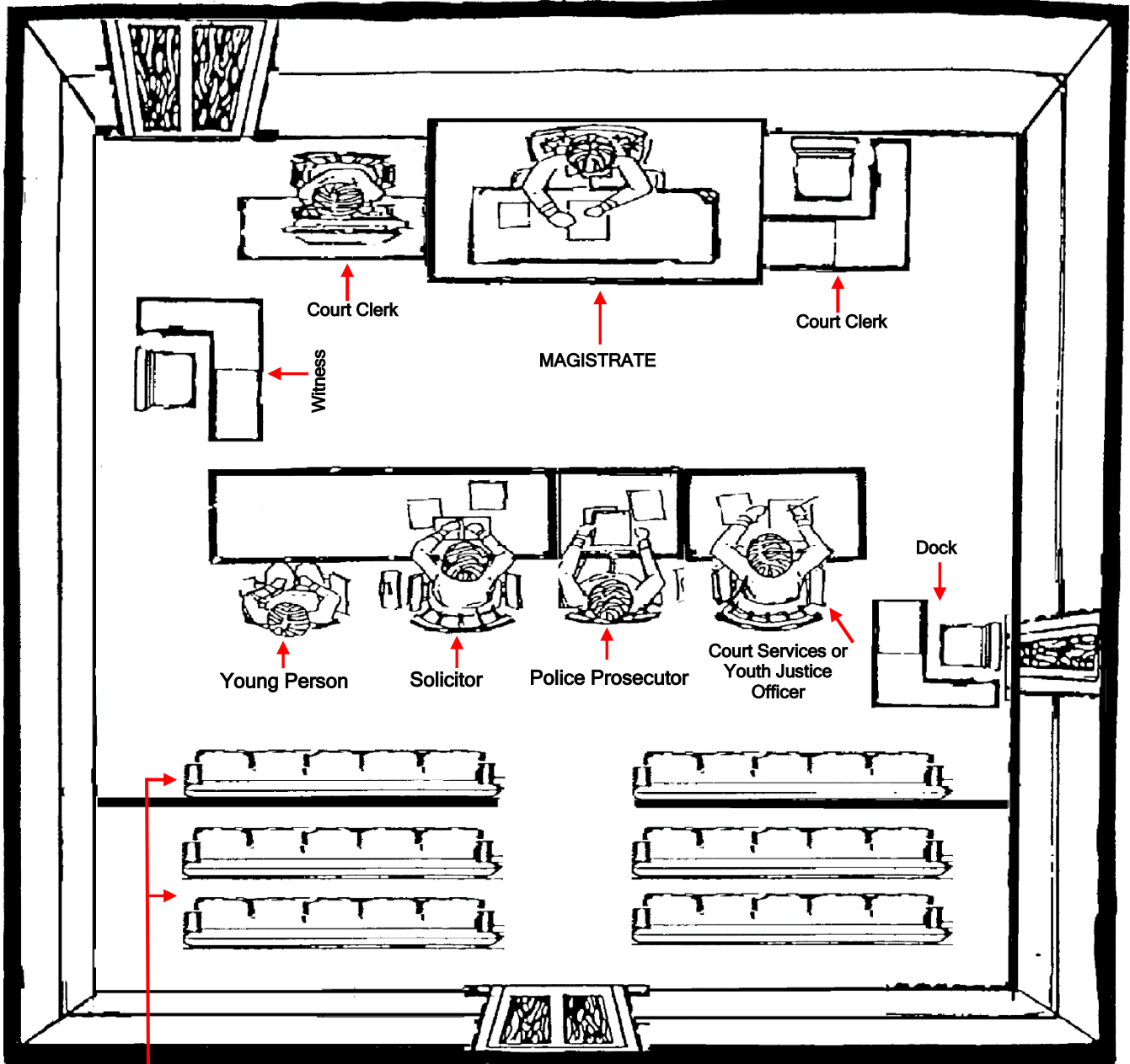




Brisbane Childrens Court Diagram



Parents / Support Person / Youth Worker

Who will be in court:

- the MAGISTRATE (makes decisions about your case);
- the POLICE PROSECUTOR (tells the court what you are supposed to have done);
- the SOLICITOR (tells the court what you have to say about the allegations);
- any WITNESSES (are asked to come to court to say what they know about the case);
- someone from COURT SERVICES or YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICES (tells the court anything they know about you on issues such as bail and sentence);
- the COURT CLERK (keeps a record of the court proceedings);
- the COURT ORDERLY (assists the court, such as calling you into court when it is your turn).

Who could be in court:

- a PARENT or another ADULT RELATIVE;
- if you are Aboriginal or Islander and you would like someone from an ABORIGINAL OR ISLANDER CHILD WELFARE AGENCY with you (they can sit in the same place as PARENTS);
- any other person who can assist the court or who the court gives permission to be there, such as a RELATIVE or FAMILY FRIEND, YOUTH WORKER. (Including someone from the MEDIA).

What is the role of your solicitor?

The solicitor should explain:

- your charges (what laws the police say that you have broken)
- what the police say happened
- how the court works
- your choices and make sure you understand them and
- what is happening and what is likely to happen.

Your solicitor tells the Magistrate what you want the Magistrate to know about you and your charges. The solicitor must say what you tell them to say (not your parents, carers or Youth Justice Services). The solicitor cannot tell anyone information you tell them (including your parents/carers) unless you agree.

What is the role of Court Services or Youth Justice Services Officer in court?

Someone from Youth Justice Services (YJS) should be at court (in Brisbane Childrens Court this person is called the Court Services Officer). The YJS Officer will want to talk to you before you go into court. Any information you tell the YJS Officer may be later told to the court even if you do not want this to happen. If you are going to tell the Magistrate that you are not guilty you should not discuss the facts about the charges with the YJS Officer. In general, the YJS Officer will tell the court about your background and any previous contact you have had with them. When bail is being considered the YJS Officer may be able to assist the Magistrate with information about accommodation or some other support for you. The YJS Officer does not speak for you or the police.

What is the role of a support person?

Your parents are allowed to go into court even if this is not what you want. If the Magistrate agrees, you can also have another person to support you in court. This person can be a youth worker, friend or relative who is over 18. A support person may help you understand the court process. It is important that you tell your solicitor that you would like a support person with you in court so that they can ask the Magistrate. If you talk about the offence with any other person except your solicitor, it is possible the police could make them come to court to tell the Magistrate what you said.

What should I wear to court?

It is important that you have a clean and neat appearance. This shows the Magistrate that you are taking court seriously. Remember, you want to give the best impression you can. However, it is not expected that you will buy clothes to go to court. You might think of:

- not wearing a hat into the court room
- not wearing singlets, thongs, midriffs, swimwear, see-through clothing
- not wearing clothing that has inappropriate slogans or encourage breaking the law
- wearing footwear
- wearing your school uniform
- covering or removing facial or visible piercings and
- covering any tattoos.

What should I do in court?

It is important that you treat the court with respect. You should appear to pay attention to what is being said in court. You should not interrupt others, shout or laugh in court. If you want to make a point about something tell your solicitor quietly. You should address the Magistrate as "Your Honour" or "Sir" or "Miss". When the Magistrate is speaking to you, you should stand. You cannot take food or drink into court.