

**McKenna's Law**  
**Script/Checklist for Judge and Consulting Attorney to**  
**Notify Child Age 10 or Older of Right to a Lawyer and Right to Participate in Court**

As a child 10 years old or older, you have special rights that I'd like to talk with you about. Every child your age has these rights in a child protection case.

**Right to a Lawyer**

1. You can have a lawyer if you want one.
  - a. A lawyer is someone who works only for you and tells the judge, social worker, and others what you want them to know.
  - b. A lawyer can also talk with you about why you and your family are in court, where you are currently living, when you can see certain family members, and what you would like to see happen in the case.
  - c. You don't have to pay anything for your lawyer. Your family doesn't have to pay for your lawyer either.
  - d. Anything you say or write to your lawyer stays private. This means the lawyer cannot tell the judge or anyone else about what you say or write, unless you tell your lawyer it is okay or unless the law specifically requires or allows the lawyer to share that information with the judge or others. Your lawyer can explain to you what those situations are that would allow or require them to share private information.
  - e. Would you like to have a lawyer who works just for you? (Yes/No) If you are not sure or have questions, you will get to talk with a lawyer to find out more. After that, you can decide if you want a lawyer or not.

**Right to Go to Court**

2. You can go to court to tell the judge what you want to happen.
  - a. Over the next few months there will be meetings in court, called "hearings," where the judge, lawyers, social worker, guardian ad litem, and others will talk about what is happening in your case and what is happening with you and your family.
  - b. You will be given the date and time for each court hearing.
  - c. If you want, you can go to court and tell the judge what you want to happen. Tell your lawyer, caretaker, or social worker and they will be able to help you get to court.
  - d. If you don't want to go to court, you can let the judge know what you want to happen by writing a letter or by telling your social worker, guardian ad litem, or lawyer, if you have one, so they can tell the judge for you.
  - e. Hearings might discuss things very personal to you and it might be hard for you to talk about certain things in a courtroom full of people. If you are worried about this, talk to your social worker, guardian ad litem, or lawyer, if you have one, about your concerns.