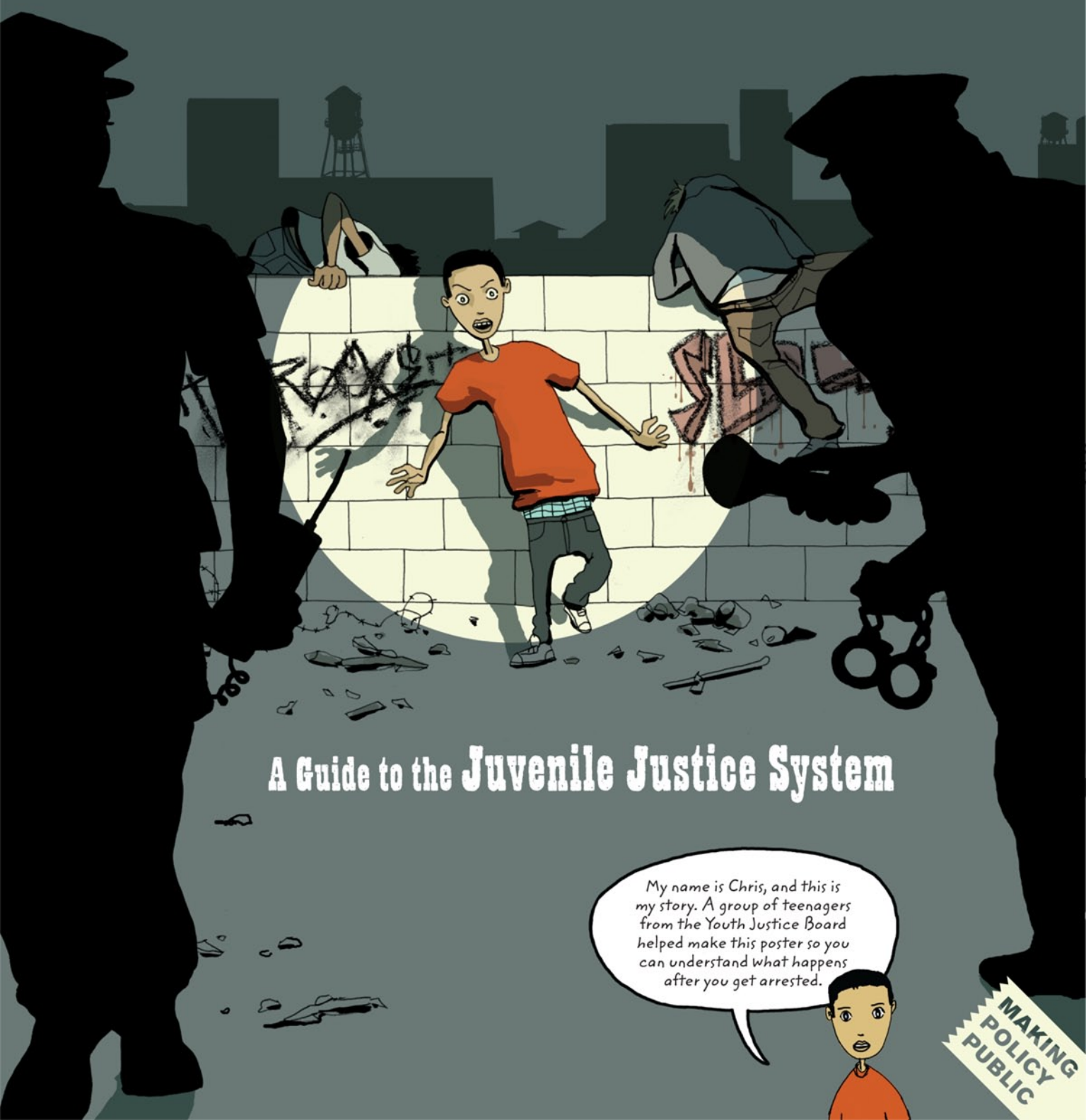


# I got arrested!

# NOW WHAT?



## A Guide to the Juvenile Justice System

My name is Chris, and this is my story. A group of teenagers from the Youth Justice Board helped make this poster so you can understand what happens after you get arrested.



**MAKING  
POLICY  
PUBLIC**



# DOWN AT THE Police Station, CHRIS GETS BOOKED...

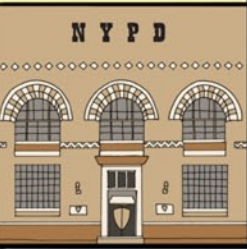
## WORDS YOU MIGHT HEAR:

**Family Court:** The court that hears juvenile delinquency cases as well as family matters like abuse, neglect, adoption, and child custody.

**Family Court Appearance Ticket:** A notice police give you after you get arrested. It tells you when to go to Probation for your intake interview.

**Detention:** The facilities (away from home) that you live in during your case if the judge thinks you'll get in trouble again or skip your court dates.

**Placement:** The facilities (away from home) that you live in after your case if the judge finds you committed the acts charged in the petition and thinks you're a danger to the community. Placement can last up to 18 months, with possible extension by the court.



My son did WHAT?... No, I can't make it down to the station. He's all yours!

Ma'am, if you come down here, we can let him go with a ticket to show up in Family Court.

If you don't, we'll have to put him in detention...

Your mom can't make it -

I don't give a -

- and I can't let you go unless there's an adult to take you.

Is there someone else I can call?

Otherwise, I'm gonna have to take you to detention until Family Court opens in the morning...

Overnight in DETENTION

...What am I gonna do?

## 2 The next morning in DETENTION, a probation officer interviews Chris

How many times have you been arrested?

...

How many days of school have you missed this year?

Perfect attendance.

Hm. I need to talk to a parent or guardian. Do you live with an adult who can come down here?

Maybe.

Listen, you can make this easy or hard.

It's your right not to talk, but I can look up your info whether you tell me or not.

Depending on what we learn, we might decide to 'adjust' your case and send you home today with a parent. But you also need to take this seriously.

The other option is to refer your case to the Law Department, which means you could go to court and the judge could put you back in detention...

Here -

- take this comic book about how the system works.

If you don't want to help me out, there's not much else I can do for you...

## WORDS YOU MIGHT HEAR:

**Adjustment:** When Probation 'adjusts' your case, they decide not to refer your case to the Law Department as long as you follow the rules set by the probation officer.

**Probation Department:** Probation officers lead your intake interview after arrest, gather information about your life for the court, and supervise you if you're on probation or in other programs during or after your case.

**Intake Interview:** A meeting after you get arrested where the probation officer asks you (and, if possible, your parent or guardian) questions about the arrest and your life.

**Law Department:** The lawyers who try to prove you committed an offense. They investigate cases and decide whether to bring them to court, then serve as prosecutors in the courtroom.

**File a Petition:** This is what it's called when the Law Department decides to bring a case to court.

## 3 to the LAW DEPARTMENT

Chris's case is referred to the LAW DEPARTMENT

Okay, next case.

This kid has no record, but Probation had trouble getting a parent to come to intake and said he wasn't very cooperative.

We think he was there that night.

If we don't do something about this kid, I bet we'll see him again.

I'm not so sure - this could just be a one-time thing for him.

Let's file, but maybe the court will order services to keep him out of trouble and we won't have to push for placement...

See how Chris's case unfolds...



# That same day, Chris meets his LAWYER in detention



## WORDS YOU MIGHT HEAR:

**Lawyer for the Youth:** The lawyer who defends you in court and explains the case to you.

**Initial Court Appearance:** The first time you go to court after getting arrested. You hear the charges against you and can make an admission or enter a denial. The judge then decides to parole you home, assign you to an Alternative-to-Detention program, or remand you to detention.

**Make an Admission of Responsibility:** To plead guilty or admit you committed an offense.

**Enter a Denial of Responsibility:** To plead not guilty or deny you committed an offense.

**Parole:** When the judge sends you home during your case instead of putting you in detention.

**Remand:** When the judge decides to send you to a detention facility during your case.

**Alternative to Detention (ATD):** Community programs you go to during your case that provide supervision, case management, and social services to help you stay out of trouble and keep your court dates.

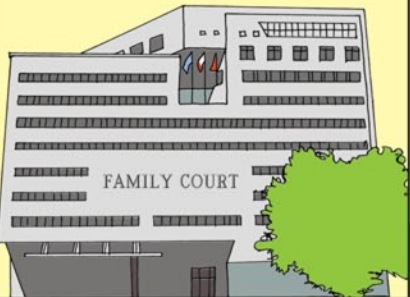
**Fact-Finding Hearing:** The hearing where lawyers present evidence and the judge decides whether you committed the acts charged in the petition.

**Disposition Hearing:** The hearing where the judge announces the disposition. This hearing happens if the judge finds you committed the acts charged in the petition.

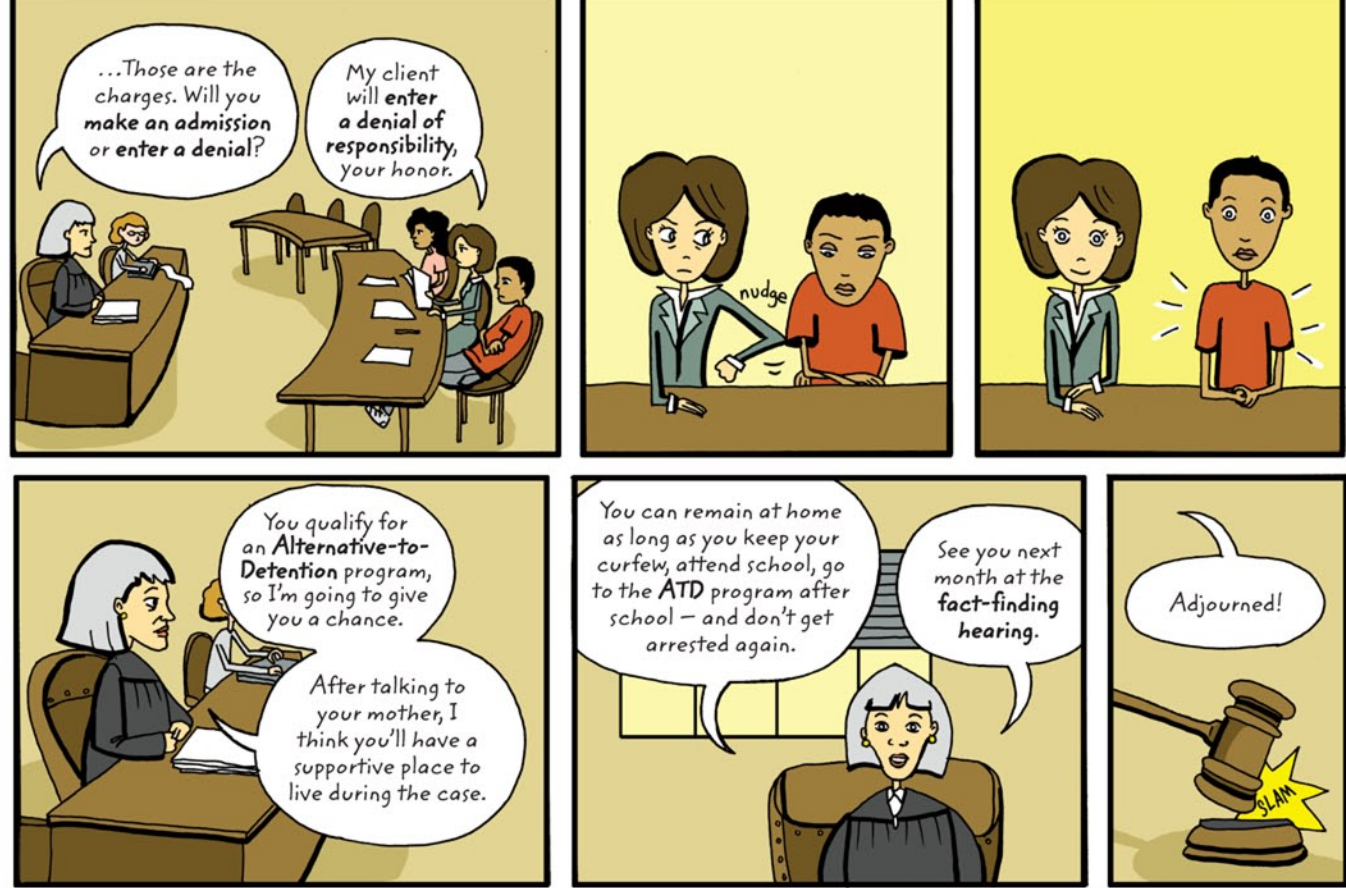
**Disposition:** The sentence you get after the judge finds you committed the acts charged in the petition. Options include: release without conditions, probation, and placement.

**Respondent:** A youth who gets arrested and accused of committing an offense.

**Offense (aka Delinquent Act):** Illegal behavior by a person under the age of 16.



## 5 And then, court is in session at the INITIAL COURT APPEARANCE



## 7 Waiting for the FACT-FINDING HEARING



SINCE I HAD PEOPLE CHECKING UP ON ME, I WENT TO SCHOOL MORE, MADE MY CURFEW, STAYED OUT OF FIGHTS, AND WENT TO MY ATD.



I WANTED A CLEAN REPORT AT THE HEARING.

I DID NOT WANT TO GO TO DETENTION OR HAVE THE JUDGE PUT ME IN PLACEMENT AT THE END OF MY CASE.



Family Court is now in session!



And then THE JUDGE MAKES A DECISION



...Based on the evidence presented at this hearing, I find the respondent committed the acts charged in the petition.



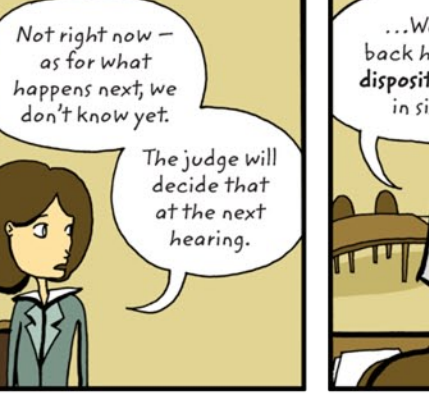
The best things you can do are keep going to school and ATD, get home for curfew, and stay out of trouble...



I ALSO KEPT IN TOUCH WITH MY LAWYER SO THAT WE COULD LET THE JUDGE KNOW I WAS TAKING ALL THIS SERIOUSLY.



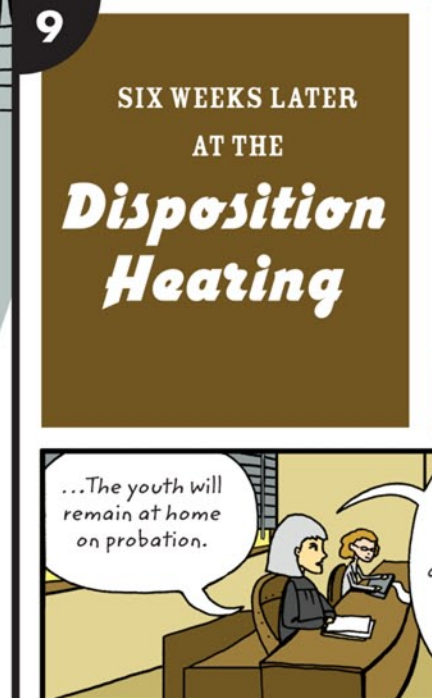
...We'll come back here for the disposition hearing in six weeks.



I'll expect a report from Probation and recommendations from the Law Department and Chris's lawyer about where he should go after the next hearing.



Listen, you've been doing really well.



## 9 SIX WEEKS LATER AT THE Disposition Hearing



...I just want to stay home, your honor. I'm sorry for what I did and it won't happen again.



...In recognition of the progress this youth has made in his Alternative-to-Detention program, we recommend...



...my client has shown that he can attend school and live at home and in his community without any problems.

IT WASN'T EASY - OR FUN - BUT I JUST KEPT TELLING MYSELF THAT I COULD GO UPSTATE IF I MESSED UP.

Can he do it? Look inside to find out...





# I got arrested! NOW WHAT?

## A Guide to the Juvenile Justice System



### WANT SOME TIPS?

**HERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT WE LEARNED:**

- Bring a parent, a guardian, or another responsible adult. This is really important. If you have a responsible adult with you at every stage, you're more likely to stay at home during and after your case.
- Start building a good record right away: Stay out of trouble. Go to school. Go to court dates and other appointments on time. People will be checking up on you. Your behavior during the case can matter as much as anything you've done in the past.
- Show that you take the process seriously: Treat everyone with respect. Be polite. Dress appropriately. The probation officer, the judge, and the Law Department notice these things when they're making decisions about your case. (It makes a good impression when you tuck in your shirt, pull up your pants, and take off your hat or durag.)
- Take advantage of the programs and services in the system. They can help show the judge that you're trying to stay out of trouble.
- If you don't understand something, ask questions!

**CHRIS & HIS MOM**

**HERE'S MY advice:**

- Be honest and open with me. You have a right to a lawyer, and being honest and open helps us do our job.
- Use caution when talking to people in the system. Whatever you say or do around a police officer or probation officer is NOT confidential and can come up in court. You always have the right not to talk.
- Stay in touch with me! Return my phone calls. Call or email and I'll get back to you as soon as I can.
- Ask me questions! It's my job to help you understand the process.

**LAWYER FOR THE YOUTH CLARISSA PARKER**

**LAWYER FOR THE YOUTH CLARISSA PARKER**

Anything we talk about is confidential. That means I can't tell anyone else without your permission, and nothing you say to me will be used against you.

I represent you. I'm here to explain your case and the system to you. If we go to court, I'll tell your side of the story to the judge. Remember that you're innocent unless the Law Department can prove you're guilty.

OR... You make an admission of responsibility

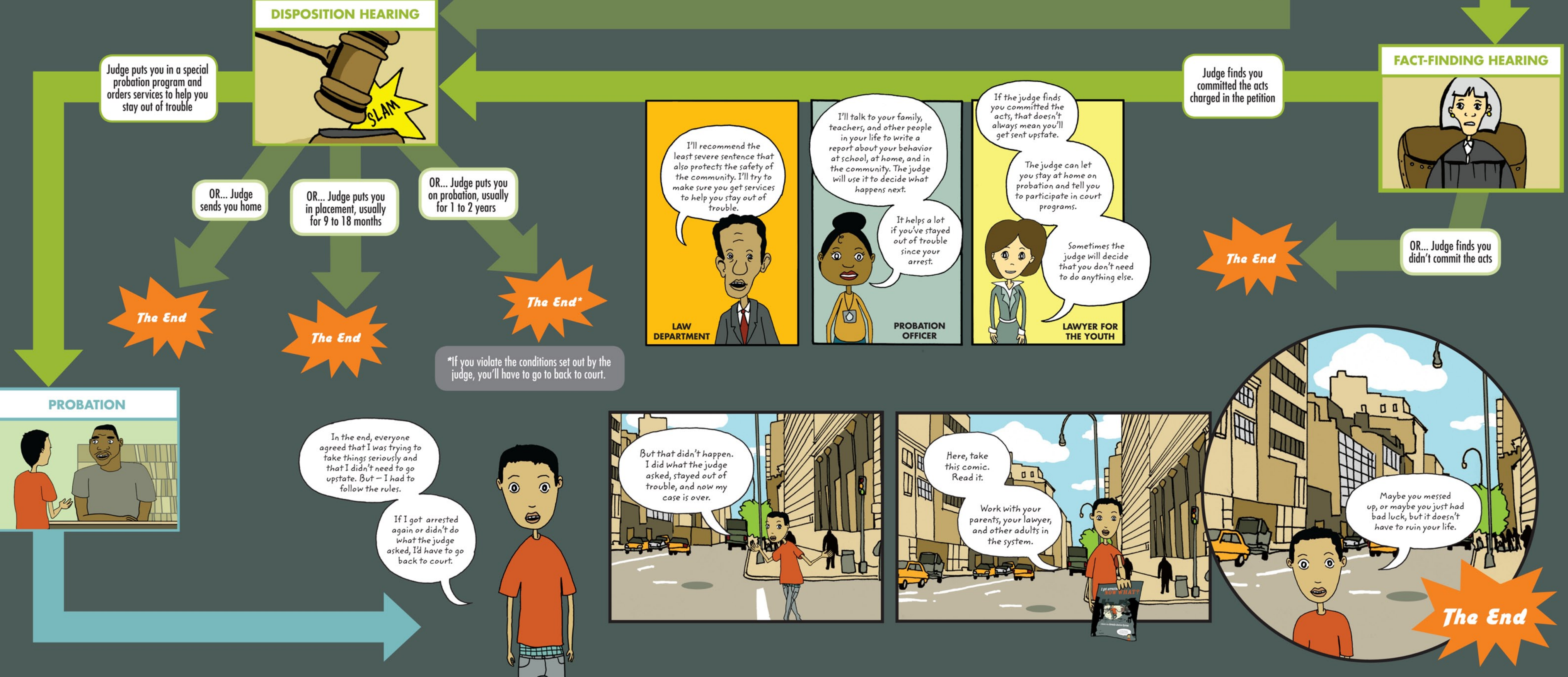
You enter a denial of responsibility

You're allowed to stay home

OR... You're allowed to stay home and are placed in an ATD program

OR... You're sent to a detention facility

At the initial court appearance, the judge decides where you'll live during your case





# I got arrested! NOW WHAT?

If your case goes to court, use this to keep track of your information:

Initial Court Appearance Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Location (Court Part) \_\_\_\_\_  
Judge's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Lawyer's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Lawyer's Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Lawyer's Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Words You Might Hear

**Adjustment:** When Probation 'adjusts' your case, they decide not to refer your case to the Law Department as long as you follow the rules set by the probation officer. The complainant has to consent. Adjustment periods usually last from 60 to 120 days. If you follow the rules, your case is over and you have no record.

**Alternative to Detention (ATD):** Community programs you go to during your case that provide supervision, case management, and social services to help you stay out of trouble and keep your court dates.

**Alternative to Placement (ATP):** Community programs you go to after your case (instead of placement) if the judge finds you committed the acts charged in the petition. They are conditions of probation. ATP programs try to help you stay out of trouble.

**Complainant:** The person who makes a report to the police about an offense. This can be a victim, a police officer, or another law enforcement member.

**Detention:** The facilities (away from home) that you live in during your case if the judge thinks you'll get in trouble again or skip your court dates.

**Disposition:** The sentence you get after the judge finds you committed the acts charged in the petition. Options include: release without conditions, probation, and placement.

**Disposition Hearing:** The hearing where the judge announces the disposition. This hearing happens if the judge finds you committed the acts charged in the petition.

**Enter a Denial of Responsibility:** To plead not guilty or deny you committed an offense.

**Fact-Finding Hearing:** The hearing where lawyers present evidence and the judge decides whether you committed the acts charged in the petition.

**Family Court:** The court that hears juvenile delinquency cases as well as family matters like abuse, neglect, adoption, and child custody.

**Family Court Appearance Ticket (FCAT):** A notice police give you after you get arrested. It tells you when to go to Probation for your intake interview.

**File a Petition:** This is what it's called when the Law Department decides to bring a case to Family Court. The petition includes the charges – the acts or offenses that the Law Department says you committed.

**Initial Court Appearance:** The first time you go to court after getting arrested. You hear the charges against you and can make an admission or enter a denial. The judge then decides to parole you home, assign you to an Alternative-to-Detention program, or remand you to detention.

**Intake Interview:** A meeting after you get arrested where the probation officer asks you (and, if possible, your parent or guardian) questions about the arrest and your life. The judge and the Law Department use this information to make decisions about your case.

**Juvenile Delinquent:** A 7 to 15-year-old youth found responsible in Family Court of committing an offense.

**Juvenile Offender:** A 13 to 15-year-old youth found guilty as an adult in Criminal Court. A decision to try a youth in Criminal Court is based on the seriousness of the crime.

**Law Department:** The lawyers who try to prove you committed an offense. They investigate cases and decide whether to bring them to court, then serve as prosecutors in the courtroom. They work for the City.

**Lawyer for the Youth:** The lawyer who defends you in court and explains the case to you.

**Make an Admission of Responsibility:** To plead guilty or admit you committed an offense.

**Offense (aka Delinquent Act):** Illegal behavior by a person under the age of 16.

**Parole:** When the judge sends you home during your case instead of putting you in detention.

**Placement:** The facilities (away from home) that you live in after your case if the judge finds you committed the acts and thinks you're a danger to the community. Placement can last up to 18 months, with a possible extension by the court.

**Probation Department:** Probation officers lead your intake interview after arrest, gather information about your life for the court, and supervise you if you're on probation or in other programs during or after your case.

**Remand:** When the judge decides to send you to a detention facility during your case.

**Respondent:** A youth who gets arrested and accused of committing an offense.

**Violation Hearing:** A hearing you'll have if you get in trouble while on probation. The judge will decide on consequences, which can include new rules or going to placement.

## CREDITS

**MAKING POLICY PUBLIC** is a program of the Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP) that pairs policy advocates with graphic designers to produce foldout posters like this one. CUP chooses project participants through a juried process and facilitates their collaboration. [www.makingpolicypublic.net](http://www.makingpolicypublic.net)

### COLLABORATORS

**The Center for Court Innovation:** Linda Baird, Dory Hack, Colin Lentz; **The Youth Justice Board:** Ashley, Claudia, Imani, Joanelly, Johanel, Josh, Khaair, N'dack, Olivia, Phelipe, Ronique, Shahid, Shanna, Sunny, Zeinah; **Artist:** Danica Novgorodoff; **CUP:** John Mangin, Christine Gaspar; **NYC Department of Probation:** Stacey Spear, Eileen Donohue

### THE CENTER FOR URBAN PEDAGOGY (CUP)

CUP uses art, design, and visual culture to create projects that improve the quality of public participation in urban planning and community design. [www.anothercupdevelopment.org](http://www.anothercupdevelopment.org)

### THE CENTER FOR COURT INNOVATION

The Center for Court Innovation is a nonprofit think tank that helps courts and criminal justice agencies aid victims, reduce crime, and improve public trust in justice. In New York, the Center functions as the court system's independent research and development arm, creating demonstration projects that test new ideas. [www.courtinnovation.org](http://www.courtinnovation.org)

### THE YOUTH JUSTICE BOARD

A project of the Center for Court Innovation, the Youth Justice Board is an after-school program that gives young people a voice in policies that affect their lives. Each year, a team of 15 to 20 youth from across New York City studies a juvenile justice or public safety issue, writes recommendations, and works to make positive change. The project aims to bring policymakers and informed youth leaders together in ongoing conversations. [www.courtinnovation.org/youthjusticeboard](http://www.courtinnovation.org/youthjusticeboard)

### DANICA NOVGORODOFF

Danica Novgorodoff is a painter, comic book artist, writer, and graphic designer. Her graphic novels *Slow Storm* and *Refresh, Refresh* were published by First Second Books in 2008 and 2009. [www.danicanovgorodoff.com](http://www.danicanovgorodoff.com)

### BIG THANKS TO:

Angela Albertus, Liberty Aldrich, Raye Barbieri, Greg Berman, Matthew Canfield, Nancy Fishman, Melissa Gelber, Gineen Gray, Hon. Joseph Lauria, David Long, Valeria Mogilevich, Joseph Peña, Natalie Rodriguez, Jacqueline Sherman, Alfred Siegel, Robert Wolf, Rosten Woo, and everyone who met with the Youth Justice Board during their research: Hon. Nancy Bannon, Meredith Donovan, Hon. Monica Drinane, Hon. Lee Elkins, Rodolfo Estrada, Robert Feldstein, Gerald Foley, Dianna Guerin, Yasna Heravi, Hon. Fran Lubow, Edward March, Yumari Martinez, Angela Merrill, Shernette Pink, Miriam Simon-Henry, Samantha Sorwick, Nicole Spain, Tamara Steckler, Michele Sviridoff, Steven Wint

Support for this project was provided by The Nathan Cummings Foundation, public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the North Star Fund, and the Union Square Awards.



The characters in this publication are fictional. Any resemblance to real people is coincidental! This publication is not intended to replace legal advice.