



*It's hard to know what to do when your child gets into trouble with the police or goes to Court. Don't be afraid to ask questions.*

***For more information, call:***

**Probation Screening Unit**

**(408) 278-5818**

**Juvenile Hall**

**(408) 278-5810**

**Juvenile Hall Visiting Appt.**

**(408) 278-5810**

**Office of the Public Defender**

**(408) 299-7725**

## **Glossary**

**Citation:** the official paper that notifies you about maybe having done something against the law. You will be asked to sign this paper promising to come to the Juvenile Probation Department.

**Detention Hearing:** a hearing to determine if the child is to be released from or remain in custody.

**Disposition Hearing:** a hearing where the judge orders what services are in the best interest of the child.

**Formal Probation:** a court order that allows the child to remain in the community under supervision of the Probation Department with specific conditions ordered by the court.

**Fitness Hearing:** a hearing to determine if the charges against your child should be heard in adult court.

**Informal Probation:** when the child's case is diverted and is handled informally by the Juvenile Court and Probation Department.

**Jurisdictional Hearing:** a hearing at which the petition is found to be true or not true.

**Petition:** a written request in which specific court action is asked for; in Juvenile Court a petition is filed to charge a minor.



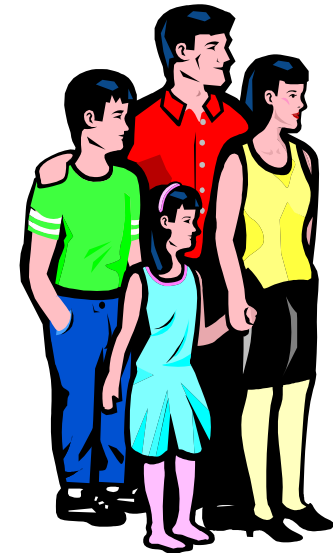
**J u v e n i l e   D e t e n t i o n   R e f o r m  
P l a n n i n g   C o m m i t t e e**

For More Information

Probation Screening Unit: 408-278-5818

Juvenile Hall: 408-278-5810

# Your Child and the Juvenile Justice System



*This brochure describes what happens if your child gets into trouble with the police or gets arrested. It is important for you to understand what is happening.*

**IF YOUR CHILD GETS A CITATION**  
**(SEE GLOSSARY ON BACK FOR DEFINITIONS OF**  
**UNDERLINED WORDS)**

- \* The police will fill out a crime report and give it to the Probation Department.
- \* The Probation Department will assign your child a Probation Officer.
- \* The Probation Officer will call you and make an appointment to meet you and your child.

**IF YOUR CHILD GETS TAKEN TO JUVENILE HALL**

- \* The Police Officer will tell you that your child is going to Juvenile Hall. Juvenile Hall is a locked building where young people are taken when the police believe they have committed a serious crime.
- \* A Probation Officer will call you when your child arrives and is admitted. Your child may be able to come home to you within 24 to 48 hours. Once in Juvenile Hall, your child will be able to call you. You may visit your child anytime and without an appointment for your first visit during the first 24 hours your child is there. After your first visit, you must have an appointment. The Probation Officer will tell you what happens next in your child's case; your child may not have to talk to a Judge in Court.
- \* If your child is not returned home to you quickly, your child stays at Juvenile Hall. The District Attorney may file a petition, formal charges against your child which says what crime may have been done. This is a formal case, and your child will have to go to Court.

**IF THE CASE IS HANDLED INFORMALLY AND**  
**YOUR CHILD RETURNS HOME**

- The Probation Officer has different things he/she can do:
- \* You and your child may have to talk to a group of neighborhood people who will decide what your child must do and what rules he must follow. This is called the "Restorative Justice Program." If your child completes one of these programs and follows the rules,

*Support your child during this time, learn what is happening, and go with youth child to the important meetings in court.*

your child will have no record at the Probation Department.

- \* Your child may have "informal supervision" by the assigned Probation Officer. In this case, you, your child, and the Probation Officer will agree to what your child will do and how often your child will have to meet with the Probation Officer. This lasts from six to twelve months.
- IF THE CASE IS HANDLED FORMALLY**
- \* Someone will call you with the dates and times of your child's Court Hearings.
  - \* You may hire a lawyer for your child, or a lawyer will be

given to him/her. A lawyer that is given, or assigned, to your child is called a Public Defender.

- \* The first hearing is called a Detention Hearing, if your child is in Juvenile Hall. A judge will decide if your child stays in Juvenile Hall or goes home. It is very important for you to attend this hearing.
- \* A second hearing, called a Jurisdictional Hearing, is where the judge decides if the charges against your child are true.
- \* Your child may also have to have a Fitness Hearing; this is where a judge decides if the charges against your child have adult (serious) results.

**IF THE JUDGE DECIDES THE CHARGES AGAINST**  
**YOUR CHILD ARE TRUE**

Your child will have a Dispositional Hearing. This is where the judge will decide what will happen with your child. These are types of things, called sanctions, that could occur:

- \* Be placed on formal probation, which means that he returns home, has a Probation Officer, and very serious rules to follow.
- \* Stay in Juvenile Hall for a while
- \* Live in a foster home
- \* Stay at a Probation Ranch, for a while, with other kids who are under Probation supervision.
- \* Go to the California Youth Authority, where he is locked up. The length of time will be determined by the judge.