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## Gulf Coast Community Foundation grant boosts Teen Court

Staff Report  
Oct 26, 2022



PHOTO PROVIDED BY TEEN COURT SARASOTA

SARASOTA — The Gulf Coast Community Foundation awarded Teen Court of Sarasota \$30,000 in grant funding.

Teen Court will use the funding to support its programs to "positively redirect students" who are suspended from school, who receive a civil citation or who are referred by their parent, according to a news release from Teen Court.

The goal is to provide the teens "tools to make better choices and improve their mental well-being," the release states.

With a focus on teens who have "experimented with drugs or alcohol," the grant will help "pay for mental health counseling using Teen Court's private practice counselors to assure the most at-risk teens do not have a waiting period as they have already shown signs of need," the release states.

Funds from the Gulf Coast Community Foundation have enabled Teen Court to expand to North Port in recent years. The Anna V. Pfister, Nellie Mae Koss and Helen K. Hadden Memorial Endowment Fund has designated \$10,000 of the funding to support the organization's middle school expansion program, supporting a Teen Court case manager onsite at the middle school level in North Port.

Another program to benefit is Teen Court's CAMP X-RAYD — Examine the Reality About Your Decisions. This teaches team building with law enforcement, a tour of the morgue, life skills and physical fitness, a visit to the Sarasota County Sheriff recovery pods (with lunch), and an information session at the Venice Fire Department.

"Teen Court of Sarasota has seen a 15% increase in referrals this year," said Heather Todd, the nonprofit's executive director. "These generous grants allow for capacity building, expansion, and support of quality services."

For more information, visit [www.sarasotateencourt.org](http://www.sarasotateencourt.org).

