

WHY AM I GOING TO SEE

A FAMILY CONSULTANT?

**INFORMATION FOR
TEENAGERS**



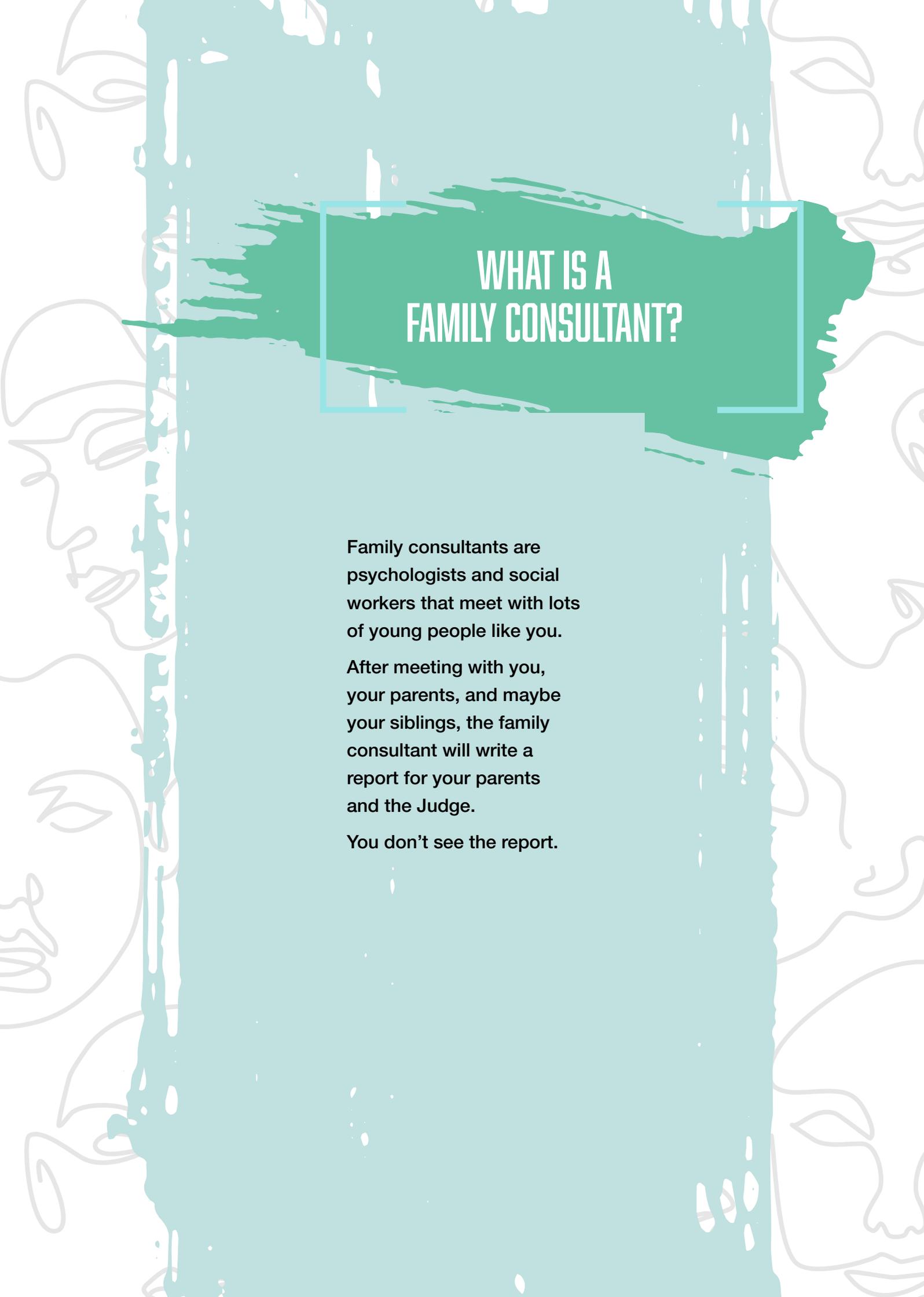
**FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA
FEDERAL CIRCUIT COURT OF AUSTRALIA**

When parents separate they can't always agree on what the arrangements should be for their children.

If they can't agree, some parents come to the Court for help.

This means that a judge may need to make a decision for them.

The judge wants to know what YOU think.

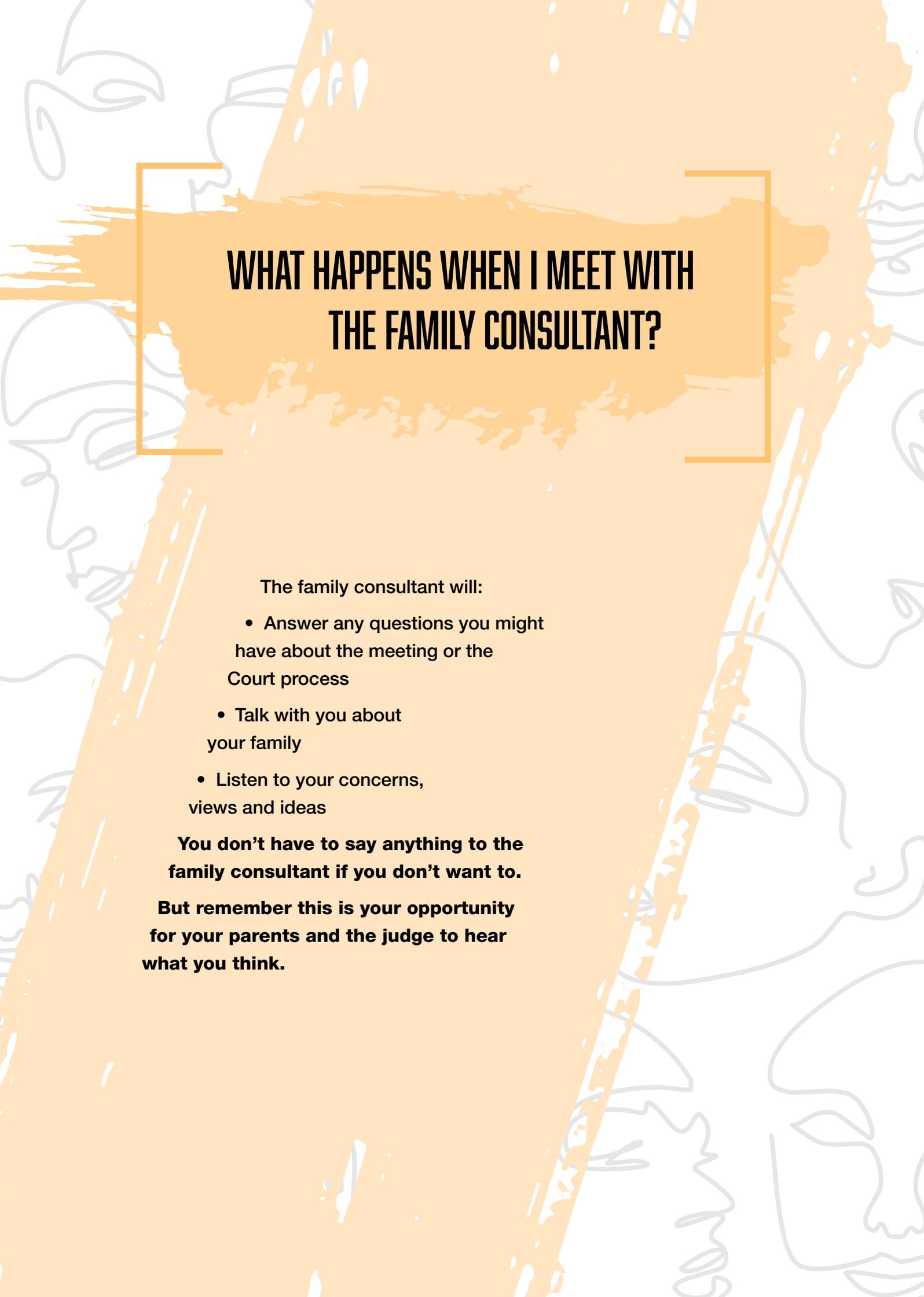


WHAT IS A FAMILY CONSULTANT?

Family consultants are psychologists and social workers that meet with lots of young people like you.

After meeting with you, your parents, and maybe your siblings, the family consultant will write a report for your parents and the Judge.

You don't see the report.



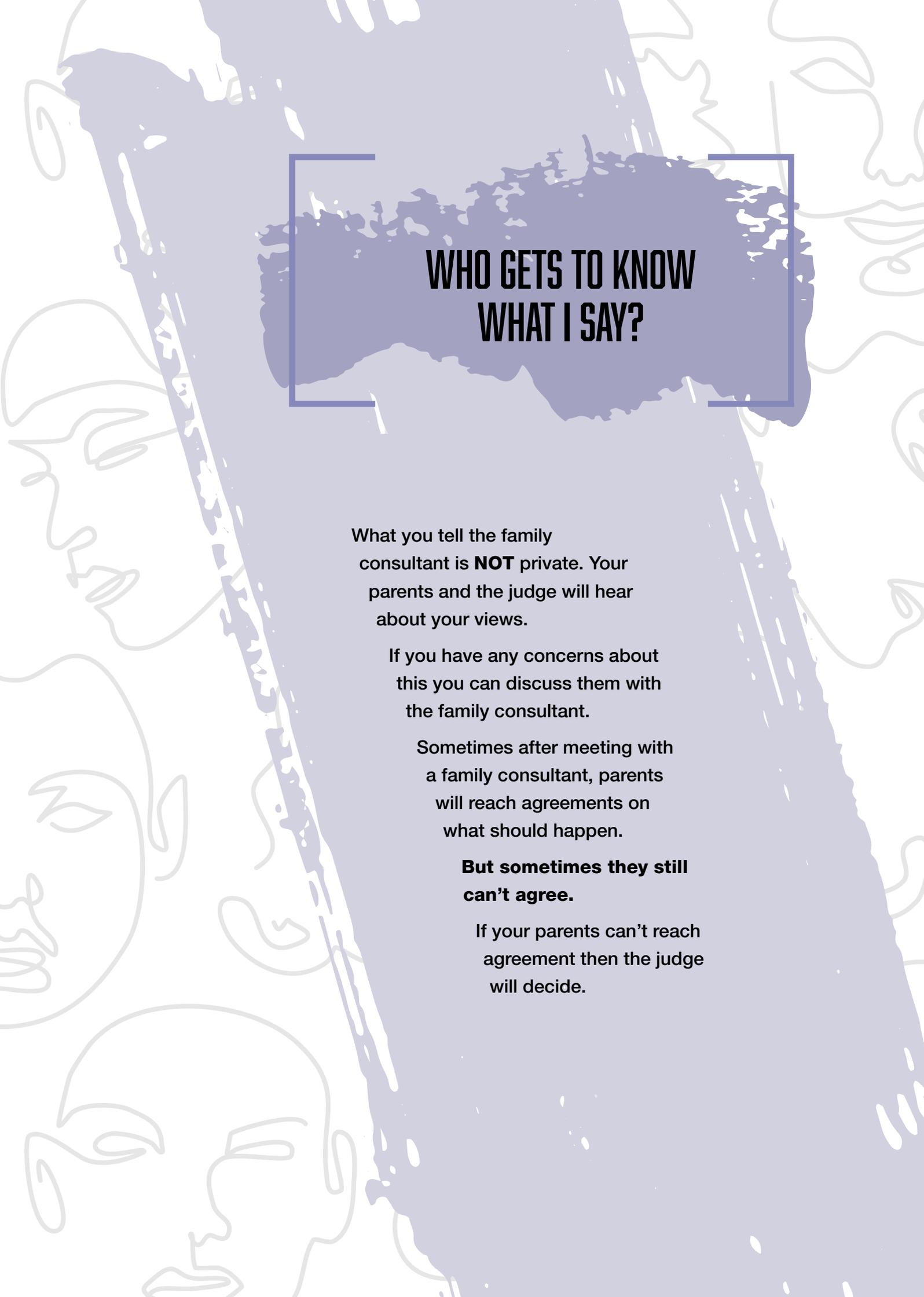
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I MEET WITH THE FAMILY CONSULTANT?

The family consultant will:

- Answer any questions you might have about the meeting or the Court process
- Talk with you about your family
- Listen to your concerns, views and ideas

You don't have to say anything to the family consultant if you don't want to.

But remember this is your opportunity for your parents and the judge to hear what you think.



WHO GETS TO KNOW WHAT I SAY?

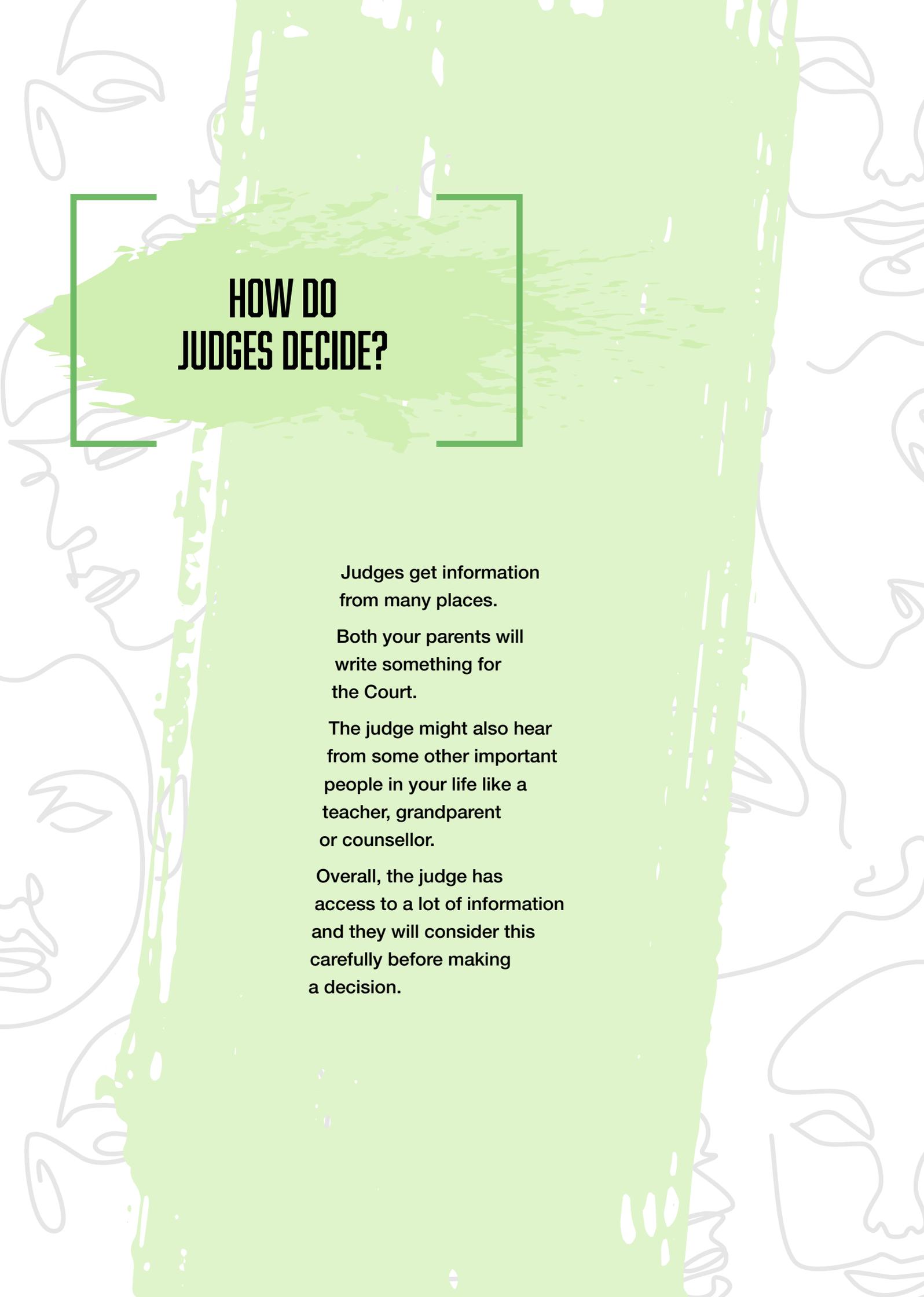
What you tell the family consultant is **NOT** private. Your parents and the judge will hear about your views.

If you have any concerns about this you can discuss them with the family consultant.

Sometimes after meeting with a family consultant, parents will reach agreements on what should happen.

But sometimes they still can't agree.

If your parents can't reach agreement then the judge will decide.

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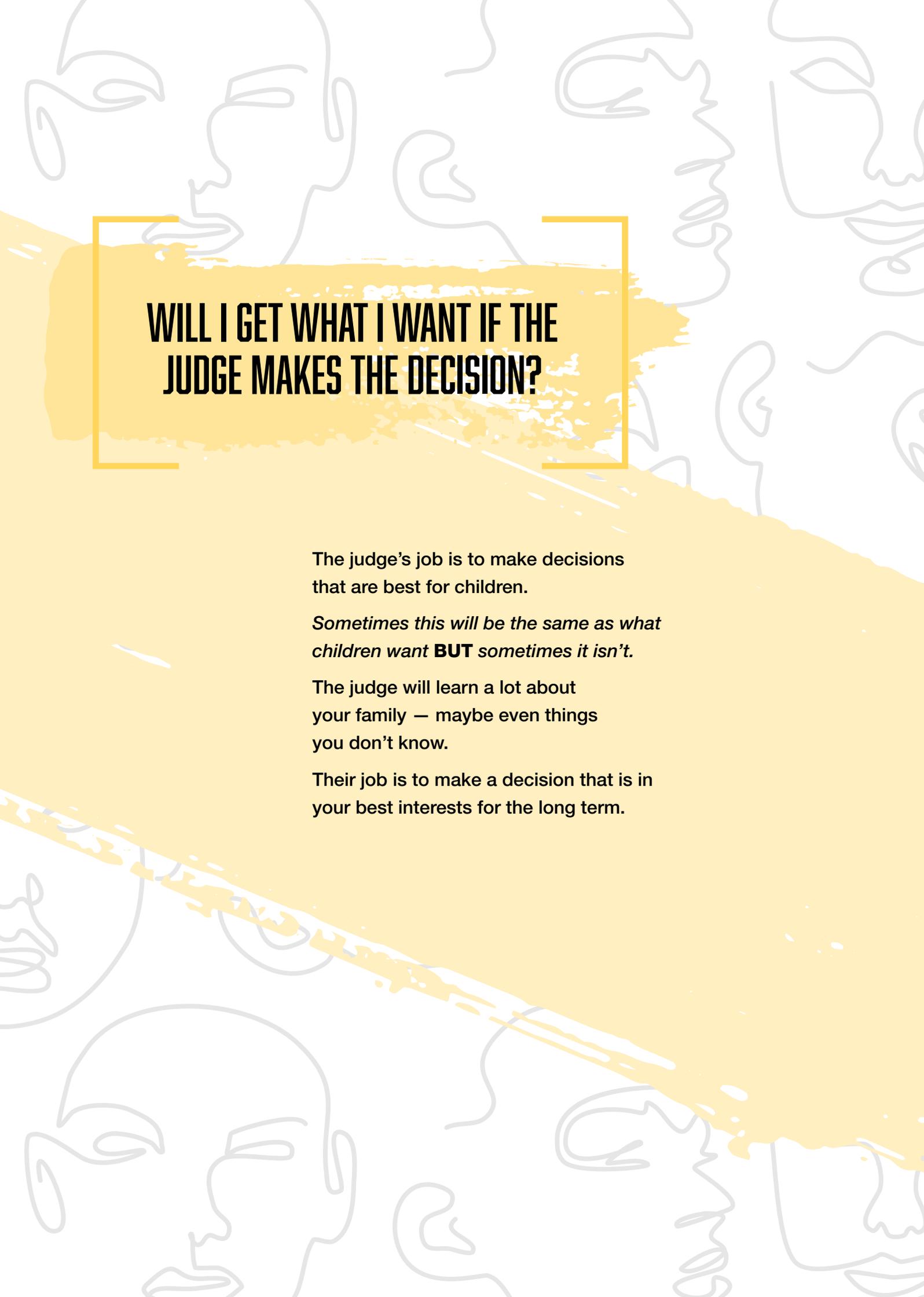
HOW DO JUDGES DECIDE?

Judges get information from many places.

Both your parents will write something for the Court.

The judge might also hear from some other important people in your life like a teacher, grandparent or counsellor.

Overall, the judge has access to a lot of information and they will consider this carefully before making a decision.

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WILL I GET WHAT I WANT IF THE JUDGE MAKES THE DECISION?

The judge's job is to make decisions that are best for children.

*Sometimes this will be the same as what children want **BUT** sometimes it isn't.*

The judge will learn a lot about your family — maybe even things you don't know.

Their job is to make a decision that is in your best interests for the long term.



We care.
We listen.

If you want to talk to someone else,
the Kids Help Line can help.

Call **1800 55 1800**
or go to www.kidshelp.com.au

Kids Help Line

Australia's only free, confidential and anonymous, 24 hour telephone and online counselling service specifically for people aged between 5 and 25.