

Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

In the Matter of)
)
Carriage of the Transmissions)
of Digital Television Broadcast Stations)
)
)

CS Docket No. 98-120

Comments of The Courtroom Television Network

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | <u>Page</u> |
|--|-------------|
| Summary..... | ii |
| I. THE PUBLIC INTEREST CALCULUS IS FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT FOR DIGITAL MUST CARRY THAN IT WAS IN THE ANALOG ENVIRONMENT | 2 |
| II. THE CABLE ACT DOES NOT AUTHORIZE THE COMMISSION TO IMPOSE DUPLICATIVE MUST CARRY REQUIREMENTS..... | 6 |
| III. DIGITAL MUST CARRY REQUIREMENTS CONTRADICT THE PURPOSES OF THE CABLE ACT AND VIOLATE BOTH THE PUBLIC INTEREST AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT | 9 |

Summary

Court TV opposes the adoption of any of the must carry proposals and urges the Commission to find other ways to promote the development of digital broadcasting. The Commission is proposing rules that would force cable operators to replace valuable programming services with duplicative signals that only a small fraction of the audience will be able to receive for an indeterminate number of years. Loss of such programming would represent an irreparable loss to viewers and to the public interest, since cable programming networks do not have an alternative transmission path to all homes in a community in the same way that broadcasters do.

The Commission was too hasty in concluding that it has broad authority under the 1992 Cable Act to define the scope of a cable operator's signal carriage requirements during the transition to digital broadcasting. Congress has expressly avoided defining must carry rights in the digital context. And the statutory grounds upon which the Commission relies for assuming it has delegated authority to impose such requirements are exceedingly thin. A more accurate reading of the law confirms that it is directed toward preventing signal degradation as the FCC alters technical standards for broadcasting -- not a carte blanche mandate to increase the substantive must carry requirement. No digital must carry requirement can be reconciled with the plain language of the Cable Act of 1992, since the digital television rules require duplication of analog and digital television transmissions.

Not only would a digital must carry rule violate the letter of the Cable Act, it would conflict with the spirit of the law, as well. Both the Supreme Court and the FCC have acknowledged that must carry rules restrict speech by reducing the number of channels over which cable operators may exert control and by making it “more difficult for cable programmers to compete for carriage on the limited channels remaining.” This adverse effect of a digital must carry rule makes clear that such a requirement would contravene both the public interest and the First Amendment.

opposes the adoption of any of the must carry proposals and urges the Commission to find other ways to promote the development of digital broadcasting.

I. THE PUBLIC INTEREST CALCULUS IS FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT FOR DIGITAL MUST CARRY THAN IT WAS IN THE ANALOG ENVIRONMENT

As the Commission acknowledged in the *Notice*, this proceeding seeks to strike a balance between preserving the obvious public interest value of providing consumers with diverse cable programming networks and an effort to promote digital broadcasting. The very nature of the inquiry makes this proceeding different from those relating to analog must carry, where it was assumed that there would be no “net decrease in the amount of available speech” since each lost cable network was replaced with a broadcast signal that all subscribers could receive. *Turner Broadcasting System, Inc. v. FCC*, 512 U.S. 622, 647 (1994) (“*Turner I*”). Here, however, the Commission is proposing rules that would force cable operators to replace valuable programming services with duplicative signals that only a small fraction of the audience will be able to receive for an indeterminate number of years.

In order to weigh the public interest values at stake, it is necessary for the Commission to understand the nature of the programming that would be lost if it were to adopt digital must carry requirements. Justice O’Connor noted in *Turner I* that many cable programming networks have “as much claim as PBS to being educational or related to public affairs.” ^{3/} Loss of such programming would represent an irreparable loss to

^{3/} *Turner I*, 512 U.S. at 681 (O’Connor, J., concurring in part and dissenting in part). The Commission appears to agree with this assessment. See, e.g., *Notice* ¶ 16

viewers and to the public interest, since cable programming networks do not have an alternative transmission path to all homes in a community in the same way that broadcasters do. ^{4/}

The loss to the public interest would be very significant if Court TV is among the channels to be sacrificed. Court TV, the only television network devoted primarily to in-depth coverage of legal issues, was launched on July 1, 1991, and currently has approximately 34 million subscribers. The network provides live broadcasts of trials, legal commentary, news on law-related topics and other special programming. Court TV has greatly expanded the amount and types of original programming provided to subscribers. Examples include: *Prime Time Justice*, a daily live wrap-up program featuring the most important testimony from the day's court proceedings; *Supreme Court Watch*, hosted by Fred Graham, which is the only television program to focus on the nation's highest court; *Miller's Law*, in which Harvard Law School Professor Arthur Miller and an expert panel examine compelling legal and social issues that are shaping the justice system; *Washington Watch*, a discussion program devoted to legal news from the nation's capital; *Trial Story*, in which the network's most

("Broadcasting may not be the only source of local programming as cable operators have developed local news channels and public, educational, and governmental access channels, which provide highly localized content, have multiplied in the past six years.")

^{4/} Not only do broadcasters have an over-the-air transmission path due to their government license, they are guaranteed a channel on cable systems because of analog must carry requirements.

important trials are summarized in one and two-hour programs; and *The Greatest Trials of all Time*, a series of documentaries on major trials in history. ^{5/} See Attachment 1.

In addition to new, original programming, Court TV has made a strong, tangible commitment to presenting public affairs and educational programming. ^{6/} A centerpiece of Court TV's public affairs efforts is its work with schools, and in particular, with Cable in the Classroom ("CIC"). ^{7/} Through its CIC program entitled *Choices and Consequences*, the network provides monthly one-hour summaries of trials involving important legal and social issues affecting 10- to 15-year-olds during the transition from childhood to adolescence. ^{8/} The curriculum specific program educates young people about the consequences of choices that lead to violence, pranks, drugs, early pregnancy

^{5/} Other original Court TV programs have included *The System*, which follows cases in one specific community from the street, to the police precinct and to the courthouse, and finally to incarceration and parole; *Verdicts and Justice*, a retrospective analysis of the most critical and dramatic cases in America's courtrooms; *Lock & Key*, which examines the fate of convicted prisoners through a review of sentencing, parole and death penalty hearings; and *Instant Justice*, which covers proceedings in municipal and night courts from across the country.

^{6/} For example, the network sponsored a campaign entitled *American Violence, American Justice* which examined the legal and social issues surrounding violent crime. All of Court TV's prime time programs devoted special segments to addressing the campaign's theme.

^{7/} Court TV produces teacher's guides for use with *Choices and Consequences* and other CIC programs. See Attachment 2.

^{8/} For each CIC program, teachers can obtain a companion study guide that suggests the issues to be discussed both before and after viewing of a program. For example, the study guide accompanying the program *A Teenage Killing: Jealousy or Drugs?* was designed to provoke discussion of the use of steroids and teen relationship abuse, and to familiarize students with diminished capacity as a defense.

and other issues. *Choices and Consequences* includes a community outreach component entitled *Your Turn*, which brings together teens and high-profile community leaders to discuss legal and social issues of significance to the community. *Your Turn* has traveled to over 40 communities and produced programs on such topics as gang violence, teen curfews, weapons in school, prayer in public places and teen substance abuse. See Attachment 3.

As part of a specific educational campaign designed for Southern California, Court TV produced a videotape for California high schools to explain the details of the Reginald Denny trial and to outline the issues facing the jury. After the verdicts, the network, in conjunction with other organizations, hosted a town meeting with high school students in Pasadena to discuss both the Rodney King and Reginald Denny trials.

Court TV's extensive public affairs and educational efforts have been well-received. In a national survey of high school teachers conducted in 1994 by Malarkey-Taylor Associates, teachers were asked about the importance and educational value of the network. Of all teachers surveyed, the vast majority believed that Court TV is important because it allows students to see the justice system in action (84%); that it helps students to understand many aspects of the law (69%); that it constructively presents current issues of social interest (62%); that it focuses on justice being served, unlike shows that focus on violence (72%); and that watching Court TV should be recommended (75%). Teachers who had previously watched Court TV were even more enthusiastic in their responses. A full ninety percent said that Court TV is important because it enables students to see the justice system in action, and 87 percent said that

Court TV focuses on justice being served rather than violence. 9/ Nearly 80 percent of the teachers said that Court TV should be available in the schools. 10/

With the prospect of losing such valuable programming as a result of carriage requirements, the Commission should be able to identify compelling statutory and constitutional support for its several digital must carry options. However, as explained below, no such support exists.

II. THE CABLE ACT DOES NOT AUTHORIZE THE COMMISSION TO IMPOSE DUPLICATIVE MUST CARRY REQUIREMENTS

The Commission was too hasty in concluding in the *Notice* that it has “broad authority to define the scope of a cable operator’s signal carriage requirements” during the transition to digital broadcasting. *Notice* at ¶ 13. Congress has expressly avoided defining must carry rights in the digital context. 11/ And the statutory grounds upon

9/ Responses were higher in every category for teachers who had watched Court TV. For example, 80 percent said that Court TV helps students understand many aspects of the law, 85 percent said the Court TV constructively presents current issues of social interest; and 79 percent of the teachers said they would recommend that their students watch Court TV.

10/ According to *Cable in the Classroom*, teachers rate Court TV as one of the best sources of educational programming out of the television and cable networks available in schools. On a scale of 1 to 100, Court TV ranked third, slightly behind PBS and Discovery, but ahead of other quality networks such as The Learning Channel, CNBC, C-Span and Mind Extension University. On a scale of 1-100, the various networks received the following ratings: PBS (89), Discovery (86), **Court TV (86)**, CNN (86), The Learning Channel (84), CNBC (84), C-Span (82), Mind Extension University (76), X-Press (50) and VISN (47).

11/ In the Telecommunications Act of 1996, Congress expressly declined to mandate must carry status on advanced television or other video services offered on an ancillary or supplementary basis. 47 U.S.C. § 336(b)(3). See Conf. Rpt. 104-230, 104th Cong., 2d Sess. at 161. Similarly, Congress avoided any suggestion in the Balanced Budget Act of

which the Commission relies for its delegated authority to impose such requirements are exceedingly thin. Although it is true that Section 614(b)(4)(B) of the Cable Act states that “the Commission shall initiate a proceeding to establish any changes in the signal carriage requirements” after it establishes DTV requirements, 47 U.S.C. § 534(b)(4)(B), it is unreasonable to read that brief provision as empowering the FCC to effectively double the must carry requirement. A more accurate reading of the provision confirms that it is directed toward preventing signal degradation as the FCC alters technical standards for broadcasting -- not a carte blanche mandate to increase the substantive must carry requirement. 12/

The FCC is empowered to impose digital transmission requirements to the must carry rules only so long as they are “in accordance with the objectives of . . . Section 614.” S. Rep. No. 102-92, p. 85. However, the relevant statutory provisions cannot be reconciled with any requirement that would force cable operators to carry both the digital and analog signals from the same broadcast station. For example, Section 614(b)(5) provides that “a cable operator shall not be required to carry the signal of any

1997 that it was requiring digital must carry. H.R. Conf. Rep., 105th Cong., 2d Sess. 577 (1997).

12/ A related provision, Section 614(b)(4)(A), requires cable operators to carry the analog broadcast signal “without material degradation.” 47 U.S.C. § 534(b)(4)(A). It is logical that Section 614(b)(4)(B) similarly relates to signal quality. This interpretation is supported by the legislative history. *See, e.g.*, H.R. Rep. No. 102-628, 102d Cong., 2d Sess. at 94 (1992) (“The Committee recognizes that the Commission may, in the future, modify the technical standards applicable to television broadcast signals. In the event of such modifications, the Commission is instructed to initiate a proceeding to establish technical standards for cable carriage of such broadcast signals which have been changed to conform to such modified signals.”).

local commercial television station that substantially duplicates the signal of another local commercial television station which is carried on its cable system, or to carry the signals of more than one local commercial television station affiliated with a particular broadcast network.” Similarly, Section 615(b)(2)(C) provides that cable operators shall not be required to carry the signal of a public station that “substantially duplicates” the programming carried by another qualified noncommercial station. 47 U.S.C. § 535(b)(2)(C).

No digital must carry requirement can be reconciled with the plain language of the Cable Act of 1992, since the digital television rules require duplication of analog and digital television transmissions. The Commission established a simulcasting phase-in schedule for the transition, whereby stations must broadcast the same programming in both analog and digital formats. Digital channels must simulcast fifty percent of the video programming of their analog channel by April 21, 2003; seventy five percent by April 21, 2004; and one hundred percent by April 1 2005. *Advanced Television Systems and Their Impact Upon the Existing Television Broadcast Service, Fifth Report & Order*, 12 FCC Rcd. 12809, 12832 (1997). Accordingly, any digital must carry requirement that would force operators to carry more than one broadcast signal per station is inconsistent with the statute.

III. DIGITAL MUST CARRY REQUIREMENTS CONTRADICT THE PURPOSES OF THE CABLE ACT AND VIOLATE BOTH THE PUBLIC INTEREST AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT

Not only would a digital must carry rule violate the letter of the Cable Act, it would conflict with the spirit of the law, as well. In adopting analog must carry requirements, Congress was concerned about increasing the number of voices in the video marketplace, and specifically took notice of “barriers to entry for new programmers and a reduction in the number of media voices available to consumers.” *Turner I*, 512 U.S. at 634 (quoting Cable Act, § 2(a)(4)). A digital must carry requirement would directly undermine this statutory purpose.

Both the Supreme Court and the FCC have acknowledged that must carry rules restrict speech by reducing the number of channels over which cable operators may exert control and by making it “more difficult for cable programmers to compete for carriage on the limited channels remaining.” ^{13/} In fact, the Commission in this proceeding noted that during the transition period to digital broadcasting there will be “twice as many stations as are now in operation or will be in operation after the transition.” Accordingly, “cable operators could be required to carry double the amount of television stations, that will eventually carry identical content, while having to drop various and varied cable programming services where channel capacity is limited.”

^{13/} *Turner I*, 512 U.S. at 637; *id.* at 645 (“must carry provisions also burden cable programmers by reducing the number of channels for which they can compete”).

Notice at ¶ 39. Far from promoting an increase the number of voices in the video marketplace and reducing barriers to entry for new programmers, a digital must carry requirement would have precisely the opposite effect. This is especially true in this situation since “there will be an increasing redundancy of basic content between analog and digital stations.” *Id.*

This adverse effect of a digital must carry rule makes clear that such a requirement would contravene both the public interest and the First Amendment. This is so because “the ‘public interest’ standard necessarily invites reference to First Amendment principles.” *CBS, Inc. v. Democratic National Committee*, 412 U.S. 94, 122 (1973). With respect to constitutional values, the Supreme Court in *Turner I* found that promoting “a multiplicity of information sources is a governmental purpose of the highest order” because “it promotes values central to the First Amendment.” 512 U.S. at 663 (citation omitted). ^{14/} The Court in *Turner II* narrowly upheld analog must carry rules on the specific facts before it because it found that there would be no net decrease in the amount of speech. Here, however, where the Commission has acknowledged that a digital must carry requirement would have a profound speech-inhibiting effect, both constitutional and public interest analyses strongly support the rejection of carriage requirements in this proceeding.

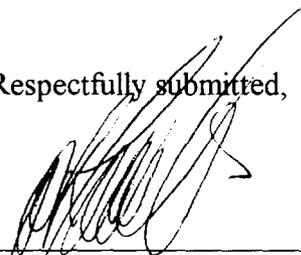
^{14/} This finding was reaffirmed in *Turner Broadcasting System, Inc. v. FCC*, 117 S. Ct. 1174, 1188 (1997) (“*Turner II*”) (“the Cable Act’s findings reflect a concern that congressional action was necessary to prevent ‘a reduction in the number of media voices available to consumers.’”) (quoting Cable Act § 2(a)(4)).

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, Court TV urges the Commission to reject the proposals for digital broadcasting carriage requirements.

Respectfully submitted,

By



Douglas P. Jacobs
Executive Vice President
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By



Glenn Moss
Associate General Counsel

The Courtroom Television Network

October 13, 1998

US OFFICE PRODUCTS

Daytime

Live Trial Coverage



The case of British au pair Louise Woodward put the spotlight on the au pair system, the justice system, and the backlash against working mothers.

Massachusetts v. Woodward
"Au Pair Trial"

Dr. Jack Kevorkian was charged with assisted suicide. Timothy McVeigh was sentenced to the death penalty for the Oklahoma City bombing, one of the worst terrorist acts in our country's history. In the case that inspired Megan's Law, Jesse Timmendequas was convicted of the rape and murder of 7-year old Megan Kanka. Every day, the real-life drama of justice unfolds on Court TV with gavel-to-gavel coverage of some of the nation's most compelling and talked-about trials.



Michigan v. Kevorkian



The Oklahoma City Bombing Trial



Private Movie Company v.
Pamela Anderson Lee



Michigan v. Schmitz
"Jenny Jones Talk Show Murder Trial"



New Jersey v. Timmendequas

Programming

COURT



PRIME
TIME
JUSTICE

Prime Time Justice

Prime Time Justice is a fast-paced news show that puts the day's legal events in perspective, with excerpts from important, ongoing trials and interviews with high-profile guests. Regular weekly commentators include U.S. Attorney General Dick Thornburgh, the Honorable Kym Worthy, Harvard Law Professor Arthur Miller, Court TV anchor Raymond Brown, and criminal defense attorney Leslie Abramson. The program is anchored by Gregg Jarrett.



TRIAL
STORY

Trial Story

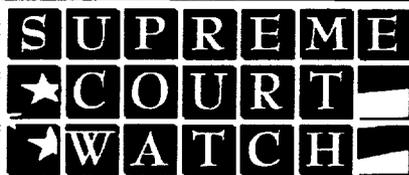
Trial Story, a documentary series, takes the most important moments from a trial covered on Court TV and condenses them into a one-hour prime time program. From opening statements to the verdict, *Trial Story* features all of a trial's key testimony as well as interviews with judges, attorneys, defendants, and plaintiffs. Some recent *Trial Story* programs include "Police Force: Necessary or Deadly?" (*MI v. Budzen*), about a racially charged case of police brutality and "Killer in Class" (*WA v. Loukaitis*), which tells the story of a 14-year-old boy who shot and killed 2 classmates and a teacher, then held his class hostage.



COCHRAN
COMPANY

Cochran & Company

Renowned defense attorney Johnnie Cochran, co-host Rikki Klieman and high-profile guests analyze and debate not only the day's top legal stories, but also their wider social and political ramifications. Recent guests: Bill Cosby, Jesse Jackson, Dennis Rodman, and Barbara Walters. Recent topics: the Au Pair trial, the Jonesboro shootings, the Ennis Cosby Murder Trial and the Clinton/White House crisis.



SUPREME
★ COURT
→ WATCH

Supreme Court Watch

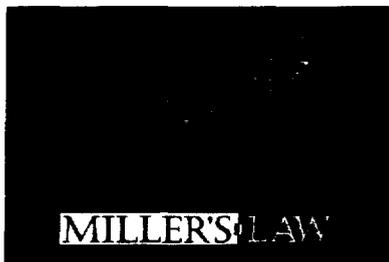
Hosted by Court TV chief anchor Fred Graham, this is the only television program to focus solely on the nation's highest court. Attorneys arguing before the Court join Graham as they examine the issues, trace the history of the litigation, and analyze the decisions. Justices, lawyers, and parties involved in the cases are profiled in this half-hour segment as well. *Supreme Court Watch*, covering cases ranging from gay rights to redistricting, provides viewers with an in-depth look at the most important and intriguing cases facing the Court today.



WASHINGTON Watch

Washington Watch

Court TV's *Washington Watch* is devoted to lively discussion about legal news and judicial issues taking place in the nation's capital. This weekly program is hosted by Fred Graham, Court TV's chief anchor, who covered the Washington political scene and the U.S. Supreme Court for CBS News and *The New York Times*. Expert guests have included U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno, Senator and Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee Orrin Hatch, and the Reverend Jesse Jackson. Topics have ranged from the changing face of the U.S. Supreme Court to the state of civil rights issues in the Clinton administration.



MILLER'S LAW

Miller's Law

Harvard Law Professor Arthur Miller leads a lively panel of the nation's foremost legal experts as they discuss the current issues and trials that are shaping America's justice system.



the GREATEST TRIALS of ALL TIME

The Greatest Trials of All Time

The Greatest Trials of All Time is a series of documentaries that looks at some of the major trials of the 20th century such as *The Court-Martial of Lt. William Calley*, who was convicted for his participation in the 1968 My Lai massacre; *The Scopes Monkey Trial*, involving a biology teacher charged with teaching evolution; and *The Trial of Fatty Arbuckle*; the silent movie star charged with the rape and murder of actress Virginia Rappe. Each episode is built around trial transcripts, firsthand accounts, and archival information. Legal experts, historians, journalists, and writers provide additional perspective. The series is hosted by Tony Award-winning actor James Naughton.



choices AND CONSEQUENCES

Choices and Consequences

Choices and Consequences is Court TV's *Cable in the Classroom* program, which spotlights issues facing 10- to 15-year-olds during the transition period from childhood to adolescence. The curriculum specific program educates young people about the consequences of choices that lead to violence, pranks, drugs, early pregnancy, etc. They encourage young people to make healthy choices in real-life situations. Cable systems and educators across the nation have embraced the program.

**Broadcasting
& Cable**

Cableday

Wednesday, October 8, 1997

FAX

top of the news

COURT TV LAUNCHES ANTI-VIOLENCE CAMPAIGN-

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley joined hundreds of students gathered at the Newseum in Arlington, VA., yesterday to take part in *Portraits In Change*, the kick-off for Court TV's Choices & Consequences campaign. The campaign is a response to the NCTA's violence study which concludes that violence on TV is isolated, with little evidence of consequences, says Court TV's Richard Behrs. Teens and pre-teens in the audience were able to speak their minds on the program, offered by open feed to any cable system in the country and viewed in schools nationwide, leading Riley to say, "I don't know when I've been more impressed." He later commented on the value of the new campaign, saying, "I think the engaging way [Court TV] handles the adolescents' inquiries is helpful," reiterating the predominant sense of all involved that the age of 10 to 15 is when important life choices are made. Court TV is joined by Cable in the Classroom, The National Middle Association and cable companies nationwide, particularly TCI, who paid for *Portraits In Change* and Time-Warner, who bused students to the Newseum from across the country. Marion J. Payne, principal of Mount View Middle School in Marriottsville, MD., says there isn't enough focus on the middle school age group in current programming, other than Maryland Public Television. Most programs, she says, are "not appropriate." Choices & Consequences is a multi-year project integrating reality programming and curriculum support for middle school students.

choices[®]
AND CONSEQUENCES 

A Court TV Initiative

STOP SIGN CASE

Based on *What's The Verdict*
A Mini-Unit on Justice and the Law

Created by Ross M. Burkhardt for Court TV
with the support of TCI and Time Warner Cable

Choices and Consequences is a registered mark of Johnson Institute.

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE "STOP SIGN" CASE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this mini-unit is to have students think about the choices they make and the consequences of those choices. In this way, they may become better decision makers when they confront real issues in their lives.

OVERVIEW

"STOP SIGN" is a classroom instruction mini-unit designed for middle level students. It is based on an actual courtroom trial, *Florida v. Miller, et al.*, the "stop sign" case. As they view and discuss excerpts from the actual trial, students will examine their beliefs about justice, guilt and innocence, appropriate sentencing, victims' rights, and the implications of choices and their consequences. Through small group and large group discussions, writing activities and homework assignments, students will learn more about our legal system and its role in their lives.

NOTE TO THE TEACHER

This mini-unit is designed to have you and your students look carefully at an actual event that had profoundly tragic consequences for six young people. In doing so, your students will examine their own understandings of fairness as well as the consequences of choices people make. The real individuals depicted in the video exhibit, on occasions, strong emotions. The videotape has six parts. Preview all of them -- the entire video -- before using any part with your students. Part of the power of this video is that as students view it, they may change their opinions as new information is revealed. This is an intentional aspect of the experience of viewing "Stop Sign." DO NOT TELL STUDENTS THE OUTCOME OF THE TRIAL AHEAD OF TIME. Let them reach preliminary opinions based on the information available to them. Afterwards you can discuss the concept of "rushing to judgment" before one has all the facts.

THE FACTS OF THE CASE

At a busy 4-way intersection in Tampa, Florida in February 1996, some individual or individuals removed a stop sign. Three young men driving in a car, Keith Farr, Randall White and Brian Hernandez, died instantly when a large truck hit their vehicle as they proceeded through the intersection. The missing stop sign was the cause of the tragic accident.

Three teens, Christopher Cole, Nissa Baille and Thomas Miller, confessed to stealing several road signs in the area as a prank but emphatically denied that they had taken the stop sign from that particular intersection. They were accused of first degree manslaughter and put on trial. The jury unanimously reached a guilty verdict for all three defendants. After listening to impassioned pleas from parents and friends of both the defendants and the victims, the judge sentenced each of the defendants -- Cole, Baille and Miller -- to 30 years in prison, suspending 15 years, resulting in prison terms of 15 years plus five years probation for each defendant.

THE VIDEOTAPE PARTS

The six videotape parts include excerpts from the actual trial. The total running time of all parts is eighteen and a half minutes. This mini-unit is divided into three lessons, two of which employ appx. 9 minutes of video each. 5 seconds of blank tape separate each video part.

VOCABULARY TERMS

Vocabulary terms have been included for each video part. Students will hear these terms during the trial. Before showing a video part, define and review the related vocabulary terms with your students so they are familiar with them and can more easily understand what occurs. Students can write vocabulary definitions in their social studies journals, notebooks, or on the forms provided in the appendix of this unit.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before and after showing each video part, you may find the suggested discussion questions helpful in structuring a classroom conversation. You can use the questions with the entire group, or you can divide the students into smaller groups and instruct them to discuss their responses to specific questions among themselves before sharing their responses with the whole class. Often it is useful to have students write down their responses to questions before engaging in discussion.

VARIATIONS ON THE LESSON

Because different teachers have different teaching styles and varying levels of comfort when teaching, you are encouraged to adapt these materials to your specific classroom. Use the approach that best fits your style of teaching and meets the needs of your students.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

Suggested homework assignments are included for each lesson. These assignments are based on vocabulary, discussion questions, video parts and follow-up discussion. The assignments encourage students to think more deeply about what they saw and heard in class. Adapt these assignments so that they better meet the needs/abilities of your students.

OBSERVATION

This mini-unit depends for its success on student participation. Listen, reflect, and allow divergent opinions to emerge during discussions. The seriousness of this case suggests that middle level students will not see the defendants' actions as a "harmless prank." You may want to remind your students that these are not actors but real teens facing real consequences.

SUGGESTIONS TO THE TEACHER

- Be creative -- you know your students best. Use the three lesson plans as a guide, and adapt them accordingly.
- While teaching this mini-unit, have students keep track of their individual responses as they express preliminary opinions on the guilt or innocence of the three defendants and as they suggest possible sentences. At the end of the unit, review with students how and when they changed their minds about guilt, innocence and sentencing, if they did

change their minds. A discussion about "rushing to judgment" might be appropriate here.

- Define the vocabulary terms for each video part before showing it. This way your students will better understand what they are about to see and hear.
- Use those parts of this mini-unit that work best for you, your classroom goals, your students, and your teaching setting.
- You have Court TV's permission to adapt these teaching materials to best suit your classroom purposes.
- Ask your students, "Why?" Have them explain their responses.

II. THE "STOP SIGN" CASE - LESSON PLANS ONE, TWO & THREE

OVERVIEW

In Lesson One, introduce the "Stop Sign" case. Break students into small groups. Ask each group to create working definitions of several vocabulary terms from the master list. Then review the definitions.

In Lesson Two, discuss the preliminary questions, re-examine the vocabulary terms for each of the first three video parts, show three video parts (total time = 8 minutes 40 seconds) and discuss each of them, and assign homework based on the day's activities.

In Lesson Three, review the facts of the "Stop Sign" case revealed thus far, discuss the follow-up questions from the preceding day, have students share their homework responses (letters), review the vocabulary terms, show three video parts (total time = nine minutes) and discuss each of them, and assign homework based on the entire unit.

SUGGESTED PLAN FOR LESSON ONE

1. Explain to your students that they will be looking at an actual trial and sentencing of three defendants. In order to better understand the trial, they need to know certain vocabulary terms.
2. Divide your class into several smaller groups (three or four students to a group works well).
3. Assign each group the task of creating a working definition of a smaller set of vocabulary terms from the master list of forty-three so that each term on the master list is accounted for.
4. Provide class time for groups of students to "define" their set of terms.
5. Have each group report its working definitions of their terms to the whole class.
6. Assign homework that has students using the vocabulary terms. This could be the task of writing sentences using the terms correctly, or defining terms not addressed in class, or doing a piece of writing that employs at least twenty-five of the vocabulary terms.

SUGGESTED PLAN FOR LESSON TWO

1. Use the "Opening Questions" to stimulate student thinking and create engagement.
2. Review the "Introductory Vocabulary Terms" with your students. Have students copy terms in their journals or notebooks, or use Form #1A, if appropriate.
3. Discuss the following question and elicit several student responses: "Is the stealing of road signs a harmless prank?"
4. Review the vocabulary terms for Video Part #1. Have students copy terms in their journals or notebooks, or use Form #1B, if appropriate.
5. Show Video Part #1 (3:20).
6. Review the facts presented in Video Part #1.
7. Engage the class in the discussion questions based on Video Part #1.
8. Review vocabulary terms for Video Part #2. Have students copy terms in their journals or notebooks, or use Form #2, if appropriate.
9. Show Video Part #2 (1:10).
10. Engage the class in the discussion questions based on Video Part #2.
11. Review vocabulary terms for Video Part #3. Have students copy terms in their journals or notebooks, or use Form #3, if appropriate.

12. Show Video Part #3 (4:00).
13. Engage the class in the discussion questions based on Video Part #3.
14. Assign homework for the following day.

SUGGESTED PLAN FOR LESSON THREE

1. Review the "Opening Questions" from Lesson Two to stimulate student thinking.
2. Have several students read their homework assignment letters aloud to the class.
3. Review the vocabulary terms for Video Part #4. Have students copy terms in their journals or notebooks, or use Form #4, if appropriate.
4. Show Video Part #4 (5:00).
5. Engage the class in the discussion questions based on Video Part #4.
6. Review vocabulary terms for Video Part #5. Have students copy terms in their journals or notebooks, or use Form #5, if appropriate.
7. Show Video Part #5 (2:25).
8. Engage the class in the discussion questions based on Video Part #5.
9. Review vocabulary terms for Video Part #6. Have students copy terms in their journals or notebooks, or use Form #6, if appropriate.
10. Show Video Part #6 (3:25).
11. Engage the class in the discussion questions based on Video Part #6.
12. Assign homework for the following day.

OPTION

- Give students the set of vocabulary terms to look up and define as homework the day before beginning this mini-unit.

NOTE ABOUT THIS MINI-UNIT

- This mini-unit uses the constructivist approach -- students construct their knowledge and learn by listening to others, by thinking about what is said, by writing out their ideas, by voicing their opinions and by asking their questions. You are encouraged to invite full class participation from your students over the three lessons of this unit.

"STOP SIGN" CASE - LESSON ONE

INTRODUCTION

Explain to your students that they will be looking at an actual trial and sentencing of three defendants. In order to better understand the trial, let them know that they will need to understand certain vocabulary terms. (Note: Students can review the vocabulary without getting into the specific facts of the "stop sign" case.)

MASTER LIST OF VOCABULARY TERMS

| | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>innocent</i> | <i>guilty</i> | <i>justice</i> | <i>mercy</i> |
| <i>judge</i> | <i>choice</i> | <i>consequence</i> | <i>prosecutor</i> |
| <i>victim</i> | <i>trial</i> | <i>sentence</i> | <i>prank</i> |
| <i>manslaughter</i> | <i>intend</i> | <i>maximum penalty</i> | <i>admit</i> |
| <i>deny</i> | <i>allege, alleged</i> | <i>convicted</i> | <i>collision</i> |
| <i>count</i> | <i>suspended sentence</i> | <i>probation</i> | <i>"rush to judgment"</i> |
| <i>battery</i> | <i>petty theft</i> | <i>grand theft</i> | <i>error in judgment</i> |
| <i>bond</i> | <i>juvenile</i> | <i>appropriate punishment</i> | <i>impact statement</i> |
| <i>leniency</i> | <i>plea</i> | <i>emotion</i> | <i>sentencing</i> |
| <i>remorse</i> | <i>remorseful</i> | <i>hardened criminal</i> | <i>unanimous verdict</i> |
| <i>defiance</i> | <i>testimony</i> | <i>revenge</i> | |

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

- Divide your class into several smaller groups (three or four students to a group works well).
- Assign each group the task of creating a working definition of a smaller set of vocabulary terms from the master list of forty-three so that each term on the master list of accounted for.
- Provide class time for groups of students to "define" their terms among themselves.
- Have each group report the working definitions of their vocabulary terms to the whole class. As each group reports, other students can write definitions in their social studies journals or on the forms provided in the appendix.
- Review all of the vocabulary terms with the entire class to check that each term is understood by your students and to respond to any specific questions that students may have.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

Assign a homework task that has students using many of the vocabulary terms. This could include writing several sentences using the vocabulary terms correctly, defining those vocabulary terms not fully addressed in class, or doing a piece of writing that employs at least twenty-five of the vocabulary terms.

----- END OF LESSON ONE -----

"STOP SIGN" CASE - LESSON TWO

OPENING QUESTIONS

Begin the lesson by asking the following question:

- *What is the purpose of a STOP sign at highway intersections?*

After eliciting several responses and having a short discussion, move on to the following questions:

- *Why do we have laws in our society? What purposes do they serve?*
- *What happens when someone breaks the law? What does society do in response?*
- *What is "guilt"?*
- *What is "innocence"?*
- *Who decides someone's guilt or innocence?*

INTRODUCTORY VOCABULARY TERMS

Review the following terms early in the first lesson. You may want to use Form #1A (see Appendix, "Introductory Vocabulary Terms") and have students write down definitions of the several terms, or they can write them in their social studies journals or notebooks.

| | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| <i>choice</i> | <i>consequence</i> | <i>innocent</i> | <i>guilt</i> | <i>justice</i> |
| <i>mercy</i> | <i>trial</i> | <i>judge</i> | <i>prosecutor</i> | <i>victim</i> |

SHORT DISCUSSION

Ask students the following question:

"Is the stealing of road signs a harmless prank or a criminal act?"

Elicit preliminary opinions in writing. Ask students to share briefly what they have written. Then discuss their responses.

VOCABULARY TERMS FOR VIDEO Part #1

Review the following terms before showing Video Part #1. You may want to use Form #1B ("Vocabulary Terms For Video Part #1") and have students write down definitions of the several terms, or they can write them in their social studies journals or notebooks.

prank
deny

manslaughter
allege, alleged

intend
convicted

maximum penalty
collision

VIDEO PART #1

The first video part is 3:20 minutes in length. It introduces the facts of trial.

REVIEW THE FACTS

- *How many defendants are there?*
- *What are they accused of doing?*
- *What were the consequences of their "alleged" crime?*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS BASED ON VIDEO PART #1

- *Based on what you have seen so far, what reactions or opinions do you have so far?*
- *What questions do you have about what you have seen?*

VOCABULARY TERMS FOR VIDEO PART # 2

Discuss the following terms before showing Video Part #2. You may want to use Form #2 (Appendix, "Vocabulary Terms for Video Part #2") to have students write down definitions of the several terms, or they can write them in their social studies journals or notebooks.

evidence
jury

circumstantial
verdict

reckless disregard
collision

intersection
defendant

VIDEO Part #2

The second video part is 1:10 minutes long.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS BASED ON VIDEO Part #2

- *Was it manslaughter?*
- *What about the fact that these kids admitted to stealing other stop signs?*
- *Is there a difference between taking a stop sign and taking a street sign?*

VOCABULARY TERMS FOR VIDEO Part # 3

Go over the following terms before showing Video Part #3. You may want to use Form #3 ("Vocabulary Terms for Video Part #3") and have students write down definitions of the several terms, or they can write them in their social studies journals or notebooks.

*remorse, remorseful
testimony*

*hardened criminal
revenge*

*unanimous verdict
impact statement*

*defiance
sentence*

VIDEO PART #3

The third video part is 4:00 minutes long.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS BASED ON VIDEO PART #3

- *What testimony impressed you? Why?*
- *Are they good kids who took a wrong turn or senseless killers?*
- *Should they be locked up with "hardened criminals"?*
- *They didn't deny stealing other signs -- should we believe their denial about the stop sign?*
- *One defendant has a young son -- should this make a difference in his sentence?*
- *Does a "lack of remorse" indicate guilt?*
- *Can a person be remorseful for something they didn't do?*
- *Should revenge be a factor in a jury decision?*

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT OPTIONS

- *Write a letter to one of the defendant's family.*

OR

- *Write a letter to one of the victim's family.*

OR

- *Write a letter to the judge suggesting an appropriate sentence for the three defendants.*

IF TIME ALLOWS . . .

A. Discussion questions:

- *What did you learn in class today?*
- *What questions do you have about the case?*

B. Allow students class time to begin writing their letters (the next day's homework).

----- END OF LESSON TWO -----

"STOP SIGN" CASE - LESSON THREEREVIEW

To begin the third lesson, go over the following questions as a review exercise.

- *What is the purpose of a STOP sign at highway intersections Why do we have laws in our society? What purposes to they serve? What happens when someone breaks the law? What does society do in response?*
- *How many defendants are there in the "stop sign" case?*
- *What are they accused of doing?*
- *What were the consequences of their "alleged" crime?*
- *What has happened in the trial so far?*
- *What is remorse?*

SHARE THE HOMEWORK

Ask several students to read aloud their letters written as homework.

VOCABULARY TERMS FOR VIDEO Part #4

Go over the following terms before showing Video Part #4. You may want to use Form #4 ("Vocabulary Terms for Video Part #4") and have students write down definitions of the several terms, or they can write them in their social studies journals or notebooks.

leniency

plea

emotion

sentencing

admit

VIDEO Part #4

The fourth video Part is 5:00 minutes in length.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS BASED ON VIDEO PART #4

- *Are the defendants just saying they are sorry?*
- *Does a defendant need to show remorse in order to be innocent?*
- *Are the opinions and feelings of a victim's family and friends important to a judge who is determining a sentence?*
- *Does Ann Hertle's plea for leniency change your opinion about sentencing? How? Why?*
- *Should the judge be lenient?*
- *Does "emotion" belong in a court of law?*
- *Do two "wrongs" make a "right"?*

VOCABULARY TERMS FOR VIDEO Part # 5

Go over the following terms before showing Video Part #5. You may want to use Form #5 ("Vocabulary Terms for Video Part #5") and have students write down definitions of the several terms, or they can write them in their social studies journals or notebooks.

battery
bond

petty theft
juvenile

grand theft
appropriate punishment

error in judgment

VIDEO Part #5

The fifth video clip is 2:25 minutes long.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS BASED ON VIDEO Part #5

- *Should all three teens get the same punishment?*
- *Should previous crimes have an impact on sentencing?*
- *What is an appropriate sentence for these three defendants? Community service? One to five years? Ten years? Life in prison?*
- *Do Tom Miller's previous crimes call for heavier sentencing now?*
- *Should Tom Miller's one year old son be a factor in sentencing? Should it make a difference to the judge?*
- *Should stealing a stop sign be punishable by jail time?*

VOCABULARY TERMS FOR VIDEO Part # 6

Go over the following terms before showing Video Part #6. You may want to use Form #6 ("Vocabulary Terms for Video Part #6") and have students write down definitions of the several terms, or they can write them in their social studies journals or notebooks.

count

suspended sentence

probation

"rush to judgment"

VIDEO Part #6

The sixth video clip is 3:25 minutes long. It ends with three questions:

- *What was the choice?*
- *What were the consequences?*
- *Was justice served?*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS BASED ON VIDEO CLIP #6

- *What was the choice, and what were the consequences?*
- *Was justice served? Why or why not?*
- *Do you agree with the same sentence of 15 years for all three defendants? Why or why not?*
- *Should the two "non-criminals" have received a lesser sentence?*
- *Did your decision on sentencing change during this discussion? How? Why?*
- *Did you "rush to judgment"? How could this have been avoided?*
- *Should juveniles be treated as adults?*
- *If the three defendants had been fourteen, should or could they have known about the serious consequences of removing a stop sign? 18-year-olds can drive, but 14-year-olds cannot.*
- *How old do you have to be to know that taking a stop sign away from an intersection can result in death?*
- *Do 12-year-olds realize the serious consequences of this crime? What about 10-year-olds?*
- *Was the sentencing -- 15 years -- "fair"?*
- *What's the larger message of this trial? What do you take away from it?*

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

- Write an editorial stating your opinion based on the facts of the case and its outcome.

OR

- Write a "Letter to the Editor" of a newspaper stating your opinion about what happened and the sentencing of the three defendants.

----- END OF LESSON THREE -----

ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

- Design a vocabulary test based on the terms presented during the unit:

| | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>innocent</i> | <i>guilty</i> | <i>justice</i> | <i>mercy</i> |
| <i>judge</i> | <i>choice</i> | <i>consequence</i> | <i>prosecutor</i> |
| <i>victim</i> | <i>trial</i> | <i>sentence</i> | <i>prank</i> |
| <i>manslaughter</i> | <i>intend</i> | <i>maximum penalty</i> | <i>admit</i> |
| <i>deny</i> | <i>allege, alleged</i> | <i>convicted</i> | <i>collision</i> |
| <i>count</i> | <i>suspended sentence</i> | <i>probation</i> | <i>"rush to judgment"</i> |
| | | | |
| <i>battery</i> | <i>petty theft</i> | <i>grand theft</i> | <i>error in judgment</i> |
| <i>bond</i> | <i>juvenile</i> | <i>appropriate punishment</i> | <i>impact statement</i> |
| <i>leniency</i> | <i>plea</i> | <i>emotion</i> | <i>sentencing</i> |
| <i>remorse</i> | <i>remorseful</i> | <i>hardened criminal</i> | <i>unanimous verdict</i> |
| <i>defiance</i> | <i>testimony</i> | <i>revenge</i> | |

- Have students explain in writing the purpose of each of the following:

judge, jury, trial, lawyer, laws, sentence, verdict

- Present the following quotation to your students:

"Envision your future and weigh it against the moment."

In other words, are the long range consequences of what you are about to do worth the brief, momentary pleasure or thrill of a particular choice of action? Ask them to discuss this quotation either in small groups or as a whole class. You may also ask them to write about their understanding of this quotation.

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- *Did you change your mind about the guilt or innocence of the three defendants while watching this video? If so, what caused you to change your mind?*
- *Did you change your mind about an appropriate sentence for the three defendants while watching this video? If so, what caused you to change your mind?*
- *What did you learn by watching this trial?*

HOMEWORK ACTIVITY: THE "BEST OF LIFE"

Assign students the task of asking their parents to write a list of some important events that occurred in their lives from when they were 18 up until they turned 33 (or up until today, if the parent is younger than 33). This "best of life" list represents some events that an 18-year old would miss if he or she were sentenced to jail for the next fifteen years. This activity could be a homework assignment at the beginning or the end of the "stop sign" mini-unit. It offers an opportunity for students and their parents to work together on a positive school assignment.

EXAMPLE

In order to help students understand the "best of life" assignment, you may want to share the following example with them. You may also want to make your own personal "best of life" list.

When I was 18 I entered college.

When I was 19 I played in the college marching band at football rallies and games.

When I was 20 I attended my parents' 25th wedding anniversary.

When I was 21 I graduated from college.

When I was 22 I traveled to Italy and visited the ancient city of Pompeii.

When I was 23 I had Thanksgiving with my aunt and uncle and cousins. I also attended my sister's graduation from college.

When I was 24 I bought my first brand new car.

When I was 25 I was an usher at my sister's wedding.

When I was 26 I got married. I also earned my master's degree.

When I was 27 I held my newborn daughter in my arms.

When I was 28 my son was born.

When I was 29 I drove across America and saw the sunrise at the Grand Canyon.

When I was 30 I went to my brother's wedding.

When I was 31 I played tooth fairy for my daughter.

When I was 32 I took my son his first pony ride.

When I was 33 I watched "Sesame Street" with my children.

A suggested form for using this "best of life" activity can be found in the appendix.

“STOP SIGN”

THE APPENDIX

Vocabulary Forms 1A, 1B, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6

“The Best of Life” Activity Form

FORM #1A: INTRODUCTORY VOCABULARY TERMS

NAME: _____ PERIOD/CLASS _____ DATE _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Write a complete sentence definition for each of the terms below.

choice _____

consequence _____

innocence _____

guilt _____

justice _____

mercy _____

trial _____

judge _____

prosecutor _____

victim _____

FORM #1B: VOCABULARY TERMS FOR VIDEO PART #1

NAME: _____ PERIOD/CLASS _____ DATE _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Write a complete sentence definition for each of the terms below.

prank _____

manslaughter _____

intend _____

maximum penalty _____

deny _____

allege, alleged _____

convicted _____

collision _____

FORM #2: VOCABULARY TERMS FOR VIDEO PART #2

NAME: _____ PERIOD/CLASS _____ DATE _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Write a complete sentence definition for each of the terms below.

evidence _____

circumstantial _____

reckless disregard _____

intersection _____

jury _____

verdict _____

collision _____

defendant _____

FORM #3: VOCABULARY TERMS FOR VIDEO PART #3

NAME: _____ PERIOD/CLASS _____ DATE _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Write a complete sentence definition for each of the terms below.

remorse, remorseful _____

hardened criminal _____

unanimous verdict _____

defiance _____

testimony _____

revenge _____

impact statement _____

sentence _____

FORM #4: VOCABULARY TERMS FOR VIDEO PART #4

NAME: _____ PERIOD/CLASS _____ DATE _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Write a complete sentence definition for each of the terms below.

leniency _____

plea _____

emotion _____

sentencing _____

admit _____

FORM #5: VOCABULARY TERMS FOR VIDEO PART #6

NAME: _____ PERIOD/CLASS _____ DATE _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Write a complete sentence definition for each of the terms below.

battery _____

petty theft _____

grand theft _____

error in judgment _____

bond _____

juvenile _____

appropriate punishment _____

FORM.#6: VOCABULARY TERMS FOR VIDEO PART #6

NAME: _____ PERIOD/CLASS _____ DATE _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Write a complete sentence definition for each of the terms below.

count _____

suspended sentence _____

probation _____

"rush to judgment" _____

SUGGESTED FORM: "The Best of Life"

"THE BEST OF LIFE"

STUDENT: _____ RESPONDING ADULT: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: *Ask a parent to list at least one positive memory or event for each year indicated below.*

When I was 18 _____

When I was 19 _____

When I was 20 _____

When I was 21 _____

When I was 22 _____

When I was 23 _____

When I was 24 _____

When I was 25 _____

When I was 26 _____

When I was 27 _____

When I was 28 _____

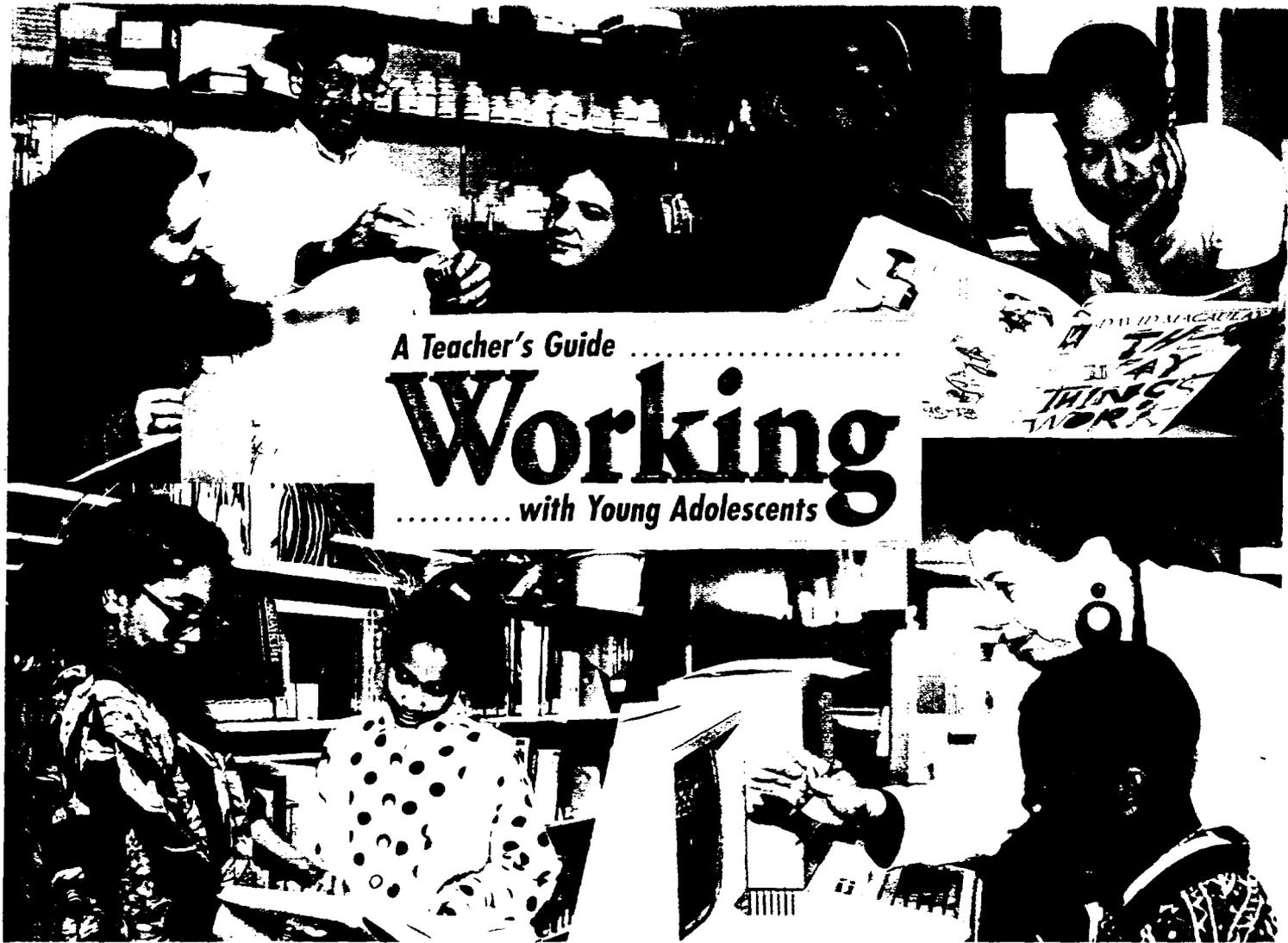
When I was 29 _____

When I was 30 _____

When I was 31 _____

When I was 32 _____

When I was 33 _____



A Teacher's Guide

Working

..... with Young Adolescents

As educators, we know that young adolescents (10–15 year olds) are unique and at times misunderstood. Teaching them can be a constant challenge filled with personal rewards, not unlike riding a roller coaster—there are high points, speedy descents, and, every once in a while, a huge change in direction. In order to fully appreciate this exciting ride, you need to know a little about the journey you are undertaking.

This Teacher's Guide, a component of Court TV's *Choices and Consequences* initiative, is an example of how National Middle School Association, Court TV, and the non-profit Cable in the

Classroom organization are reaching out to educators, parents, and students. *Choices and Consequences*, produced in conjunction with Time Warner Cable, MediaOne, TCI, Cablevision Systems, Marcus Cable and other cable companies, is a multi-year, multi-faceted program designed to assist young people in making the connection between the choices they make and the consequences that follow.

Whether you are a first year teacher or an experienced middle level educator, this guide is designed to reaffirm, educate, and motivate those who ride the middle level roller coaster on a daily basis. We invite you to share this information with your colleagues.



choices
AND CONSEQUENCES

COURT TV®

WORKING

WITH YOUNG ADOLESCENTS

By Judith Baenen, in collaboration with the National Middle School Association.

Although teaching any grade level has its special moments, working with middle school students can be the most rewarding experience a teacher will ever have. It's just that it's not easy. Young adolescents are a challenging group, but once you recognize and appreciate the unique characteristics of this age, you're hooked.

Middle school students (ages 10–15) experience dramatic shifts in mind and body. This isn't news to a teacher who deals with those changes moment to moment in the classroom. These young adolescents are no longer the malleable elementary school children who approach school and learning with wonder, nor are they sophisticated high school students forging toward the future. Instead, they are a delightful mix of both: it's just that they're not sure which one they are at any given nanosecond.

The most obvious transformations are physical ones. There is no "typical" middle schooler. They range from tiny to tall, from thin to thick, from grown-up looking to hardly growing. These physical changes both increase and drain young adolescents' energy and are outward indications of what's happening inside.

Their intellectual approach is mostly concrete, but they are capable of abstract reasoning. Their interest span leads them from idea to idea or project to project without looking back. On the other hand, a middle schooler will spend hours pursuing a special interest with no seeming consciousness of the outside world. Their organizational skills lapse. Forgetfulness and thoughtlessness are common. But they can also be counted on to organize a clothing drive for the homeless or spearhead a campaign to preserve the rainforest.

Friends and peer acceptance are crucially important to young adolescents, but adults—especially parents and teachers—play a significant part in their lives as role



models. Middle schoolers also rely on adults to provide structure and safety, since young adolescents often do not possess the maturity to impose rules on themselves.

If you are a veteran teacher of middle schoolers, the ideas in this guide should affirm the good work you are already doing. If you are new to middle school, you may find these suggestions useful. Experienced or beginner, you're fortunate to be teaching in middle school!

What you can do

- 1. Respect is the key to understanding middle schoolers. A teacher needs to be sensitive to the (sometimes troubling) changes his or her students are experiencing and honor each student as unique.**
- 2. Build relationships. Before students can embrace the curriculum, they must connect with the teacher. Getting to know students and letting them know you is essential to their success and yours.**
- 3. A middle school classroom should offer the climate and structure that middle schoolers require: not restrictive or punitive, but an inviting setting where expectations and consequences are clear and warmth and trust prevail.**
- 4. Relish small successes. Jot down those "Eurekas!" and "Thank yous!" Keep a folder with special notes from parents or students. On a tough day, they're a valuable reminder of the difference you make.**

challenging

YOUNG ADOLESCENTS

Middle schoolers like challenges. And they should encounter a rigorous academic curriculum. Middle schoolers play complicated musical instruments. They create museum-worthy art. They write poetry that brings tears to your eyes. They memorize lengthy parts in plays. They learn second or third languages. They master sophisticated computer programs. They solve algebraic equations. The key is not *what* is taught, but *how*. How teachers teach their subjects can be the difference between frustration and success for both the teacher and the young adolescent.

Middle school teachers know that, for their students, the process of learning is as important as the product. Students will meet high expectations when they are clear about the small steps that lead to the goal. Middle school teacher Joan Maute says that teachers of 10–15 year olds must “think big but teach small.”

Middle school students should be encouraged to be problem-solvers, decision-makers, question-askers, and risk-takers. A rigid classroom environment, bound to the

content and sequence of the curriculum, does not work for many middle schoolers. Further, a middle school teacher can never assume that a student comes ready to learn on any given day. Information grasped yesterday is lost today; confidence may be high or low depending on the appearance of one’s hair. Middle school teachers have to be willing to start with students where they are each day while still insisting on quality performances.

Good middle school teachers convert big concepts into small segments: they may give long-range assignments, but they establish regular checkpoints to ensure progress. They employ many strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners: large and small group presentations, frequent use of cooperative learning groups, some one-on-one coaching, and computer-assisted instruction. Exploration is encouraged; giving students the opportunity to apply what they have learned to real-life situations cements the knowledge. Effective middle school teachers never say, “Someday you will use this.” Instead, they declare, “Now, here’s how we’re going to use this.”

Middle schoolers can and do learn a lot, but generally not through lecture or busy work. We do them a disservice if we do not offer a strong academic program; equally, they are not served if our teaching methods miss the mark.

What you can do

1. Remember that learning is cumulative, especially for middle schoolers. The sequence of learning should be more like concentric circles than a straight line through the material.
2. If your state or district has mandated achievement standards, let students know what they are. You might be surprised at how adept middle schoolers are at helping you create relevant curriculum to reach the required goals.
3. Avoid overloading middle schoolers with assignments or projects. Young adolescents’ lives are in flux, and they expend a lot of energy just coping. Remember: small steps.
4. Talk frequently with other teachers about their strategies—in general and for specific students. Read educational journals to keep up with the emerging ideas in your profession. Give yourself and your students a fresh start every day.



KNOW

YOUNG ADOLESCENTS

Middle school teachers should not only know and respect every student they teach, their students should *know* they are understood and valued. They should see that their teachers really listen to them and act as their advocates when problems arise. Relieving young adolescents' minds of troubles that bubble up as a result of changing relationships with friends and family can clear the air for more concentrated learning. Supporting a spontaneous interest in current events eases the stress a confusing world can cause.

Although middle schoolers should be old enough to act wisely, often they don't. They want to take risks, test limits and try new—and sometimes forbidden—things. It's important, therefore, to help students understand the consequences of their actions and the choices open to them in each decision. Teaching decision-making skills is an urgent task in the middle school. Court TV's *Choices and Consequences* curriculum materials (available on the Web at www.courtstv.com or by calling 1-800-COURT-56) can help develop these skills.

Another key element to understanding middle schoolers is being aware of their ability to engage adults in power plays. When you see this coming, stay calm and avoid getting dragged in. The shrug or smirk which implies they aren't affected by your authority does not diminish your authority. The concerned middle school teacher does not use humiliation or sarcasm to retaliate, but serenely steps aside and busies him or herself elsewhere, responding appropriately at a later time.

Finally, keep in mind the developmental needs of your students. Young adolescents are growing rapidly and have a somewhat short interest span. Effective middle school teachers change activities often and give students plenty of opportunities to move about the classroom.



What you can do

1. You might know your students well, but you can't be an expert in every area. Make yourself aware of the agencies and support systems in your school and community, and contact them when a student requires special attention. National organizations and curriculum materials can also help—see the last two pages of this guide for phone numbers and Web sites that offer support.
2. Keep up on current youth culture to be aware of the world in which your students live. It helps to have a good grasp on popular TV shows, movies, music, fads, slang, and fashion if you want to really understand today's students' issues and interests and tie them into your classroom.
3. To gain a new perspective on what it's like to be a student, spend a day "shadowing" a young adolescent selected at random.
4. Teach kids coping skills—how to manage time, keep track of assignments, take notes, prepare for tests, handle peer pressure. Sometimes just giving a student an assignment pad makes all the difference. *Choices and Consequences* materials may also help students become better decision-makers.
5. Young adolescents do not pay enough attention to their health. Encourage a healthy lifestyle. Offer nutrition breaks as part of your school or class routine.

respecting

**YOUNG
ADOLESCENTS**

The young adolescents you teach are diverse, not just because they are middle schoolers but because they come from a wonderfully diverse society. Because this is an important time for young adolescents' personal growth, teachers must be leaders for equity and justice. Productive, educated citizens are more likely to result when teachers believe in their students and treat all of them fairly.

Keep your behavioral expectations as high as your academic standards. Young adolescents are capable of being cruel and impulsive. They also echo our culture's prejudices even though they may not have fully or personally adopted any particular view. Teachers must be unwavering in expecting appropriate behavior and speech.

In a middle school classroom, all abilities and ways of knowing are honored. Teachers should not vary their expectations from group to group or individual to individual, even though methods, techniques and strategies may. Middle schoolers feel more comfortable with their own differences when all cultures and personalities are celebrated and esteemed.

For these reasons, heterogenous classrooms should be the standard for middle school programs. Tracking, levelling, etc., are not effective practices and ultimately do not produce the results they promise. In an engaging classroom, middle school students of all abilities learn constantly from their peers, from the text, from you, from the materials on the bulletin boards, and from off-hand remarks. The more diverse and stimulating the classroom environment, the better the learning.

What you can do

1. Examine your own attitudes toward students of different genders, races, religions, and lifestyles. Invite a colleague to come into your classroom to "code" your speech. You may be using prejudicial language inadvertently.
2. Create assignments and activities that acknowledge and address your students' cultural differences as well as varied learning styles.
3. Be alert to those "teachable moments," especially relating to student put-downs or racist and sexist statements. Implement a no-tolerance policy for such remarks.
4. Avoid telling or repeating negative tales about current or former students or making perjorative remarks about their families or living situations. Respect is as necessary in the teachers' lounge as it is in the classroom.



reaching out

WITH YOUNG ADOLESCENTS

Committed middle school teachers design ways to involve students with their families and to link the school with businesses and the community. Young adolescents are known for their reluctance to discuss school with their parents, yet we know that family involvement with the school and interest in what their children do at school lead to greater student achievement.

Middle school teachers should devise homework and projects which require that students speak to or join with

family members to accomplish a specific task. Assignment notebooks give parents and guardians the opportunity to review a day's or week's work and open up dialogue.

Often the community is largely unaware of the excellent education being offered in their schools. Teachers and administrators could well spend more time on simple, inexpensive ways of publicizing their programs. Business

partnerships in which local businesses support a school financially and/or through volunteer tutors and mentors give at least some members of the public a glimpse of the fine education your school provides.

Most young adolescents express social concerns. As their awareness of the world grows and they're exposed to different cultures and ideas through technology and the media, middle schoolers should be directed toward service—as long as it's not related to cleaning their room. Many middle schools have a service component as part of their regular program, and they find service projects a practical way to apply what is learned in the classroom—for example, using math skills to build a playground for disadvantaged children, or using writing and organization skills to put together a proposal to the city, etc.

Middle school teachers are keenly aware that their classrooms do not exist in a vacuum. The more the lines and boundaries are blurred, the more families and the community can reach in and connect with students. Consequently, more students can then safely explore the larger world.



What you can do

1. Know the importance of catching students doing the right thing and of regularly delivering positive messages to students' families. If a negative message is in order, include objective, concrete suggestions for ways parents/guardians can partner with the teacher to help the student improve.
2. Broaden your methods of meeting and communicating with students' families. Implement a homework hotline, hold parent conferences in the local library or community center, or ask if parents would be interested in a home visit. "A Parent's Guide—Tuning In to Young Adolescents," available from NMSA or Court TV, can help parents whose children are transitioning from elementary to middle school.
3. If your school/district allows it, rethink your school hours to include homework time for students after school or opportunities for early morning or evening visits from parents.
4. Think of positive ways your students can connect with the community and the community can respond to the school. Your middle schoolers will have some terrific ideas on this.
5. Brainstorm with students, colleagues, administration, families and local business people about ways to share your school's successes. Research what other schools are doing.
6. Promote the vision that, in a democracy, education needs to be equitable for all.

MediaSmarts

Today's middle schoolers are immersed in the media. They watch TV and movies, surf the Internet, use CD-Roms to research information, exchange e-mail, converse on cell phones, make tapes of favorite songs, and are rarely without a Walkman. Yet they are not very discriminating. Too often they are passive receivers and *acceptingly* uncritical of the myriad messages delivered through all these sources. Middle school teachers have a vital role to play in teaching young adolescents to be media literate.

- Teach students to analyze the content and intent of advertising, Web site information, music videos, and other audio-visual technologies. Every source of information—video, movie, TV show, Web site, advertisement, etc.—has an agenda and a point of view.
- Match your curriculum needs to Cable in the Classroom programs. Look in *Cable in the Classroom* magazine for information about programs, projects, and support materials, or visit CIC's Web site (www.ciconline.org) to do a keyword search or link to sites with downloadable lesson plans.
- Preview taped programs. Which segments invite interdisciplinary collaborative learning activities? Which encourage discussion about social issues or personal convictions? How can a program be used to enhance learning for students with special needs?
- Model active viewing habits. Previewing activities focus students' attention during a video; reviewing helps them use new knowledge. Have student groups brainstorm things they already know about the topic, sketch a drama's outcome, write editorial responses to news reports or design action plans to address social issues.
- Use short segments to illustrate a concept, reinforce self-awareness and promote discussion. And keep the lights on — kids can see fine, and you can see your kids!
- Control the remote control. Pause frequently and pose questions. "Can you predict what will happen?" "How did the characters' choices affect the outcome?" "What would you do in a similar situation?"
- Bookmark Web sites for student-directed research. Many Cable in the Classroom members' sites link to (or are) curriculum-rich "safe harbor" sites for students.

Media Resources for Middle School

Court TV's *Choices and Consequences*: Taking the Debate Online

One component of *Choices and Consequences* is the award-winning television program *Your Turn*, in which adolescents in a town hall format discuss issues ranging from drugs and gangs to dress codes and teenage pregnancy. Now, through an interactive conversation center on Court TV's Web site, kids from across the country can talk to each other about topics covered in *Your Turn* programs. Log on to www.courtstv.com and click on *Choices and Consequences Forum*. All conversations are under the guidance of participating teachers and parents.

Cable in the Classroom

A public service of the cable television industry, this not-for-profit initiative provides 540 hours per month of commercial-free educational programming to schools, free of charge. A monthly magazine, support materials, Web sites, workshops, and other materials are also available. For more information, check out Cable in the Classroom's Web site (www.ciconline.org) or call 1-800-743-5355.

Think for Yourself: Media Literacy for the Millennium

Produced by NMSA and Quality Work Environments Inc., this 45-minute video includes a teacher's guide and classroom activities. Call 1-800-528-NMSA. (\$176 includes shipping & handling within the U.S.)

The Family and Community Critical Viewing Project

Workshops, pamphlets, and other materials from the National Cable Television Association, Cable in the Classroom, and the National PTA help teachers and parents take charge of TV. Call 1-800-743-5355.

***Better Viewing* magazine**

From the publishers of *Cable in the Classroom* magazine, this family guide lists age-appropriate, non-violent programs and includes family viewing activities and helpful articles for parents. \$9.97 per year. Call 1-800-216-2225.

Media Literacy Web sites

Center for Media Literacy (www.medialit.org)

New Mexico Media Literacy Project (www.aa.edu/nmmlp.html)

Media Literacy Online Project (<http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit/HomePage>)



choices AND CONSEQUENCES

COURT TV

Principal funding for this Guide has been provided by Court TV, TCI, and Time Warner Cable.

In response to the National Television Violence Study, Court TV, in association with Cable in the Classroom, National Middle School Association (NMSA), and the nation's leading cable companies, created a multi-year, multi-faceted initiative called *Choices and Consequences*, which helps young people make healthy choices in their everyday lives. Here are some of its components, as well as resources from NMSA for middle level educators:

CABLE IN THE CLASSROOM CURRICULA

Using the *Choices and Consequences* theme, Court TV has produced a series of interactive, curriculum-specific programs that encourage students to become better decision-makers. Developed by former NMSA president Ross M. Burkhardt, each commercial-free program and its corresponding curriculum is built around a real courtroom trial covering important themes such as pranks, violence, gangs, drinking and driving, discrimination, and teen pregnancy. The programs and curricula are disseminated to middle and high schools nationwide. For more information, call Jennifer Randolph at (212) 937-7913, or visit the Web sites for Court TV (www.courtstv.com) and Cable in the Classroom (www.ciconline.org).

RESOURCE GUIDES

Resource guides for parents, educators, and students are an integral part of *Choices and Consequences*. *A Parent's Guide: Tuning In to Young Adolescents* was the first in the series and is available online (www.courtstv.com). More than 650,000 copies have been distributed through *Cable in the Classroom* and *Better Viewing* magazines, as well as by cable companies and NMSA.

ONLINE

In addition to the *Choices and Consequences Forum* (see Media Resources, pg. 7) on Court TV's Web site (www.courtstv.com), you'll find curricula for the *Choices and Consequences* program series, online versions of the parent's guide and this teacher's guide in multiple languages, links to Web sites that offer in depth information on specific topics, and more. Check the Web site for updates and additions to the *Choices and Consequences* initiative.

YOUR TURN

Your Turn is Court TV's Beacon Award-winning program that travels the country bringing together young people and

local leaders to discuss legal-social issues of importance to their community. *Your Turn* airs weekends at 2pm ET on Court TV as part of an educational block that includes *What's the Verdict?* and *Justice Factory*, two additional programs aimed at young people. If you would like *Your Turn* to come to your community, contact your local cable provider. Find out who your local cable provider is by going to the *Cable in the Classroom* Web site and clicking on "Who's My Cable Company?"

Resources for Middle Level Educators

From National Middle School Association. Visit NMSA's Web site (www.nmsa.org) or call 1-800-528-NMSA. Prices include shipping and handling within the U.S.



The Roller-Coaster Years: Raising Your Child through the Maddening Yet Magical Middle School Years By Charlene Giannetti & Margaret Sagarese, an insightful parent resource providing helpful hints on raising a young adolescent. \$20

Signaling Student Success: Thematic Learning Situations and Integrated Units By Sandra Schurr, Sharen Lewis, Kathy LaMorte, Kathy Shewey, shows teachers how to become directors of learning. \$32

Practical Strategies for Improving Instruction By Karen Wood, 23 complete teaching strategies from oral reading to cooperative learning. \$19

The Inquiry Process: Student Centered Learning

By Ross Burkhardt, shows how teachers can capitalize on student interests to bring relevance to the curriculum. \$20

Ensuring Success for all Students: Programs that Work

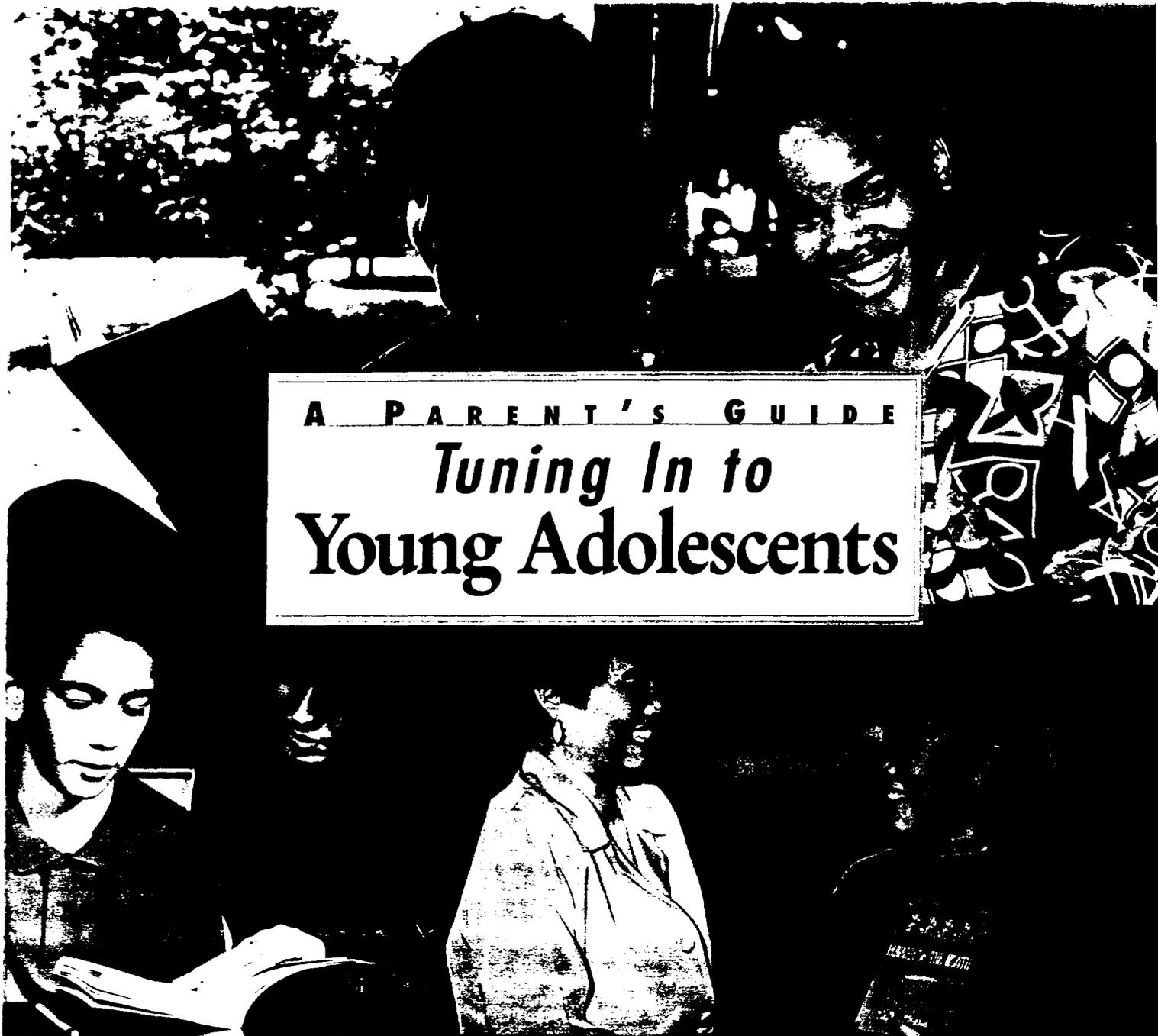
By John Dougherty, examples of programs that support student success. \$15

What Current Research Says to the Middle Level Practitioner

Judith L. Irvin, Editor, covers inclusion, grouping, organization, more. \$32

Dynamite in the Classroom: A How-to Handbook for Teachers

By Sandra L. Schurr, an extensive reproducible collection of teaching tools to help middle level educators. \$20



A P A R E N T ' S G U I D E
Tuning In to
Young Adolescents

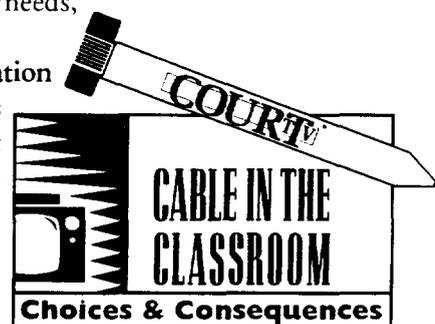
For many, the ages of 10–15 are a forgotten time; however, this period, known as early adolescence, is critical. Young adolescents are moving toward making independent decisions about values, attitudes, and personal beliefs. To increase awareness of this special age group, National Middle School Association (NMSA) and 29 collaborating organizations have initiated the Month of the Young Adolescent. To support this worthy goal, this Parent's Guide was created as part of *Choices & Consequences*, an ongoing outreach initiative sponsored by Courtroom Television Network, Cable in the Classroom, and local cable companies.



Parents, teachers, and family members know that early adolescence

is a time of heightened curiosity characterized by a sense of adventure. Both parent and child face difficult, challenging decisions. Our intention is that this guide will be a resource to you and your family so the joys of raising a young adolescent will outweigh the challenges. Together, let's make a commitment to celebrate the importance of young adolescents, to be aware of their needs, and to show that we care.

For updated information and additional resources throughout the year, visit Court TV's Web site (www.courtstv.com) and click on "Choices & Consequences" or call 1-800-Court-56.



Living With Young Adolescents

By Judith Baenen, author of *H.E.L.P.—How to Enjoy Living with a Preadolescent*, in collaboration with the National Middle School Association.



You might be familiar with a show that begins with an out-of-focus test pattern. Do not attempt to adjust your set, a voice warns, your television is controlled by forces beyond your ability to counter or understand. You know what? This could be the opening for a show called *Early Adolescence*!

Early adolescence begins around age ten, just as a child reaches a peak—a peak of responsibility, of knowledge gathering, of dependability, of family-centeredness, of measured physical growth. The concerns and needs of young adolescents (10- to 15-year-olds) are quite distinct from children (9 and younger) and adolescents (16 and older). You and your child are now going to be controlled by forces beyond your imagining. The bad news is that this particular program lasts for four or five years (it ends around the age of 15); the good news is that, although you can't control this stage, you can participate in it and enjoy it in spite of its quirks.

Change is a constant for young adolescents. Children differ from their previous and future selves. They are often overwhelmed intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally by developmental changes. Suddenly, everything goes out of focus. One of the earliest signs of change is forgetting—forgetting to do homework or forgetting to give you important phone

messages. Many formerly good-natured children become irritable. Cooperation can turn to power plays and struggles over simple tasks. In other words, they suddenly think differently, look differently, act differently, and, well, cry a lot. If you are a parent of a child in this age group, you may recognize some of these behaviors. Don't worry, it's a normal part of growing up and they will grow out of it.

Even if you know it's coming, early adolescence can be a frustrating and anxious time. We've selected four critical areas that often af-

fect and cause stress among young adolescents and their families—separation, exploration, communication, and expectations—and have provided helpful ways of communicating, guiding, and challenging children between the ages of 10 and 15. Children *can* be successful during these years of early adolescence. Remember, your program is only temporarily out of focus! We encourage you to stay tuned until the regular schedule resumes.

What you can do

- 1.** Young adolescents are particularly interested in their communities. Encourage them to volunteer at their church or synagogue; help them organize recreation nights; get them engaged in problem solving for their communities or community service activities; young adolescents like to participate in real and meaningful work — just as long as it's not in their own houses or rooms.
- 2.** Network with other parents from your school, church, or local agency to advocate for young adolescents and their families. This is an important time in a young person's life, and providing resources and opportunities for young adolescents and their families is critical.
- 3.** Pay particular attention to your young adolescent's health and nutrition. Assist your young person in getting all the information he or she needs concerning diet, exercise, sexually transmitted diseases, eating disorders, substance abuse, etc. Find out as much as you can about prevention, warning signs, exercise needs, and assuring a balanced eating plan.
- 4.** Stay tuned! Early adolescence is a wonderful time. The changes and the out-of-focus moments are part of growing up, not an insidious plot to keep adults off balance. Instead of complaining or simply reacting to how different he or she is, make time to get to know this delightful young adolescent who before long will be a terrific adult.

S E P A R A T I O N

Young adolescents are in a kind of limbo. They are no longer children, but they are not yet adolescents. They feel powerless: they depend on others for everything—getting them places, providing money, telling them how they look and who they are. They want to be independent, but they can fall into the trap of what other people, especially their peers, might think. They want to be separate, but they probably still rely on their family for ultimate support. They want to be superstars, but they sometimes can't discipline themselves enough to study or practice. They want to be grown up, but they can't help acting their age.

Young adolescents want to be seen as mature and independent, not as children accompanied by an adult. Don't be disturbed if your young adolescent walks two steps behind you or three steps ahead, doesn't want to be seen with you, or begs you to let them off "one block ahead." It's often painful for parents to let go, but young people at this age need to take these first tentative steps toward independence.



What you can do

- 1.** Spend as much time as possible getting to know this new person in the house. The more you know about your young adolescent's dreams, likes and dislikes, sources of embarrassment, learning styles, and friends, the easier the next few years will be for both of you. A good time to find out these things, by the way, is while working together on something (cooking a meal, cleaning the garage) or driving them someplace.
- 2.** Accept that life will assume the characteristics of a white-water rafting trip. There will be smooth water, lots of rapids, new territory to explore, fear, and fun. Hold on to each other.
- 3.** Physical changes can lead to an inability to get to sleep at night, an unwillingness to eat breakfast (not hungry until 9 a.m.), heightening of some medical problems (allergies) and lessening of others (allergies). Understanding that these situations can occur should decrease both your anxiety and that of your young adolescent.
- 4.** Many self-esteem issues arise at this age, particularly among girls. Look for ways in which your young adolescent is successful rather than areas of criticism; make sure that there are opportunities for engaging in hobbies or other interests outside of school; avoid letting your daughter buy into the beauty culture—assure her that her brain is valued as well.
- 5.** Speaking of brains, your young adolescent will sometimes act as if he or she does not have one. This is part of the transition in cerebral development at this age. They are also being driven to focus on so many other things happening in their lives. Go ahead and give them reminders, assist them in planning, and go over everything one more time.

Exploration

Young adolescents are explorers. They are curious, want to try new activities, take risks, and do things they've never done (or been allowed to do) before. Some will choose new friends; some will become consumed with an unusual topic or idea. Others prefer exploring in smaller ways, like wearing a different hairstyle or changing the look of their room. All of

this is the beginning of a slow movement from family as the center of things to one's friends as the center of things to eventually becoming other-centered as an adult. Exploration (in the young adolescent's eyes) is also a way of entering the adult world and moving beyond childhood.

Sometimes these explorations have short lives. A young adolescent can be intensely interested in something for a short period of time, then lose interest in it altogether for no discernible reason (Tip: Buy used sports equipment, rent the instrument). Sometimes these explorations go too far: young adolescents may try smoking or drinking, take "dares" (shoplifting, for example), or ride their bicycles or skateboards in a dangerous place/way.



What you can do

1. Encourage exploration in safe situations. This is the best time—and maybe the last—for many youngsters to learn a new sport, take art or cooking classes, delve into robotics, etc.
2. Examine how you feel about commitment to a new interest and discuss this with your child. Once she starts a new sport, must she "hang in" for the whole season? How much practicing must take place before you buy the musical instrument he wants so much?
3. Monitor your child's free time. Empty hours can lead to inappropriate exploration.
4. Check to see that your child's school offers exploratory courses (foreign language, woodworking, bowling, etc.) on a regular and/or mini-course basis.
5. Exploration coupled with a young adolescent's need for belonging can lead to gang participation at this age. Contact your school, police department or other community agencies to get help with gang issues if they become a concern.

communication

One of the greatest frustrations for families of young adolescents is a young person's inability and/or unwillingness to communicate anything beyond the fact that someone threw up at school. The talkative, thoughtful, and optimistic child of yesterday can become a silent, sullen, slouchy young adolescent. Conversations become one-sided affairs, with the adult doing most, if not all of the talking. Unfortunately, this often degenerates into the parent barking orders or criticisms—hardly an ideal model for effective conversation.

The most common phrases uttered at these times by the 10- to 15-year-old are "I don't know," "I forgot," and

"So?"

Since these are often accompanied by a shrug of the shoulders or a rolling of the eyes, frustration peaks and communication shuts down altogether. Don't give up.

Young adolescents' minds are sometimes filled with many new and confusing thoughts. They often *don't* know why they did or did not do something or how to bring all of their thoughts and emotions into one easy answer that will satisfy them or you. At other times, they simply do not wish to talk or engage in a conversation on an issue *at that time*. On the other hand, if the young adolescent starts the conversation, most likely he or she is just looking for someone to listen, not lecture.

Communication with young adolescents, in spite of the difficulties involved, is well worth pursuing. They can be funny, perceptive, self-reflective, and deeply concerned about social issues. Furthermore, they like to talk! It just has to be on their own terms and in their own time. They are also fearful of criticism or a critical tone (remember the importance of self-esteem), so be careful about how you sound.

What you can do

1. Think creatively about ways to question young adolescents and carry on a conversation. A more specific question such as "Were there any surprise questions on the social studies test?" is better than a general question such as "How did school go today?" And be careful about your tone of voice.
2. Today's young adolescents have more complicated questions to ask than did young people of another generation. Stay calm; don't overreact until you have the whole story.
3. Sometimes another adult can be a better sounding board than a parent. An aunt, uncle, grandparent, coach, or teacher might seem less judgmental to a young adolescent than a parent. Accept this assistance graciously.
4. Use newspaper stories, television or neighborhood events as conversation starters or to share hard-to-say ideas. ("Wow! I can't imagine how that mother must feel—I love you so much I'd be heartbroken if you ran away.")
5. Avoid judgmental remarks that might close down conversations before they start. Derogatory comments about gender, race, your young adolescent's friends, and clothing styles might let your child know that you have already made a judgment or said all that you have to say about a certain subject.



Expectations

Early adolescence is a time of tremendous growth. Like a slinky, the young adolescent is capable of bending and extending in many different directions during this stage. Providing support and guidance is important so that no one gets bent out of shape. Parents

and families, while they offer opportunities for growth and exploration, must also work with the young adolescent to agree on certain expectations.

Often 10- to 15-year-olds do not have the knack of looking ahead. Yesterday's misdeed is long forgotten by the time today's punishment is served. Although they crave to be adults, they don't imagine an adult self, simply a taller young adolescent. They cannot seem to think through the consequences of their actions so they go ahead and put the stink bomb on the bus.

School and schoolwork can bring on family battles at this age. The highly-organized, school-focused younger child can morph into a spacey young adolescent who finds school an annoying interruption to his or her real life. Stay calm, plan ahead, and negotiate.

What you can do

1. Young adolescents need to be helped to understand—in advance—the consequences of their actions. This must be ongoing! Do not assume that a young person will transfer what has been learned from one situation to the next. And don't wait for a crisis to discuss issues. Let your young adolescent know your expectations regarding grades, chores, behavior, etc.
2. Imposed consequences (punishments, etc.) should be immediate, logical, and of short or moderate duration. Grounding a young adolescent for a month loses its impact and is often a punishment for the family as well.
3. Talk regularly with other parents as a way of providing support for your own expectations. Contact your school to see if they can help disseminate common expectations regarding curfew, parties, supervision, etc.
4. Help your child develop study habits and organizational patterns that work for him or her: a day timer, weekly calendar, divided notebook, etc. Monitor the study environment—silence might work for one child, noise for another. Ask if your school has a homework hotline; avoid the late-night project crunch.
5. College may not be for everyone, but it should at least be an option for everyone. Encourage your child to take challenging courses that will keep that option open. Learn about the many ways to afford college. For information, call the U.S. Dept. of Education at 800-USA-LEARN.
6. Be willing to negotiate. Young adolescents are still young, but families need to be willing to expand the parameters little by little as the young adolescent grows and shows more responsibility. You've heard this before: Choose your battles.



TV Tips

Parents have always been faced with the choices of what is appropriate viewing material for their young adolescent. As parents, we know that it is our responsibility to help guide young adolescents into wise television choices. This tip sheet provides strategies on how to make television viewing a learning experience.



- Television is a powerful tool that can encourage meaningful and insightful dialogues between parents and young adolescents. The most important tip for parents is that television viewing can be a family event that can provide opportunities for enrichment, discussion, and family debate.
- News broadcasts can encourage conversations about world issues, social injustices, discrimination, and health issues. They can also demonstrate the importance of personal convictions.
- Shows on travel and exploration can make the world seem like a smaller place.
- Television viewing can be a structured activity that involves decision making. Sit down with your family and discuss possible choices for television viewing.
- Make compromises with your young adolescent when selecting television shows. This is a great opportunity to encourage negotiating skills.
- Encourage your young adolescent to watch various types of television programs—nature, travel, cartoons, historical reenactments, medical discoveries, and cooking.
- Tap into your young adolescent's interests and then provide some viewing suggestions to increase their awareness of themselves in the world.
- Use television to discuss con-

troversial issues such as drug use, peer pressure, and sex.

- Use television to discuss plot, characterization, and setting. Explore camera angles and discuss how the use of television provides us with opportunities to tell stories.
- Discuss all of the possible career opportunities that are available through the medium of television.
- Finally, discuss the television shows you watch with your young adolescent, using the time together as a learning opportunity. Television can become a tool to help define personal values and beliefs.

Smart Choices

To help kick off the Month of the Young Adolescent, Court TV aired a special live town-hall meeting with young adolescents discussing the issues and challenges that most affect them on October 7, 1997. This commercial-free program, *Portraits in Change: Celebrating the Month of the Young Adolescent*, was collaboratively developed by Court TV, NMSA, Cable in the Classroom, and Tele-Communications, Inc. (To obtain a videotape of the program, call 1-800-888-4580.) The program is just one part of Court TV's ongoing effort to provide young adolescents with a televised forum for their views and ideas. Every Saturday, programs such as *What's the Verdict?* (1pm ET), *Your Turn* (2am ET), and *Justice Factory* (3pm ET), offer young people in this age group an opportunity to discuss their opinions on important social and legal issues.

Cable in the Classroom is a public service initiative of the cable television industry. Through Cable in the Classroom, local cable operators and national cable programmers provide schools with free basic cable service and more than 540 hours of commercial-free educational programming each month. Many of these programs are used effectively in middle schools across the country. For more information, call 1-800-743-5355.

For additional information about these and other quality educational and entertainment programs designed with young adolescents in mind, as well as articles on child development and television issues, parents can subscribe to *Better Viewing* magazine. To subscribe, call 1-800-216-2225.

Principal funding for this Guide has been provided by Courtroom Television Network, Tele-Communications, Inc., and Time Warner Cable.



Month of the Young Adolescent Collaborating Organizations

Education

American Association for Health Education
800-213-7193

American Association of School Administrators
703-528-0700

American Counseling Association
800-347-6647

Cable in the Classroom
1-800-743-5355

The College Board
212-713-8000

Community of Caring, Inc.
202-393-1251

National Alliance of Black School Educators
202-483-1549

National Association of Elementary
School Principals
800-386-2733

National Association of School Psychologists
301-657-0270

National Association of Secondary
School Principals
800-253-7746

National Association for Sport and
Physical Education
703-476-3410

The National Beta Club
800-845-8281

National Coalition for Parent Involvement in
Education
202-872-8405, ext. 53

National Dropout Prevention Center
864-656-2599

National School Public Relations Association
301-519-0496

U.S. Department of Education
800-USA-LEARN

Young Adult Library Services Association,
a division of the American Library Association
800-545-2433

Community

Big Brothers Big Sisters
of America
215-567-7000

Boys & Girls Clubs
of America
404-815-5765

Boys Town USA
402-498-1111

International Youth
Foundation
410-347-1500

National Council
of La Raza
202-785-1670

National 4-H Council
301-961-2800

National Helpers
Network, Inc.
212-679-2482

Special Committee on
Youth Education for
Citizenship of the
American Bar
Association
312-988-5735

Supporters

Prentice Hall, a Simon & Schuster Company
Tele-Communications, Inc.

The Variable Annuity Life Insurance Company
(VALIC)

Choices & Consequences Collaborating Organizations

Cablevision Systems Corporation

Marcus Cable

National Middle School Association

Time Warner Cable

Courtroom Television Network

MediaOne

Tele-Communications, Inc.

GEICO

Resources for Parents and Teachers

Available from National Middle School Association, call 1-800-528-NMSA
(Prices include shipping & handling within the U.S. only.)

H.E.L.P.—How to Enjoy Living with a Preadolescent—
Get Ready for the Changes

By Judith Baenen \$2.00 per copy/\$18.00 for 50
(Spanish and English Versions)

More H.E.L.P.—How to Enjoy Living with a Preadolescent
By Judith Baenen \$2.00 per copy/\$18.00 for 50

Living with a Work in Progress: A Parent's Guide to Surviving Adolescence
By Carol Goldberg Freeman \$12.00

Grounded for Life?! Stop Blowing Your Fuse and Start
Communicating with Your Teenager
By Louise Felton Tracy \$17.00

The New American Family and the School
By J. Howard Johnston \$9.00

The Family Connection—A quarterly newsletter for parents
National Middle School Association—Edward Brazee &
Connie Carter, Editors \$20.00/annual subscription

Involving Families in Middle Level Education
By John Myers and Luetta Monson \$10.00

Court TV wishes to give special thanks to Johnson Institute for its support and cooperation. Choices & Consequences is a registered mark of Johnson Institute.



FAST FACTS

Hosted by Carol
Randolph

Traveled to more
than 45 markets

Part of Court TV's
*Choices and
Consequences*
initiative

Airs weekend
afternoons
on Court TV:

2pm ET
1pm CST
Noon MST
11am PT

Your Turn Online:
[www.courtstv.com/
choices/yourturn/](http://www.courtstv.com/choices/yourturn/)

YOUR TURN

Teens Speaking Out Instead of Being Spoken About

Y*our Turn* is Court TV's Beacon Award-winning public service/community affairs program that travels throughout the country working jointly with local cable affiliates to provide teens a platform for constructive positive dialogue. Hosted by Court TV anchor Carol Randolph, the program brings teens together with high-profile community leaders to discuss a legal/social issue of particular significance and current event value to their specific community and to the national television audience.

A local taping of ***Your Turn*** offers a tremendous opportunity for a cable operator to underscore its commitment to the local community it serves—an issue that is particularly important to cable companies in today's highly competitive marketplace.

Your Turn has traveled to more than 45 markets, focusing on a variety of important topics ranging from gun control (Time Warner/Bakersfield, CA) to teen stress (Time Warner/Orlando, FL) to the future of the family (TCI/Tacoma, WA) to sexual harassment (Time Warner/Canton, OH). ***Your Turn*** airs weekend afternoons on Court TV.

Your Turn is part of the network's *Choices and Consequences* initiative that spotlights the issues facing young adolescents as they make critical decisions during their transition into adulthood.

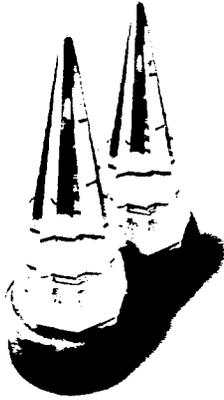
"I think this tape [Your Turn, Hartford] ought to be required viewing for our legislators, for our local officials, for parents...Parents ultimately have the biggest say, and they should, in the education of their children." (Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal)



PARKERSBURG, WV
"We are thrilled that Court TV has joined us in helping our community focus on this particular family issue. Court TV ignites not only the community leaders, but also the youth of the community. And as a bonus, Court TV shares the community's process of resolving the issue with the rest of the nation by turning our local 'Your Turn' into a national TV show,"
said Sharon Lewgood, Marketing and Service Manager, TCI.

Your Turn Wins Community Relations Beacon Award

In October 1996, Court TV's **Your Turn** program traveled to the Fort Peck Reservation in Wolf Point, Montana, which had the country's highest per capita murder rate. Court TV and TCI Communications brought together prominent tribal and federal government officials, as well as residents and high-school students to discuss the problem and search for solutions. The **Your Turn** event successfully heightened awareness of the situation nationally, as U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno promised a part-time prosecutor to directly oversee the Indian reservation. The murder rate has since declined dramatically. For this episode, Court TV was the winner of the CTPAA 1997 Community Relations Award Single/Special Event.



Your Turn Wins Gilbert Community Service Award

In February 1998, **Your Turn** won the Gilbert Community Service Award for outstanding public service conducted by CTANNY (Cable Television and Telecommunications Association of New York). The winning program, "The Death Penalty: Punishment or Murder?," produced in association with TCI of Buffalo, brought together one hundred Buffalo teens from local youth organizations and a group of esteemed panelists, including New York Attorney General Dennis Vacco, for a highly charged and emotional discussion of the death penalty.

"There's an old saying that mom, baseball and apple pie are truly American. Add one more to the list: Wolf Point filming a segment of Your Turn. You have given an entire

"Dealing With Harrassment" Canton, OH

(below) Local community leaders and national leaders often play a major role on the program.



(l to r) George Crisci, Former In-House Council of Cleveland Board of Education; Sharon Regas, Employment Defense Attorney, Cleveland, Ohio and Norma Cantu, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

"Censorship of the Internet" Greenville, SC

(below) Your Turn provides a forum for teens to express their ideas and opinions.



PART OF WHAT MAKES YOUR TURN SO SUCCESSFUL IS ADULTS GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR THOUGHTS AND CONCERNS FROM YOUNG PEOPLE THAT THEY ORDINARILY NEVER GET TO HEAR.

"Death Penalty: Punishment or Murder?"



**New York State
Attorney General
Dennis Vacco,
Buffalo, NY**

**Former President
Gerald Ford,
East Lansing, MI**

"Self-Esteem"



"Life on a Border Town"



**Mayor of El Paso
Carlos Ramirez,
El Paso, TX**

"What is right and wrong with the criminal justice system?"



**Johnnie Cochran,
Attorney/Court TV Anchor,
New York City, NY**

ore to the list: Court TV. That pretty much sums up the impact of your presence last week in community a breath of new life..." (Editor Greg Little, The Herald News)

EL PASO, TX
"The taping of the Court TV Your Turn event was a home run for us," said John Neal, Southwest Division President of Paragon Cable. "Subscriber numbers for Road Runner were up 10 percent the week of the coverage."

RICHMOND, VA
"If other people are having problems," Lincoln junior Liz Green said, "they can watch the show and know they're not alone."

Your Turn Online Keeps Them Talking

Before, during and after an event, **Your Turn** utilizes the internet to maximize reach and community participation. Live streaming video during the event adds to the studio audience through links with schools and organizations. An innovative **Your Turn** bulletin board on Court TV's Web site, called **Your Turn Online**, gives teens across the country the opportunity to exchange ideas and viewpoints on a variety of topics covered in **Your Turn** programs.



Teens can go to the address below, and look for varied show topics. Then, once they're inside, they can click on the "Talk about it" button to enter the discussion area and read comments from other teens and post their own comments in the bulletin boards we have set up for each show. All bulletin boards are moderated and monitored by professional hosts to make sure things are kept safe, clean and on topic.

www.courttv.com/choices/yourturn/

Our Travels Have Taken Us To:

| City | Affiliate | Topic |
|--------------------|------------------|--|
| St. Paul, MN | MediaOne | Teen Smoking: New Laws Regulating Tobacco Sales |
| Baltimore, MD | TCI | Legalization of Drugs for Medical Purposes |
| Omaha, NE | US West | Violence and the Media |
| Boston, MA | Time Warner | Mandatory Community Service: What if it's part of a school curriculum? |
| San Diego, CA | Cox | Teen Curfews |
| Philadelphia, PA | Wade Cablevision | Weapons in School |
| Syracuse, NY | Time Warner | Teen Pregnancy: Who should be responsible for sexual promiscuity? |
| Wolf Point, MT | TCI | Tribal Courts |
| Detroit, MI | Comcast | Juvenile Justice |
| Baton Rouge, LA | TCI | Music Censorship |
| Clearwater, FL | Time Warner | School Uniforms/Dress Codes |
| Ft. Lauderdale, FL | Comcast | Teen Domestic Violence |
| Van Nuys, CA | TCI | Proposition 187: Immigration Reform |
| Hampton Roads, VA | Cox | Parole Reform: "Truth in Sentencing" |
| Baton Rouge, LA | TCI | Juvenile Justice |
| Manatee City, FL | Time Warner | Crime & Punishment: Does the punishment fit the crime? |
| Pasadena, CA | Charter | Rodney King Verdict |
| Tallahassee, FL | FL Cable Co-op | Domestic Violence: The Governor's Task Force |
| Binghamton, NY | Time Warner | Searches and Seizures: Privacy in School |
| New York, NY | Time Warner | What is right and wrong with the criminal justice system? |
| Charlotte, NC | Time Warner | School Busing: "Resegregation in the New South" |
| Washington, DC | TCI | Whodunit? On Trial with Cochran and Grace |
| Boston, MA | Media One | Waiting to Inhale: An Examination of Teen Substance Abuse |
| Santa Barbara, CA | Cox | Gang Violence |
| Montgomery, AL | TCI | Prayer in Public Places |
| Buffalo, NY | TCI | Death Penalty: Punishment or Murder? |
| Hartford, CT | Cox | Sheff v. O'Neill: Equal Educational Opportunities in Inner Cities |
| Miami, FL | TCI | Environmental Protection |
| Minneapolis, MN | Time Warner | Teen Hate Crimes: Moving From Conflict to Understanding |
| Greenville, SC | Intermedia | Censorship of the Internet |
| El Paso, TX | Time Warner | Teen Life in a Border Town |
| Dallas, TX | TCI | Superstar Role Models: Do We Expect Too Much? |
| Tacoma, WA | TCI | The Future of the Family |
| Richmond, VA | MediaOne | Gender in the 90s: Breaking the Glass Ceiling |
| Orlando, FL | Time Warner | Finding the Prescription For Teen Stress |
| Milwaukee, WI | Time Warner | Making the Grade - The Future of Education in Milwaukee |
| East Lansing, MI | TCI | Self Esteem |
| Carson, CA | MediaOne | Media Perception of Urban Youth |
| Sacramento, CA | Comcast | English or Else? Language and Diversity in California Public Schools |
| Bakersfield, CA | Time Warner | Gun Control: Targeting a Life and Death Issue |
| Minneapolis, MN | Paragon and TCI | Minnesota Hate Crime Summit |
| Parkersburg, WV | TCI | Divorce, Domestic Violence & Teens |
| Indianapolis, IN | Time Warner | Teen CEO's: Taking Care of Business |
| Canton, OH | Time Warner | Flirting or Hurting: Dealing With Harassment |
| Portland, ME | Time Warner | Adult Perceptions of Teens |
| Columbus, OH | Time Warner | Teen Depression |

Overview

Court TV's programming, supported by the network's educational and public affairs activities, provides cable operators with an important opportunity to bring a unique kind of television to subscribers — important, newsworthy, educational, and entertaining.

Each day Court TV brings viewers headline-making trials, giving Americans a window into the nation's courts and the justice system.

While the network's daily programming can be considered public service television at its best, specific Court TV programs — local impact campaigns, educational programs, and the activities of the network's lobbying organization, Citizens for Court TV — bring home the point.

Your Turn At Work In The Community

In selected cities across the country, Court TV continues to work hand-in-hand with local cable systems to customize and produce episodes of *Your Turn*, Court TV's Beacon Award-winning public service/community affairs program that provides a platform for constructive positive dialogue. *Your Turn* is a component of the network's *Choices and Consequences* initiative.

Your Turn brings teens together with high-profile community leaders to discuss a legal/social issue of particular significance and current event value to their specific community and to the national television audience. *Your Turn* has traveled to over 40 markets focusing on a variety of important topics such as: gang violence, teen curfews, weapons in school, prayer in public places and teen substance abuse.

Before, during and after a *Your Turn* event, *Road Runner*, an online service provider, utilizes the internet to maximize reach and community participation. Live streaming video during the event adds to the studio audience through links with schools and organizations. An innovative *Your Turn* bulletin board on Court TV's Web site, called *Your Turn Online*, provides an invaluable sounding board that keeps young people talking about the issues long after the event is over.

Your Turn airs weekend afternoons.

The Award-Winning Your Turn

In October 1996, Court TV's *Your Turn* program traveled to the Fort Peck Reservation in Wolf Point, Montana, which had the country's highest per capita murder rate. Court TV and TCI Communications brought together prominent tribal and federal government officials, as well as residents and high-school students to discuss the problem and search for solutions. The *Your Turn* event successfully heightened awareness of the situation nationally, as U.S. attorney General Janet Reno promised a part-time prosecutor to directly oversee the Indian reservation. The murder rate has since declined dramatically. For this episode, Court TV won the CTPAA (Cable Television Public Affairs Association) 1997 Community Relations Award Single/Special Event.

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COURT TV
www.courtstv.com

Choices and Consequences

Choices and Consequences, our *Cable in the Classroom* program, spotlights issues facing 10- to 15-year-olds during the transition period from childhood to adolescence. This weekly, commercial-free program is taped by teachers and used in the classroom. The shows educate young people about the consequences of making choices that lead to violence, pranks, drugs, early pregnancy, etc. and encourage them to make healthy decisions when confronted with such choices in real-life situations.

The shows are an integral part of an initiative that Court TV, NMSA, Cable in the Classroom and major cable companies have designed as a response to the National Television Violence Study, which stressed the negative results of portraying violence without consequences on television. *Choices and Consequences*, underscores the consequences of violence and includes information and resources that help young people make the all-important connection between the choices they make and the consequences that follow:

Each show has a corresponding curriculum that was developed by Ross M. Burkhardt, former NMSA President and recent inductee into the National Teachers Hall of Fame. Resource guides in different versions for parents, educators, students, and communities are also available. In the spirit of the overall initiative, the guides are designed to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of young adolescents and provide the reader with resources that can address a particular topic in greater detail.

Court TV's Web site, *Court TV Online*, offers online versions of the curricula and the resource guides, and links to a variety of related Web sites, including the U.S. Department of Education, NMSA, Cable in the Classroom, and Family Education Network. Plus, an interactive conversation center on the site (*Your Turn Online*) gives kids nationwide the opportunity to exchange ideas and viewpoints on a variety of topics, especially those covered in the network's *Your Turn* programs. Check *Court TV Online* for updates and additions to *Choices and Consequences* at www.courtstv.com or call Court TV's Viewer Information Line at 1-800-COURT-56.

**To request tapes, curricula, and resource guides
call our Choices and Consequences line at 1-212-973-7913.**

Citizens for Court TV

Not surprisingly, Court TV viewers are educated, concerned about their government, and socially active. In 1993, in response to numerous viewer calls and letters, a grassroots organization, Citizens for Court TV, was created to help lift unnecessary restrictions on cameras in courtrooms. Members of the group, numbering in the tens of thousands, receive the Court TV newsletter, information on various camera access laws, and notices on upcoming programs and events. Periodically, our most active Citizens help our lobbying efforts around the country by writing to and visiting with their legislators, judges, and community leaders.

THE BEACON JOURNAL

THURSDAY August 6, 1998

3 Stark/Portage Edition 35¢

Serving the community for 160 years

TV show has teens tackling harassment

• Cable program to talk with Canton-area students

BY JANET FRANKSTON
Beacon Journal staff writer

CANTON: Sexual harassment is often associated with issues in the workplace. But the same issues arise in high school, local students say.

They say it's an issue that they often face, but the problem, for the most part, is that it's often difficult to identify what's sexual harassment until it's too late.

"A lot of girls know what sexual harassment is," said Morgan Childers, 16, a junior at GlenOak High School in Plain Township. "(But) they don't know if they're being harassed and if they're not. For guys, they don't know when they are harassing girls and when to draw the line."

A group of 150 Canton-area teens will discuss sexual harassment in schools and how it affects them at noon today at the Players Guild in the Cultural Center for the Arts.

TODAY'S TAPING

The Court TV show *Your Turn* will tape a segment called *Flirting or Hurting? Dealing With Harassment* at noon today. The taping, involving local teen-agers discussing sexual harassment, will be at the Players Guild in the Cultural Center for the Arts in downtown Canton, 1001 Market Ave. N.

The event is free and open to the public. Audience members should arrive by 11:30 a.m.

The program, called *Flirting or Hurting? Dealing With Harassment*, will be televised for a national cable audience.

The topic came up during a focus group sponsored by Court TV, a legal affairs cable station, and Time Warner Cable, a local cable provider.

Producers from Court TV came to Canton twice earlier this summer to talk with local teen-agers about their concerns, looking for a topic for a televised forum for its show *Your Turn*.

The topic teen-agers kept coming back to was sexual harassment, said Matthew Apfel, the show's producer.

"What might be considered flirting by an older person might not be considered flirting by the younger generation," said Apfel, 33.

So what's the difference between harassment and teens just being teens? That will be discussed, and much more.

"It was probably considered sexual harassment back then, but we just didn't call it that," said host Carol Randolph, who also is a lawyer.

The forum participants, comprising teens, national experts, local family court judges and community leaders, will discuss harassment and the laws that address it, and talk about some guidelines for recognizing it.

She said she defines sexual harassment as "anything that makes someone feel uncomfortable in a sexual way." It could be an unsolicited comment, whistling in a derogatory way or physical touching.

"It's basically everywhere," she said, adding she sees daily instances between teen-agers more than between students and teachers.

"There are a lot of issues and not many people have talked about them," added Leah Loukas, 16, a junior at McKinley High School and also a participant. "It might be good for people to say how they feel about it."

Norma Cantu, assistant secretary for civil rights in the U.S. Department of Education and a panelist, said there is no national study that tracks instances of sexual harassment among teens.

"But there's a couple of sources that lead me to the concern that it is still much too frequent and occurring in America's schools," she said.

According to the Department of Education, 125 civil rights complaints were filed against elementary and secondary schools in 1997, and 84 were filed against post-secondary schools. In 1996, 78 and 81 were filed respectively.

Your Turn will air at 2 p.m. on Sept. 19 and 20. For Time Warner customers in the Akron and Canton areas, it will be broadcast on Channel 58.

The local teen participants are from the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, the Canton Urban League, Pyramid Career Services, Northeast Community Center, Canton Youthquake, North Canton Recreation, Stark County Park District, Youth Leadership Collaboration 2000, Canton Park System, Downtown Canton YMCA, Stark Metropolitan Housing Authority and the Canton Office of Youth Development.

Adult participants include Cantu; George Crisci, former in-house council for the Cleveland Board of Education; Sharon Regas, an employment defense attorney in Cleveland; Alliance Mayor Judy

Carr; Louisville Mayor Tom Zwick; Daryl Revoldt, North Canton council president and district staff director for Rep. Ralph Regula, R-Navarre; Ron Ponder, owner of PonderSystems Media PR; and Stark County Family Court Judges John Hoffman, Julie Edwards and David Stucki.

Court TV to visit Parkersburg for new show

By PAMELA BRUST
Sentinel Reporter

Court TV is coming to Parkersburg.

Officials with the show visited Parkersburg Friday to determine a date, topics and locale in this area to film their town-hall style teen talk show called "Your Turn."

The show will be filmed here in June and will include 120-150 middle school, junior high and high school students discussing topics of concern.

The show is expected to air in July.

The program is set in a panel/teen audience participation style format.

Court TV is a 24-hour network that focuses on live trial coverage.

The teen forum is part of three Court TV shows that comprise Teen Court TV.

The three-hour programming block airs on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Friday's meeting was coordinated by TCI Cable Co.

Law enforcement officers, prosecutors, juvenile court judges, social service agency representatives, school officials, and mayors from Ohio and Wood County attended the meeting.

They were joined by legislators and state Supreme Court Justice Margaret Workman, who offered suggestions and ideas for the program.

Court TV representatives were scheduled to meet later with area youths to gather feedback and suggestions.

Producers of the show will return to the area to develop focus groups.

Show topics suggested Friday by local officials included juvenile crime, family and peer violence, conflict resolution, child abuse and neglect, gangs and substance abuse problems.

Bill Jones, a retired West Virginia University-Parkersburg professor and former probation/parole officer, urged the Court TV representatives to include teens from all social/economic/ethnic backgrounds. Youths who have been involved in the juvenile court system also should participate in the program.

Wood County Circuit Court Judge Jeffrey Reed said juvenile crime is increasing locally. The courts are seeing more violent behavior, said Reed.

Local psychologist Fred Krieg said he'd like the program to share positive solutions and programs from this area.

Court TV's teen forum programs have addressed community service, weapons in schools, teen curfews, school dress codes, crime rates, teen smoking, violence and the media, teen pregnancy, juvenile justice, teen domestic violence, parole reform, search and seizures in school, gang violence,

teen hate crimes, censorship of the Internet, the future of the family, gender equality, teen stress, education, self-esteem, the death penalty, public prayer, and busing.

"We act as a vehicle for communication and change in communities that need it."

Scot MacPherson
Vice president, Court TV

"We act as a vehicle for communication and change in communities that need it," said Scot MacPherson, vice president of Affiliate and Consumer Promotion for Court TV.

The shows have caught the attention of policy-makers and officials in positions to make changes. They encourage continued discussion among teens in their community and outside through websites on the computer.

The teen forum show is hosted by Carol Randolph, a 17-year veteran of legal and broadcast journalism.

"Many young people say nobody ever asks them what they think. We're providing them with a forum and I find it very positive to see young people working to make change," Randolph said.

Because of the success of the program, Court TV expanded from 12 shows in 1996 to 14-18 in 1997.

Wood teens talk to Court TV

High school students speak out about domestic violence, divorce

By Dawn Miller
STAFF WRITER

PARKERSBURG — Wood County high school student Charlise Robinson told Court TV on Thursday that her ex-boyfriend had shoved her, pulled her hair and isolated her from her friends and family. But he always promised to do better.

"I didn't know I was being abused," Robinson said during a 90-minute taping of "Your Turn," Court TV's weekend program for teens.

Robinson stood with her friend Heather Day among 100 junior high and high school students from Wood County. They posed questions of panelists and offered solutions to problems of domestic violence and divorce.

Robinson and the old boyfriend broke off their relationship some time ago, she said.

"Please tell me you ended it," urged "Your Turn" host Carol Randolph.

In the end, Robinson said, she didn't listen to her good friend Heather, who was concerned that she was being denied the companionship of her friends. Nor did Robinson pay much attention to anyone else. The boy moved away, and because of various factors, they split up.

"Her story is exactly like an adult story," offered Judi Ball, director of Family Crisis Intervention and panelist on the show.

"She was really lucky. She had a friend to cry to. But even the friend didn't make a difference," Ball said.

Robinson nodded as Ball ticked off typical behaviors of teen-agers and adults—male and female—who are abused by spouses and lovers.

She probably really loved him, and believed him when he said he wouldn't hurt her again, Ball said.

"I thought it was my fault because I made him mad," Robinson said.

Program producers visited Parkersburg and met with students several times in advance of Thursday's taping. They discussed topics and scouted out some good anecdotes, but the questions and comments from the audience came out as the students uttered them, Randolph said.

"I had no idea that was going to come out of her mouth," Randolph said after the filming.

She had noticed Robinson caught her eye a few times.

"Are you going to say something or not?" Randolph asked her during the breaks.



Gazette photos by LAWRENCE PIERCE

High school senior Sarah Laucle (on the monitor) tells Court TV host Carol Randolph that she was not allowed to date until she was 16. Perhaps young people date too early and get involved in relationships that lead to abuse and divorce, Laucle suggested during a taping of "Your Turn" in Parkersburg.



"Your Turn" host Carol Randolph (right) listens to student Charlise Robinson (center) describe her abusive ex-boyfriend.

Robinson was hesitant, and wanted to tell the story, but only with her friend standing next to her.

No problem, Randolph said, not knowing what the girl was going to say. "You never know," Randolph said.

State Supreme Court Justice Margaret Workman, another panelist, said young people need more instruction.

"So often, people think that being overpossessive, that wanting to know who you're with, people think it's because they care," Workman said. Instead, it can be an early sign of abusive behavior that will grow worse over time.

Court TV visited Parkersburg at the invitation of TCI, the area's cable company, Randolph said.

TCI District Sales and Service Manager Sharon Lewgood said the company wanted to do something for young people in the area. Company officials knew the award-winning program, and were looking for a project to follow last year's effort that brought a traveling display of the Vietnam Memorial to Wood County.

The program is scheduled to air at 2 p.m. on July 25 and 26.

To contact staff writer Dawn Miller, call 348-5117.



Repository / Michael Balash

■ **DISCUSSION LEADER.** Carol Randolph, host of "Your Turn" for Teen Court TV, poses a question on sexual harassment to 150 local teens. Produced by Warner Cable and Court TV, the show will air nationally next month.

Teens tackle sex harassment

Students discuss volatile topic for taping of Teen Court TV show

By JENNIFER MASTROIANNI
Repository staff writer

CANTON — Hoover High School classmates Steve Ridgway and Emily Gurney work at area restaurants.

Steve is one of only two males working with 24 females at a North Canton family restaurant.

"We get grabbed and slaps on the butt. I get more back rubs," said Steve, 17. "We don't mind, though."

Emily Gurney gets her share of attention at a Jackson Township eatery and bar.

"I've had drunk men say, 'Oh, hey, nice chest,'" said Emily, 17.

The two were among 150 local teens at the Players Guild on Thursday afternoon discussing "Flirting or Hurting? Dealing with Harassment," a town hall meeting taped for national broadcast.

Court TV and Time Warner Cable produced the show for the Teen Court TV weekend program "Your Turn." The show will air locally at 2 p.m. on Sept. 19 and 20 on Channel 58.

Sexual harassment is a complicated issue, said program host Carol Randolph, a broadcast journalist and attorney. One that often divides the genders.

"Women say men just don't get it," Ms.

"IF A GIRL wears a short skirt to school and a low-cut shirt, guys aren't supposed to look? That's ridiculous. That's how it is with the opposite sex."

Antonio Hall

McKinley High School student

Randolph said. "Men say women send mixed messages. And it's even more confusing for teen-agers."

The program, presented in talk-show format, featured a panel of four teens and five adults. Teen audience members were from 14 area groups, including Youth Leadership Collaboration 2000, Canton Urban League, North Canton Recreation and the Northeast Community Center.

Panelist Teva Ferestad talked openly about her experience with sexual harassment at Hoover High School.

"I was being teased about wearing shorts," said Teva, who will be a junior this fall. "Some guys were saying I smelled, and that kind of stuff."

Teva said the sexually explicit insults continued for a year and a half. This

spring, she and her parents went to the school administration. One boy was suspended for four days.

"After that, I only heard it about two times a day instead of 20," Teva said.

Jean Ferestad said the harassment had a huge impact on her daughter.

"It changed her," she said. "No question about it."

Students agreed that derogatory remarks constitute harassment, but others were concerned about the fine line between flirting and harassing.

"If a girl wears a short skirt to school and a low-cut shirt, guys aren't supposed to look?" asked teen panelist Antonio Hall, 16, of McKinley High School. "That's ridiculous. That's how it is with the opposite sex."

Evan Gurney, a 15-year-old Hoover student, feels the topic is blown out of proportion.

"The issue is being exploited," he said.

Panelist John Paul Peterson, a senior from McKinley, said national tension over the issue forces some people to overreact.

"Like that 6-year-old kissing a girl in class," John Paul said. Others are lawsuit happy.



Repository / Michael Balash

■ **FLIRTING OR HURTING?** "Your Turn" host Carol Randolph talks to panelists about sexual harassment in the schools at the taping of the Teen Court TV show Thursday at the Players Guild theater. Panelists (left to right) are Teva Ferestad from Hoover High School; John Paul Peterson, Leah Loukas and Antonio Hall, all from McKinley High School.

Teens

■ CONTINUED FROM B-1

"They're out to make money," he said.

Panelist Leah Loukas, 16, from McKinley, said she's been teased since grade school.

"They comment that I have a big butt," she said. The remarks don't bother her if they are from friends, but are inappropriate from other people, she said.

Adult panelists tried to explain the complex issue, especially where students are concerned.

"In 1997, our office issued a policy that sexual harassment is illegal words and conduct of a sexual nature so severe that they interfere with education," said panelist Norma Cantu, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education. "It's OK for teachers to hug a child. It's OK to clap an athlete on the shoulder. That's not sexual harassment. It doesn't keep the student from wanting to learn."

Panelist George Crisci said reports of sexual harassment in schools must be investigated.

"When the administration finds out, they have a legal obligation

to stop the problem or they can get sued," said Crisci, former in-house council member of the Cleveland Board of Education.

McKinley High School teacher Mark Kittoe shook his head when Cantu, describing a time she taught 2,000 freshmen in one building, said, "There were so many hormones, I'm surprised the roof didn't come crashing down."

"That's the truth," Kittoe said. "There's going to be inappropriate remarks. Dealing with it though, that's the thing that has to be done."

COURTING NATIONAL ATTENTION

Middle school takes center stage in broadcast for Court TV

By Tom Munds
Herald Staff Writer

Viewers across the nation looked in on Flood Middle School Tuesday as Court TV taped a segment from the Flood stage as part of a one-hour live broadcast about middle school students.

About 500 middle-schoolers crowded into the auditorium to be the audience for the live segments from Flood.

Jennifer Gailus, one of the students picked to be interviewed, sat on the edge of the stage waiting for the broadcast to start.

"This is pretty important for us, because it will bring more interest in our school and the things we are doing here," she said. "It also lets a lot of people know we are a National Blue Ribbon School. That's something we are proud of — that we worked hard for."

Flood Principal Steve Cohen agreed it was an honor for the school to be chosen to be part of the program.

"We are proud to be a part of the program and we appreciate our local cable system providing a hookup so all our students could be a part of the show," he said.

The commercial-free program called, "Portraits in Change: Cele-

brating the Month of the Young Adolescent," provides a forum for young people across the country to express concerns about issues that most affect their lives.

Tuesday's broadcast originated from Arlington, Va., and included segments from Flood and a school in Seattle.

"This broadcast kicks off a national campaign to spotlight issues facing young adolescents and is sponsored by Court TV, the National Middle School Association, Cable in the Classroom and the nation's leading cable operators like TCI," David DeKadt of Court TV said.

The program that went out live Tuesday will be rebroadcast on Channel 52 and 65 at 2 p.m. Saturday and at the same hour Saturday, Oct. 18 and Saturday, Nov. 1.

The Flood segment highlights some of the school's programs. Before she went on, Sarah Williams said she was excited and a little nervous.

"But I'm happy they picked Flood, and I'm glad they picked me because I'll be talking about FROGS — Females Reaching Options Gaining Success, a self-esteem-building group for girls," she said.

Metropolitan State College student Amanda Wiziecki, a tutor at Flood, was interviewed with her student Tom Horan.

"I was fine when we rehearsed, but the real thing isn't the same," Wiziecki said after her segment. "The camera and the idea a lot of people were watching made me so nervous my cheek was shaking as I smiled."

Eleanor Perry-Smith said it was a great honor to be chosen to be on the show.

"I'm not really nervous because I've been up in front of audiences before when I did plays and things," she said.

Flood's Project Wise, a program that brings middle school students and seniors together in a writing partnership, was also covered. In the live segment, teacher Roz Goldstein, student Sabrina Hauk and senior Geraldean Memler were interviewed.

Before the broadcast, the girls said they were more excited than nervous to be on TV.

Memler came off the stage smiling. "I'm thrilled they asked me to do the broadcast. You know, I live in Meridian. The folks over there think I'm a big celebrity. Why, they taped the program and the Meridian will show it to everyone tonight."