

## What Parents Need to Know

The juvenile justice system can often be confusing and scary. Youth and families come into the system for many different reasons that can be as simple as not attending school or as complex as committing a serious crime.

Regardless of the reason, the Jefferson Parish Department of Juvenile Services will use the best practices available to keep youth and families from returning.

Parents and guardians are important team partners in keeping youth safe, healthy, and educated. This brochure describes parents'/guardians' responsibilities in the team so everyone wins.



**Jefferson Parish Department of Juvenile Services**

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Jefferson Parish  
Department of  
Juvenile Services

## Parents & Juvenile Justice

### Things You Should Know



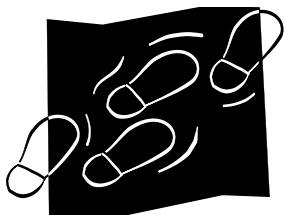
# Parents: Keys to the Future

Whatever the reasons youth and families are referred to the juvenile justice system, parents/guardians need to be involved in the process of getting youth out of the system and keeping youth out of the system.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians and the Juvenile Probation Department to make every effort to provide guidance, structure, discipline, and caring adults to youth. Juvenile Court and Juvenile Probation Officers use a mix of sanctions, rewards, treatment services, and positive support to guide youth and parents/guardians. When it comes down to it, however, parents/guardians are responsible for the care and control of minors under their supervision. They must take steps to be effective parents.

## Parent Responsibilities

Parents/guardians are responsible for the well-being of youth under their care. This includes providing shelter, safety, food, clothing, medical care, education, supervision, and emotional support and guidance, to name a few. Parents/guardians are also responsible for many aspects of their child's probation term, including attending court hearings, probation meetings, medical and therapy appointments, and school.



**Taking steps in the Right Direction**

## Are Parents on Probation?

Yes, sort of. According to Louisiana laws, parents/guardians are also under jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court when a minor under their care is involved with the court. This means parents/guardians are required to follow the terms of the probation contract received from the Juvenile Probation Officer. The probation contract is a court order, so if parents/guardians violate court orders, several things may happen.



### How does court involvement affect parents/guardians?

If parents/guardians violate court orders:

- ⇒ Parents/guardians may be ordered to pay fines, perform community service work, or even sentenced to jail.
- ⇒ Under Federal laws, parents/guardians may lose Social Security disability benefits, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program "Food Stamp" benefits, and/or Section 8 housing assistance while they are in violation of a court order.

## Can Parents be Arrested?

Yes. Parents/guardians may be arrested and charged criminally for violating Louisiana laws, R.S. 14:92.1 Encouraging or contributing to child delinquency, dependency or neglect and R.S. 14:92.2 Improper supervision of a minor by a parent or legal custodian.

Also, Louisiana law allows for parent's/guardian's Louisiana tax refunds to be withheld to pay unpaid court fees and fines.

## Does the Court Take Children?

Rarely. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing shelter for minors under their care until the minor is 18 years old. Youths need safe and stable homes that are provided by caring adults. The Juvenile Court and Juvenile Probation Officers will make every effort to keep youth in their homes because youth generally do better at home compared to youth who are removed from their homes. Only in extreme cases does Juvenile Court remove youth from their homes and only after all efforts have been tried.

## Working as a Team!

Remember, Juvenile Probation can assist with providing structure, discipline, and rewards for youth while youth are on probation. But, parents/guardians make the difference between success or failure in the long run!

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