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SUGGESTED CONCEPTS UNDERLYING PRESENTATIONS IN GRADES K-8

- 1 After thanking the students and their teacher for this opportunity to speak, inform them of your rules (i.e., raise hands to contribute or ask questions).

Let's begin with some basic assumptions. By the time children begin kindergarten, they are living in an environment of endless rules. Think about it. Their parents/caregivers have all kinds of rules. A different set of rules may exist at their grandparent's or friend's house. There are different rules at school, riding in cars, riding the school bus, sitting at the dinner table, at church, watching television, waiting in lines, eating (when, where, what), riding bicycles/skateboards, music or sports extracurricular activities, clothing, sharing, interacting with strangers versus familiar people, talking/remaining quiet, computer use and gaming, crossing the street....

- 2 Children understand what is fair and unfair. They are already being conditioned for adulthood. The notion of right and wrong exists and is as important for them as it is for us in the adult world. They also have begun to understand rules to protect and safeguard individuals, the community, and the environment.

Techniques involving some form of dispute resolution have long been adopted and utilized. Conflict resolution skills begin to form upon the first light of realization that they are not alone in this world.

- 3 Last, value their knowledge and experience of consequences from their decisions. What school-aged child does not appreciate why you do not grab a pot of boiling water off the stove? They have received rewards and punishments on hundreds of occasions over their short lifespan.
- 4 We should use lessons regarding rules, order from potential chaos, principles of fundamental fairness, use of dispute resolution skills, and consequences from decisions to help them to begin to understand the value of "the Rule of Law" and role of lawyers and judiciary in helping to maintain some measure of order in the pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness.

By engaging children on these issues, they and you may find you have just spent the quickest 20 minutes of a day together.

- 5 **PERSONAL CLOSING:** Share why your role is significant to you and society. **LET YOUR PASSION FOR JUSTICE BE CONTAGIOUS.**

Please share any presentation proposals with the Celebrate NC Courts Committee at events@NCCourts.org.