

The Putnam County Youth Court Program was established in 1988. Through the years we have made a difference in the lives of young people. Youth Court has become one of the fastest-growing crime prevention and intervention programs in the country.

We are committed to reducing the rate of recidivism in juvenile offenders.

Common offenses that may be handled by Youth Court include:

Assault, Criminal Mischief, Harassment, Burglary, Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance, Grand Larceny, Petit Larceny, and Traffic Violations.

Youth who are referred to Youth Court are represented by a youth Defense Attorney and tried by a youth Prosecutor.

A Youth Judge may assign any or all of the following restorative recommendations:

- ◆ Up to 50 Hours of Community Service
- ◆ Essay on Consequences of Actions
- ◆ Letter of Apology
- ◆ Sheriff's Department Jail Tour
- ◆ Carmel Court Observation
- ◆ Educational Courses
- ◆ Instructional Videos



PUTNAM COUNTY YOUTH BUREAU'S YOUTH COURT



This Program is Funded By:

*The New York State Office of
Children and Family Services, New
York State Governor's Traffic Safety
Committee, & The Putnam County
Youth Bureau*

Program Information:

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## PUTNAM COUNTY YOUTH COURT



### JUSTICE FOR YOUTH, BY YOUTH

### Program Coordinators

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## How Does it Work?

- ◆ The juvenile offender, or defendant, is referred to Youth Court by the Putnam County Probation Department or a municipal court.
- ◆ Youth Court staff works with the defendant and their family to schedule a hearing in a timely manner. All proceedings are confidential.
- ◆ The hearing is conducted by youth volunteers who are trained in courtroom protocol, judicial process and the responsibilities of the various court personnel.
- ◆ The defendant meets with their youth attorney prior to the hearing to discuss the case and provide pertinent information for their defense.
- ◆ The defendant is given the opportunity to tell their story in court.
- ◆ During the hearing, Youth Court members serve as Judge, Supervisor, Defense Counsel, Prosecution, Clerk, Bailiff and Jurors.
- ◆ Defendants receive restorative recommendations from a youth Judge, which must be completed within a certain time period.
- ◆ If the defendant successfully completes their restorative recommendations, they will avoid having a conviction on their record.
- ◆ If the defendant fails to complete the restorative recommendations within the given time period or has a new violation, their case will be returned to the referral source.

## WHAT IS YOUTH COURT?

The Putnam County Youth Court is a diversion program aimed at reducing juvenile delinquency throughout the county.

It is a court proceeding by peers for first-time offenders between the ages of 7-17 who have allegedly committed misdemeanors and non-violent felonies with the approval from the County Attorney's Office.

Our Teen Driving initiative also provides eligible young drivers, charged with a traffic violation, the opportunity to have their case heard.

Youth Court offers these youth an opportunity to constructively assume responsibility for their behavior and accountability to the community while enhancing their respect and understanding of the judicial process.

In addition, all youth that are processed through Youth Court are offered to train with the program and become a youth court member.

As a Youth Court member, youth get to experience the inner workings of the courtroom.

With guidance from adult professionals and other volunteers, they become aware of the complex issues surrounding behavior, laws, and the community.

In addition, the Youth Court process provides an excellent training ground for the development of analytical and verbal skills.



## G R E A T V O L U N T E E R O P P O R T U N I T Y

Youth Court volunteer members range from age's 12 to 19 and come from communities and/or school districts throughout Putnam County.

These young people complete a comprehensive ten session training program led by program staff, adult professionals and community volunteers in the field. This training is held every fall in Carmel and spring in Philipstown. Applications are accepted year-round.

### Key Topics Covered:

- The Law & Justice System
- Courtroom Roles & Procedures
- Responsibility & Respect
- Confidentiality
- Principles of Restorative Justice

### Why Join Youth Court?

- ◆ Earn community service credits
- ◆ Learn about the Law and the Justice System
- ◆ Build personal skills
- ◆ Observe local town court proceedings as well as take a tour of the Putnam County Sheriff's Department/Jail
- ◆ Discuss criminal charges and traffic violations by participating in real juvenile court cases
- ◆ Become involved in your community and make a difference in the lives of others!