedback from their peers than from adults. Teen Court is a unique opportunity for your teen to experience some "positive peer pressure" about choices and consequences. Teen Court is also a diversion from the regular juvenile justice system. When your teen completes Teen Court, they will have the opportunity to avoid a juvenile justice record.

### **After you speak with the referring agent, the following happens:**

- The referring agency will contact Teen Court to let them know of your teen's case, and will forward any necessary documents.
- Your teen's case will be handled through one of the two Teen Court hearing processes:
  - **Jury Council:** The Jury Council includes a student advocate for your youth, a jury of peers, and an adult legal mentor. It takes place in a non-courtroom setting
    - **Location:** Virtually or at the Boys & Girls Club Teen Center
    - **Days:** 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> or other Thursdays of the month
    - **Time:** 4:30-5:45 pm
  - **Teen Court Courthouse Hearing:** A hearing at the courthouse includes student attorneys, judges and jury along with adult mentor attorneys and judge
    - **Location:** Eureka Courthouse, 825 5<sup>th</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor
    - **Days:** 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays of the month
    - **Time:** 4:15-6:15 pm

### **STAGES of TEEN COURT**

- Intake Meeting- *parent and youth attend*
- Hearing- *for youth only*
- Serve on Jury Duty 2-3 times as a juror
- Finish any restorative assignments within 2 months

**By signing this document, I hereby understand and agree to the following:**

- **Voluntary:** I understand that Teen Court is a voluntary alternative to being handled by another school discipline, diversion program or juvenile probation. I can choose to participate or not to participate.
- **Restorative:** I understand that Teen Court is a diversion opportunity where I can take responsibility, learn from my mistakes, repair any harms and avoid traditional punitive penalties. It is a restorative court process run entirely by teens. I will be represented by a Teen Attorney or Advocate and a restorative assignment will be determined by a Teen Jury. I will have to tell my side of the story in front of a courtroom or room of my peers.
- **Confidentiality:** By choosing to participate in Teen Court, I waive my rights to confidentiality to the extent necessary for participation. I give the referring agency {Arcata Police/ Juvenile Probation/ Eureka Police/School/Other (circle one)} permission to share information with Teen Court, including the police report and documents pertaining directly to the referral incident.
- I also agree to grant Teen Court permission to communicate with Juvenile Probation, APD Diversion Officer, EPD, FPD, school, community organization, or other pertinent law enforcement agents to the extent necessary to handle my case.
- **Take Responsibility:** I understand that Teen Court is an alternative way of dealing with youth who have accepted responsibility for their offense. I understand that Teen Court does not determine guilt or innocence but is for teens who have accepted responsibility.
- **Restorative Assignments:** I understand that my restorative assignment will include mandatory service on a Teen Jury and *may* include other options such as written work, counseling, or community engagement.
- **Successful Completion:** I understand that upon successful completion of my restorative assignment, within the time specified, and if I do not reoffend, my case file will be closed and I will have successfully avoided traditional punishment. (And if referred by probation, will be told how to have my record sealed).
- **If Unsuccessful:** I understand that if I do not complete my TEEN COURT restorative assignment or if I commit another crime before completing, my case will be returned to the referring agent for further action. I may be subject to the original punishment for which Teen Court was an alternative, such as criminal citation, formal probation, or suspension/expulsion from school.

**We understand these conditions and hereby choose to attend Teen Court.**

*\*Teen Court accepts verbal consent- referring agent can sign initials by proxy*

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Referring Agent Signature

Date