

Competition Kickoff

The CT Kids Court Competition kicks off on **May 22, 2014** with **Kids' Speak**, which will be held at the University of Connecticut School of Law. **Kids' Speak** will provide an opportunity for students to participate in group exercises, improvisations, and debate and hear from a panel of experts on diversity issues, anti-bullying and competition topics. Students are **not required** to participate in Kids' Speak in order to compete in the Kids' Court Essay Competition.

Competition RULES

Any student interested in participating in this essay competition must select **one** of the five "Kids' Court Topics" listed in this brochure. In order to compete, a student must write a short paper about the topic they have chosen.

Division A (9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th)

The paper must be no fewer than 2 pages and no longer than 4 pages.

Division B (5th, 6th, 7th and 8th graders)

The paper must be no fewer than 2 pages and no longer than 3 pages.

All Participants

Students must write about **one** of the six Kids Court topics. Each paper must contain a cover page, which includes the student's name, grade, school, town, email address or telephone number and title of the paper. All papers must be double spaced and 12 point font.

All papers must be typed or legibly hand written and submitted to the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights & Opportunities, 25 Sigourney Street, 7th Floor, Hartford, CT c/o Cheryl A. Sharp, or emailed to Cheryl.Sharp@ct.gov by Thursday, **June 4, 2014**. **LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** (A post marked date of **June 4, 2014** is acceptable).

Judging

The papers will be judged on the student's understanding of the topic, consistency of argument, persuasiveness, civil rights issues addressed, creativity and thoughtfulness. The five Jr. High School and five High School students receiving the highest scores on their paper will have an opportunity to compete for prizes in the Oral Kids Court Competition to be held on **June 10, 2014 from 5:00-7:30** at the State Capitol in the Old Judiciary Room.

Prizes



Students may win prizes such as: a medal, certificate, plaque, citation from the legislature or Governor, and/or cash prize in the amount of **\$250, \$150, \$100, \$50 or \$25.**

The State of Connecticut Commission on Human Rights & Opportunities



Co-Sponsors

CT Kids' Court Essay Competition 2014

&

CT Kids' Speak



May 22, 2014

University of CT School of Law
9:00 a.m. -1:30 p.m.

For more information email

Cheryl.Sharp@ct.gov



Connecticut
Commission on Children



BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF NEW HAVEN



The Connecticut Kids' Court

Competition is now a regional competition open to middle and high school students in Connecticut, New York and Massachusetts. The Competition challenges students' knowledge and understanding of diversity and civil rights issues while encouraging students to examine ways in which these issues impact their education.

HISTORY



In 1993, then UCONN law school students, Cheryl A. Sharp and Rae Thiesfield-Vann developed and launched the first Kids' Court Competition in the Greater Hartford area to educate students about diversity and civil/human rights issues. In 1996, after receiving approval from the Governor's Office, Attorneys Sharp and Thiesfield-Vann co-chaired the first statewide Kids' Court Competition and Kids' Speak. The statewide competition, which was sponsored by the CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, successfully ran for five straight years and thousands of students participated. In 2000, CT Kids' Speak and Kids' Court was selected by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as one of the best practice award winners, and received the "**Simply the Best**" award. Kids' Court has been featured on **Fox 61 News** and in local papers throughout the state. Kids' Court returned to CT in April of 2011 and **Governor Dannel Malloy** provided a brief address to students who participated in Kids Speak. The 2014 kickoff of Kids Court

promises to be exciting as we have special guest speakers this year.

PURPOSE

- To educate youth and raise their consciousness about diversity and civil and human rights within CT and New England;
- To reduce prejudice and create school environments which encourage mutual respect among students and faculty regardless of differences in backgrounds, cultures, abilities, disabilities, religion, race, color, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, age;
- To dissuade discriminatory bullying;
- To assist students in developing debating, writing and analytical reasoning skills;
- To expose students to the legislature and law making process;
- To provide students with an opportunity to use interactive exercises and peer dialogue to resolve important social issues affecting them in a school setting and;
- To provide students with a voice and an opportunity to be heard.



Kids' Court Topics:

1. **Who is the "Other"?**
2. **The in crowd: self-segregation like or dislike?**
3. **Should we "ban the bossy"?**
raising girls to be leaders
4. **#socialmedia#schoolclimate**
#cyberbullying
5. **Blurred lines: the effects of derogatory music lyrics**
6. **Crossing the tracks: busing and integration**

Competition Structure

The Competition has two divisions.

Division A

High school students (9th-12th graders)

Division B

Middle school students (5th-8th graders)

Eligibility

Any student attending a Connecticut, Massachusetts or New York school or being home schooled in CT, Mass. or NY, who is currently enrolled in grades 5th through 12th is eligible to participate in the competition.