

**GROUP OF SPECIALISTS ON  
CHILD-FRIENDLY JUSTICE  
(CJ-S-CH)**

**GUIDELINES ON CHILD-FRIENDLY JUSTICE  
A BRIEF SUMMARY**

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## **Guidelines on Child-Friendly Justice – a Brief Summary**

In November 2010, the Council of Europe adopted Guidelines on Child-Friendly Justice. These rules apply to everyone under 18 years when they come into contact with the justice system, such as when they break the law, their parents get divorced or when someone who hurt them is being punished.

The Rules say that:

- Decisions should be made about children in a way that respects their rights. The child's age and needs must always be taken into account, and his/her privacy respected.
- Children should know about their rights and who can help them.
- Children have the right to be heard in decisions that affect them, and adults must take children's views seriously.
- Children's rights should be respected and they must be treated equally.
- Children and their parents should be given information about the child's right to be treated fairly and properly. This should be explained in a way everyone under 18 years can understand.
- Everyone working with children should receive training on children's rights, how to talk to children and on the needs of children.
- Special rules should apply when children break the law. They must be respected by the police.
- Children who understand their rights should be able to go to court to have those rights protected. They should have their own lawyer and they should have a say in cases that affect them. Decisions should be taken as quickly as possible and should be explained to children in a way they understand. Before they go to court, children should know what it will be like. Special rules should apply to those who have been hurt.
- Governments must take steps to promote child-friendly justice and should keep trying to make things better for children.