

# CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Set up the meeting space like a courtroom with a judge's bench, jury box and defendant's chair. Recruit a volunteer to play the first *judge* for this activity. Have the *judge* choose six group members to be the first *jury*. The *jury* takes its place and the *judge* explains that the first defendant has been tried and found guilty. You or a volunteer may serve as the clerk of the court and read the charges of the first defendant as described below, embellishing both the description of the defendant and the crime.

The *judge* then gives the *jury* 3 minutes to decide on an appropriate punishment for the defendant. When the time is up, the *judge* calls for the *jury's* decision. A representative of the *jury* stands and announces its decision. Repeat the activity for the remaining defendants on the list. For each defendant, recruit a new *judge* and new *jury members*.

## Defendants/Crimes:

- Jenny: 7-year-old female who took three cookies from her grandparent's cookie jar without permission
- Daryl: 18-year-old male whose neglect led to the accidental death by drowning of a 3-year-old boy he was babysitting
- Bianca: 29-year-old female whose drunk driving resulted in the death of a mother and her two children
- Randy: 41-year-old male who fatally stabbed another man in an argument over drugs
- Ken: 53-year-old male who raped an 18-year-old female

## HOW TO DECIDE

- Begin with the activity Crime (previous column). After all punishment have been determined, discuss:
- What guided our choice of punishment?
  - On what did *jury members* disagree?
  - Overall, do you think the punishment chosen by our *juries* were harsh? lenient? fair? unfair?
  - What's the purpose of punishment?
  - What different principles could be used in determining a punishment, for example:
    - eye for an eye (vengeance)
    - change the heart (rehabilitation)
    - protect the rest of us
    - make an example for society