

## Attorney's Perspective Panel Discussion

1. Attorneys introduce themselves, describe their roles, and the purpose of their agency.
2. The following hypothetical situation is shared and a discussion will be held by the attorneys about their interactions with their hypothetical clients and court colleagues in dealing with this situation.

### Hypothetical Scenario:

Carlos Ramirez is 13 years old and currently living in a foster home, 15 miles from his original home, shared with 3 younger children. He was removed from the home of his Mother and boyfriend one year ago when neighbors called 911 about a suspected kitchen fire in the Ramirez apartment. Upon their arrival firefighters and police found Mrs. Ramirez strung out on meth on the sofa. She was unable to tell them the whereabouts her children.

It has been 12 months since DFCS removed Carlos and his 4 year old half-sister from Mrs. Ramirez and the boyfriend's care. Carlos wants desperately to "go home" and be reunited with his half-sister, Mother, and her boyfriend. Carlos' biological father will remain incarcerated for the next four years, but Mrs. Ramirez' boyfriend of six years, who is the half-sister's father, sees himself as the Carlos' "acting" father and is still living in the apartment with Mrs. Ramirez.

Carlos has had a Child Advocate championing his needs for the past 6 months, and he has tried to convince her that he is ready to be reunited with his family. For Carlos' safety and progress, his Advocate does not agree. In her court report, which she has shared with the social worker, the Advocate has recommended that Carlos not return home yet as Mrs. Ramirez is having difficulty complying with her case plan and maintaining her sobriety.

3. Discussion open to trainee Q & A