



CHAPTER 11

Youth and the Law

People younger than 18 have more rights and protection under the law than adults. The police must be very clear with you about your rights and use simple language that you can understand.

If you are in a dangerous or threatening situation, call 911. If your problem involves the police, or you are in a situation where you don't want the police involved directly, call the Helpline for Children at 310-1234 (no area code needed, B.C. only) or TDD 1-866-660-0505.

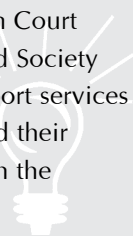
Just like an adult, you have the right to remain silent. You should never feel threatened by the police because of what they do or say. You also have the right to understand what is happening. Ask questions if you do not understand what is going on.

You may want to tell the police your side of the story, but you should wait until your lawyer arrives. Your lawyer can help make sure that your rights are protected. Tell the police or the Judge you want to speak to a lawyer and they will get you one. You do not need to apply for *legal aid*. Lawyers are free for young people.

Your parents will be contacted as soon as the police can call them. If they are not around, you can give police the name of a close relative or trusted adult friend who can come to the jail instead. You have the right to have another adult person with you other than your lawyer. If there is no-one else who can look out for your rights, the Judge may act as guardian (temporary parent) for you during the hearings.

Young people are not usually put in the same jail as adults. Young people are kept by themselves, or in a special location just for youth.

Help for Youth in Court
The John Howard Society
offers many support services
to help youth and their
families deal with the
justice system.



See *Youth Criminal Justice Act*