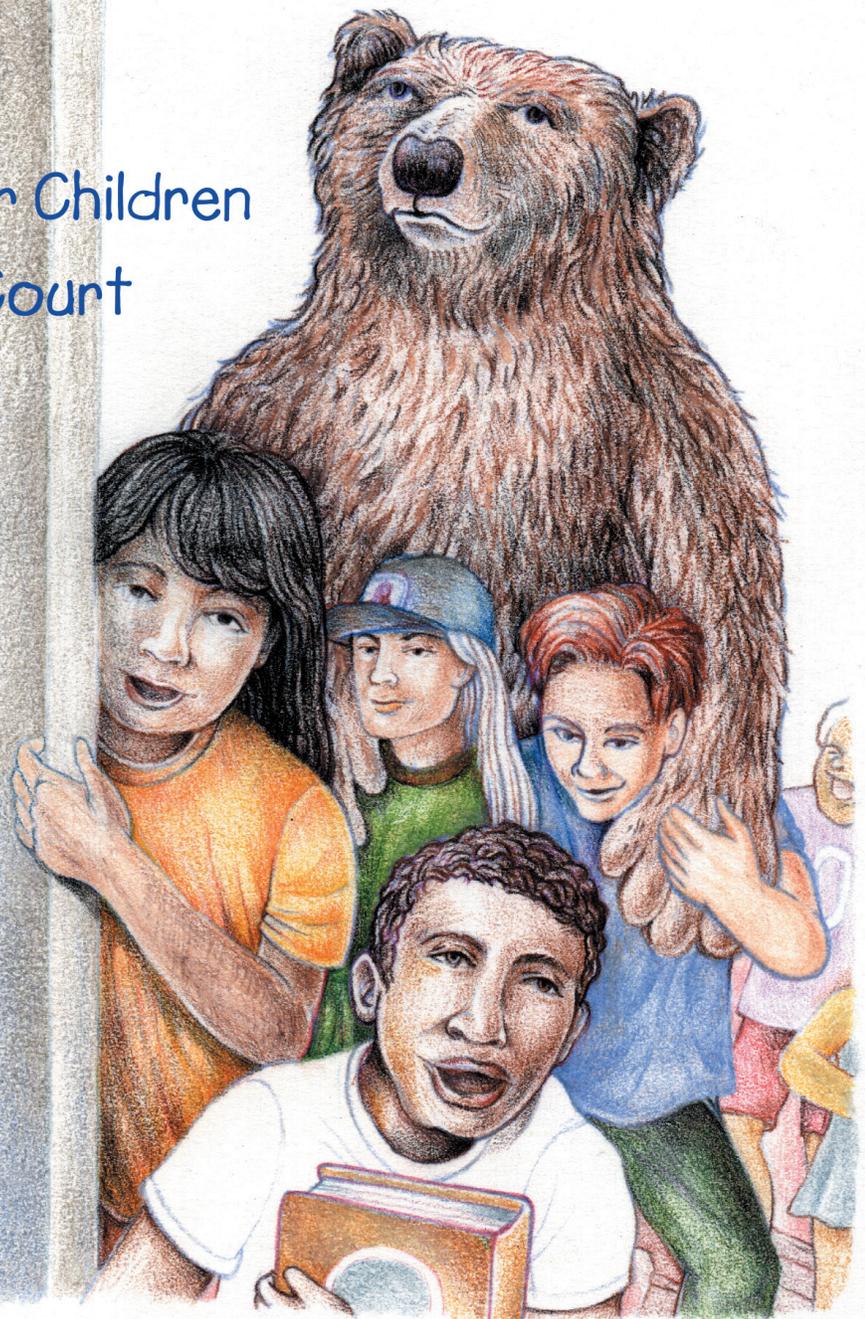


# What's Happening In Court?

An Activity Book for Children  
Who Are Going to Court  
In California



# Welcome From the Chief

Welcome to the California courts.

Every day people of all ages come to court for many different reasons. The court may be helping a family solve a problem. Sometimes it may need to know about what a person saw or experienced so that it has the information it needs to help a family solve a problem. School classes also visit the court to learn about how the courts work.

One of my jobs, as the Chief Justice, is to be sure that all of the people who come to court, no matter who they are, get the help and information they need. We wrote this book especially for young people so that each of you can find out more about courts and how they work.

This book is full of information. We hope it is also lots of fun. It is filled with activities that help explain different types of court cases and new words that are used in court. You can work on the book while you are at court and can also take it home with you.

Remember—you are important to me and to the people who work at the court. If you are confused or want to know more about anything that happens during your day in court, please ask questions.

I hope you like **What's Happening in Court**.

*Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye*

*Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye  
Supreme Court of California*



*Chief Justice  
Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye*

---

Copyright © 1999, 2012 by Judicial Council of California.  
All rights reserved. First edition 1999.  
Second edition June 2012.

This activities book for children was originally written in 1999 by staff of the Judicial Council and illustrated by San Francisco artists Andrew DeWitt and Robert Gutierrez. The initial project was made possible by the generous support of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, with additional funding from the Foundation of the State Bar of California.

For additional copies or more information about the book, please call the Center for Families, Children & the Courts at 415-865-7739 or submit a request to the address below. An interactive version of this book is available on line at <http://www.courts.ca.gov/cms/cab/>

Judicial Council of California  
Attn: Center for Families, Children & the Courts  
455 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, California 94102-3688

# What's in This Book?

Welcome From the Chief.....	inside front cover
On My Way to Court .....	2
Why Am I Here? .....	4
Who Are the People in Court? .....	6
How Should I Act in Court?.....	10
I Am a Witness .....	12
What Is Juvenile Dependency?.....	14
Mental Health Hearings .....	18
Courthouse Rooms to Decorate.....	20
Family Law Court .....	22
Guardianships.....	28
I'm Being Adopted .....	30
What Is Emancipation? .....	32
Special Laws for Children .....	34
Did I Do Something Wrong? .....	36
Answer Key .....	38
Facts About Me.....	40
Stickers to Decorate Courthouse Rooms .....	41
Some Important Information .....	inside back cover
About This Book .....	back cover

# On My Way to Court

These are the rules of the game:

Be the first player to get to the courthouse by following the path that has a picture of how you got to the courthouse.

1-4 players can play.

Use coins, paperclips, or erasers as game pieces.

Drop 3 extra coins on a flat surface.

Count the number of heads and move ahead that number.

If there are 1 head and 2 tails, move forward 1 space.

If there are 2 heads and 1 tail, move forward 2 spaces.

If there are 3 heads and no tails, move forward 3 spaces.

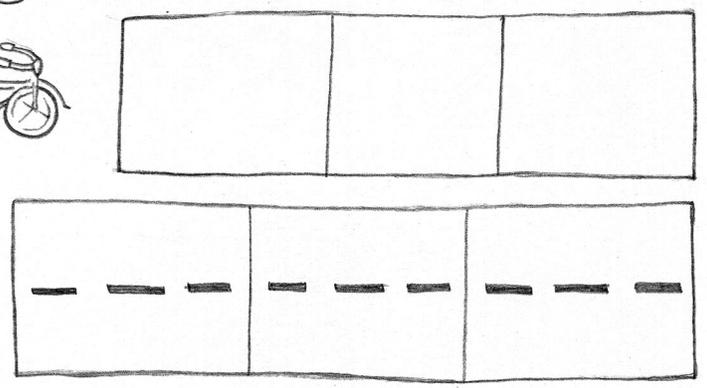
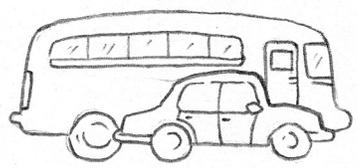
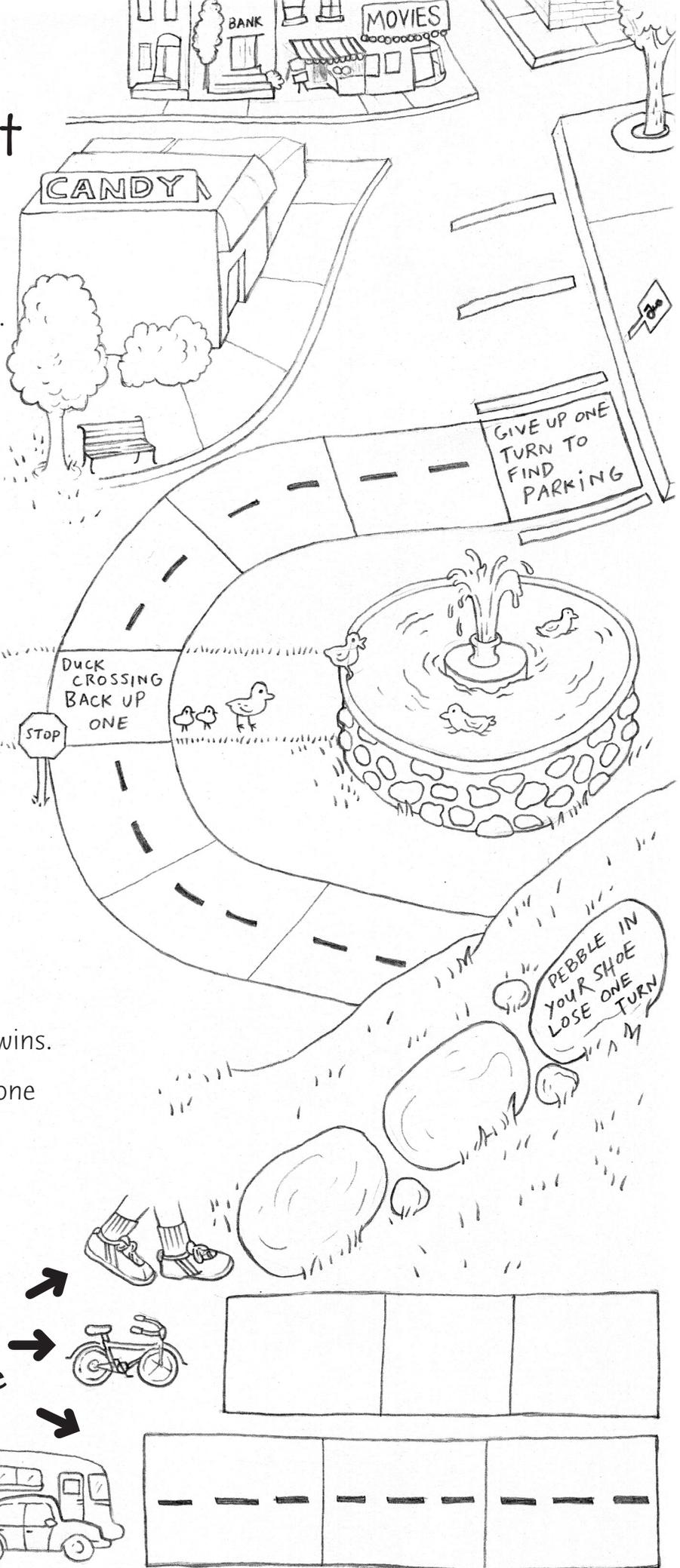
If there are no heads and 3 tails, do not move.

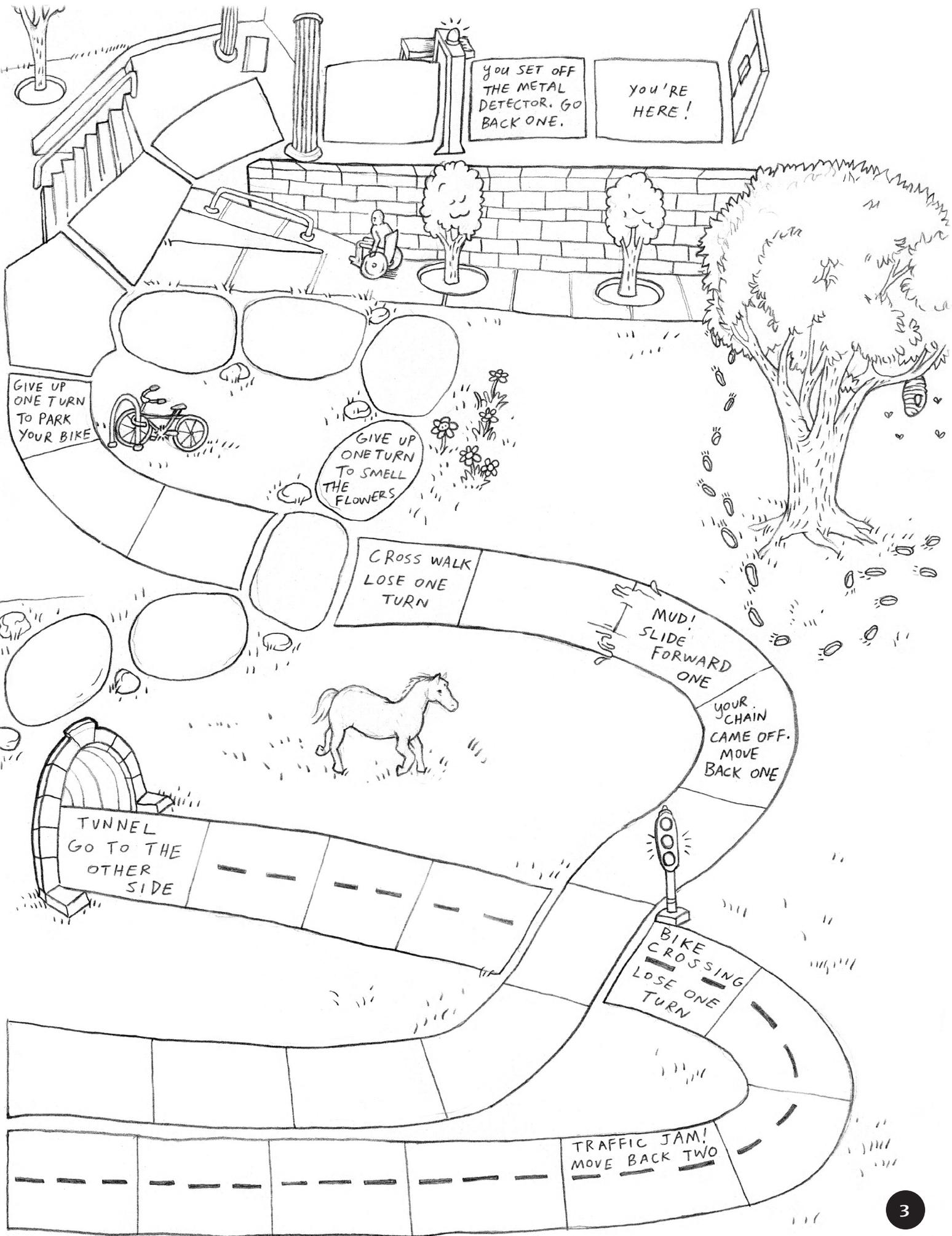
When you land on a space, follow the instructions on that space.

The first player to get to the courthouse wins.

At the end of the game, make sure everyone gets their game pieces back.

Circle on the game all the objects that you saw on your way to court today. If you saw a horse, then circle the horse. If what you saw today is not here, draw a picture of it on the game.





# Why Am I Here?

Check the box that tells why you are at court today, then color the pictures.

I am at court today with

\_\_\_\_\_

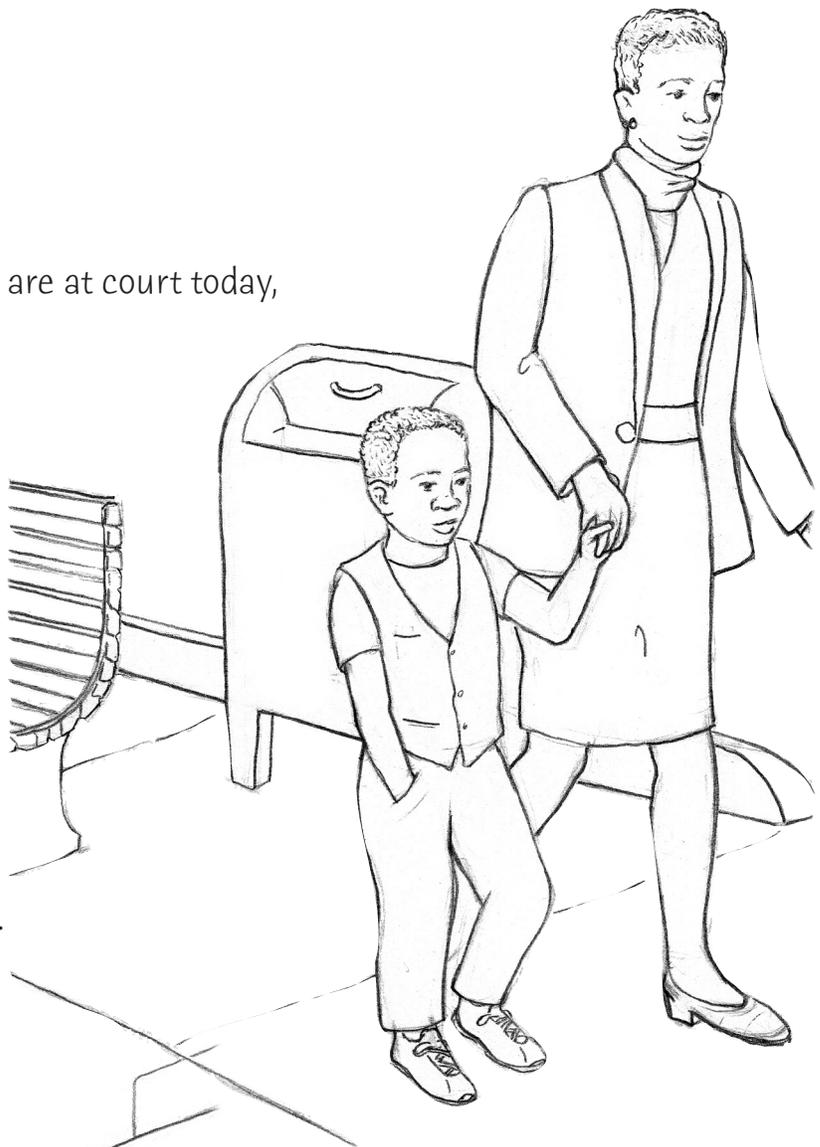
who has come here to

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



I am at court today on a field trip  
with \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



I am here because I am involved in a case or I am here as a witness to tell what I have seen or heard.

I do not know why I am at court.



# Who Are the People in Court?

Many people work in a court. Everyone has a job to do.

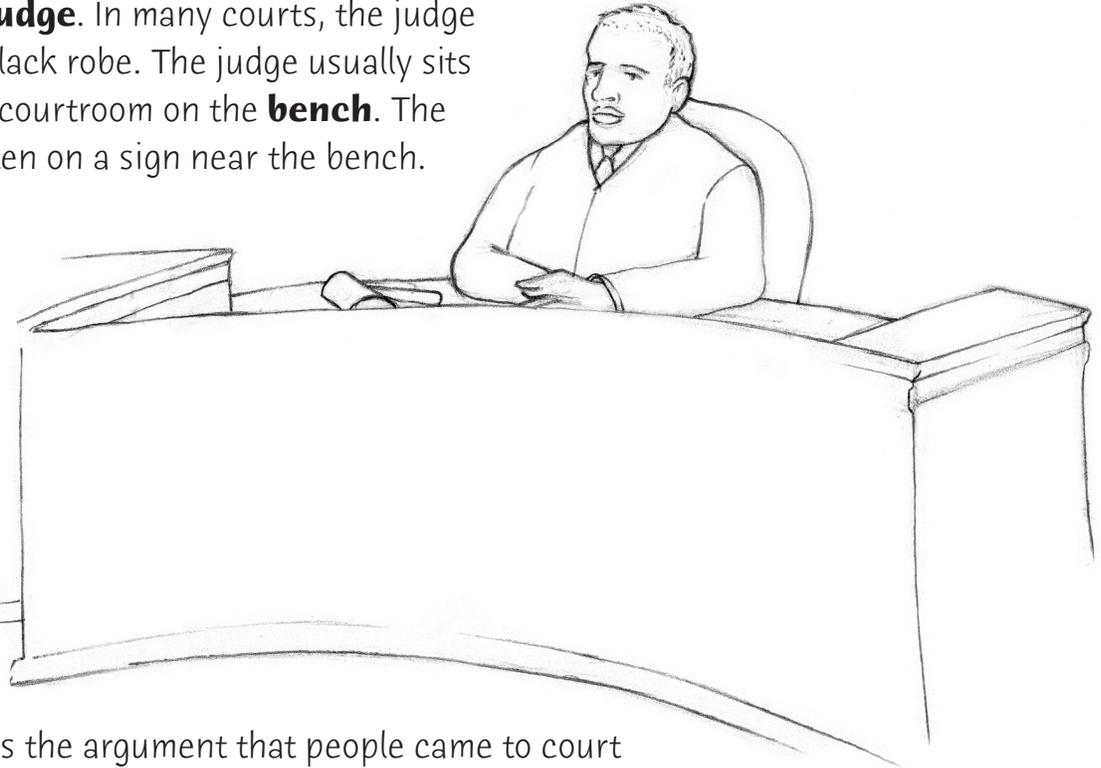
First, there is the **judge**. In many courts, the judge will be wearing a black robe. The judge usually sits at the front of the courtroom on the **bench**. The judge's name is often on a sign near the bench.

The judge does many things. First, the judge is like a referee at a ball game. The judge makes sure that everyone plays by the rules.

Sometimes the judge is also the person who decides the argument that people came to court about. For example, if two people come to court because they disagree about money, the judge might be the person who finally decides who gets the money.

Other times, a group of people decides who wins the argument. These people are called **jurors**. Jurors are people who come to court to listen to each side of a

disagreement. Then the jurors decide how the disagreement will be settled. A group of jurors is called a **jury**.





When people go to court, they often have **lawyers**. Lawyers are also called **attorneys**. Lawyers give advice to people on their disagreements in court. It is the lawyer's job to talk to the judge and

jurors for the people who come to court. You don't have to have a lawyer to go to court. When a lawyer talks for someone who has come to court, it means that the lawyer "represents" the person. Each lawyer represents only one person in court. So, if many people are involved in a disagreement, there might be more than one lawyer in court. All kinds of people have lawyers, even children! Lawyers usually sit next to the person they represent in the court.

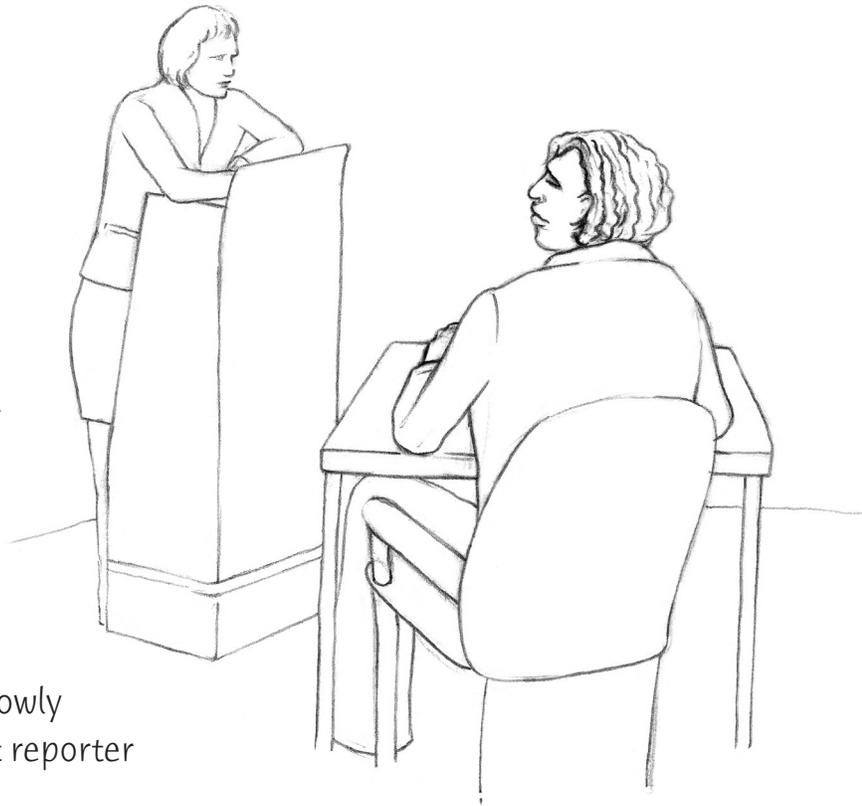
You can probably spot the **bailiff** very easily. The bailiff is the person who makes sure the people who go to court obey the rules. The bailiff is usually wearing a uniform, like a police officer's uniform. The bailiff is a special police officer just for the court.

Courts also have **interpreters** for people who don't speak or understand English. The interpreter's job is to translate what is said in court.



The **court reporter** is the person who writes down everything that everybody says in court. Wow! Can you imagine writing down all the words people say? The court reporter usually sits near the judge and types on a small machine.

Court reporters type very fast, and everyone in court has to speak slowly and clearly so the court reporter can hear what they say.



All courts have **clerks** as well. A court clerk keeps all the papers about the cases in the court and organizes them. The clerk keeps track of the decisions or orders that the judge makes during court and also keeps the court's schedule.

**Witnesses** are people who come to court to tell what they have seen or heard. For example, if someone is accused of stealing something, a witness might come to court to say what they saw happen.

When witnesses come to court, they have to raise their hand and make a special promise, called an oath, to tell the truth. They take a special seat and the lawyers ask them questions. Cases that last a long time may have lots of witnesses.



**Now that you know about some of the people in a court, can you solve this puzzle? Draw a line to connect the name of the person with the job they do. Good luck!**

Lawyers ○  
or attorneys

- These people come to court to tell the truth and talk about what they have seen or heard.

Judge ○

- This person types everything that is said in court into a machine.

Bailiff ○

- This person organizes all the papers and keeps track of the judge's decisions.

Jurors ○

- This person translates what is said in court.

Clerk ○

- This person's job is to make decisions and make sure that everyone follows the rules in court.

Witnesses ○

- These people give advice and talk in court for the people who have disagreements.

Court reporter ○

- This person keeps order in the courtroom and usually wears a uniform.

Interpreter ○

- These people listen to both sides of a disagreement in court and then decide who wins.

# How Should I Act in Court?

- Be on time.
- Dress neatly.
- Don't go in alone. Make sure there is an adult with you.
- Show respect to the people who are there.
- Don't eat or drink in court.
- Don't chew gum.
- You need to be quiet in court, so keep all electronic devices turned off. This includes digital music players, cell phones, and other portable devices.
- There may be other cases before yours. You have to be quiet and wait.
- You can read a book or play quietly with this book while you wait.
- When your case starts, call the judge "Your Honor." This is what people call the judge to show respect.
- Don't speak unless the judge or a lawyer asks you to.
- If you don't understand something, say that you don't understand. Someone will explain it again for you.

## What's Wrong With This Picture? →

Circle the things in the picture that are wrong or that should not be happening in court. Or you can write them here:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



# I Am a Witness

You read about **witnesses** on page 8. Children can go to court and sometimes they can be witnesses, too. The most important thing for every witness to do is to tell the truth. Sometimes it hurts to say what really happened, but if you are a witness you still have to tell the truth.

Sometimes a lawyer can ask you a question and you do not remember the answer. If that ever happens, all you have to do is say you don't remember. If you do not know the answer to a question, you can say, "I don't know." It is important not to guess, and not to say something that you think the lawyer or the judge wants to hear. Lawyers sometimes ask questions in a funny way. If they do, you may not understand what they mean. That's OK, too. Just let the judge or the lawyer know that you do not understand the question, and the judge will take care of the situation.

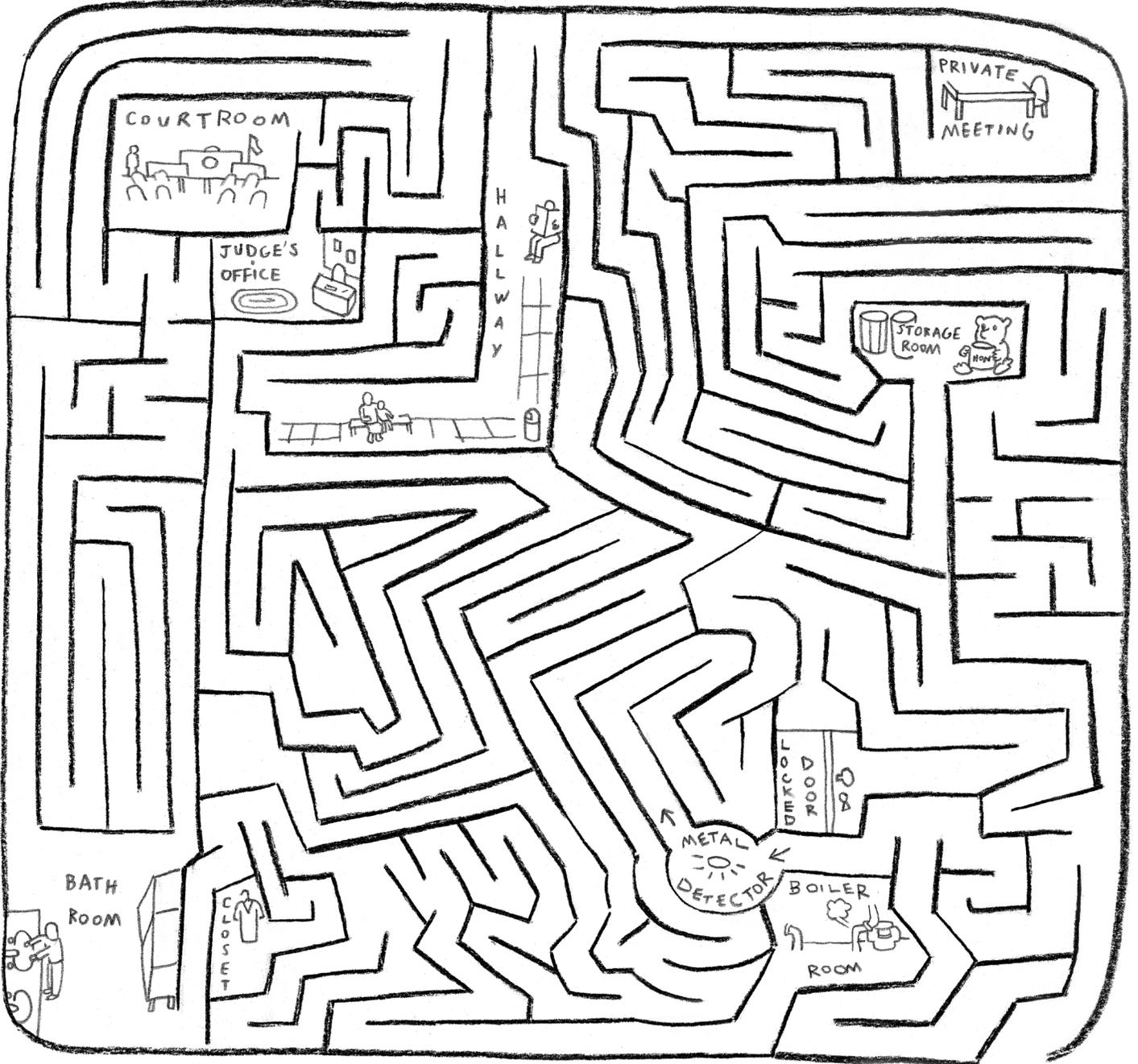
Sometimes children are scared to go to court. If you have to go to court, it's OK to feel scared. Adults get scared about court, too. Just remember the judge is there to make sure everything is fair.

Children usually go to court because of cases involving their family. It could be a criminal case, where someone is charged with a crime. Or it could be a family law case if one or both parents need the judge to decide something. Sometimes it is a case where someone in the family hurt someone else in the family. These cases are hard for everyone.



# Can You Find Your Way to the Courtroom?

(The courthouse isn't really this confusing!)



Start Here ↑

# What Is Juvenile Dependency?

When children come to court because a parent has hurt them or not taken care of them, this is a **juvenile dependency** case. Until a child grows up, he or she is dependent on adults and needs their protection. If parents can't or won't take care of their child properly, the juvenile court may step in and the child may become "dependent" on the court for safeguarding. When this happens, the child may have to live with relatives or another family for a while. This temporary family is called a **foster care family**.

Usually, parents want to have their child live with them. The judge and social workers will work with parents to make their home healthy and safe. If they succeed, then the child can move back home with the parents. This is called **reunification**.

Sometimes parents can't make their home safe for the child. Then the judge and others may have to find another home where the child can live safely for a long time. They make a **permanent plan** for a child.

Children can now stay in foster care after age 18 if they need help. These young people are called **nonminor dependents**. The nonminor dependent works with a judge and social worker to try to live independently like an adult. If a nonminor dependent wants the case to end at 18, the nonminor dependent can always come back to foster care if they need help. This is called **re-entry**.

## What Does the Social Worker Do in Juvenile Dependency Court?

A social worker is a person who tries to protect children and keep them safe. A social worker may help children who are being hit or touched in ways that are wrong (this is called **abuse**). The social worker may also help children who don't have proper food, clothes, or other things they need (this is called **neglect**). If the abuse or neglect is very bad, the social worker may have to find another place for the child to stay. Then the family and the social worker may have to go to court so that a judge can decide how to help the child and the family.

## What Does the Judge Do in Juvenile Dependency Court?

You read about judges on page 6 of this book. Judges in dependency court do all the jobs judges usually do, except that there is no jury in dependency court. The judge is the one who makes the final decision about what happens in a case.

It is the judge's job to listen to what everyone says in court. The judge knows what the law is and decides what needs to happen to keep kids safe. If the judge asks you a question, it is very important for you to tell the truth. The judge needs to know the truth to make the best decision for you. If you stay in foster care after age 18, you get to tell the judge where you want to live and why.



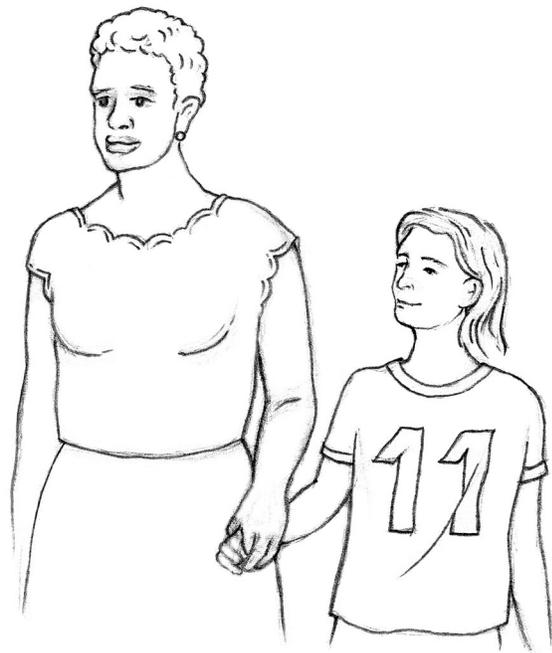
**Draw a picture of the place you live.**

## What Do Lawyers Do in Juvenile Dependency Court?

On page 7 of this book, you learned about the job of lawyers, who are also called attorneys. People involved in a case usually have a lawyer to speak for them in court. The people in a dependency case who might have a lawyer are the social worker, parents, children, and sometimes others.

## What Does a CASA Do in Juvenile Dependency Court?

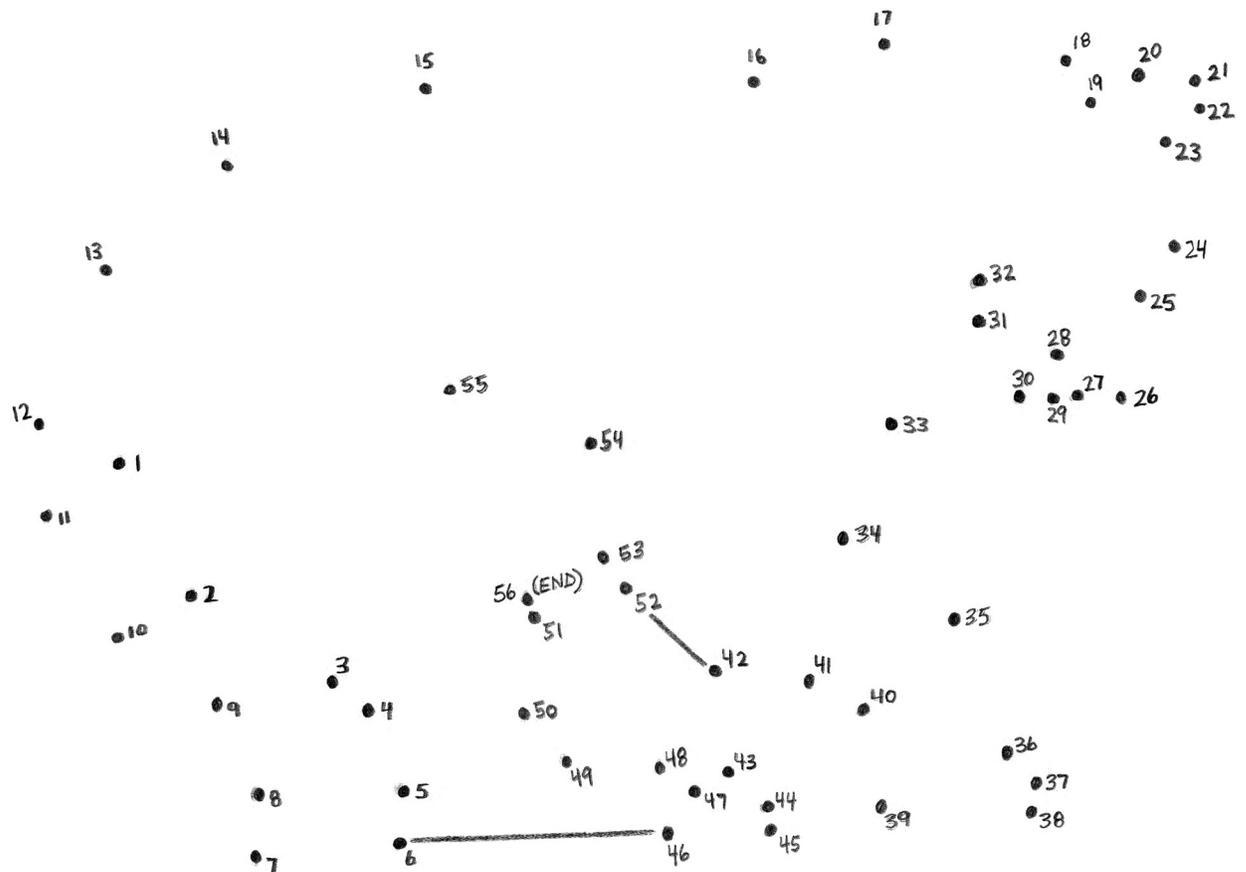
Sometimes the judge will assign a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) to help with a dependency case. CASAs are volunteers who help by talking to people, especially children, and telling the judge what they learn. CASAs spend a lot of time with the children they're assigned to. They listen to the children and tell their story to the court. The CASA also suggests to the court what can be done to make the child safe and healthy.



## What Do Children Do in Juvenile Dependency Court?

This book tells about witnesses on pages 8 and 12. A child might be a witness. If you are a witness, the lawyers and sometimes the judge will ask you questions. Of course, it is very important to tell the truth when you answer questions in court. You even have to make a special promise, called an oath, to tell the truth before you answer questions. It is also important to answer just the questions that you understand. If you don't understand a question, it is OK to say so and have the question explained to you. If you are a nonminor dependent, make sure to talk to your lawyer before you go to court to answer questions.

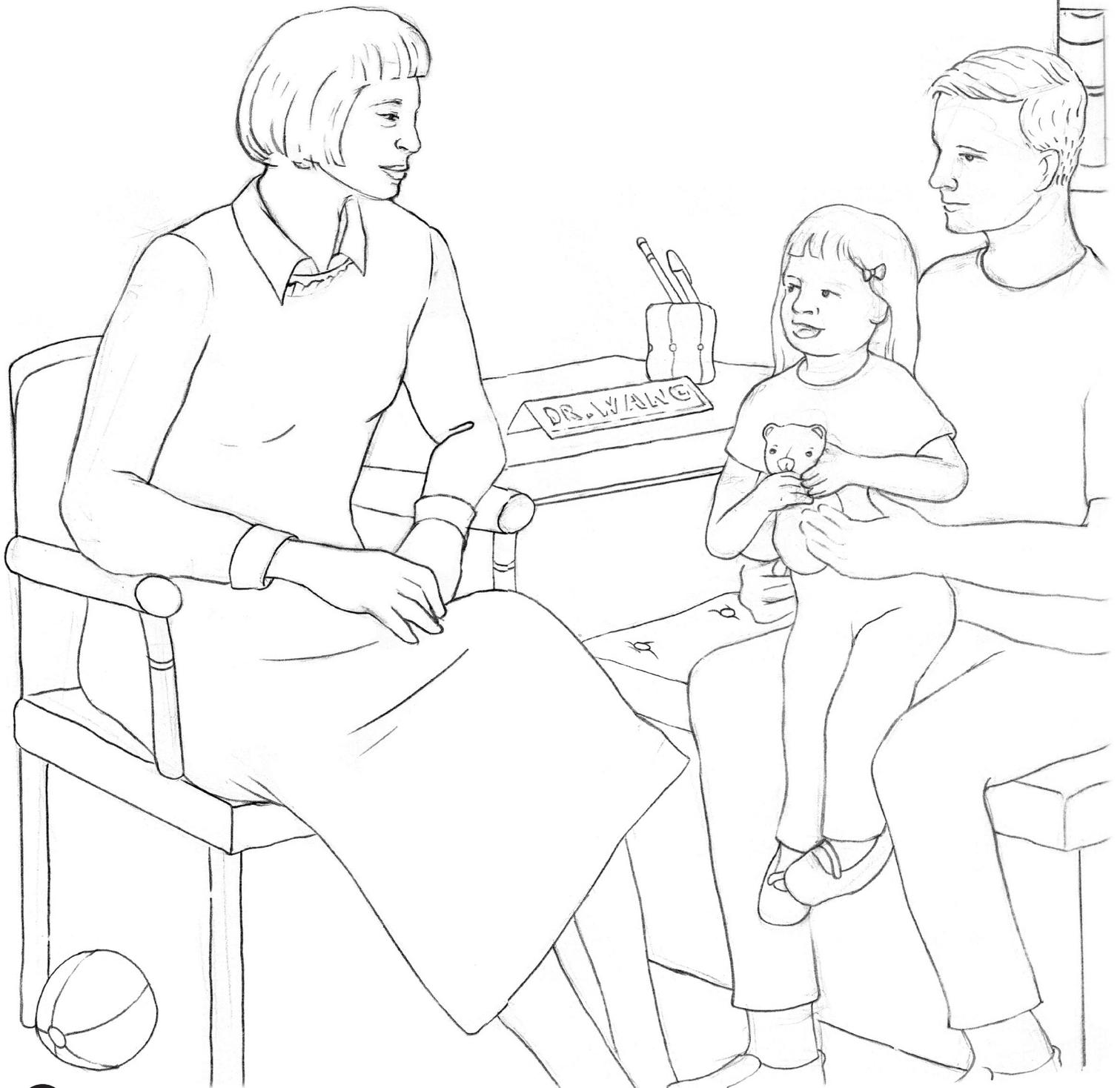
If you're afraid to answer questions in the courtroom, be sure to tell your lawyer, if you have one, or the judge. They will do everything they can to make you feel more comfortable. They may let you answer questions in the judge's office or have your CASA sit with you in court.



Connect the dots to draw the animal on the California state flag.

# Mental Health Hearings

Mental health is about people's thoughts and feelings. Mental health is just as important as physical health. A person with emotional or mental problems may feel or act sick. Sometimes people have such big emotional or mental problems





that the only place they can be taken care of is a hospital. This can happen to both adults and children. Adults can give their own permission to a hospital to treat them. Usually, parents can give a hospital permission to treat their children. These are called “voluntary” admissions to a hospital.

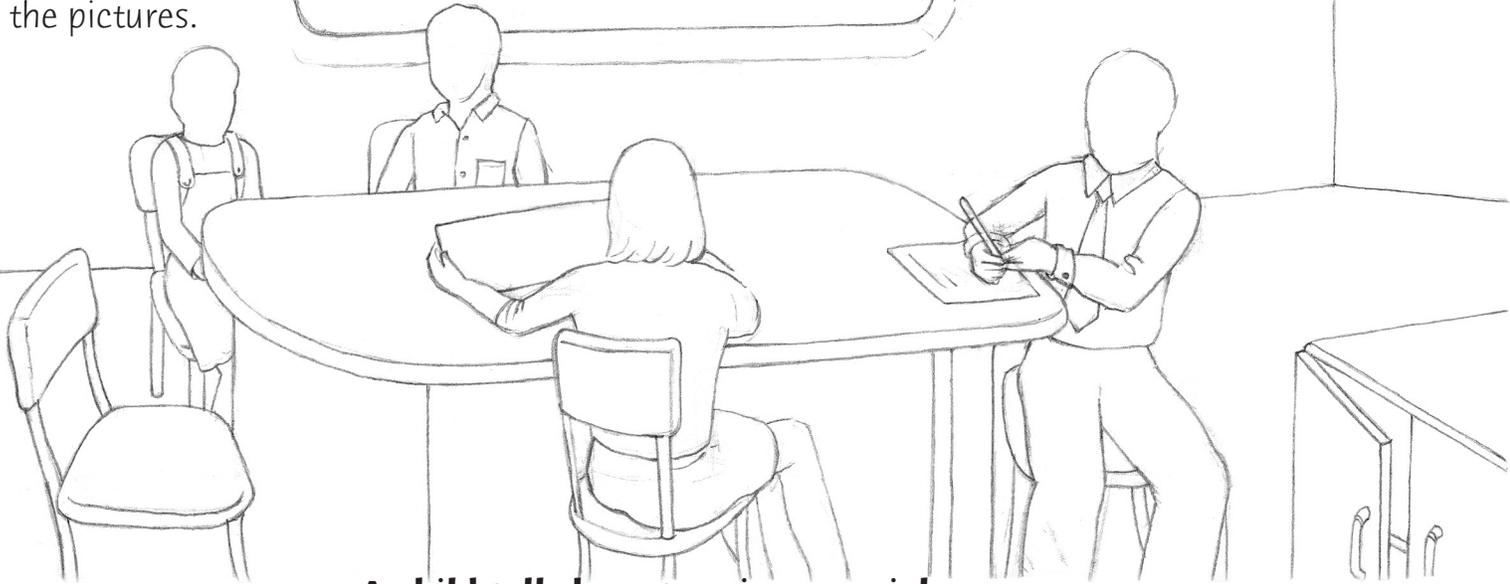
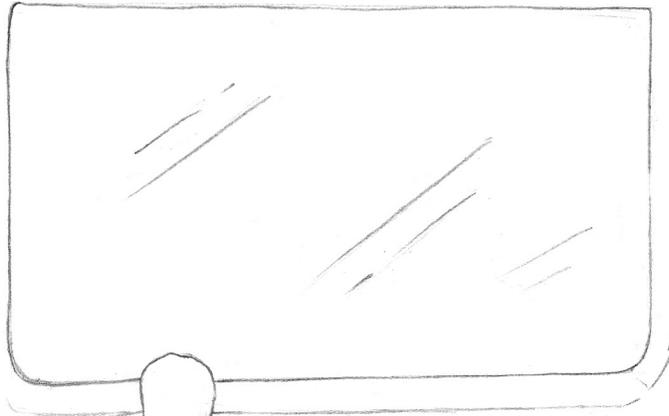
Sometimes people can't or won't give a hospital permission to treat themselves or their child. In that case, a court might be asked to order or “commit” the person to go into the hospital. The person goes in front of a judge who hears the case. This is called a **hearing**. The hearing where a judge decides whether or not to order treatment in a hospital may be called a commitment hearing. Sometimes a person does things that are against the law because they have mental or emotional problems. **Mental health court** helps people who break the law get help for their problems so they do not continue to get in trouble.

At the commitment hearing the judge will hear stories and facts about what mental or emotional problems the person has and how to treat them. The judge has to decide if the problems are so big that the person has to stay in the hospital, even if the person doesn't want to.

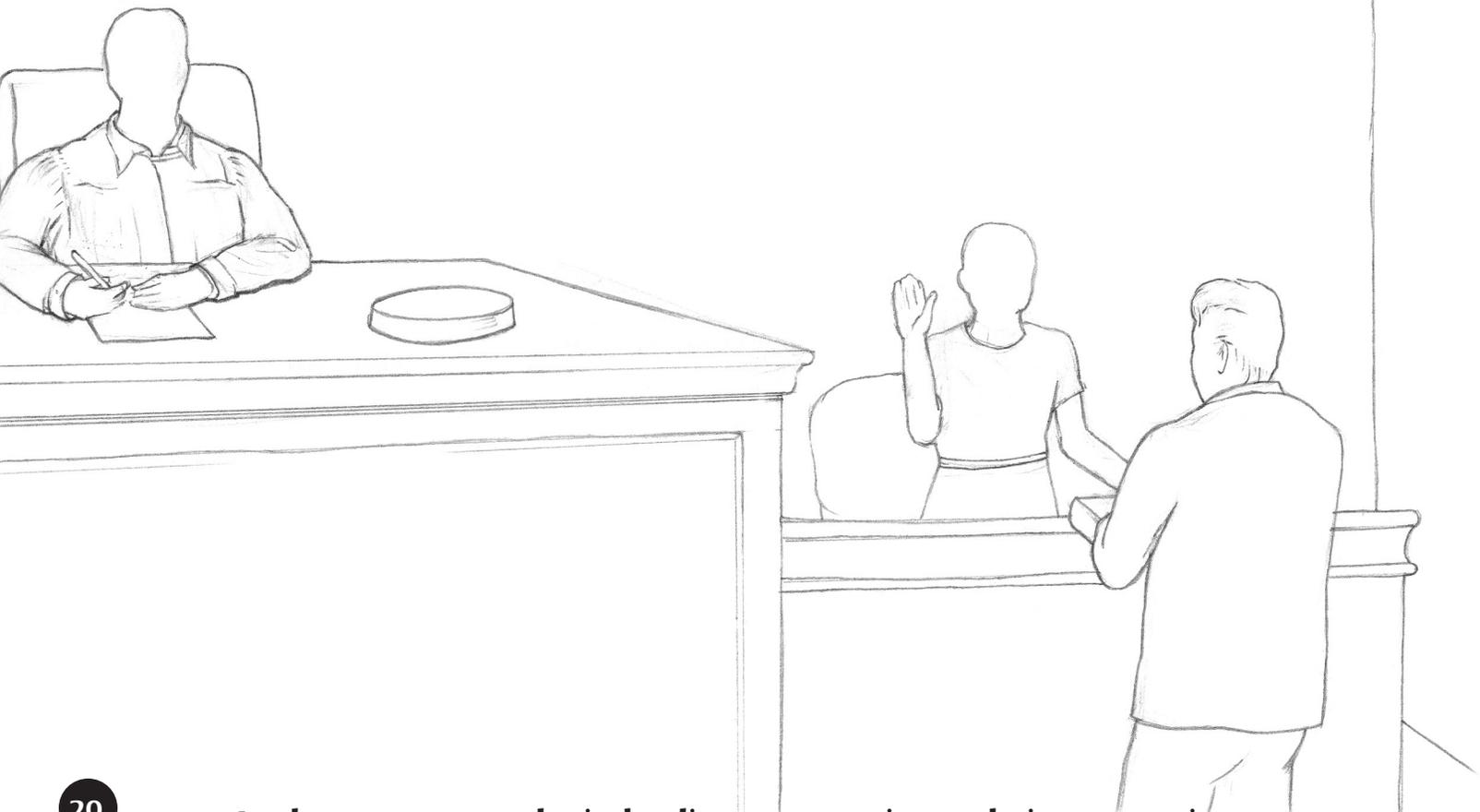
Sometimes the judge goes to the hospital and holds court there instead of in the courthouse.

# Courthouse Rooms

Give these people in the courthouse faces. Find the faces and courthouse objects on the sticker pages at the back of this book. You can also color in the pictures.

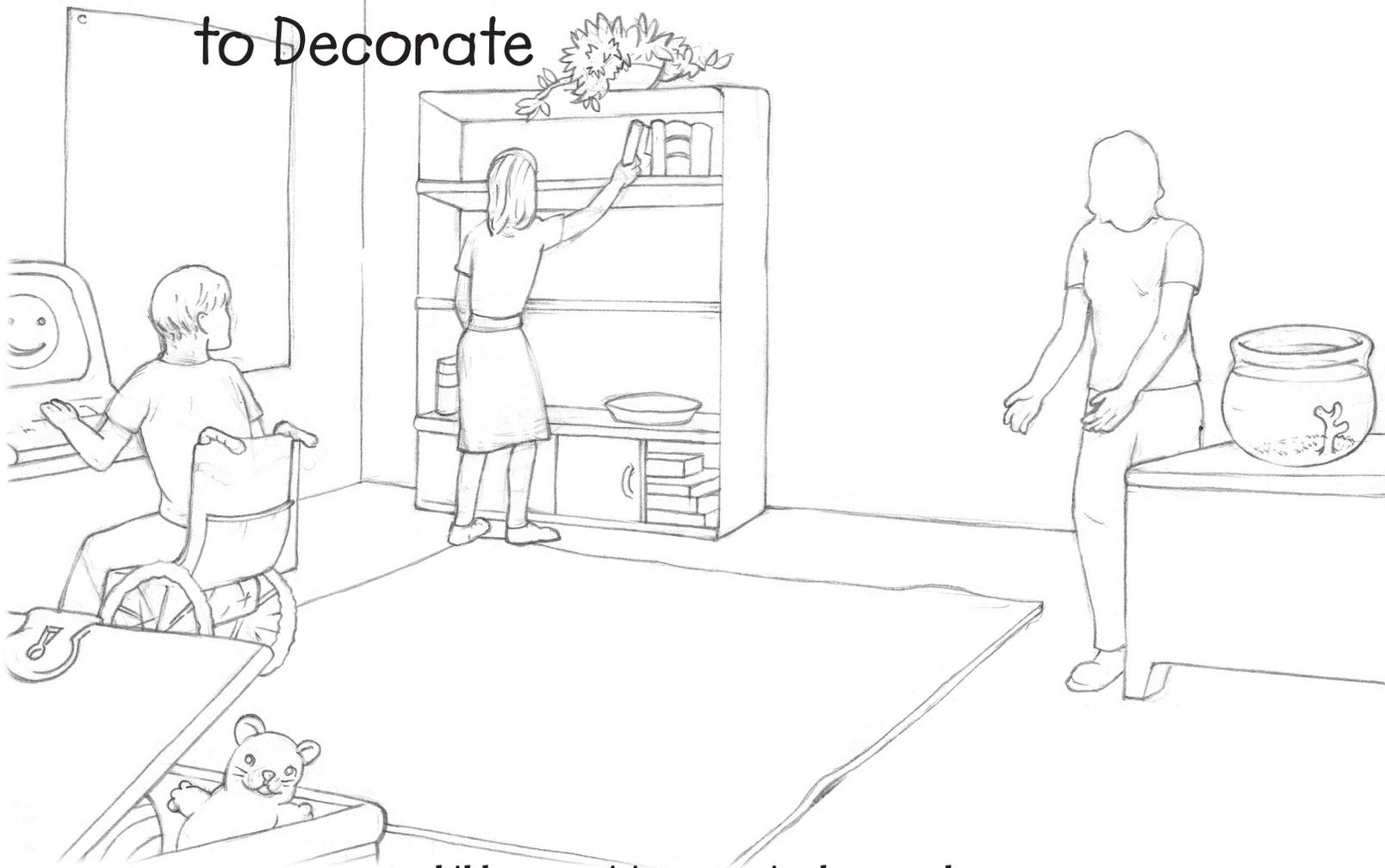


**A child tells her story in a special room**

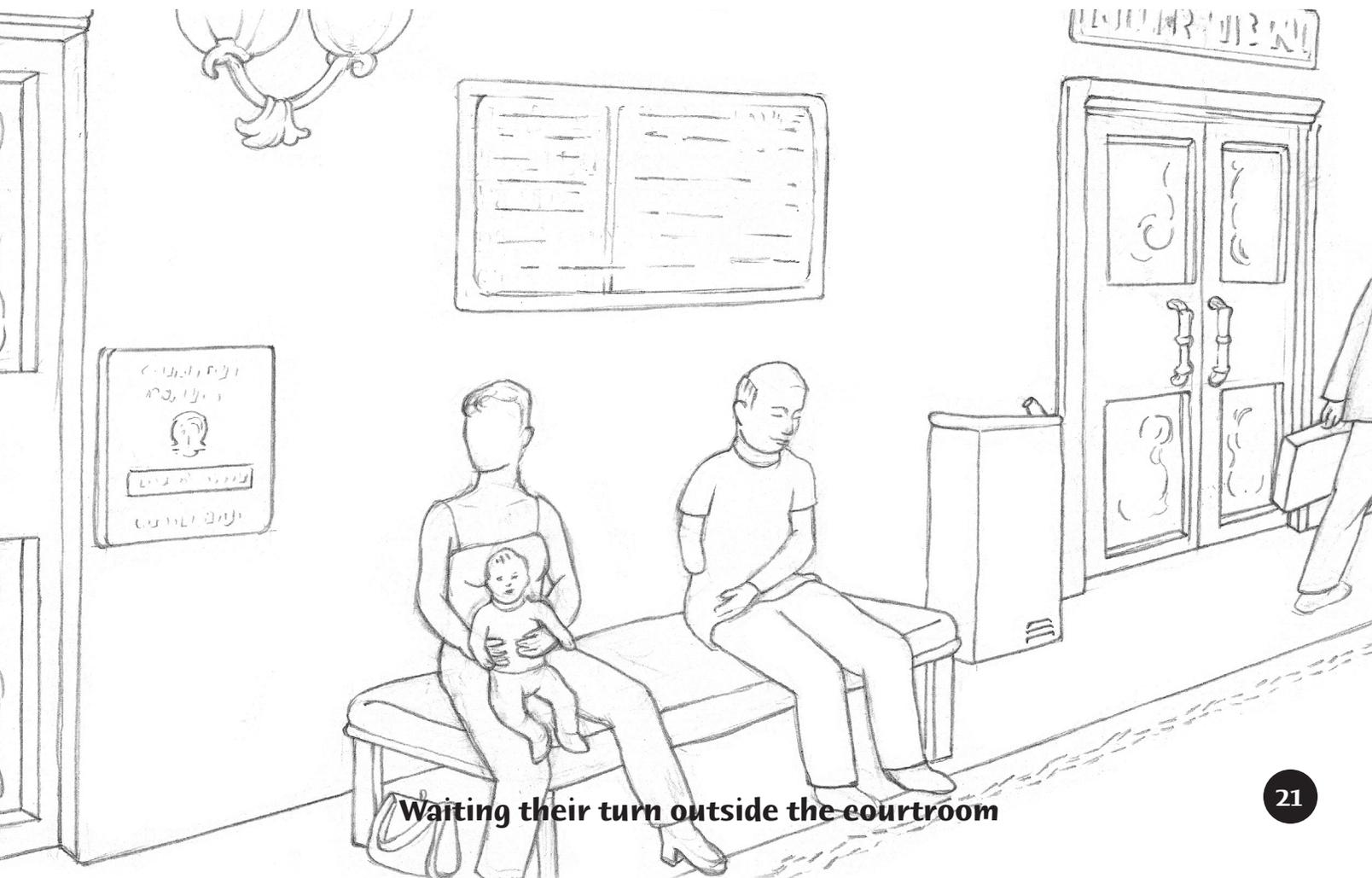


**In the courtroom, the judge listens to a witness being sworn in**

to Decorate



**A children's waiting room in the courthouse**



**Waiting their turn outside the courtroom**

# Family Law Court

When parents decide they can't live together anymore, they may decide to separate and live in different homes. If they have been married and don't want to live together or be married anymore, they can either get a **legal separation** or a **divorce**. Divorce is also called **dissolution**. To get a divorce, married people have to go to court. In court, a mediator will help the parents plan for how they will take care of their children, and a judge will decide how they will split up all the things they shared while living together.

Most of the time, children don't have to go to court even if their parents have a case there, but sometimes they do. If you have to go to court, remember that it isn't because you have done something wrong. Courts are different than other places you may have been, but you don't have to be afraid. Most court people are nice to children. Lots of children have parents who go to family court. If you are wondering about this or are a little scared, it helps to talk to someone about your feelings about going to court.

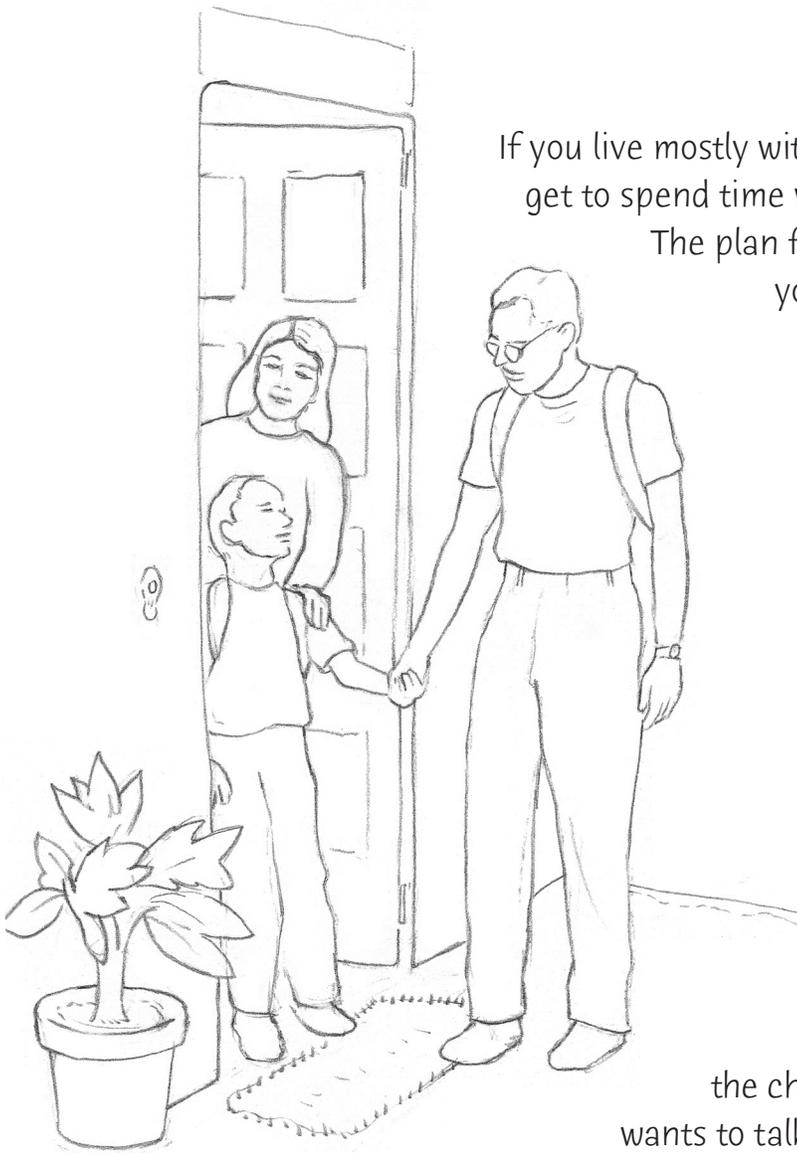
If your parents aren't living together, they need to figure out how you can spend time with both of your parents. They need to figure out when you will live with each of your parents. This plan about where you live is called a **custody plan**, or a parenting plan.





**Write a story about a person going to family court.**

**Maybe you know someone who went to family court to fix a problem.**



If you live mostly with one parent, you will usually get to spend time with, or **visit**, the other parent.

The plan for how often you visit with your other parent is called a visitation schedule or **parenting plan**.

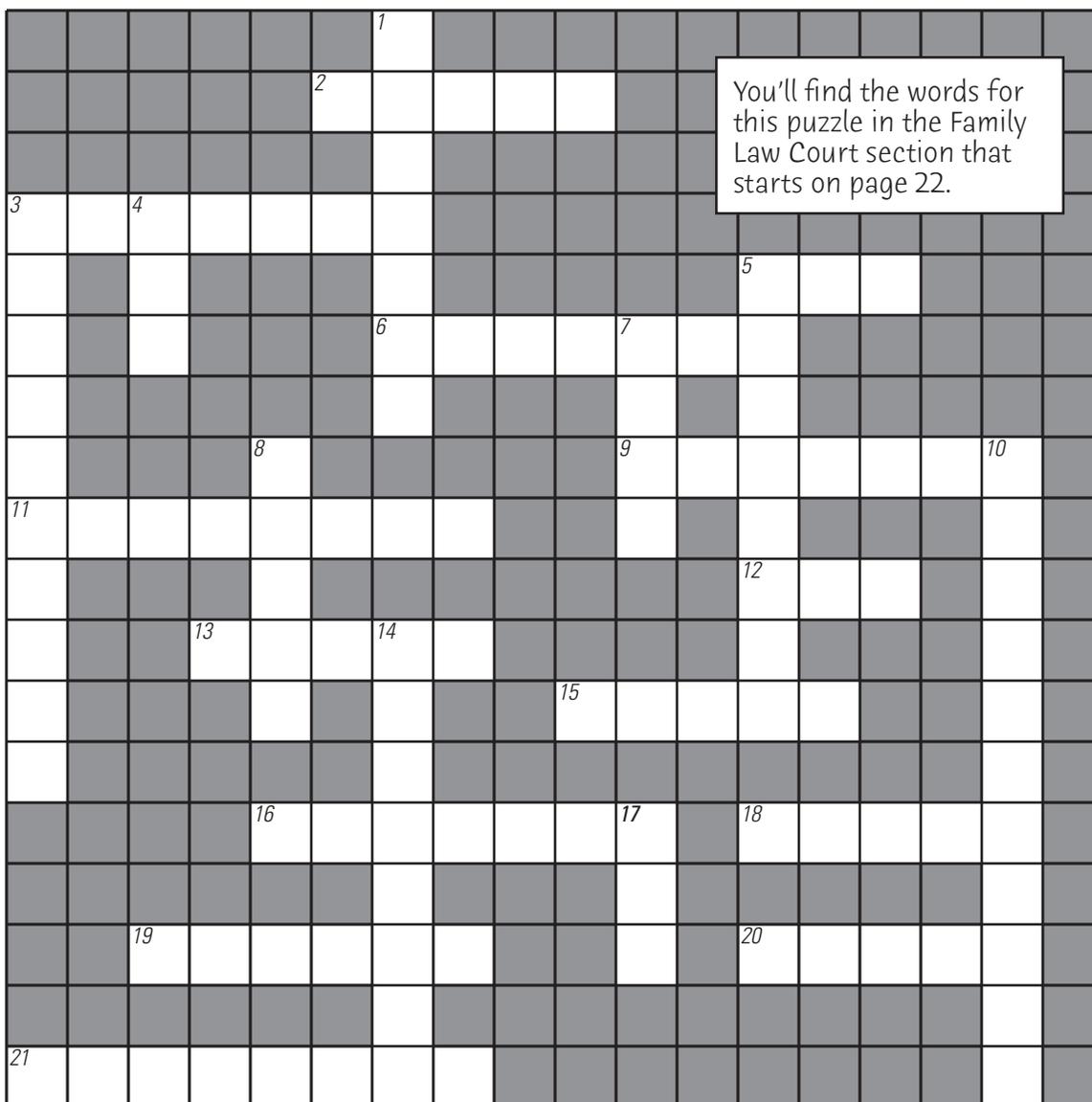
When your parents need help deciding about custody and visitation, they can see a court **mediator**, sometimes called a **child custody recommending counselor** or **CCRC**. The mediator listens to your parents' ideas about how best to take care of you. The mediator helps them work out a plan that will be best for you. Sometimes mediators also want to meet the children. If your parents' mediator

wants to talk to you, he or she will probably ask you questions about how things are going for you at home, at school, and with your friends. The mediator won't ask you to choose which parent you want to live with or to say if you like one of your parents more than the other.

Parents also have to figure out how much money they need to give each other to take care of you after they separate. This money is called **support**. At court there is a lawyer called a **facilitator** who helps parents and the court decide how much support will be paid.

If parents can't agree on their own, the **judge** will tell them what to do. When the judge tells someone what to do, it is called an **order**. The judge has an office in the court and sits at a desk called a **bench**. The judge wears a black **robe**. The judge gets help from the **clerk**, who keeps the judge organized. In the courtroom, there is a special police officer called a **bailiff** who keeps everyone safe. Sometimes a judge can't finish a case in one day. Then the judge will **continue** the case.

# Crossword Puzzle



You'll find the words for this puzzle in the Family Law Court section that starts on page 22.

## ACROSS

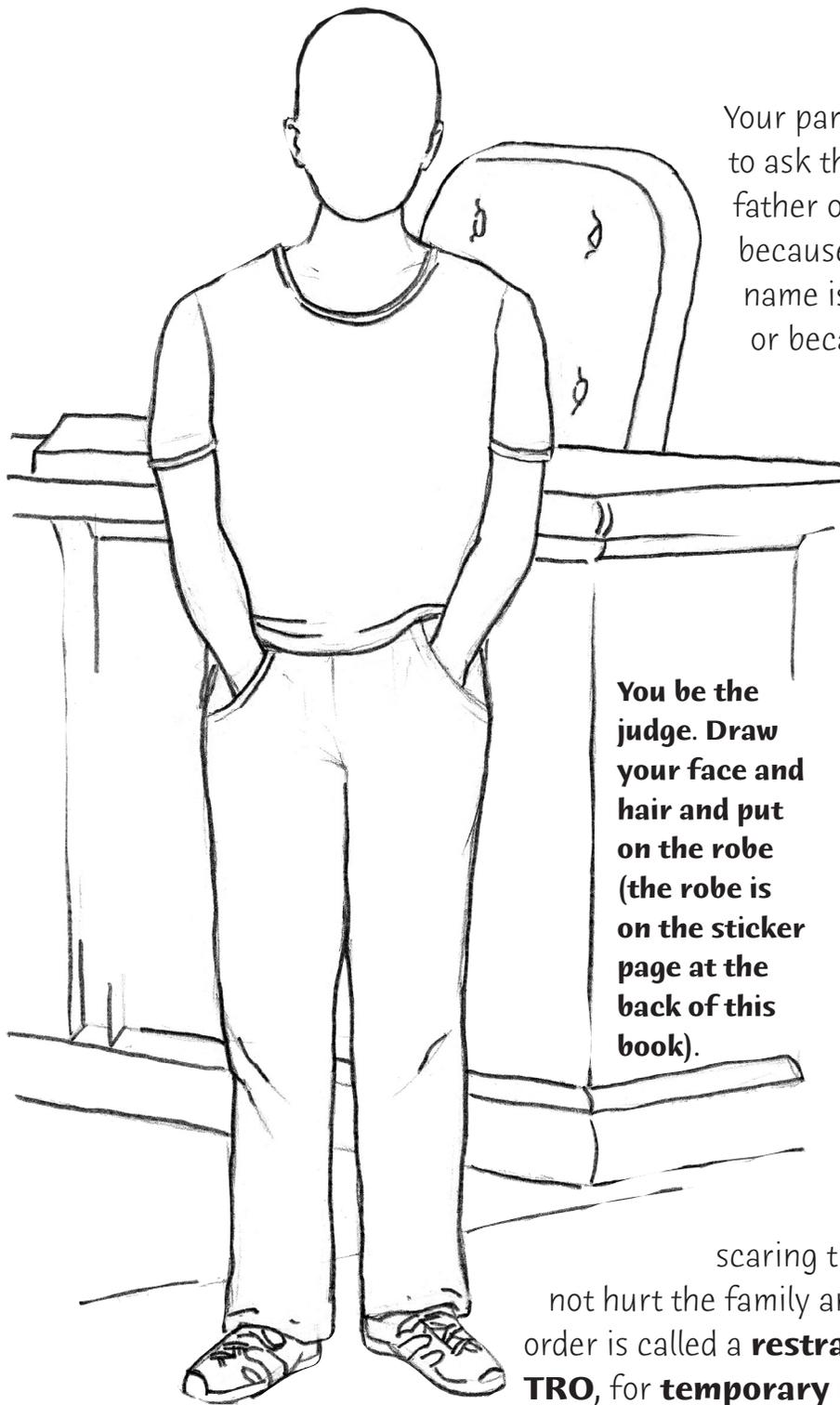
2. The person who makes decisions when parents cannot agree is the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Money one parent pays the other to help take care of children is called \_\_\_\_\_.
5. A short name for mother is \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Getting unmarried is called \_\_\_\_\_.
9. The police officer for the court is the \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Another name for "lawyer" is an \_\_\_\_\_.
12. The initials for a temporary restraining order, which is a judge's order to protect somebody, are \_\_\_\_\_.
13. The judge sits on the \_\_\_\_\_.
15. The person who helps the judge stay organized is the \_\_\_\_\_.
16. A person who tells what they know or saw to the judge is a \_\_\_\_\_.
18. The place where the judge works is the \_\_\_\_\_.
19. Someone you can talk to is a \_\_\_\_\_.

20. Spending time with a parent you don't live with is called a \_\_\_\_\_, or parenting time.
21. The person who types up everything that is said is a court \_\_\_\_\_.

## DOWN

1. The plan for where a child lives is called \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Parents who decide to live in different places are having a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. A nickname for dad is \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The person who helps parents decide together where children will live is the \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The clothing that the judge wears is the \_\_\_\_\_.
8. What the judge tells you to do is called an \_\_\_\_\_.
10. The court lawyer who helps the parent with child support is the \_\_\_\_\_.
14. If a case can't be heard that day, then the judge will \_\_\_\_\_ it to another day.
17. A short name for sister is \_\_\_\_\_.

Answers on page 38.



**You be the judge. Draw your face and hair and put on the robe (the robe is on the sticker page at the back of this book).**

Your parents can also come to court to ask the judge to decide who your father or mother is. This may be because your father or mother's name is not on your birth certificate, or because your parents weren't married to each other when you were born. The judge can make a decision about who is legally your father or mother. This decision is called **paternity** or **parentage**.

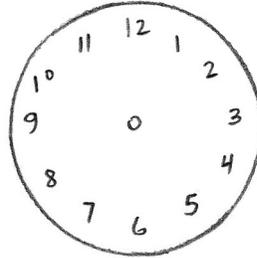
Sometimes parents, or people who live together, get scared of each other. Some parents hurt each other or their children. This is called **domestic violence**. If one parent hurts or really scares the other parent, that other parent can ask the judge for help. The judge can make a court order that tells the parent who is hurting or

scaring the family to stay away and not hurt the family anymore. This kind of court order is called a **restraining order**, or sometimes a **TRO**, for **temporary restraining order**.

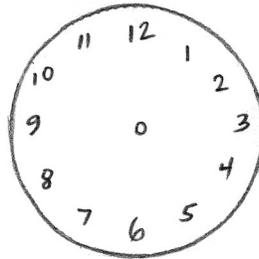
If your parents and the mediator can't work out a parenting plan, the judge may tell your parents to get a custody evaluation. A custody **evaluator** will spend some time getting to know both you and your parents. After that, the evaluator will think about what would be the best way for you to spend time with your parents, then the evaluator will tell the judge what he or she thinks.

# Draw the hands on the clocks for:

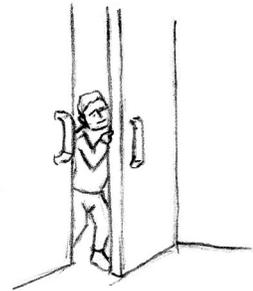
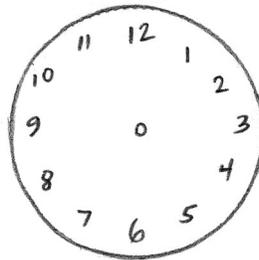
What time you woke up



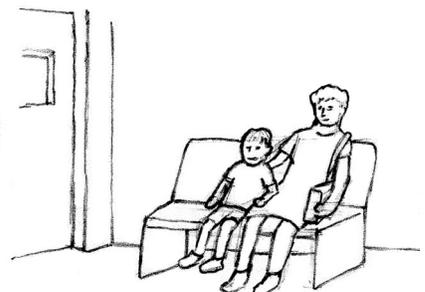
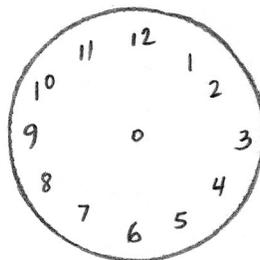
What time you left your house



What time you got to court



What time it is now



# Guardianships

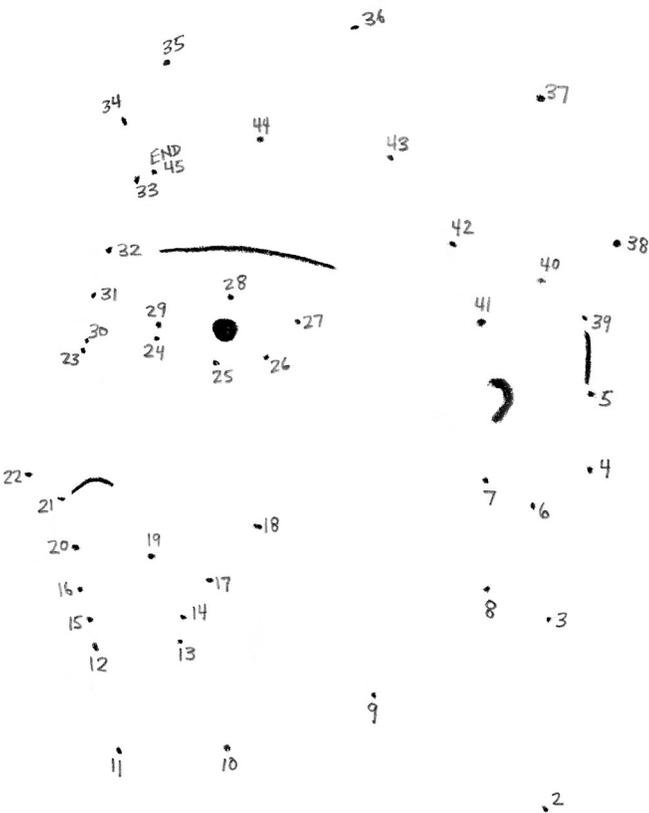
Sometimes children have no parent to take care of them. This can happen if the parents are dead, or very sick, or in jail, or if they have drug or alcohol problems. There can be other reasons too. Another family member or a friend will need to take care of the children. This works best if a judge gives the friend or relative the legal right to act as the parent. When a judge picks someone else to care for children instead of their parents, that person is called a **guardian**. This plan is called a **guardianship**.

Like a parent, the guardian cares for the children until one or both parents can do it again or until the children grow up and don't need anyone to care for them. Like a parent, the guardian finds a home and a school for the children, provides food and clothes, and takes the children to the doctor when they are sick. The children are part of the guardian's family. The guardian also listens to them when they want to talk.

The guardian makes them do their homework and helps them if they need it.

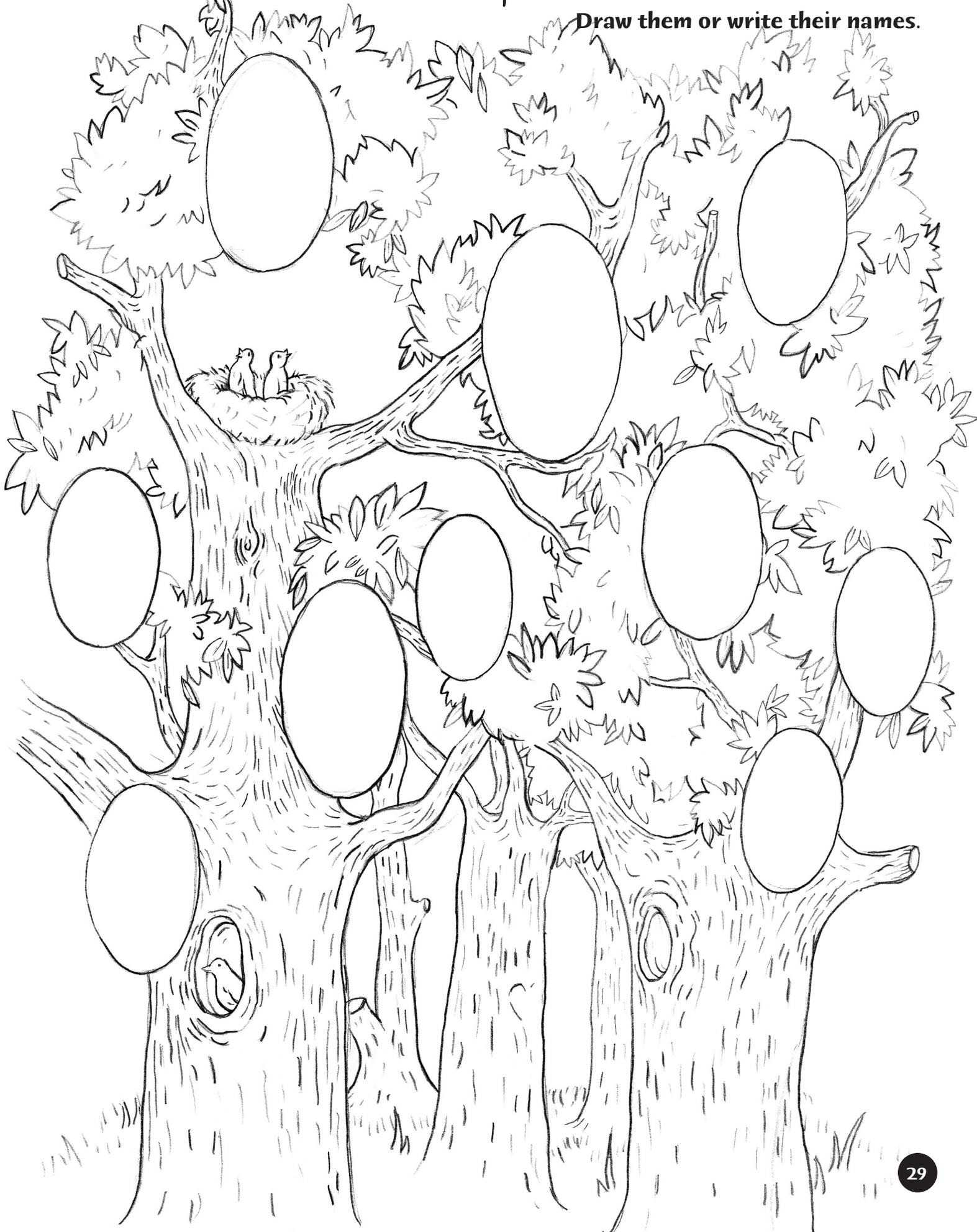
Parents who cannot care for their children may still love their children. If they are able to, the parents may visit or phone the children at the guardian's home or other places. If the parents get better, the judge may allow the parents to take care of the children again.

The judge watches the guardian to make sure the guardian is doing a good job. The parents, the children, and the guardian may see the judge to talk about any help the children need.



# Who Are the People You Are Connected To?

Draw them or write their names.



# I'm Being Adopted

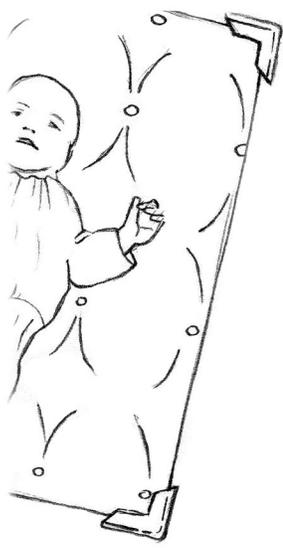
**Adoption** is the way a child legally becomes part of a new family. The judge decides if it is best for the child to be adopted. Before the judge makes this decision, a social worker will talk to the child. The social worker also meets the new parents and visits the new home. After adoption a child is a member of a new family. A new family can include brothers and sisters, grandparents, and aunts and uncles. As a member of the new family, the child has all the legal rights of a child born into that family.

Children become adoptable for many different reasons. Sometimes the birth-parents are not able to raise the child. They may be too young. They may not be able to give the things a child needs to be happy and healthy. Sometimes the birth-parents have died.

People adopt children because they love children and want to bring a child into their family. Foster parents, the birth-parents' family, or anyone else who wants to include a child in their family can adopt children.

Adoptions can involve all types of children and families. Children can be adopted at any age. Some are babies. Others are teenagers. Even adults can be adopted. Children can be adopted into a family of a different race or religion. Children with special abilities can be adopted. Children can even be adopted from other states or countries.



A black and white illustration of a spiral-bound notebook. The notebook is open, showing two pages. The pages are ruled with horizontal lines. The spiral binding is on the left side. The notebook is tilted slightly to the right.

**Write about someone you know who is adopted.**

**You can write about yourself if you are adopted, or you can make up a story.**

# What Is Emancipation?

**Emancipation** ends the legal authority that a parent has over a child who is under 18. After emancipation, your parent doesn't have to take care of you or pay for things that you need. Emancipation changes your life. You will have some new rights and also some new responsibilities.

## When Can You Get a Judge to Emancipate You?

You have to be at least 14 and living away from home. Your parents have to agree with your decision. They could also decide not to fight you in court. You have to have a legal income that pays for food, clothes, and rent. The judge has to decide that emancipation is best for you.

## After You Are Emancipated, Which of These Are Rights? Which Are Responsibilities?

**Right**—the power to have or do something (if you want) that is guaranteed by law.

**Responsibility**—an obligation or something you must do.

Write the word “right” or “responsibility” next to each sentence:

1. You can live where you want. \_\_\_\_\_
2. You can decide when to go to the doctor. \_\_\_\_\_
3. You must have the money to take care of yourself. \_\_\_\_\_
4. You can sign contracts to buy, sell, rent, or give things away. \_\_\_\_\_
5. You can keep the money you make. \_\_\_\_\_
6. You can sign up for school and get a work permit. \_\_\_\_\_
7. You can get a driver's license if you are old enough and have insurance. \_\_\_\_\_
8. You must pay your doctor bills if you get sick. \_\_\_\_\_

## Emancipation Is Not the Same as Being 18

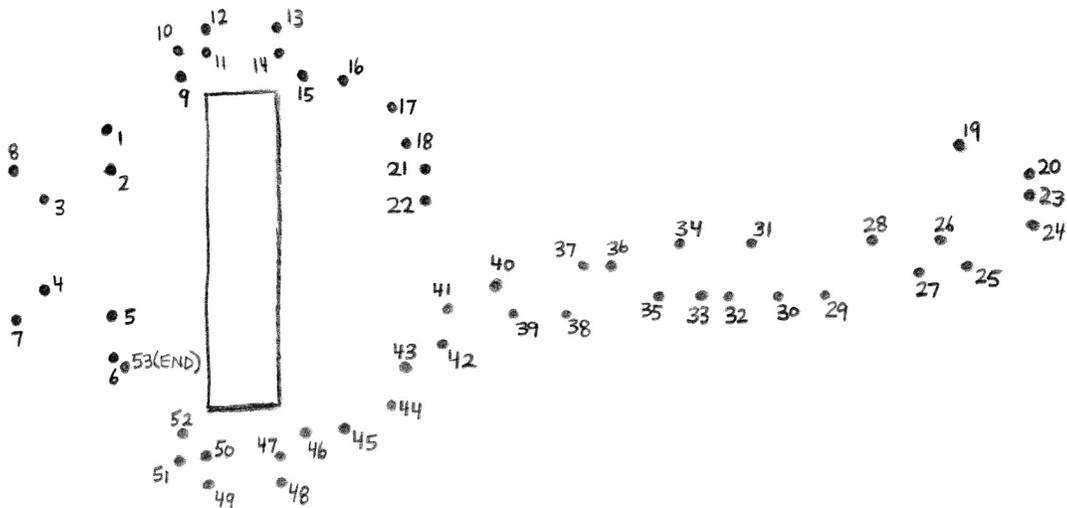
If you are emancipated, is the answer to these questions YES or NO?  
Circle the right answer:

1. Do you still have to attend school until you are 18?    YES    NO
2. Can you work as many hours as an 18-year-old?    YES    NO
3. Can you get married without your parent's consent?    YES    NO
4. If you break a law, will you have to go to adult criminal court?    YES    NO
5. Can you vote?    YES    NO
6. Can you buy and drink alcohol?    YES    NO

## What Are the Three Ways to Get Emancipated? Who Has to Agree?

**Draw a line connecting the action at the left with the people on the right who have to participate.**

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Getting married ●           | <input type="radio"/> Parents only      |
| Joining the armed forces ●  | <input type="radio"/> Judge only        |
| Emancipation from a judge ● | <input type="radio"/> Parents and judge |



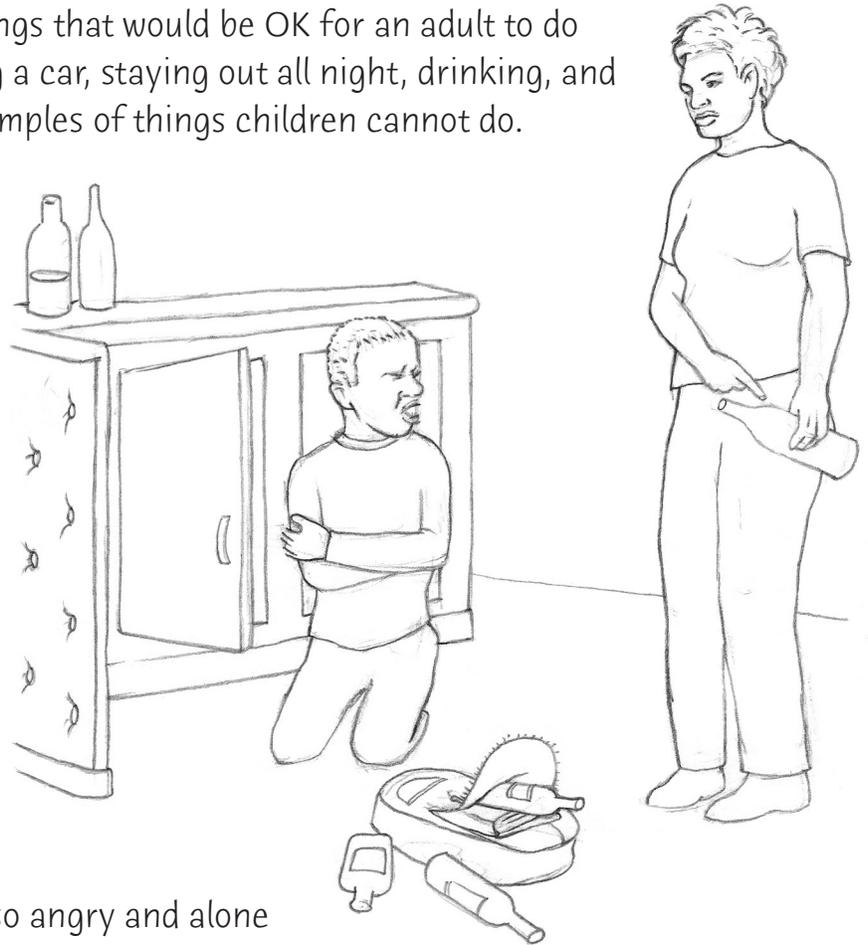
# Special Laws For Children

Sometimes children do things that would be OK for an adult to do but not for a child. Driving a car, staying out all night, drinking, and skipping school are all examples of things children cannot do.

If you are a child and you do these things, they are called **status offenses**. That means you are breaking the law because you are not yet old enough to do these things. Children do things that are status offenses for many reasons. For example, some children have problems that never seem to go away. These children feel sad, alone, and angry. They may feel so angry and alone that they always disobey their parents, never go to school, or even run away from home.

But because of their age it is against the law for children to do these things. Children can get help with these feelings. They can see a school counselor or any adult they trust to talk to about their feelings.

Usually status offenders can go home, but if you are not allowed to go home, you can call your parents, your lawyer, or someone else to help you.



# Find-a-Word

S F U I G B P A O S D M N R A L  
 T W O Z L A R B D L U T R F G E  
 N A R Q T S E T E N I R U T P O  
 E R A U J U V E N I L E H A L L  
 R M W S Y C L L R E F F T N S R  
 A S P M S P E E D I N G O N T H  
 P V L O I A Y E N P T I J H A R  
 Y O B K Y C U O O F T P P M T E  
 E B U I L E D L Y U I M P T U C  
 B M F N F A I D T L S N L H S I  
 O D C G V C C I L A C T U L O F  
 S S P O E X T I C U R F E W F F  
 I M P F A S T Q S U E D I T F O  
 D E A G E I P T A J F A L R E N  
 G L T R F E S N N U T A I U N O  
 G B E F G O C S I D I E D O S I  
 S O A I H Y T R A G N O E C E T  
 C R C M C G N I L E S N U O C A  
 G P H R N S K I P S C H O O L B  
 H E E S S I R P E S E N I F T O  
 P U R F L A W Y E R D P A A R R  
 L O H O C L A D A M E R R I C P

The words may be  
HORIZONTAL

V  
E  
R  
T  
I  
C  
A  
L

D  
I  
A  
G  
O  
N  
A  
L

or  
SDRAWKCAB

Circle these words when you find them:

ALCOHOL

ASSAULT

BUI (bicycling under  
influence)

COUNSELING

COURT

CURFEW

DISOBEY PARENTS

DUI (driving under  
influence)

GRAFFITI

JUDGE

JUVENILE HALL

LAWYER

POLICE

PROBATION OFFICER

PROBLEMS

RESTITUTION

SKIP SCHOOL

SMOKING

SPEEDING

STATUS OFFENSE

TEACHER

TRUANCY

URINE TEST

Answers on page 39.

# Did I Do Something Wrong?



Youth can get into trouble if they disobey the law. If a **police officer** believes that you have broken the law, the officer could arrest you. The officer may ask you questions

and decide if you can go home or if you have to go to **juvenile hall**. At juvenile hall all of the doors are locked. Usually you will

have to stay there until a judge

says you can leave. Even if you get to go home, later you may have to talk to a **probation officer** about what you did and why you disobeyed the law. A probation officer helps you make better choices for the future and may decide that you have to go to juvenile court.

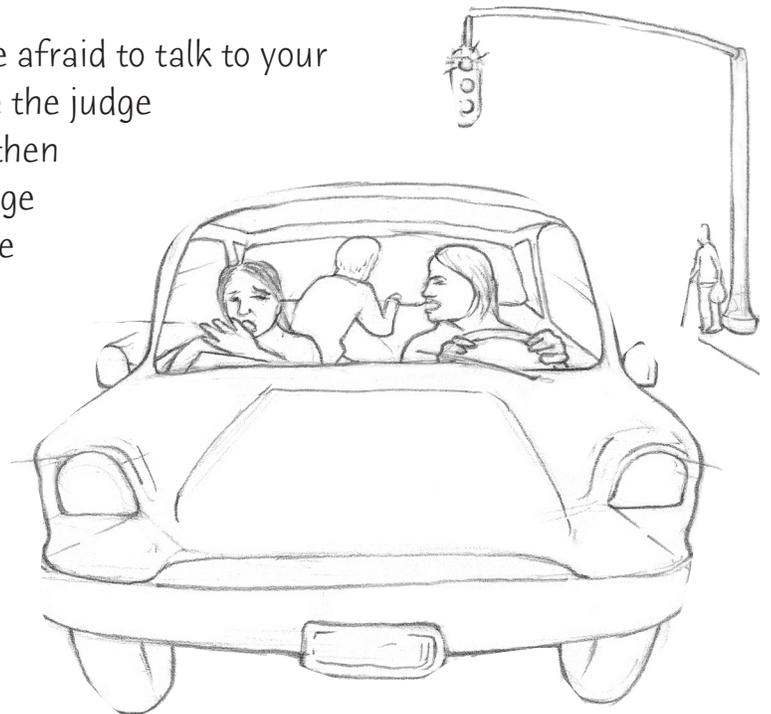
If you ever get arrested, the first thing to remember is to get some HELP! You need to talk to a lawyer about what happened. Your lawyer will help you talk to the police and everyone else who wants to ask you questions. You have the right to call a lawyer right away if you are locked up. You have the right to a lawyer even if you cannot afford one.



There are different kinds of crimes. Some are much more serious than others. **Felony** crimes are more serious than **misdemeanor** crimes and you could be locked up for a longer period of time. In some very serious cases, youth may have to go to adult court.

Some crimes can be either a misdemeanor or felony, depending on what happened. For example, if you get into a fistfight you could be charged with misdemeanor battery. But if you hurt someone badly in a fistfight, you could be charged with felony battery.

If you have to go to court, don't be afraid to talk to your lawyer. There may be a trial where the judge hears both sides of the story and then decides if you are guilty. If the judge decides that you are guilty, and the crime is not very serious, you might get put on probation. If that happens then you must do what the judge and probation officer say. If the crime is serious or you have been in trouble before, you could be forced to live away from home or even be locked up. Your family can usually visit you if you cannot live at home. You and your family may even go to counseling together to understand how to improve your behavior.



Some counties offer **youth** or **peer court**, which allows youth to be judged and sentenced by their peers. This is usually only offered if you haven't been in trouble before and for less serious crimes. The punishment can be things like community service, paying for the damage you caused, or even serving on the jury for someone else's case.

No matter what, even if you do get into trouble, remember it's never too late to change yourself for the better. Don't ever give up on yourself!



## Answer Key *continued*

### Emancipation: Rights and Responsibilities (page 32)

1. Right
2. Right
3. Responsibility
4. Right
5. Right
6. Right
7. Right
8. Responsibility

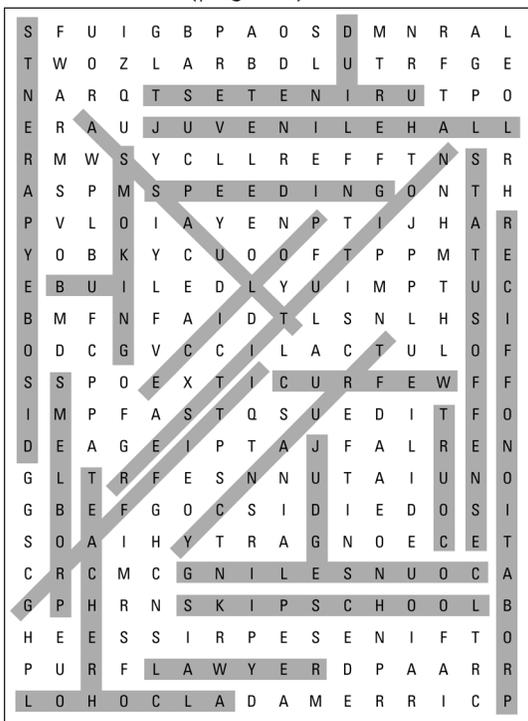
### Emancipation Is Not the Same as Being 18 (page 33)

1. Yes
2. Yes
3. No
4. No
5. No
6. No

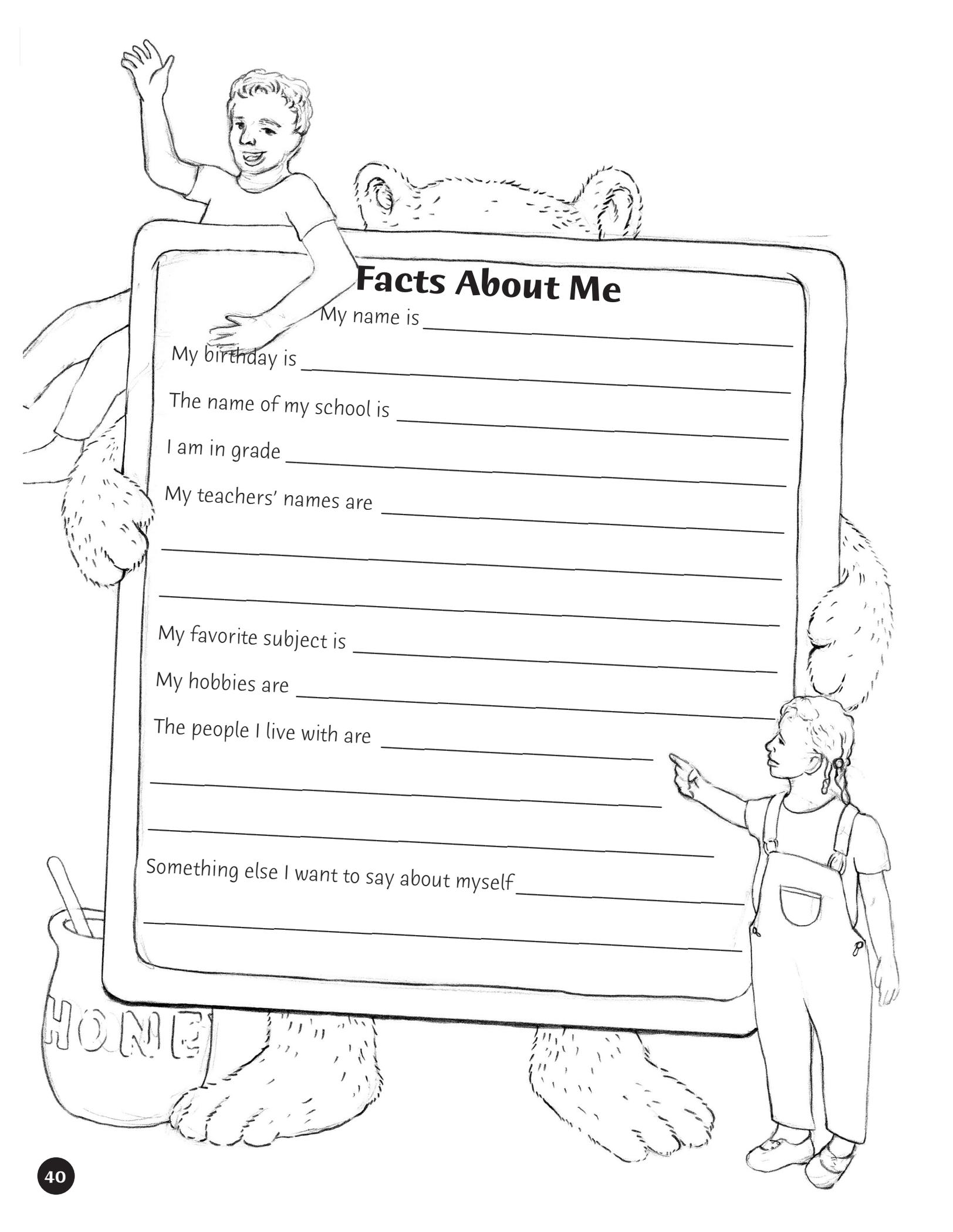
### What Are the Three Ways to Get Emancipated? (page 33)

- Getting married  Parents only
- Joining the armed forces  Judge only
- Emancipation from a judge  Parents and judge

### Find-a-Word (page 35)



- ALCOHOL
- ASSAULT
- BUI (bicycling under influence)
- COUNSELING
- COURT
- CURFEW
- DISOBEY PARENTS
- DUI (driving under influence)
- GRAFFITI
- JUDGE
- JUVENILE HALL
- LAWYER
- POLICE
- PROBATION OFFICER
- PROBLEMS
- RESTITUTION
- SKIP SCHOOL
- SMOKING
- SPEEDING
- STATUS OFFENSE
- TEACHER
- TRUANCY
- URINE TEST



## Facts About Me

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

My birthday is \_\_\_\_\_

The name of my school is \_\_\_\_\_

I am in grade \_\_\_\_\_

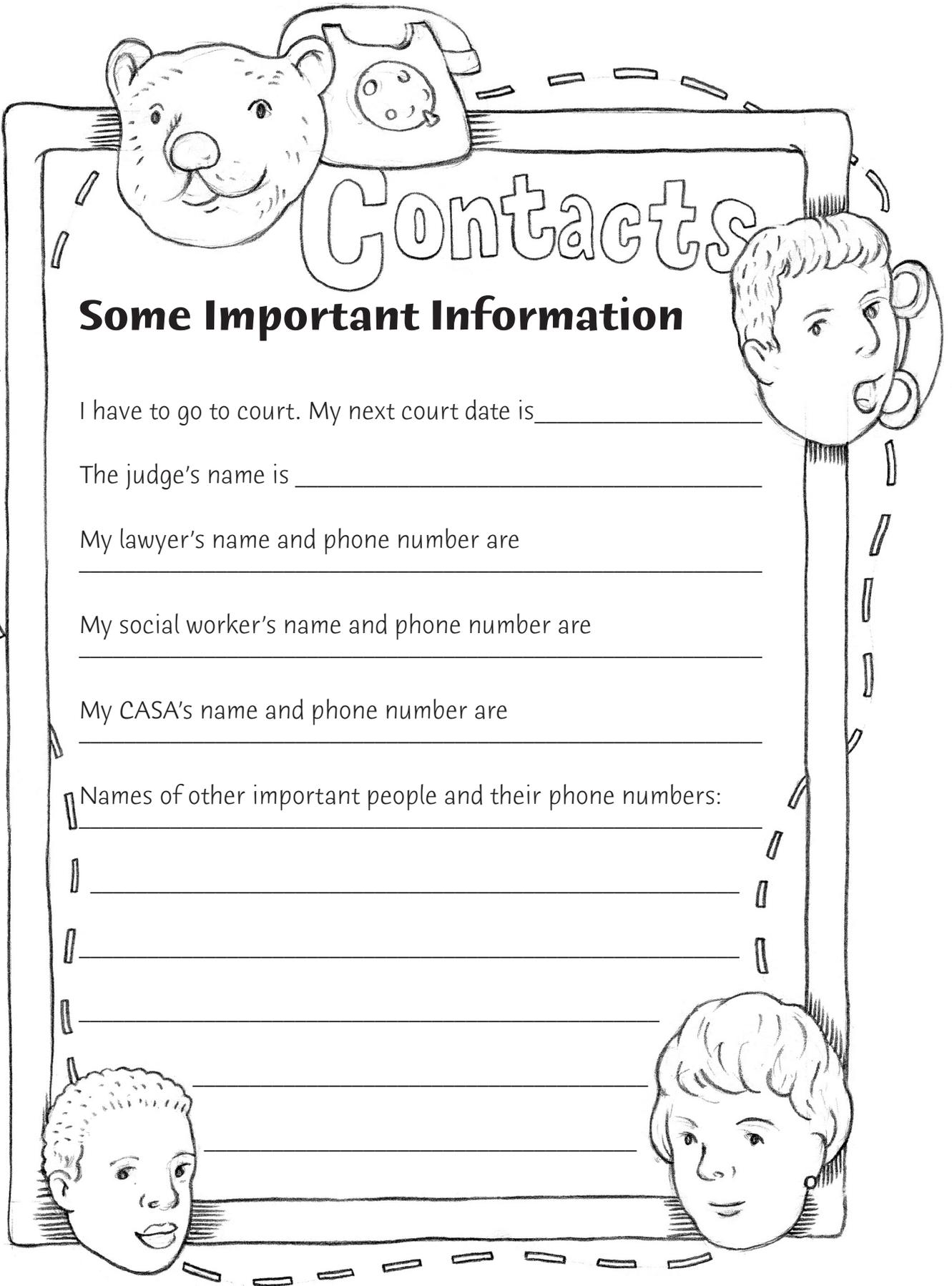
My teachers' names are \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

My favorite subject is \_\_\_\_\_

My hobbies are \_\_\_\_\_

The people I live with are \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Something else I want to say about myself \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Contacts

## Some Important Information

I have to go to court. My next court date is \_\_\_\_\_

The judge's name is \_\_\_\_\_

My lawyer's name and phone number are \_\_\_\_\_

My social worker's name and phone number are \_\_\_\_\_

My CASA's name and phone number are \_\_\_\_\_

Names of other important people and their phone numbers:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## About This Book

***What's Happening in Court?* is intended for children who are in court for any reason—whether they are witnesses, visitors to the courthouse, or involved in a case. It aims to introduce children to the court processes in which they are or could be involved, the people who work in the judicial system, and the vocabulary that surrounds judicial proceedings. It is meant to be used as a**

**teaching tool that may foster conversations between children and adults about the court system, and a game book that gives children who are in court something to do while they wait. This book is not intended to give or substitute for legal advice.**



**Children of all ages can enjoy this book. Depending on their age, ability, and interest, they may look at and color the pictures, read the text, play the games, or do the activities.**

**We hope California's children will find this book interesting and fun.**