

### **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT:**

- \* To be free from self-incrimination. You do not have to speak to an officer or write a statement.
- \* To be free from unreasonable searches. Officers can't search you unless they have your consent or a good reason to think you have something illegal (or something not allowed at school, if you're at school). You can refuse consent to a search of you and your belongings (ex. clothes, backpack, and car).
- \* To be free from excessive force, bullying, harassment, and discrimination.
- \* To not be arrested unless the officer knows facts that show it's more likely than not that you committed a crime.

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### **GENERAL TIPS:**

- \* Never run, resist, fight, or interfere.
- \* Stay calm and be polite.
- \* Give your name if asked for it.
- \* Don't lie or give false documents.
- \* Ask if you are free to leave. If so, leave.
- \* If you're arrested and/or told you can't leave, ask for your parent and a lawyer immediately.
- \* After the encounter is over, write down everything you can remember, including the date, time, officer's name, witnesses' names, and what happened, and take photos of any injuries.
- \* Read the statement on the back of this card to the officer.

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**IF AN OFFICER VIOLATES YOUR RIGHTS:**

- \* You can file an internal affairs complaint with the officer's police department or sheriff's department.
- \* You can report the incident to the media.
- \* You should tell your defense attorney, if you have one.

**YOU CAN READ THIS TO THE OFFICER:**

*"I am not resisting. I do not consent to any search of me or my things. I am exercising my right to remain silent. I do not want to speak to you. If I am free to leave, please tell me. If I am not free to leave, please call my parent/guardian, \_\_\_\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_.*

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Encounters with Law Enforcement

**KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!**

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YOUTH JUSTICE PROJECT  
www.youthjusticenc.org

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## Printing Instructions

1. Print pages 1-2 of this document. In printing options, select “Print on Both Sides” and “Flip pages on long edge.”
2. Make 4 horizontal cuts to produce 5 strips with same text on each (there will be text on front and back).
3. Fold each strip on printed vertical line so title card is facing out.
4. Trim extra white space so card edges line up.
5. Place one folded card in your wallet and pass out the other 4!

For more information or assistance, contact Peggy Nicholson at [peggynicholson@scsj.org](mailto:peggynicholson@scsj.org) or Ricky Watson at [rickywatsonjr@scsj.org](mailto:rickywatsonjr@scsj.org).