

Court Orientation Tips

Arrival at the Court House (Leduc)

- PARKING
 - Available in court house lot or in theatre lot
- Docket location on bulletin boards
- Location of BOTH court rooms
- Location of Washrooms
- Waiting Areas
 - No designated areas for people to sit.
 - If victim needs separate area, he/she should advise Crown Prosecutor upon arrival – but this is not a guarantee
- Location of Crown Prosecutor's office
- Room for Closed Circuit testimony (only for small children, if arranged in advance after consultation with the Crown Prosecutor)

Waiting for your turn in court

Bring mindless activities (few can really concentrate on homework or books)

- ie: cards, puzzles, comic books, doodling paper, magazines, music and headphones

Snacks - nothing too crumbly or with too much sugar

Drinks – something with a screw-top lid is ideal. **AVOID CAFFEINE!!!**

During the Trial

*****JUDGE DOES NOT HAVE INFORMATION about the case before trial*****

The Crown Prosecutor is not representing you. He/she is representing 'society'.

- Purses/Coats/Backpacks
 - Bring your purse/coat/possessions with you into court room or have someone watch these for you. DO NOT LEAVE UNATTENDED!!!
- All cell phones & pagers OFF
- Lunch Breaks
 - Judge/Lawyers may ask that VS tag along to ensure family/friends don't discuss case
- Expect "warm-up" questions
 - Name
 - Age
 - School/Work
 - Birthdate
 - How long lived in area
- During testimony, a witness may be excused from the court room. This is common and occurs when lawyers and the judge need to discuss a 'finer point of the law' that may impact a person's testimony. During this discussion a witness may be asked to leave the court room. (Just stand outside door and you will be called back in.)
- At the provincial court level (Leduc/Breton), lawyers will refer to each other as 'My FRIEND'
- FIDGETTING while testifying
 - No coins or keys in pockets. Use something made of fabric instead.
- Gum, Candy & Chewing Tobacco
 - No rules about this, but use common sense
- Silence and delay between questions
 - The Crown Prosecutor and Defense lawyer do not have everything scripted.
 - They may have lost their train of thought or are not sure what to ask next.
- Avoid talking with other witnesses until after trial is over. If you **MUST** sit together, do not discuss the case.
- Ensure that your support people know that they cannot (appear to) help you while sitting in courtroom. As hard as it may be, they must try to refrain from gestures and comments.

ADRENALIN

May experience this after testifying. Can include crying, nausea, shaking, giggling, sweating, shivering, headaches.....

CLOTHING

Dress in layers. Courtroom temperature is not always predictable.

Nice, but comfortable (i.e. for a family dinner, job interview or school photo)

KEY PHRASES:

“I do not remember”

“I do not understand”

“I do not know”

- Do NOT make up answers. Do NOT feel obligated to come up with answers.
- If you are nervous, find a focus point to concentrate on.
- Stance, stretch, breathe – get comfortable in the witness box.
- There is no rush to answer questions
- There is no rush for lawyers to ask questions
- There will be a security officer in courtroom. Standard nowadays for all trials.

****Do your homework**** Read your statement