

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**July 28, 2010**

**Pima County Attorney Barbara LaWall  
Announces New Kids in Court Program**

(Tucson, Arizona) – **Barbara LaWall, Pima County Attorney**, is pleased to announce the creation of a new program designed to help child victims and witnesses learn more about the criminal justice system and to help reduce their anxiety about testifying in court. The new program, **Kids in Court**, has been in development for the past year and will be launched on August 3, 2010.

A child who is a victim or a witness to a crime often faces a legal system that can be confusing and overwhelming. And, the possibility of appearing in court to testify can produce feelings of anxiety and fear. Many of these feelings are based on misconceptions, and their effects can be detrimental to a child's health, as well as the ability to testify effectively.

The **Kids in Court** program is intended to serve children, ages 4-12 years. The purpose of the program is to empower child victims/witnesses by increasing their understanding of the court process, address their feelings and concerns, and answer questions about the judicial system. The **Kids in Court** program is designed to help children and caregivers better understand the court process. The program also teaches kids how to recognize anxiety and fear and teaches them relaxation techniques and strategies to help decrease their stress.

The **Kids in Court** program is a *free* service offered by the Pima County Attorney's Office. The program is educational in nature and is not case specific. Victim privacy is guarded. Participants are instructed not to discuss any information about their case during the program. The program is conducted by trained prosecutors and victim advocates, who are knowledgeable about effective ways to support child and adult victims and witnesses in court and throughout the criminal justice process.

LaWall said: "This is a wonderful opportunity for children and care-givers. I am very pleased that my Office is able to present this outstanding program and I encourage caregivers to take advantage of the **Kids in Court** program. Not only will participants learn about the criminal justice system but I believe this will be beneficial to their case as well."

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