

SHADES Fact Sheet

Stop Hate and Delinquency by Empowering Students (**SHADES**) is an enhanced version of Teen Court which functions as an alternative intervention for Probation and school districts in imposing discipline on incidents related to hate/bias and bullying among youth.

What is Teen Court?

The Los Angeles Teen Court is a diversion program that provides an opportunity for young people who commit non-serious crimes to be questioned, judged, and sentenced by a jury of their teenage peers. If the minor successfully completes the orders of the Teen Court judge (community service, letters of apology, counseling, social services, etc.) then his/her record is erased clean. The philosophy behind Teen Court is that a young person who engages in criminal activity for the first time should have the opportunity to correct their habits before “graduating” to more serious crime.

Why **SHADES**?

SHADES is the only program of its kind designed to specifically address hate/bias/bullying conflicts and intolerance. Hate incidents: (1) violate campus policies; (2) contribute to violence on campuses and communities where safety is needed most; and (3) impact the well-being of individual victims as well as families and entire classes of people.

What is the difference between **SHADES** and Regular Teen Court?

SHADES hears specific cases where students are involved in incidents of hate and bullying targeted at the protected classes (sexual orientation, gender, race, disability, nationality, etc.).

SHADES jurors are a group of specially trained students who have participated in the SHADES Juror Training Institute. This week-long program is an intensive human relations program at the Museum of Tolerance, and the teen jurors are a mix of students from the teen court high schools throughout Los Angeles.

Additional efforts are made to have the victim present during SHADES hearings. As many of these incidents involve a two-way interaction, SHADES jurors ask questions of the victim and explore alternative sentencing options that may offer victim/offender reconciliation if appropriate.

Who qualifies to participate as a **SHADES** ‘offender?’

Students referred to SHADES will be referred by the Probation Department (pursuant to Welfare and Institutional Codes 236 and 654), the DA’s Office or directly from a school district administrator. This discipline alternative is open to students involved in incidents clearly based in bias/hate.

How are the sentences handed down and carried out?

If the student(s) is found guilty, the SHADES jury will make recommendations to the judge for the student's probationary period and imposed sentence. If the SHADES case is a referral through Probation, the offender is supervised by the Probation Department as is conducted through regular Teen Court. If the SHADES case is a referral through a school district, the offender is supervised by an attorney mentor who reports the progress of the 'offender's' probation. The SHADES program has several attorney mentors available to assist with probationary supervision if desired or needed.

What is the time commitment for **SHADES** jurors/offenders?

Each SHADES session takes no more than 3 hours and is limited to a maximum of 2 cases per SHADES session. If found guilty, the student will be placed on a probationary period of approximately 6 months to complete the sentencing requirements imposed by the SHADES jury.

Why alternative sentencing?

The goal of alternative sentencing is to allow the student to participate in activities that will raise his/her consciousness and appreciation of diversity and tolerance. The Museum of Tolerance has designed a one-on-one 8 hour program that serves as one of the "alternative sentencing" options available to the SHADES jury.

Community service aimed at promoting tolerance is another option for the judge. The following are examples of potential community service scenarios:

A student charged and convicted with assaulting a Mexican student may be sentenced to several months of community service at the Mexican-American Legal Defense Fund.

A student charged with gay bashing may be ordered to a Gay & Lesbian Center to complete her/ his community service, etc.

What involvement do parents have?

Parents of SHADES jurors are not required to participate. However; parents of the student offenders will be required to be present during the SHADES trial and, parents of the victims are asked to be present during the SHADES trial as well. As with traditional Teen Court, parents of the offenders might be ordered to participate in counseling or other restorative services as part of the sentencing determination made by the SHADES judge.

How does a student offender benefit from this program?

Student offenders benefit in just some of the following ways when they complete the SHADES probationary period:

Students are diverted from juvenile delinquency court and/or punitive school disciplinary actions;

Criminal convictions will be erased from their records and their school records reflect successful completion of SHADES (a beneficial safety and after-school program); and

Students obtain an invaluable education and awareness about the importance of diversity and tolerance, which leads to an enriched opportunity of personal development.