

# The Juvenile Court System



To request an editable PPT file of this presentation, send a request to [cnorris@unc.edu](mailto:cnorris@unc.edu).



North Carolina  
CIVIC EDUCATION  
CONSORTIUM

# Juveniles in the Courts

- Usually, anyone under the age of 18 + is classified as a juvenile
- Delinquents: young people who commit crimes

# Factors contributing to delinquency:

- Abuse or neglect
- Emotional/mental problems
- Poverty
- Over-crowded, run-down neighborhoods where drug and alcohol abuse common

# Stages in the System

- Primary goal of juvenile court: rehabilitate (correct person's behavior) rather than punishment
- Handle two types of cases: neglect and delinquency

# Diversion or Detention

- Diversion: send juveniles away from court and into special program
  - emphasis on improving behavior
  - Examples include counseling, job-training, drug treatment program, etc.
  - May be held in custody at first to determine if juvenile is dangerous to self or others

# Trial

- Preliminary hearing: determine probable cause
  - Only parties involved may attend hearing (juvenile, family or caregivers, lawyers, witnesses, arresting officer, probation officer)
  - Similar to trial but less formal
  - No jury

# Special Protections for Juveniles

- Keep identity of juvenile secret
- When arrested, not fingerprinted or photographed
- Public cannot view records
- In some cases, record is erased when juvenile becomes an adult
- If guilty, court decides disposition (sentencing)

## What the Supreme Court has said

- 1967: parents or guardians must be notified of arrest as soon as possible
- Must be notified in writing of charges against them
- Right to attorney, right to remain silent, and right to question witnesses
- In re Gault established that juveniles protected by due process clause in the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment



# Homework

---

Create a flow chart of our local juvenile justice system.