

Who is a Court Children's Officer?

A Court Children's Officer works with children and families when parents spilt up and understands how difficult things can get for all involved. They will listen to what you want to happen and look after your interests, explain about the family Court and can answer any questions you might have.

The Family Court can help with big decisions like who you should live with and who you should see.

How to contact your Court Children's Officer?

Name:

Address

Telephone:

Email

What do they do?

The Court Children's Officer can help by:

- Talking with you and listening to what you want to see happen
- Speaking to other people like your parents, family or other people who care and know about you
- Helping your parents sort things out
- Reporting to the Judge who will make decisions that look at your best interests.

What happens to the information you give?

As the Family Court needs to hear your views, your Court Children's Officer will report what you and the people who care about you have said. This report will include everything about you like your age, about your family, your beliefs and any other needs you may have.

Anything you talk about with the Court Children's Officer can go in the report, and if you wish the Court Children's Officer can take you through your part of the report. Your parents are also likely to read it too. If you are worried about this, make sure you tell your Court Children's Officer so they can help.

What happens in Court?

The Judge is given all the reports before the Court hearing. On the day of the Court the Judge sits and listens to what everyone has to say (including your report) and then

tries to help everyone agree. If this isn't possible, the Judge will make a decision on what is best for you. Your parents will usually be the ones to tell you what is decided. If you wish, your Court Children's Officer will help explain how the decision affects you.

What are your rights?

The Court Children's Officer will ensure your **rights** are looked after. Here are some of your **rights** when there is a case about you in the Family Court:

- You have a **right** to see a Court Children's Officer who will listen to you about what you want to see happen and tell the Court about your wishes and feelings.
- You have the **right** to say if you want to visit the Court or meet the Judge. Some young people want to do this and some young people don't. Talk to your Court Children's Officer about what you want.
- You have the **right** to know what has been written about you. Speak to your Court Children's Officer about this.
- You have the **right** to be told what is happening by the Court Children's Officer.
- You have the **right** to know the decision made about you by the Judge.
- You have the **right** to complain if you are not happy about anything we have said or the Court Children's Officer has said or done. See the feedback form at the end of this leaflet.

Your feedback

We are always keen to hear your views about your Court Children's Officer, you can write to us using this form. Your comments will help make things better for other young people like you.

Your Name

Your Address

Telephone

Email

Your Court Children's Officer

What do you think about the way we did things?

Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

What is the best way to get in touch with you? (Please tick)

Telephone Email Letter

Please return this form to:

Name

Title

Contact details

Court Children's Officer

Address

Telephone

BT08-228

