



Westmoreland County Youth Commission

2771 S. Grande Blvd. ■ Greensburg ■ PA ■ 15601 ■ 724-830-4203 ■ www.co.westmorelandcounty.pa.us

The Honorable
Michele Bononi
Administrative
Family Court Judge

Adeline Beighley,
Director of Probation

Serving

Burrell

Derry Area

Greensburg Salem

Franklin Regional

Hempfield Twp.

Jeannette

Kiski Area

Latrobe

Ligonier Valley

Monessen

*Mt Pleasant/
Southmoreland*

*New Kensington/
Arnold*

Norwin Area

Penn Twp.

Rostraver

Trafford

Yough

DIVERSIONARY PROCEEDING SCRIPT

1. PREAMBLE

“Welcome. My name is _____ and I am the Chairman of the _____ Youth Commission. I am going to introduce the other youth commission members, and then ask you to introduce yourselves to us.

Thank you all for attending. The maybe difficult for some or all of you, but your presence will help us deal with the matter that has brought us together. This is an opportunity for all of us to be involved in repairing the harm that has been done.”

To the Parent: “Before we get started, we are going to get some basic demographic information from you, and then I will read _____ (*juvenile’s name*) his/her rights.”

Secretary gathers basic information

Chairman reads the offender his/her rights

Chairman then states: “This preceding will focus on an incident that happened (*state the date, place and nature of the offense without elaborating*). It is important to understand that we will focus on what (*offender name*) did and how that unacceptable behavior has affected others. We are not here to decide whether (*offender name*) is good or bad. We want to explore in what way people have been affected and hopefully work toward repairing the harm that has resulted. Does everyone understand this?”

“(Offender name) has admitted his/her part in the incident.”

“This matter may be finalized at this level if you participate in a positive manner and also comply with the stipulations of your supervision that will be agreed upon at the end of the proceeding. If you do not participate in a positive manner, or do not agree to stipulations for your supervision your case will be referred back to (*please stipulate either Magistral District Justice or Juvenile Court.*)”

2. Offender

Have the offender respond to each of the following questions:

- “What happened?”
- “What were you thinking about at the time?”
- “What have you thought about since the incident?”
- “Who do you think has been affected by your actions?”
- “How have they been affected?”

Mission Statement:

Our Mission is to connect youth and family to community.

3. Victim/s

If there is an identified Victim, a youth commission member can act in their stead, and read the appropriate comments from the collected Victim Impact Paperwork that was mailed to them. The chairperson should ask the following questions:

- **“What was the victim’s reaction at the time of the incident?”**
- **“How did the victim feel about what happened?”**
- **“What has been the hardest thing for the victim?”**
- **“How did the victim’s family and friends react then they heard about the incident?”**

If there is no victim paperwork to refer to the following set of questions can be asked of a youth commission member. It should be made clear that the Youth Commission member is answering as a concerned community representative/member.

- **“What did you think when you heard about the incident?”**
- **“How do you feel about what happened?”**
- **“What has been the hardest thing for you?”**
- **“What do you think are the main issues?”**

4. OFFENDER SUPPORTER(S)

To the parent(s)/caregiver(s) the chairman should ask: **“Has this been difficult for you? Would you like to tell us about it?”**

Have each parent/caregiver respond to all of the following questions:

- **“What did you think when you heard about the incident?”**
- **“How do you feel about what happened?”**
- **“What has been the hardest thing for you?”**
- **“What do you think are the main issues?”**

5. OFFENDER

Ask the offender: **“Is there anything you want to say at this time?”**

6. REACHING AN AGREEMENT

If there is a Victim Statement, the chairperson should ask the Youth Commission Member with the statement to read the appropriate comments that answer: **“What would you like from today’s preceding?”**

The chairperson should ask the offender: **“What would you like from today’s preceding?”**

At this point, the participants discuss what should be done in the final agreement. Comments should be solicited from all participants. After comments, the youth commission may want to talk to either the parent or the juvenile in private. As well, this would be the time to ask the juvenile and family to step outside while the finished agreement is drafted by the youth commission members.

The Secretary should write up the disposition and then present it clearly to the offender and his/her family. Read the items in the agreement aloud and look to the offender and participants for acknowledgement.

7. CLOSING THE PRECEDING

The chairperson should state: **“Before I formally close this preceding, I would like to provide everyone with a final opportunity to speak. Is there anything anyone wants to say?”**

Allow for participants to respond and when they are done, say: **“Thank you for your contributions in dealing with this difficult matter.”**

If necessary the Commission may discuss disposition privately.