

Twelve Tips for Judges Presiding in Juvenile Court Delinquency Proceedings:

1. **Never** make a decision in anger.
2. Don't talk down, around or about a juvenile. Talk **to** the juvenile.
3. **Listen.** Listen to those who know the best; the parent, court counselor, case manager, mental health professional and the juvenile.
4. The **disposition** is much more difficult than the adjudication.
5. **Every case is different.** Don't make assumptions.
6. **Put your own personal experiences aside.** Juveniles and families you face are not like yours. And remember, at their, age, they have had little, if any, influence over their life situation.
7. **Applaud and praise** kids when warranted. Praise from the judge goes a long way.
8. **Hold the professionals accountable.** Are they doing what you have ordered?
9. **Pay attention to the details.** Can the family meet transportation needs? Is there electricity in the house and food on the table? What is the parent(s) work schedule? What are the other stresses on the family?
10. Never allow, "I don't know" to be an answer. **Ask, ask, ask.**
11. Often the youth you think won't make it, will; and other youth you think will, won't.
12. **Be optimistic.** Don't give up on the child or your influence as a judge.

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