



PARTICIPATION RIGHTS

OF CHILDREN/YOUTH IN D&N CASES

IF YOU ARE 0-11 YEARS OLD

You have the **right to an attorney called a guardian *ad litem* (GAL)**.

A GAL argues for what they decide is best for you, and tells others what you want.

A GAL will not tell others what you want if you ask them not to.

IF YOU ARE 12+ YEARS OLD

You have the **right to an attorney called Counsel for Youth (CFY)**.

A CFY will talk to you about what you want, and argue for that.

A CFY can usually keep things you say secret.

WHAT IS A GAL?

GALs and CFYs learn about you and your family. They'll talk with you, your family members, and people who are important to you.

They also have the right to review documents - records from your school, doctors, the courts, and more.

FOR EVERY HEARING...

You have the right to get notice of every court hearing from your GAL or CFY. This means the date, time, location, and reason for your court hearing.

You have the right to go to your court hearings and participate.

You have the right to have your GAL or CFY at every hearing.

You have the right to have someone you pick at every court hearing.

FOR SOME HEARINGS...

During an **Adjudication Hearing**, the court decides if it should have the power to make decisions about your family. GALs and youth aged 12 and older have the right to request a jury trial. If plans to move forward without a trial are discussed, you have the right to share your thoughts about those plans.

During a **Dispositional Hearing**, the court decides what services your family needs. Those services are listed in a treatment plan - you have the right to help make this plan.

During a **Permanency Hearing**, the court decides a plan for your future home. You have the right to make the plan for your future home. You also have the right to participate in many meetings held by your county department.



QUESTIONS?

Talk with your GAL or CFY whenever you have questions about your rights in a case.