

# Attending court can be difficult

Here are some tips and tricks for **attending youth court**

- Make sure you keep your subpoena as you may need to provide proof of attendance when missing school or work.
- Consider bringing a support person with you to court.
- Go to bed early the night before court and remember to eat breakfast in the morning.
- Dress comfortably, in a neat and tidy manner and avoid wearing clothing with inappropriate images and/or language.
- Pack a snack or lunch to bring with you since you may have a long wait in court. You may want to bring a book, toys or some personal items to help pass the time.
- You can bring something to drink but only bottled water is allowed in the courtroom.
- Be on time.
- When it's your turn to enter the courtroom, you will be paged, or a court support staff will locate you. Be prepared to wait.
- Hats, hoods, or headwear are not permitted in the courtroom except for cultural and spiritual dress.
- Take off your sunglasses before entering the courtroom unless they are required for a medical condition.
- Use the bathroom before you go into the courtroom.
- Remember to be respectful while in the courtroom and follow the rules of court, such as, no gum chewing, turn off your cell phone.
- Be yourself and always tell the truth.
- Know your story matters and is important. The outcome of court doesn't change this.
- Be polite and speak loudly, clearly, and slowly.
- Court is a safe place and there are people in the courtroom to protect you.
- Remember you are not in trouble and have done nothing wrong.
- Take your time, remember to breathe when answering questions and do your best to describe in detail what happened.
- Only answer the question that is being asked. If you don't understand a question, do not guess, ask to have it repeated or explained to you.
- Think of testifying as writing a story. Just tell the story the way it happened.
- Remember to answer the questions using words. Nodding or shaking your head to answer isn't acceptable as everything in the courtroom is being recorded.
- It is o.k. to feel nervous, scared or to cry. This may be a difficult time for you..
- You may ask for some water to drink, a tissue or even a break if you feel you need one.
- You may have access to testimonial aids you can use at the witness stand.
- If the judge finds the accused guilty you have the option to complete a victim impact statement form.
- Congratulate yourself on a job well done and for testifying.

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