

'THE VERDICT'

FALL/WINTER 2014 EDITION

LEON COUNTY TEEN COURT

Happy New Year From Teen Court!

The Truth About Juvenile Records

There are several common misconceptions regarding juvenile records and the impact of a juvenile record on a person's future. On a regular basis, I speak to juveniles and parents that believe juvenile arrests and charges "disappear" from a criminal record once a person becomes 18 years old. According to Florida Statute 943.0515 (1)(b), if a minor is not classified as a serious or habitual offender or committed to a juvenile correctional facility, the Criminal Justice Information Program shall retain the minor's criminal history record for 5 years after the date the minor reaches 19 years of age, at which time the record shall be expunged. This means, juveniles arrested and charged for misdemeanor offenses such as petit theft, possession of alcohol, and battery, will have the charges on their record until they are 24 years old.



The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and the Leon County Clerk of Court process applications for sealing or expunging a criminal record. After records have been sealed or expunged, a number of agencies and organizations still have access to them. The Florida Bar, Department of Children and Families, Department of Education, and other entities can obtain sealed and expunged records due to the nature of the professions they regulate. Attorneys, teachers, doctors, nurses, and child care workers are considered to hold positions of trust; therefore, background checks are required for employment.

A background check is required when applying for college and scholarships. "For example, FSU's College of Nursing requires all nursing students to have a background check on file, prior to practicing at any health care facility. Additionally, FAMU's Disciplinary Review Board reviews the files of any perspective or returning student who indicate any involvement in a criminal act or law violation on their application. The Board then assesses these applications and decide to either approve or deny admission into the university. TCC follows suit with their admission process as well. All students who have a prior law violation must disclose that information on their application. All cases are reviewed on a case by case basis and can result in the student being admitted with special criteria or being denied acceptance all together. The moral of the story is that your actions today can affect your life in the long run. Make positive decisions now to ensure a brighter future for tomorrow.

Keep this information in mind while planning for your future. This article is not meant to provide legal advice. It is a brief summary and is not intended to replace the assistance of a qualified attorney. For more information on sealing and expunging a juvenile record, please visit: <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/expunge> or call (850) 410-7870.

IMPORTANT

DATES TO REMEMBER

Mark your calendars!

March 17th

No Teen Court: Spring Break

March 31st

No Teen Court: Mandatory Teen Attorney Training

High School and incoming high school volunteers that wish to begin training to be a Teen Attorney must register with Mrs. McMillian or Mrs. Oats by emailing: McMillianD@leoncountyfl.gov OatsQ@leoncountyfl.gov

Training begins promptly at 5:30 in the regular Teen Court courtroom.

Earn 8 community service hours

April 14th

Children's Week @ the Capitol
Earn 15 community service hours

June 1st

Last Day of School!!

June 2nd

Teen Court Officer Award Ceremony

ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS!

Tell your friends and teachers about the wonderful volunteer opportunities that Teen Court offers. Teachers can request a Teen Court representative to come to your school to talk about teen court and recruit new volunteers. Many of our high school volunteers will be graduating soon and we need more high school students to be jurors, clerks and teen attorneys. Teen attorneys and clerks receive 3 community service hours each time they attend teen court. Pass the word around! Tell your teachers to contact Mrs. McMillian or Mrs. Oats to schedule a presentation at your school! We will give an additional service hour for every teacher referral! Just tell your teacher to mention your name when they call or email us!

EXAMS

Are You Ready?

Tips for Test Preparation

Learn what works best for you.

Are you a night owl? An early bird? Do you like study groups or complete silence?

Space & Repetition.

Study small sections of information repeatedly rather than trying to absorb large masses at one time.

Write it out.

Research suggests that we store information more securely when we type it or write it out by hand.

Take notes!

Re-cap right before bed.

The brain strengthens new memories while snoozing. Take a quick glance over your notes before you hit the sack.

Arrive a few minutes early.

Take a moment to relax. It helps to reduce your anxiety.

Read the instructions carefully!

Rely on your 1st impression.

The answer that comes to mind first is often correct.

Finished early?

Take the extra time to review your answers.

2015

This Year:

- Break a bad habit
- Learn a new skill
- Do a good deed
- Visit a new place
- Read a difficult book
- Write something important
- Try a new food
- Do something good for someone who can not thank you
- Take an important risk

LEON COUNTY TEEN COURT & CCYS THANK YOU

The month of September is National Youth Court Month. In honor of the occasion, each year Leon County Teen Court partners up with Capital City Youth Services, Inc. in hopes to collect much needed supplies for the school year. CCYS provides emergency shelter & counseling services to youth in crisis throughout the Big Bend area in North Florida.



On behalf of Leon County Teen Court, we would like to thank all of our volunteers, sanctioned youth, and parents for your time and generosity in making the 2014 Helping Hands Project a huge success! Our goal this year was to surpass the number of items that were collected during last year's drive, which was 2,019 items. Ladies and gentlemen, we are proud to announce that we greatly surpassed that goal! With your help, we were able to collect over 3,000 items to donate to those in need at Capital City Youth Services, Inc.! Your donations of school supplies, personal hygiene products, and clothing will help this amazing program continue to provide quality high-impact services to the youth in our community! Congratulations!



WORDS FROM A TEEN COURT GRADUATE...

I have got to say that Teen Court has been one of the best experiences of my life. Prior to volunteering here I was not fully aware of the processes and procedures that courtrooms endure. I was also oblivious to the amount of teenagers that commit illegal activity just within our society. Not only did I learn a lot about our legal system, but I made new friends in the process.



All of the wonderful people that put so much time and effort into Teen Court made the environment feel really welcoming. Although I was a clerk, and we don't talk as much as the teen attorneys do, I do believe that volunteering helped develop my social skills. I was able to work collaboratively with others, and ultimately gained new relationships.

All in all, volunteering at Teen Court was amazing. Observing what happened during cases and taking on different roles in the courtroom (juror, videographer, clerk, etc.) has allowed me to recognize my strengths and weaknesses.

In conjunction, being one of the ones to take up pencils, papers, and clipboards, along with spending so much time organizing the volunteer cards and emergency forms, has made my volunteering at Teen Court an unforgettable experience.

One of a kind!



-Sara

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Teen Court Class of 2014