

Resolving rows and accidents

» FOR CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS ARE DIVORCING

A new Family Child Court will focus the arguments in a divorce case on issues which concern the child's welfare, rather than those of the parents.

» FOR TROUBLED CHILDREN

The Child Care Court will take neglected, abused or troublesome children under its wing. The Juvenile Court will now handle only minors who commit crimes.

» FOR YOUNG ADULTS

The Community Court, which now deals with young offenders aged 16 to 18, will also handle those between 19 and 21.

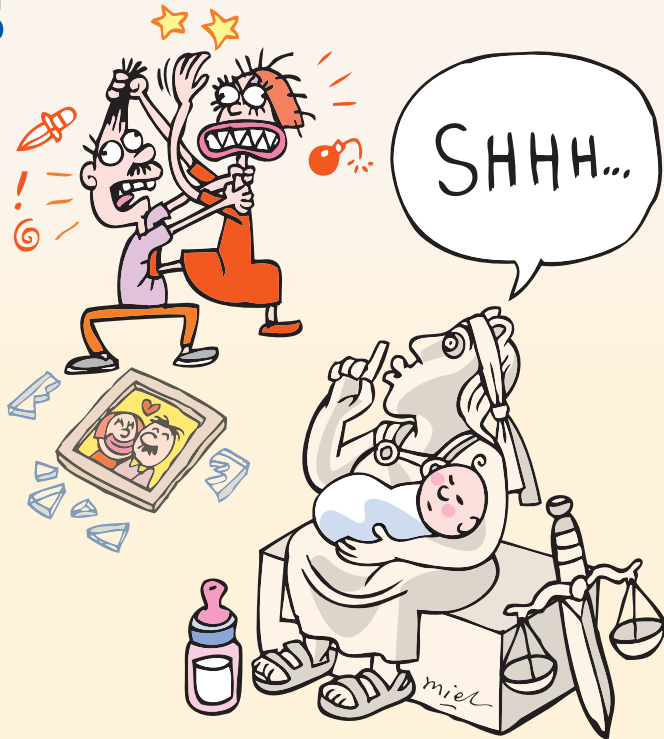
Studies have found that the behaviour of offenders below the age of 21 is more similar to that of those aged below 18, rather than adults.

» FOR ANGRY NEIGHBOURS

A Neighbourhood Court will be set up on May 15 to deal with the increasing number of disputes between neighbours. This court will be presided by legally-trained Justices of Peace.

» FOR WRONGED MOTORISTS

Motor accident cases often drag over several years because they involve both criminal and civil matters. To speed things up, civil personal injury claims will be fast-tracked. Details are still being worked out.



» FOR SHOPLIFTERS

They will all go before the Community Court, which has powers to impose flexible sentences, such as probation and long-term counselling for offenders, rather than jail terms.

Research has found that shoplifters steal because of emotional problems rather than poverty.