

# Say What?

## Definitions and Similar Meanings

**Abscond:** **hide**

hide to avoid legal matters

**Accountability:** **responsibility**

taking responsibility for damage caused by a crime and making up for the harm or loss to anyone affected.

**Adjudicated:** **convicted**

decision by a judge that your child broke a law.

**Adjudication Withheld:**

a judge decides your child is guilty but does not put it on the record and “withholds adjudication of delinquency.”



By Pasco Prodigy Artist Andre

**Aftercare:** **transition**

assessments and services when your child leaves a residential commitment program to help him have a smooth transition back to his home, school and community.

**Arraignment Hearing:** **plea**

in court, a judge tells your child what he is charged with and your child tells the judge whether he is guilty or not.

**Assessment:** **evaluation**

an evaluation to determine your child’s risk for re-arrest and needed services.

**Attorney:** **lawyer, counsel**

a trained legal professional licensed to represent people in court and give legal advice. Your child will have an attorney and the state will have an attorney.

**Bench Warrant/Pick-up Order:** **order to arrest**

a judge’s order to arrest your child and bring him to court. This may happen if your child disobeys a judge’s orders.

**Charge:** **crime, offense**

the illegal act your child is accused of doing.

**Commitment:**

placement in a residential or non-residential program.

**Community Service:**

unpaid work to benefit the community and help repair the harm caused by a crime.

**Conditional Release:** **parole**

the monitoring and services to children who are transitioning back home after being in a residential program. They must complete court-ordered sanctions and services. If they do not follow the court’s orders, they may have to go back to a residential facility.

**Continuance:** **postponement**

delay of a court hearing until another day.

**Cost of Care:**

a court-ordered fee families have to pay for the cost of caring for their child while he is in DJJ’s custody or under DJJ supervision.

**Court Order:** **legal requirement**

a document signed by a judge requiring your child to do something.

**Custodian:** **parent, guardian**

a person with legal responsibility who must take care of a child (usually the parent).

**Custody:** **responsibility**

legal responsibility for the care of a minor/child/youth.

**Day Treatment:**

a community-based program that provides interventions to your child, such as educational and vocational services and anger management classes, monitors sanctions and manages your child’s case.

**Delinquent Act:** **offense, crime**

illegal behavior by someone under the age of 18.

**Detention:**

temporary supervision of your child either while he is at home or in a facility waiting for court hearings or placement in a residential facility.

(**home detention** : **house arrest**)

**Detention Center/Facility:** **jail**

locked temporary housing center where a child may have to wait until his next court hearing or placement in a program.

**Detention Hearing:** **first appearance**

the judge decides if your child can stay at home or must stay in a detention facility until the next hearing.

**Disposition:** **sentence**

the judge’s decision about your child’s future determined at a **disposition hearing (sentencing)**.

**Diversion:** **pre-trial intervention**

cases handled outside the court process with alternative consequences, like Teen Court.

**Due Process:** **fair treatment**

the legal requirement that your child is treated fairly at court and his rights are respected.

**Electronic Monitoring:**

a GPS device worn around the ankle to make sure your child stays within court-ordered areas, usually only at home or at school.

**Expungement: erasure**

when a juvenile court record is legally erased as though it never existed, with some exceptions.

**Felony:**

a serious crime that results in serious consequences, such as commitment to a residential facility.

**Guardian:**

an adult who has the legal right to make decisions about a child and care for him. This may be a parent, family member, another adult or “the state” (DJJ).

**Hearing: appearance**

court meeting with a judge where decisions are made.

**Intake: information gathering**

when DJJ accepts custody of your child, determines risks and needs and recommends consequences to the court.

**Interventions:**

ways to help your child improve his behavior and help meet his needs.

**Jurisdiction: authority**

the judge’s legal right to listen to and decide the consequences for your child in court.

**Juvenile: youth, your child**

a child under the age of 18.

**Juvenile Probation Officer (JPO):**

a DJJ employee who conducts assessments, prepares reports for court and supervises your child according to court-ordered instructions. JPOs help meet the needs of you and your child through various services and referrals.

**Misdemeanor:**

a crime less serious than a felony.

**Offense (see Charge)****Pick-up Order (see Bench Warrant)****Plea: answer**

when your child tells the judge whether he is guilty or not guilty of the crime he is charged with.

**Plea Bargain: deal**

the state’s lawyers and your child agree to specific consequences if your child admits he committed the offense.

**Predisposition Report: PDR**

a Juvenile Probation Officer’s recommendation to the court about what should happen with your child’s case based on assessments and information gathered.

**Probable Cause: likelihood**

a strong reason to believe a crime was committed.

**Probation: supervision**

period of time when DJJ makes sure your child follows individualized court orders (community service, classes, restitution, etc.) and receives needed services and treatment (substance abuse, mental health, etc.).

**Prosecution:**

legal process of pursuing formal charges against your child.

**Prosecutor (see State Attorney)****Public Defender: PD**

a lawyer appointed by the court to represent your child if you cannot hire an attorney.

**Recidivate:**

to commit another crime.

**Released:**

when your child is sent home to the custody of a parent/guardian.

**Restitution: pay back**

a judge orders to your child to pay a victim (through the court) for damage done by a crime.

**Sanctions: punishment**

consequences for children who are on probation or break the rules of their probation (more supervision, curfews, community service, etc.).

**Services:**

helpful activities or assistance, such as tutoring.

**Screening:**

information gathered to see if your child needs further evaluation or referral for treatment (substance abuse, mental health services, etc.) when he is in DJJ custody.

**State Attorney/SA/Prosecutor:**

an attorney representing the state who brings charges against your child and recommends to the judge what consequences your child should have.

**Statute: law**

a law passed by the Florida legislature.

**Taken into Custody: arrested**

after a law enforcement officer arrests your child and transfers him to DJJ, if DJJ accepts custody, it then has legally temporary physical control of your child.

**Treatment:**

a substance or technique used in specific situations to help your child such as counseling.

**Trial: hearing**

a court hearing where the lawyers ask witnesses questions and a judge decides whether your child is guilty of a crime and what his consequences should be.

**Truant:**

a student with 5 unexcused absences from school in one month or 10 in a 90-day period.

**Got  
questions?  
Just ask!**