



Buffalo/Pepin County Teen Court

Teen Court works to create a change in youth behavior. Teen Court also works to provide an opportunity for youth to restore her/his image in the community while repairing his/her relationship between themselves and the victim. Teen court works to improve family resiliency and strengthen relationships while offering ways youth offenders can gain academic and 21st century life skills for future success. Through the restorative justice process the offender is encouraged to recognize the human relationship they have to the victim and the impact their negative actions had on everyone involved, including the school or the community. Teen Court views the situation as a teachable moment for the offender. Research illustrates that a restorative justice model, like Teen Court, can be the most powerful one for young people.

TOP PHOTO: Seventeen new panelists learn from Honorable Judge Duvall in the Buffalo County Courtroom.

BOTTOM PHOTO: A mix of newly trained and experienced panelists before a hearing.



Keeping up with what's new in youth restorative justice

“Teen Court has taught me patience and understanding beyond my years or personal experiences.” - Senior panelist

New panel judges trained

Twenty new teen panelists were trained in April 2018. Student panelists learn from Teen Court Coordinators, the Judge and more experienced panelists at the training, including participating in a mock trial. The final part of the annual training requires panelists sign an oath of confidentiality. Panelists are expected to continue to participate in hearings and trainings in subsequent years to stay fresh while serving on Teen Court.



ABOVE PHOTO: New panelists practice questioning techniques as part of their training.

Bias training for panelists

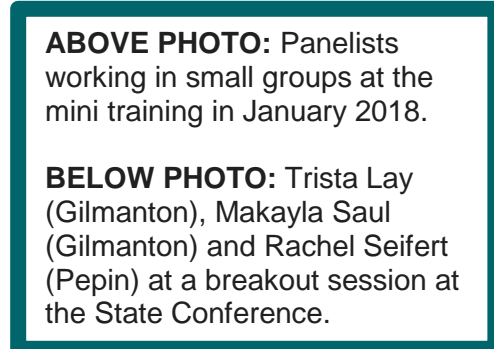
Bias, privilege and microaggressions were the focus for the January 2018 mini-training for current teen panelists. As a result of the training, panelists reported they had a better understanding implicit bias and privilege and how it may play out in a hearing. During the training, panelists explored privileges they have in their lives and also the power they have in assigning consequences to peer offenders. Youth panelists also discussed the biases and assumptions that are sometimes made when a teen makes a mistake and enters the juvenile justice system.



ABOVE PHOTO: Panelists working in small groups at the mini training in January 2018.

State conference

Teen Court Coordinators, Annie Lisowski and Marie Ritscher, along with three panelists attended the one-day Wisconsin Teen Court Association Conference in October 2017 at the Green Lake Conference Center. Youth connected with teen judges from across the state and developed a better understanding of adverse childhood experiences, especially in regards to how trauma could impact a peer offender.



BELOW PHOTO: Trista Lay (Gilmanton), Makayla Saul (Gilmanton) and Rachel Seifert (Pepin) at a breakout session at the State Conference.



Scholarship recipients and graduates

In their final year as panelist in Buffalo/Pepin County Teen Court, many seniors serve as mentors and coaches to incoming youth panelist judges. Seniors interview applicants and provide feedback on their resumes. They often also serve as the coach at hearings for newly trained panelists, providing encouraging words and asking key questions that spark deeper thought during deliberations. Senior panelists also conduct the mock trial at new panelist training and often co-teach sessions at mini-trainings. Congratulations to this year's graduating seniors! We will miss you!

- Brilyn Brecka (Alma)
- Lacie Johnson (Alma)
- Ryan Mikelson (Alma)
- Maya Smith (Alma)
- Paige Allemann (C-FC)
- Emily Bork (C-FC)
- Kayla Kaczorowski (C-FC)
- Karen Scharlau (C-FC)
- Libby Adler (Durand)
- Stephanie Brantner (Durand)
- Makayla Saul (Gilmanton)
- Kaylee Nygaard (Mondovi)
- Maggie Prokosh (Pepin)
- Claire Raethke (Pepin)
- Rachel Seifert (Pepin)

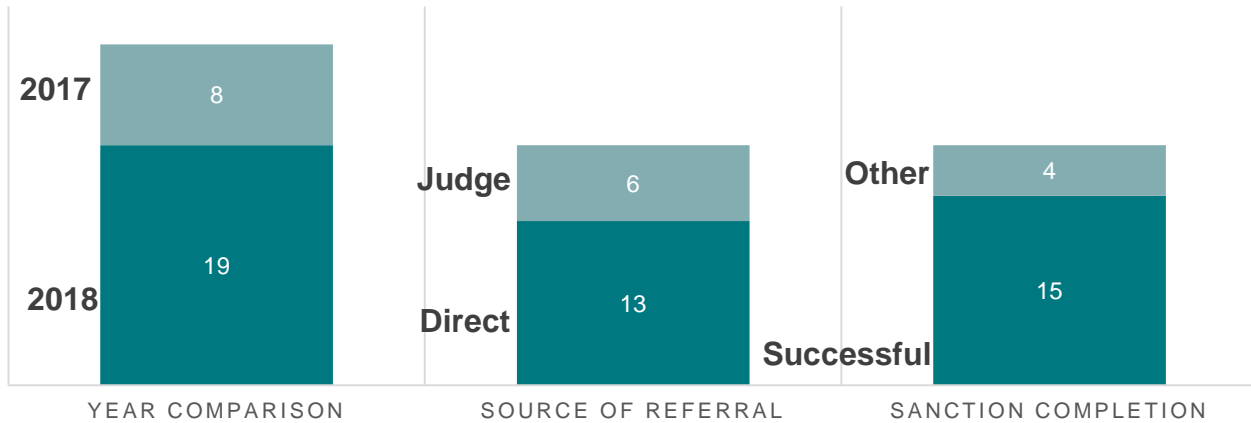
Kayla Kaczorowski was a recipient of the statewide **2018 Wisconsin Teen Court Association \$500 scholarship**. Kayla wrote in her essay, "my original goal was to be able to help other teens who were on the wrong path and help to change their ways. This goal has not changed... I have learned the skills to understand multiple sides of an issue, decipher the factors that go into delinquent behavior, and create effective and unique sanctions in order to reverse behavior."

Maya Smith was awarded the inaugural **\$500 Buffalo/Pepin County Teen Court scholarship** in May. Maya's recommendation said of her: "Maya is deeply engaged in the juvenile justice system in ways that promote restorative justice for youth offenders. She goes above and beyond to provide innovative sanctions. Maya is also held in high regard with her fellow panelists; they often look to her be the leader. During cases, she is a strong and calm presence who asks reflective and critical questions."



PHOTO AT LEFT: Senior panelists Libby Adler (Durand), Stephanie Brantner (Durand) and Makayla Saul (Gilmanton) interviewed new teen court panelist applicants at the Pepin County Government Center in February. Seniors also reviewed panelists' resumes and provided feedback as mentors to incoming youth.

REFERRALS BY THE NUMBERS



Upswing in referrals

In the last year, Teen Court has seen more than double the typical amount of referrals in twelve months' time. The upswing does not necessarily mean there are more youth behaving badly – many factors contribute to this phenomenon, including a renewed source of interest and trust in youth restorative justice from referral agents. In the last year, 68% of referrals received were direct ones that come from law enforcement, human services

or schools. The remaining referrals came from the juvenile courts directed by the Judge. Of the nineteen total referrals, 79% resulted in successful completion of sanctions. The other referrals were returned before hearing or returned partially completed. No offender was completely unsuccessful in 2018.



ABOVE PHOTO: Alisha Rinholen (Durand), Ian Schneider (Durand) and Morgan Moline (Pepin) between teen court hearings in Pepin County.

Welcoming new advisory board members

With a transition in the Buffalo /Pepin County Judge in August, the Buffalo/Pepin County Teen Court Advisory Committee has many new members to the board. Please help us in welcoming the Honorable Tom Clark, Buffalo/Pepin County Judge; Tami Bagstad, Principal at Mondovi High School; Rob Stewart, Superintendent at Alma Area Schools; Mike Johnson, Alma Chief of Police; Adam Julson and Colin Severson, Mondovi Police Department; Carol Pulkrabek, Pepin County Social Worker; and Brandon Bonnerup, Durand Police and Durand School Resource Officer.