

Benefits of the Program



The Holland Teen Court Program benefits all those involved. Not only do the teen defendants benefit; the peer jury members and our community benefit as well.

The defendants are given exposure to the court process in a formal, real-life way. They learn that dealing with a judicial system, even one outside the scope of the Juvenile Court system, can be a daunting experience. It is the goal of the Holland Teen Court Program that the defendants will learn from their courtroom experience and do everything possible to avoid subsequent exposure to the judicial system.

Peer jurors are also given the opportunity to learn more about the legal system. Most peer jurors have never seen a courtroom. None have served on real juries and very few have ever been exposed to formal courtroom procedure. The process teaches these teens to think in a critical and analytical manner as they formulate their questions for the defendant and determine the defendant's sentence. Additionally, the peer jurors are given the opportunity to make a real and positive contribution toward the future lives of the teen defendants.

The Holland community also benefits in several ways. A lower recidivism rate among teen offenders makes our community a safer place to live and raise a family. Teens who are better educated about the legal system become better citizens who give back to their community not only as teens, but also later as adults. Finally, the time that our area courts would normally spend with the defendants becomes available for serious offenders.

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