

# KIDS IN COURT



## VICTIM SERVICES DIVISION

- Kids In Court Program Overview
- Structure of the Program
- Kids In Court Staff



**BILL MONTGOMERY**  
Maricopa County Attorney

**Maricopa County Attorney's Office**  
301 West Jefferson Street  
Phoenix, Arizona 85003

**Maricopa County Attorney's Office**  
Victim Services Division  
301 West Jefferson, 9th Floor  
Phoenix, Arizona 85003

**Main Phone No: 602-506-8522**

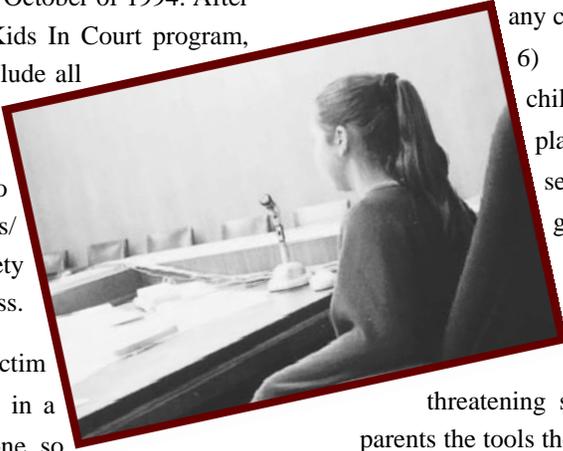
**[www.maricopacountyattorney.org](http://www.maricopacountyattorney.org)**

## KIDS IN COURT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Victim Services Division of the Maricopa County Attorney's Office offers the Kids In Court program to help children and their families prepare for court. The first Kids In Court was held in October of 1994. After realizing the benefits of the Kids In Court program, the division expanded it to include all child victim witnesses. The program offers a supportive and educational experience to help children and their parents/guardians reduce the anxiety associated with the court process.

The program is led by a Victim Services Advocate and begins in a classroom setting. This is done so the children feel less threatened. Also, this allows them to realize that others are going through a similar experience.

- 1) Following a brief introduction, the video, "Kids in Court," is shown to the participants. This video, developed by the Maricopa County Attorney's Office, explains the roles of different people in court. It also gives the children tips for testifying such as how to ask for a break and what to say if you do not know an answer.
- 2) After the video, additional tips for testifying are reinforced. Emphasis is placed on the importance of telling the truth in court and the facts of any case are never discussed.
- 3) The advocate then speaks to the children about relaxation techniques that can be used while in court. The children are taught deep breathing and muscle-relaxation exercises that will assist them while testifying. They are also taught how to give



themselves support through positive self-talk.

- 5) Children and parents are then taken to a real courtroom to view the layout and to meet with a Judge. After the Judge gives a presentation, the parents and children are invited to ask questions about the courtroom and that do not involve the specific facts of any case.
- 6) After the Judge's presentation the children are invited to participate in role playing activities with their parents present. At the end of the program, a small graduation ceremony is held.

The Kids In Court program allows children to experience the courtroom in an interesting and non-threatening situation prior to trial. It also gives parents the tools they need to assist their child in dealing with the trial process.

## STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM

The Kids In Court program is held once a month for approximately two hours. The program is designed for child victims/witnesses between the ages of 5 and 13. Participation is limited to 15 child witnesses and their families per session. The group setting provides an opportunity for children to feel less isolated by knowing that there are other children who are also going through similar experiences.

Children are referred to the program by the prosecutor or Victim Services Advocate once a firm trial date has been set. Families will then be contacted and invited to attend the program. Kids In Court is intended as a supplement to individualized trial preparation with the child.

## KIDS IN COURT STAFF

The Kids In Court program is staffed by professional Victim Services Advocates, Deputy County Attorneys and Judges who volunteer their time. Judges who are scheduled to hear a case in which a Kids In Court participant will be a witness, will not volunteer to speak to the program during that month. The program is coordinated by the Victim Services Division and follows a script which was developed by a committee of professionals with a recognized interest in this area.

### Your appointment:

---

#### Contact Us:

**Victim Services Division**  
301 West Jefferson Street, 9th Floor  
Phoenix, Arizona 85003  
PH: (602) 506-8522

