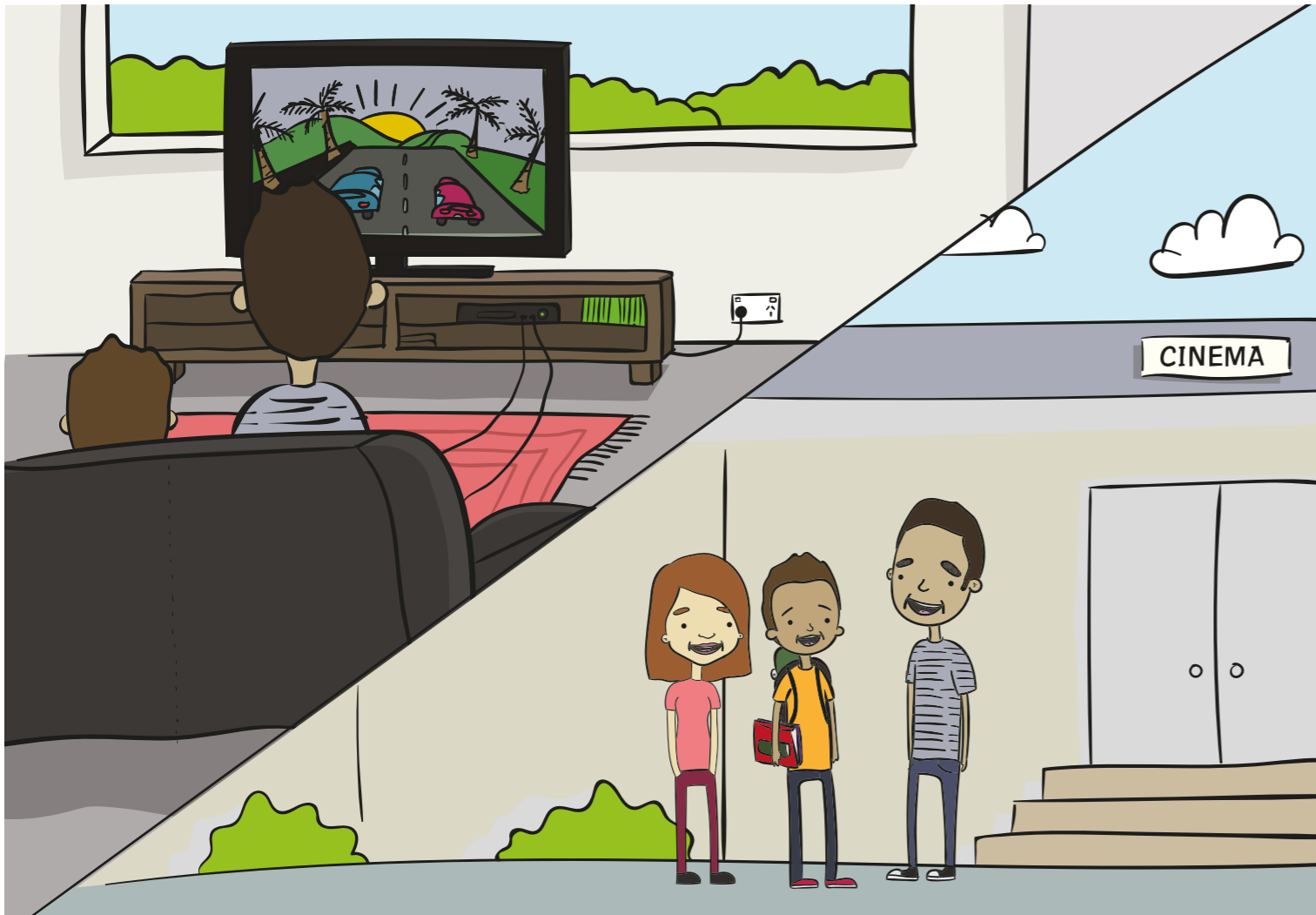


GUARDIANSHIP ORDERS

What does it mean for me?
A guide for children over 12





WHAT *is a* GUARDIAN?

A guardian is a person who will take care of you and provide you with a stable home until you are at least 18 years old. This might be your grandparent, aunt, uncle or foster carer.

They will make decisions about important things like your education and health and also help you stay connected to your culture, community and family heritage.

Guardianship is a way of helping you stay in a safe, stable home until you become an adult.

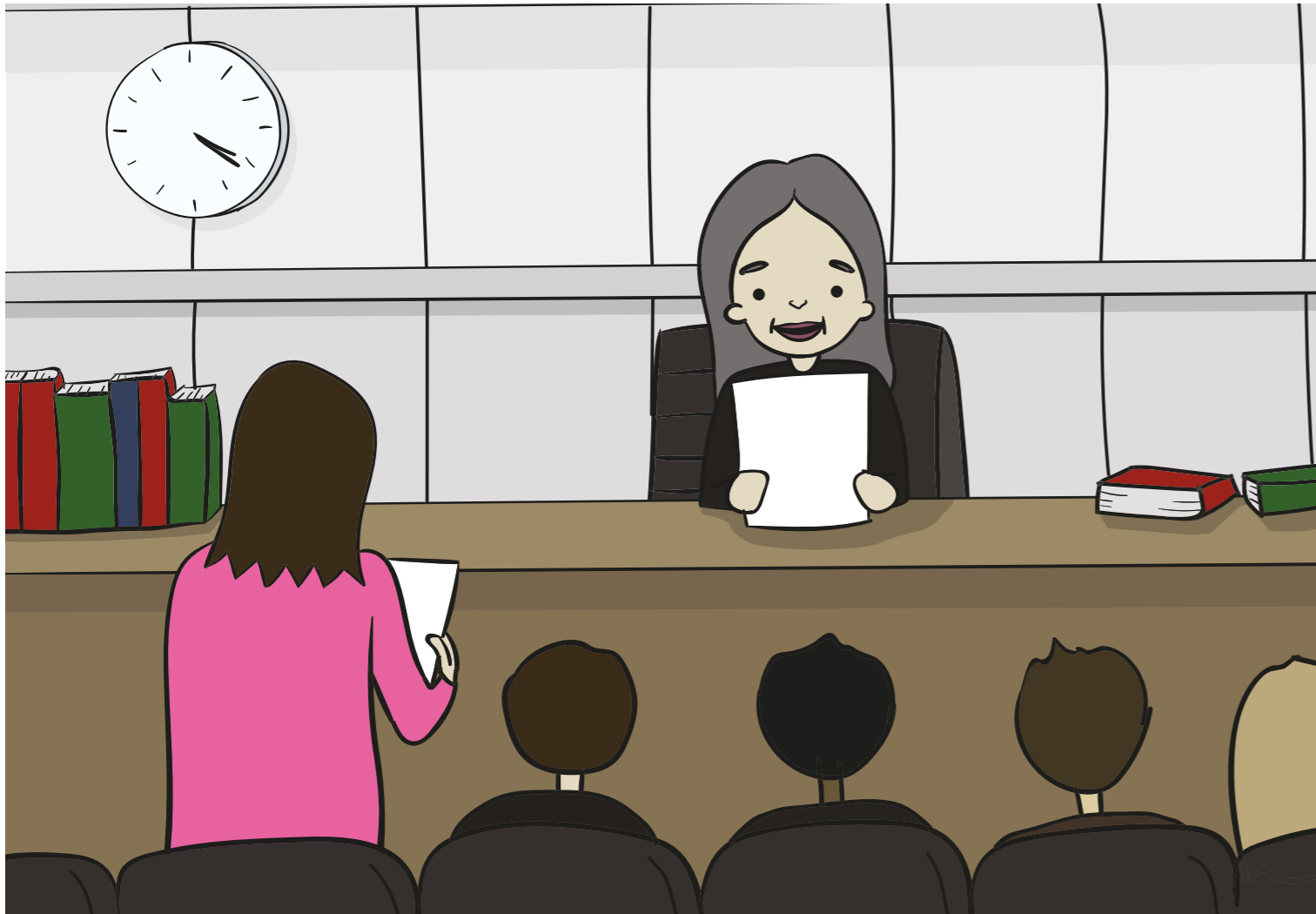
HOW DOES *someone* BECOME *a* GUARDIAN?

If someone wants to become your guardian they will talk to you, your family, your caseworker or other important people in your life about it.

Your caseworker will talk to the person who wants to become your guardian as well as the people who live in their home to make sure you will be safe, happy and well looked after.

Your caseworker and your solicitor will tell the Children's Court about these conversations.





DO I have a SAY?

Yes

A guardianship order cannot be made by the court unless you agree to it.

You will be asked whether or not you agree to a guardianship order being made. Your caseworker and your solicitor will ask you how you feel about having a guardian and you have a choice about whether you want a guardian or not.

It's important that you tell your caseworker and your solicitor about your thoughts, feelings and any worries you might have. You will always have the right to say what you think is best for you.

Agreeing to a guardianship order is called 'giving your consent'. You can speak to your carer, caseworker or someone else you feel safe talking to, like a counsellor or a youth worker.

If you agree to a guardianship order you will sign a form telling the Children's Court that you give your consent.

WILL I STILL *see my* FAMILY?

Yes

As long as it is safe to do so, you'll have contact with your family like your parents, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles and other important people in your life.

Your guardian will make sure you have contact with your family.

It's really important that you keep seeing your parents, brothers and sisters, grandparents or who ever is special to you. Your guardian will help you keep in touch with them.

Always talk to someone you trust like your guardian, a teacher or school counsellor if you're upset about these arrangements.





will i still
LEARN
about my
**FAMILY
HISTORY**
and my
CULTURE?

Yes

You have the right to learn about and stay connected to your culture and heritage, extended family and community. Your guardian will help you learn about your culture through different activities, events and services so you can understand and connect with your culture.

You will have a care plan that describes how you will be supported with staying connected to your family, culture and identity.

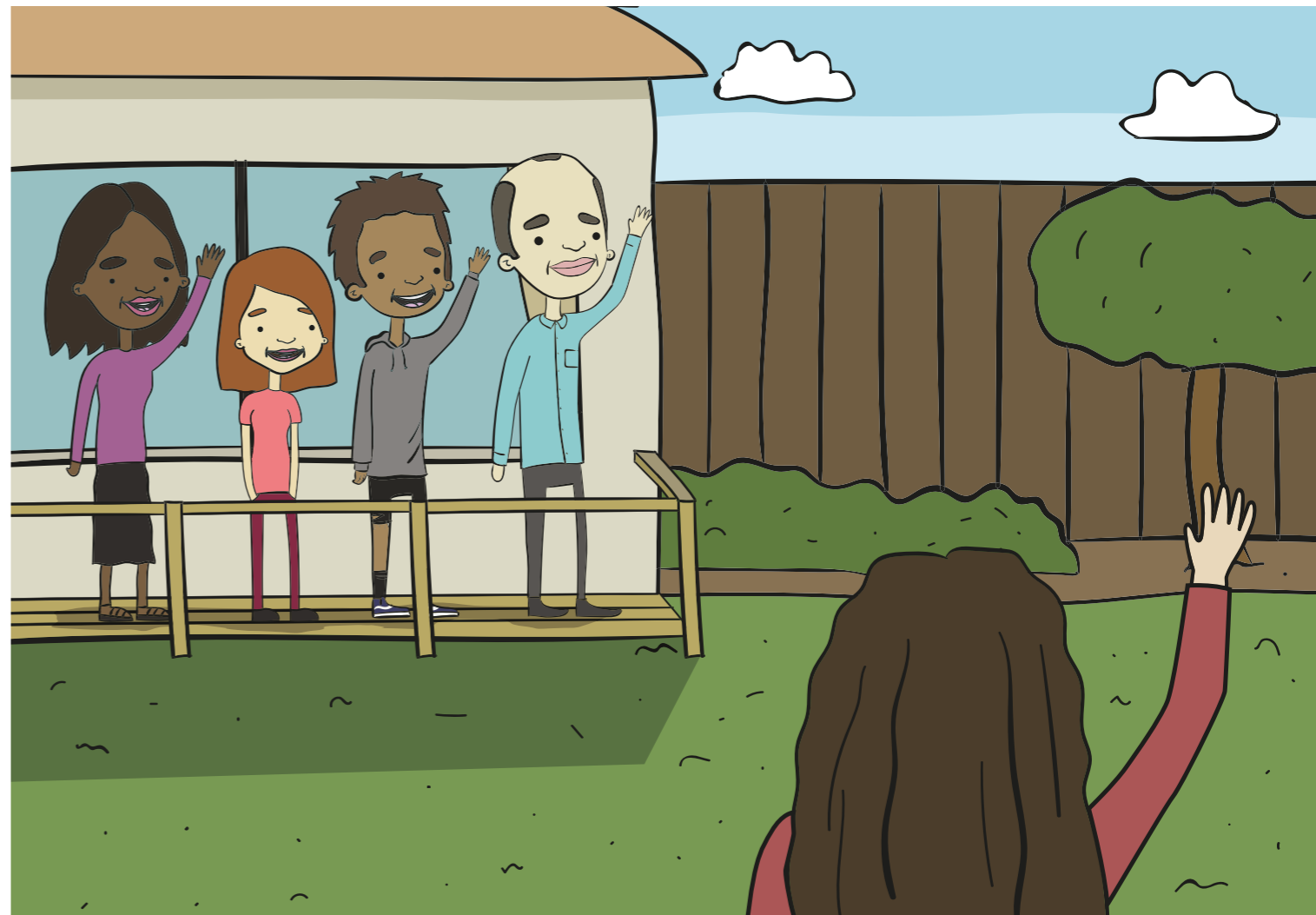
WILL I STILL *have a* CASEWORKER?

No

After someone becomes your guardian you won't have a caseworker. Guardians don't have to check with a caseworker when making decisions about looking after you.

Guardians receive an allowance from the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) to help care for you.

Every year your guardian will need to tell FACS that they are still caring for you and advise FACS if you stop living with them.





WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

WHAT IF *I still have* QUESTIONS?

It is important to talk to an adult if you have questions or worries about having a guardian.

Good people to talk to are:

- your carer
- your caseworker
- your teacher
- a counsellor
- someone you trust.

If you are worried or feeling upset and want to talk to someone else you can call the Kids Helpline, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. What you talk about is between you and the counsellor.

Their phone number is [1800 55 1800](tel:1800551800) or visit kidshelp.com.au

You can also call CREATE, which is an organisation that supports children and young people in care.

Their phone number is [1800 655 105](tel:1800655105) or visit create.org.au