

YOUTH  
JUSTICE  
BOARD

If you are interested in hosting a police-teen conversation with officers in your own neighborhood, here are eight things to consider in order to get started:

- 1) If you live in New York City, your neighborhood is served by a particular police precinct, which you can find [here](#). Each precinct has a community affairs officer and a youth officer. Once you know your precinct, you can find their contact information [here](#). Both the community affairs officer and the youth officer can help you identify other officers who would be interested in participating in a conversation with young people from your community.
- 2) It is important to pick a venue where young people from your neighborhood will feel comfortable talking to police officers. Many young people do not feel comfortable in police stations or court buildings, so think about what other spaces in your neighborhood, like churches or community centers, are available.
- 3) Make sure that you have identified an adult who is not an officer to oversee the conversation. This could be a member of your community, like a church leader, or someone who works at a school or for an after-school program.
- 4) Establish a length of time for the conversation and announce this at the beginning so that there is a clear end to the event in place. The Youth Justice Board's conversation lasted for approximately an hour.
- 5) Make a list of 10 things that you want to talk about before the conversation. This is useful to avoid awkward silences, but also to make sure that your conversation has a focus. For instance, in the Youth Justice Board's video, members decided beforehand that they wanted to talk about the "stop, question, frisk" policy utilized by the New York Police Department, race as it affects interactions between young people and the police, and reasons underlying youth attitudes toward police officers.
- 6) Discuss with participants beforehand the guidelines or rules you want to put in place prior to beginning the conversation to ensure that everyone in the room feels comfortable. For example, you might ask participants not to interrupt each other.
- 7) Consider using an icebreaker at the outset to help get people feeling comfortable sharing their ideas. Possible icebreakers can be found [here](#).
- 8) During the conversation, make sure that everyone is given the opportunity to speak. You can ask the adult facilitator overseeing the conversation to help with this.

For more information, please visit us online at [www.courtinnovation.org/youthjusticeboard](http://www.courtinnovation.org/youthjusticeboard).