

Stories from members

"BYC allows youth in the community to accept responsibility for their actions while still getting a second chance. It's a great way to help young drivers transition into the real world." -Sydney Kramer, Student at Bothell High School



"It is one of my most unwavering beliefs that conditions for societal, political, or economic change start with education of the youth. As I've learned more about the importance of restorative justice in today's world, I've come to support the concept more and more; the accountability and responsibility required by all participants in this form of justice promote maturity, self-awareness and restoration." -Makisa Bronson, Student at Inglemoor High School

"Bothell Youth Court has taught me many things about the legal system and has shown me that there is more to law than just the word guilty." - Scott Platz, Student at Bothell High

"Not only does Bothell Youth Court allow teenagers a chance to correct their mistakes and connect with the community, but it allows students, like me, to explore our passion for restorative justice and the legal field." - Kaitlin Fernandez, Student at Bothell High School

Contact us

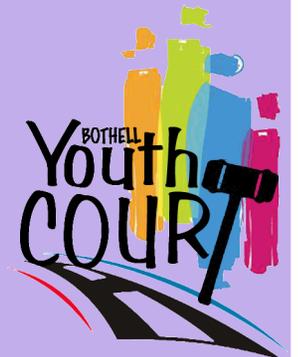
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Bothell Municipal Court
Judge Michelle Gehlsen



Bothell Youth Court



Mission statement



Bothell Youth Court is a community-based intervention and prevention program that provides an alternative response to the adult municipal court for first-time, traffic infractions offenders, in which community youth are empowered to determine the appropriate sanctions for their peers and to hold them accountable for their actions. The program provides to the youthful offenders and volunteers, educational services and hands-on experience in the judicial system in an effort to promote and increase life and coping skills that leads to enhanced public safety and create future leaders in the community.

What is youth court?

- Youth courts nationwide have a promising impact on recidivism in minor offenses. The structure, focused on restorative justice and peer participation, facilitates learning, accountability, and community involvement among all the participants.
- Youth courts reduce the costs and administrative burdens on courts, benefiting our partners in the city government and enabling more direct and positive interactions between court officials and teens than a more traditional punitive model. Youth courts are truly the “ultimate jury of your peers.”

Advantages of Restorative Justice

Restorative justice provides benefits for both the victim as well as the offender.

Benefits for the victim include:

- Having a chance to be heard and understood
- Being able to speak of the impact and harm of the crime
- To ask questions and express concern that may assist in healing.

Benefit for the offender include:

- Being able to take responsibility
- Opportunity to express genuine remorse and make amends
- Opportunity to learn from their experience and grow as an individual.
- Opportunity to put the offence behind them and learn from his/her mistakes.

Background information

- Bothell Youth Court is a partnership between the University of Washington Bothell, Bothell Municipal court and the Northshore School District.
- It was started through the joint efforts of Bothell Municipal Court Michelle K. Gehlsen, University of Washington Bothell students, and Professor Camille Walsh.
- Meeting once a month, Bothell Youth Court is presided over by a youth judge, witnessed by an all-youth jury, and cases are presented by youth attorneys. The court has heard over **45** cases and is working with over **40** students towards its goal of a safer community

