

Sentence-building principles for talking to children

Vocabulary:

- Use words that are short (1-2 syllables) and common. For example, call it a “house” instead of “residence.”
- Translate difficult words into easy phrases. Use “what happened to you” instead of “what you experienced.”
- Use proper names and places instead of pronouns, e.g., “what did Marcy do?” instead of “what did she do?”; “in the house” instead of “in there.”
- Use concrete nouns that can be visualized (“backyard”) instead of abstract ones (“area”).
- Use verbs that are action-oriented, such as “point to,” “tell me about,” instead of “describe.”
- Substitute simple, short verb forms for multi-word phrases when possible. Try, for example, “if you went” instead of “if you were to have gone.”
- Use active voice for verbs instead of the passive. For example, ask “Did you see a doctor?” instead of “Were you seen by a doctor?”
Note: One exception is the use of the passive “get” (“Did you get hurt?”), which children acquire very early and is easier to process than “Were you hurt?”

Putting the words together:

- Aim for one main idea per question/sentence.
- When combining ideas, introduce no more than one new idea at a time.
- Avoid interrupting an idea with a descriptive phrase. Put the phrase (known as a relative clause) at the end of the idea instead. For example, “Please tell me about the man who had the red hat on” instead of “The man who had the red hat on is the one I’d like you to tell me about.”
- Avoid difficult-to-process connectives like “while” and “during.”
- Avoid negatives whenever possible.
- Avoid questions that give a child only two choices. Add an open-end choice at the end. “Was the hat red, or blue, or some other color?”

The bottom line: Keep it short and simple.

III. INTERACTIONS WITH YOUR CLIENT

A. Initial meeting and interview

Ideally, your initial meeting with your client (and possibly her parent) will take place in your office with ample time to get to know each other. In reality, you are more likely to meet your client just before a court appearance, with little time or privacy in which to hold a productive conversation—for your purposes or hers. You must be prepared to conduct a quick yet efficient initial interview with your client, remembering that establishing a good relationship with her is as important as collecting vital information about the case. Document A1 in Appendix A is a sample form that can help you collect the critical information you will need prior to a detention hearing. Please feel free to adapt this form for your own use. As you interview her, maintain a calm, even tone so as not to make your client feel anxious or rushed. You will conduct a more extensive interview later, during which you will have more time to gather additional information.

If you are truly rushed or there are complex issues you need time to address before you can adequately represent your client, *you should request a delay from the court*. If the judge will not grant a later call or continuance, state repeatedly for the record that you are not prepared and cannot effectively represent your client. See Chapter 7, page 133, for more detail. Of course, when considering whether to request a delay, always take into account the need to prevent your client from being detained any longer than is absolutely necessary.

If you get cases in advance of court proceedings, your first conversation should cover the same crucial areas as if you were rushed, but you will have time to address each issue thoroughly and ask more questions on additional topics. It is also a good practice to send a letter to each client when you are assigned to her case. Many attorneys use a form or standard letter to introduce themselves and their job, as well as to request that the client call to schedule a first meeting. Document A2 in Appendix A is a sample introductory letter you can use as a starting point.

Your first in-person conversation with your client is significant to the entire case. It will lay the foundation for a strong attorney-client relationship and, therefore, effective representation. Be sure to include these crucial steps:

i. Introduce yourself and your role to your client

Tell your client who you are and what your job is, emphasizing that you work for her (and not her parent or the judge), are on her side, and will keep your conversations between just the two of you. Explain the attorney-client



privilege and emphasize how serious it is in the law and to you. Give her your card and tell her she can call you anytime. The encounter might open along these lines:

*Hi, my name is _____. I'm your attorney. How are you doing? [Pause, listen.] Have you ever had an attorney before? No? Let me tell you a couple of things about having an attorney. First, our relationship will be different than any other you've had with an adult. I work for you, not your mom, not your dad, not the court – nobody but you. My job is to help you understand what's going on in court and help you decide what you want to do on this case. Then, I'll work in court and outside of court to help take care of this case. I don't tell you what to do, and I will only do what you want me to do. Do you have any questions about that? [Pause, listen.] The second thing I want to let you know is that everything you tell me is confidential, it's secret. Do you know what I mean by that? Would you tell me what you think it means in your own words? [Pause, listen.] Yeah, that's right. And there is a law that says no one can make me tell what you've said to me. That makes it so you and I can talk about anything, and you don't have to worry, it is just between us. I will not repeat it to anyone without your permission. Does this make sense? [Pause, listen.] Do you have any questions about what I just said? [Pause, listen.] [At this point, hand your business card to your client. Document A12 in Appendix A is a camera-ready sample of an assertion of *Miranda* rights you can have printed on the back of your cards; if you choose to do so, you will want to explain its purpose.]*

Your individual style will dictate the exact language you use, but the point is to convey absolute loyalty to your client. Your clients will often have poor self-esteem and come from low-income families. They may also be untrusting of adults as a result of many unfortunate experiences. The extra effort to build rapport will pay off in innumerable ways, not the least of which is avoiding eliciting mistruths or half truths which can waste time and lead into unproductive defense theories. Furthermore, the benefits of a demoralized child experiencing camaraderie and trust with a non-threatening adult may be enormous.

2. Ask about your client

Asking about your client's grade in school, likes and dislikes, favorite activities, and home situation gives her a chance to get comfortable talking to you. It also provides you with a chance to collect valuable information and to assess her cognitive level. (For example, she might mention a teacher she likes who will

be a useful ally later.) Use her answers to tailor your language, explanations, and questions to her capabilities. (For example, high school students who have studied government should know that the Constitution provides rights, which can help introduce your explanation of the right to counsel.) If you are pressed for time in your initial meeting, you may have no choice but to skip this step, but be sure to remember it when you next have a conversation with your client.

3. Explain what is going on

Your client probably understands little about the court process—even if she has been through it before. Part of gaining her trust is showing her that you care about her questions and concerns. Before you begin asking case-related questions of her, take a minute or two to briefly explain her situation and what you need to accomplish in this quick meeting. You may say something like:

We are about to go into court so the judge can decide whether you can stay at home between now and when he listens to longer arguments about your case. We will have more time later to talk about everything that happened to you and for me to answer all of your questions, but right now I have to get some information from you pretty quickly so I can explain things to the judge at this first hearing.

4. Ask for written permission for access to confidential information

A central goal of your first meeting is to get written consent for the release of confidential information to you. The release is crucial to your investigation. School files, medical records, mental health evaluations, and other documents will help you not only in defending against the charges, but also in creating a disposition plan (see Chapter 11). It is important to send for these records as soon as possible because it can take time for other agencies to send the documents to you. For the information to be useful, you will need it as soon as possible. Because these documents contain confidential information, in most cases you will need written consent for the information to be released to you.

The rules vary as to whether it is the parent, the child, or both who have to sign a release of information, so you need to know the laws in your jurisdiction. Find out when it is necessary to have a parent's signature and when it is not, so you will be prepared if your client's parent is uncooperative or absent. Determine if your state takes into consideration the age of a child and the subject matter of the records. For example, a state may give a 16-year-old the authority to release school records or a 13-year-old the ability to consent to release of mental health information but require a parent's consent for collecting other documents.



A sample release of information form is included as Document A3 in Appendix A. Adapt that form to your state's laws and explain to the child and parent at your first meeting why it is important for you to get these records. You can reiterate the strength of the attorney-client privilege if they express concerns about how the information will be used. Give your client a copy of the release she has signed. (Note that the release of information form gives you permission to collect records but not necessarily to share them with others; see page 231 in Chapter 11 for information about laws governing sharing educational and medical records.)

5. Conduct an interview about the case, in as much detail as you have time for

If the parent has been present up to now, this is the time to ask him to give you and your client privacy. Explain that attorney-client confidentiality extends only to you and your client. Describe the risk of the parent being called to testify about this conversation. Tell him it is better for everyone if you talk to your client alone for a few minutes.

Begin this part of the conversation by asking your client's permission to take notes, explaining that you want to write things down to help you remember all the important information she tells you. Tell her specifically that you will not share your notes with anyone. As you listen, pay close attention to your client's personality, intelligence, and communication ability, as well as the facts she provides. These observations will help you recognize possible educational disabilities, mental health problems, and/or other issues addressed in later chapters of this guide.

If you have time, try letting your client tell her whole story first, without interruption, and then start over by asking questions about each part of her explanation. Ask questions while keeping in mind your time constraints, immediate concerns, and the tips for framing questions from earlier in this chapter. Begin with the crucial issues, such as:

- *What happened in this case?* Where did the incident take place, when did it happen, who was there, why was she arrested? If the client claims she was not present for the alleged incident, where was she, and how can she prove it? Reading through the police report with your client may help her articulate her version of the events.
- *Does your client have a prior record or any pending cases?* If so, what can she tell you about them? What were the offenses? What was the disposition? Is your client now on probation or parole? What are the conditions of probation or parole? Who is her probation/parole

officer? Does the probation/parole officer know about the current charge yet? How does your client think the probation/parole officer will react to the most recent charge?

- *Where is your client staying right now, and is the situation there okay? Is there assaultive behavior at home, a current family crisis, lack of supervision, narcotics dealing by family members, etc.? Did the offense occur at home or while your client was on the run from home? If she does not want to stay where she is, does she have another place to stay? What about other family members or friends? Are there adults who could help supervise her, such as someone whose house she could go to after school? Can that person come to court to say he will take your client in, and will your client's parent agree to that arrangement?*
- *Who does your client think will testify against and for her? Make suggestions to help her think of possibilities and keep track of her answers in a witness chart, where you can keep—and readily relocate—contact and other information about each person as you collect it.*

There are, of course, many more questions you will want to ask, some depending on the nature of the case and others as a result of your client's answers to these questions. Again, use your time wisely, reminding yourself and your client that you will have more time later. If you have time, ask:

- *Is the police report right about what happened? Is anything missing? Is there other information that explains why the incident happened?*
- *Will your client's parent come to this hearing? If not, why? How can you contact the parent? Are there other relatives or adults who might be able to come if asked? Who are they, and how can they be reached?*
- *Where does your client go to school? Does she miss class? How often? Has she been in trouble at school? What are her grades? Is she receiving special education services? Does she participate in any extracurricular activities? Has she won any awards? Are there any teachers or administrators there who would say good things about her?*
- *Does your client have a job? Is it full-time or part-time? Has she ever worked before? When did she work? Are there any employers who can act as references?*
- *Is there any other social information that can be used to support pre-adjudication release? Does she participate in clubs, sports, or religious activities? How can she show that she is responsible (e.g., does she*



babysit for her siblings while her parent is at work)? Does she have any hobbies?

- *Does your client have any substance abuse or medical problems? Will a parent, probation officer, or detention center employee bring up these problems in court? Has your client ever been in treatment? Did she successfully complete treatment (even if now using drugs)? If treatment is incomplete, what supplemental services might be suggested?*
- *Has your client participated in any counseling programs? Is there a counselor who could serve as a reference?*
- *What are your client's dreams/hopes for herself? What does she want to do when she is an adult? Where does she see herself in five years? Ten? Twenty?*

More detailed questions regarding particular situations appear below.

6. Explain your client's proactive role during the case

Take a couple of minutes to convey to your client how her future conduct will affect the outcome of her case, for better or for much worse. Initially, you can get that message across with a simple, generic description focused on the most important areas: 1) avoiding any further trouble with the police, 2) going to school, and 3) behaving well at home. This part of the conversation may be more productive if you include the parent; you can quickly surmise whether bringing in a parent could reduce your client's trust in you at this point. (Note that you may also want to consider having a private conversation with the parent; see Section IV of this chapter.) Find out what you can about your client's home situation and social behavior, but most importantly, emphasize the implications of your client's actions outside the courtroom. Again, while expressing these ideas in your own style, you may say something like:

Let's talk a few minutes about what you can do to help your case. Do you have any ideas about that? What kind of things do you think you could be doing that could help things out at this point? What do you think the judge will be watching for now? [Pause, listen. Respond positively to her ideas. Build on and refer back to her ideas as you move forward.]

I think there are three main things that the judge looks at. First is your record. I see you have XX charges. It's really important that you don't get in trouble while this case is going on. If you do, the judge will take that as a sign that you think court is just a big joke, nothing important. And this will tick off the judge in a big way and make him decide to lock you up in detention. Getting in

trouble right now, while this case is going on, is a much bigger deal than getting in trouble when you don't have a case going on – Tell me you'll be careful...[Pause, listen.] It's going to mean that you're going have to watch not only what you are doing, but be careful about who you are hanging out with. Can you be careful about what your friends are doing, too? [Pause, listen.] Like, if you are at the mall and a friend starts shoplifting, you need to just get out of there. Right away. If you're out with friends and someone pulls out a blunt, you gotta leave, immediately. Don't try to talk them out of it, don't bother explaining things, just leave. If the guys roll up in a car and you're not sure it's their car, say no thanks to a ride. You just can't risk being near people who are doing something wrong, even if you weren't doing anything wrong. I know that is unfair, but it's the situation you're in at this point. What do you think will be the hardest thing about this? [Pause, listen.]

Second, judges look at school. You can't be messing up in school. Prosecutors go out of their way to find out about school problems because they know if a judge hears about it he'll want to lock you up. So, be on time. Don't miss any classes. No fights, no talking back to teachers – just don't get into trouble at school. We're going to talk in a few minutes about how things are going in school, but the main thing now is remember that you need to keep school as your focus.

Third, judges watch what is happening at home. Basically, if you're not doing what your parent says, a judge thinks, "Well, okay, I guess if home isn't working out then detention is where you should be staying." Try to follow the rules at home, help around the house, get along with your brother and sister. Your parent loves you, but when the judge asks him how you are doing, he has to tell the truth. Make it easy on him so he can say you're doing well, and that since this case you've been really getting it together. When a judge hears that, he's likely to think, "Okay now, I guess we don't need to think about detention if things can turn around like this at home."

You should be listening for your client's good qualities, as well as red flags. Focus your client on her strengths and her positive potential, emphasizing how doing well in these three ways can make a huge impact on the outcome of the case. Discuss strategies for addressing any problems in these three areas and review the status of those remediation plans at each subsequent meeting with your client. She has to understand how important her behavior is while her case is in progress, and you should be prepared to work with her to find viable solutions as problems continue or arise. It may be easier to convince her of the significance of her role if you ask her to think about how her behavior must look to the judge. (Using this reasoning also helps make clear that what seems like

criticism does not come from you, but from concerns about the judge's perception.) Your assistance may include helping her obtain special education school services, family counseling, medical or social services, or other assistance. The many benefits of these strategies will become clear as the case progresses.

7. Listen to your client and find out what she wants

You must act on your client's expressed interests at every stage of the case. Before you enter the courtroom and speak on her behalf about anything, find out what her goals are for the hearing. Explain the possibilities for what you will say as well as how you will present the arguments and let her determine the best course of action.

B. Further conversations

As early as possible, you will want to gather as much information as you can from your client. Depending on what you know – from her, the police report, or other sources – about the circumstances of the offense and arrest, you will engage your client in different lines of questioning. Your goals in gathering this information are to begin to determine what legal defense is appropriate in the case, consider the potential for meritorious suppression and other pre-adjudication motions, and identify possible witnesses for the prosecution and defense. (An explanation of how to process and consolidate this information appears in Chapter 6.) Remember to take time to explain to your client why you are asking questions and how her answers may help her case. See Chapter 6 for an overview of possible grounds for suppression and suggested questions associated with each legal issue. In any situation, ask whether your client was ill or under the influence of medication, drugs, or alcohol; if she was, her decision-making capabilities may have been compromised. (In the event that illegal drugs or alcohol caused the impairment, weigh the benefits and risks of introducing that information in court.) Then, research applicable law to determine whether there are grounds to exclude harmful evidence from court.

C. Continued contact

It is very important that you maintain regular contact with your client. After your initial client interviews are complete, you should still meet with or talk to your client regularly, at least once every two weeks if the child is in the community and at least once every week if the child is detained. Regular contact with your client allows you to maintain your rapport and helps provide you and your client with deadlines for performing specific tasks. It also reminds your client of the pending case and her pre-adjudication obligations to the court.

It is a good policy to meet your client on her turf and preferably in her home, as long as you can meet in private when necessary. This strategy provides insight into your client's home situation and alleviates concerns about how or if she will come to meetings at your office. Be aware of any safety concerns related to traveling to an unfamiliar neighborhood and plan accordingly.

Though the substance of each conversation will differ, the fundamentals remain the same. Always:

- Show your client that you care about what she thinks and what happens to her,
- Keep your client informed about developments in her case,
- Let your client know of work you are doing on her case,
- Answer your client's questions plainly and clearly,
- Be timely and responsive to all your client's inquiries, and
- Keep your promises.³⁴

I learn more from spending one hour in a child's home than by spending five hours taking a social history from the child.

—Juvenile defender

Be careful not to promise your client anything you are not absolutely sure you can deliver; you risk losing her trust if you fail her. In general, if you always keep in mind that you work for your client and act upon her expressed interests, these displays of respect and frequent consultations will become a natural part of the development of each case.

IV. YOUR CLIENT'S PARENT

Interacting with your client's parent is a complicated issue unique to juvenile court. You must be clear at all times that you work for the child, but at the same time, you need to cultivate the parent's cooperation. Do what you can to work with or around the parent.

Ideally, the parent wants to be an ally. In some cases, though, he will be the complainant, or you will discover troubling information about his relationship with his child. Regardless of his willingness to help your client's case, be clear about how he can be involved and how he cannot. You have to be able to talk to your client alone, so you can be sure she is not altering anything she tells you for the parent's benefit. Similarly, you should talk to the parent alone so you can collect information free from any distortions designed to influence the child. You can also use these individual interviews to frame things for the benefit of each party. (For example, you could explain to the parent that your client's behavior,



though unacceptable, is typical for adolescents or explain to the child that her parent's nagging is a sign of concern for her.)

It will often become apparent during these interviews that there is a significant parent-child conflict. It could be a typical disagreement over curfew, sibling rivalry or perceived

One of the ways I let my clients know they are in charge is by asking them for permission before sharing information or case documents, like a police report, with their parents. Whatever the client says, the point is made.

—Juvenile defender

favoritism, or privacy boundaries and/or a more serious problem, such as neglect, abuse, or desire on the part of one or both parties to stop living together. Smoothing over relatively minor problems, on your own or with the help of a social worker, will benefit your client and her case. Encouraging a parent to enroll in counseling with her child or to enroll her child in desired counseling alone can also be helpful. If the parent was the complainant and counseling is successful, you may be able to bring a statement to the prosecutor that the parent no longer wants the case pursued, which could earn a dismissal or *nolle prosequi* (see Chapter 6, page 107). (Handling serious parent-child

issues is more complicated and transferring a case to dependency court, for example, can be a significant step to a more appropriate resolution.)

Let the parent know what impact his statements to the court, probation officer, and others will have. A parent may try to get help for his child by relating to the judge the details of difficulties at home without realizing he is actually encouraging the judge to order detention. Understand that the parent may be justifiably frustrated and let him vent to you, but help him figure out how to convey what he means to others in a way that is less harmful to his child. Do not advise the parent to lie, of course, but assist with framing the complaint: "There are some curfew problems" sounds much better than "She stays out all night. I don't know where she goes, who she's with, or what she's doing."

Further thoughts about dealing with parents at various points in the case, including strategies for winning over an uncooperative parent, are provided in Chapter 7 on page 137, as well as in other sections in which they are relevant.

Remember that you must continuously assess the child's comprehension of what you say and her ability to articulate her thoughts to you. If you are having trouble communicating with a client, consider whether that difficulty is indicative of a mental health problem or disability and whether these issues could mean she is incompetent to face adjudication. Chapter 3 addresses these difficult and complex issues.

DOCUMENT A1: SAMPLE INTERVIEW FORM

DETENTION INTERVIEW FORM TO BE ADMINISTERED BY JUVENILE DEFENDER

Explanation for youth of attorney-client relationship:

- I am your lawyer. That means my job is to help you to understand what is happening in your case. I also speak for you in court.
- I work for you. I do not work for the judge or the prosecutor. I do not work for your parent(s).
- Anything you tell me will be confidential. This means that I cannot tell anyone else what you say to me unless you say that I can. I cannot tell the judge anything you tell me unless you say it is okay.
- If anyone else asks you for information about your case, do not answer their questions. Just say that your lawyer told you not to talk about the case. I am going to give you a card that you can show to people to explain that you do not want to talk.

Client Information:

With whom does client live? _____

Does the guardian know about the hearing today? YES NO NOT SURE

Does client think the guardian will come to court today? YES NO NOT SURE

IF YES, what the guardian will probably say about the client in court today:

Will the guardian agree to take client home tonight? YES NO NOT SURE

DOCUMENT A1

Alternate Supervision:

Is there any one else client can stay with? YES NO NOT SURE

IF YES, what is this person's name: _____

Relationship to client: _____

Does client think this person can come to court today? YES NO NOT SURE

Does client know how to contact this person? YES NO

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Address: _____

Delinquency History (if there is no court file):

Has client ever been arrested before? YES NO NOT SURE

IF YES, about how many times has client been arrested? 1 2 3 4 5 or more

When? _____

Has client ever been to court before? YES NO NOT SURE

IF YES,

(1) When: _____ Why _____

What happened in that case?

(2) When: _____ Why _____

What happened in that case?



DOCUMENT A1

(3) When: _____ Why _____

What happened in that case?

Has client had a probation officer before? YES NO NOT SURE

IF YES, does client remember name of probation officer? _____

Does client remember what officer did:

- release conditions: _____
- health treatment: _____
- mental health treatment: _____
- education: _____
- supervision: _____
- OTHER: _____

Running Away:

About how long has client lived in this community: _____

Has client ever run away from home? YES NO

IF YES, client has run away about how many times: 1 2 3 4 5
or more

Last time client ran away: _____

About how long client stayed away from home: _____

Can client tell interviewer why s/he ran away?



DOCUMENT A1

Education and Truancy:

Is client in school now? YES NO

IF NOT IN SCHOOL, did s/he get GED or drop out? GED DROPPED OUT

Was client in regular classes or special classes? REGULAR SPECIAL

IF IN SCHOOL, is client in regular classes or special classes? REGULAR SPECIAL

IF IN SPECIAL CLASSES, what kind?

- for kids who have trouble learning (special education)
 for kids who have trouble paying attention (attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder)
 OTHER: _____

Does client go to school all the time? YES NO

How many days does client go to school per week? 1 2 3 4 5

Is there anything happening at school that makes client not want to go there?

YES NO

Can client tell interviewer about it? _____

Employment and Activities:

Does client have a job? YES NO

IF YES, what is the job? _____

Is there anything else that the client does every week that he/she enjoys?

- sports team
 religious group
 volunteering/public service
 extra class (art, music, etc.)
 OTHER: _____



DOCUMENT A1

Health and Mental Health:

Has the client ever talked to a counselor or doctor to get help with emotional or mental problems?

YES NO NOT SURE

Has the client ever been in a hospital or sent to stay someplace in order to feel better emotionally?

YES NO NOT SURE

IF YES, when?

Doesn't remember

Thinks it was: _____

Does the client remember where? _____

At this time, is the client taking any medicine regularly? YES NO NOT SURE

IF YES, what is it for?

Doesn't know

Thinks it is for:

Vulnerability to Harm:

Has client ever been in detention before? YES NO NOT SURE

Did client feel safe when in detention? YES NO NOT SURE

In detention, did anyone hurt or try to hurt client? YES NO NOT SURE

IF YES, what happened?



DOCUMENT A1

If the child needs medical or psychotropic drugs, when in detention, did the client get his/her medicine:

NEVER SOMETIMES ALWAYS

IF NEVER OR SOMETIMES, what happened?

Anything else client wants to tell the judge:



DOCUMENT A2: INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO CLIENT

June 20, 2005

Client Name
Street
City, ST 40569

Dear Ms. Name,

My name is Your Attorney. I am a lawyer, and I have been appointed by the Public Defender office in Our City to represent you in juvenile court. You are my client, which means that I work for you. You and your family do not have to pay me.

You are accused of petit larceny, which means taking someone else's property. Your next court date is May 3, 2005 at 10:30am in the City Juvenile Court.

It is important for us to meet as soon as possible so we can talk about your case and figure out how I can help you in court. Please bring with you the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of anyone who you think can help with your case.

Please call my secretary at (222) 333-4444, extension 55, so you can schedule a meeting with me. I am looking forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Your Attorney
Public Defender

DOCUMENT A3: AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION

Authorization to Release Information

I hereby authorize [Your Name] of [Your Office], or any person or persons duly authorized by [him/her] to:

- Verify all financial information pertaining to me with employers, banks, credit unions, loan companies or any other source.
- Obtain all necessary medical information, evaluations, or memoranda from doctors, psychologists, social workers clinics and hospitals concerning my and my child's examinations, diagnoses, treatment or hospitalization. Obtain information from any school, counseling, labor department, welfare or other agency that has rendered its services to me or my child.

I hereby authorize all proper officials of all such organizations to forward to [Your Name], [his/her] employees, or any persons duly authorized by [him/her], such requested information for one year from this date for use in regard to legal proceedings.

I understand that the information disclosed may be from records whose confidentiality is protected by state and/or federal law and may contain information pertaining to psychiatric, HIV/AIDS, drug and/or alcohol diagnosis and treatment and that this authorization may be revoked by me at any time except to the extent that action has been taken in compliance with this request.

Client: _____

Parent: _____

Child/Witness Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Client's DOB:

Date:



DOCUMENT A12: ASSERTION OF *MIRANDA* RIGHTS CARD

Assertion of *Miranda* rights
 (front of card / back of business card)

Notice to Police and Prosecutors

I will not waive my constitutional rights to remain silent and to have my attorney present.

I do not wish to answer any questions without speaking to my attorney first.

I will not consent to participate in any search until I have spoken to my attorney.

Signed: _____

Contact information

(back of card / unused)

My name: _____

My parent(s) name(s): _____

Their phone number(s): _____

My address: _____

My phone number: _____

My date of birth: _____

My attorney's name: _____

My attorney's phone number: _____

My attorney's registration number: _____