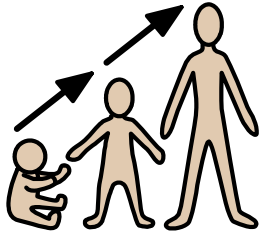
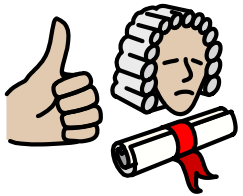


Legal and financial stuff



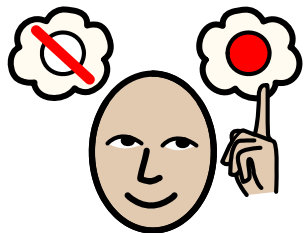
As you grow older, you learn new things. You might start to do things on your own, without your parents being there. This is called becoming independent (said: inn-dee-pen-dent).



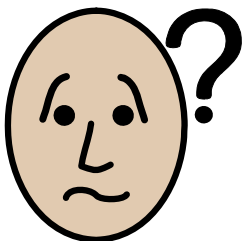
The law tells you what you are allowed to do and what you are not allowed to do. The things you are allowed to do usually change as you grow older.



For example, the law lets you buy yourself a lottery ticket when you are 16 years old.



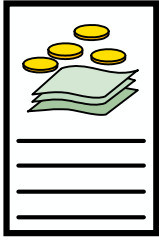
You can also decide some things yourself. Your parents can still help, but you should be the one to decide.



Before you make any decisions, someone will check that you understand what is involved and what choices you have. You might find it easy to decide some things but others can be more difficult.



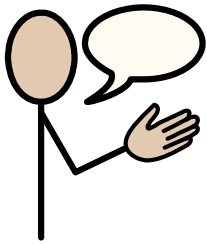
You will need to learn more about money as well as what the law lets you do.



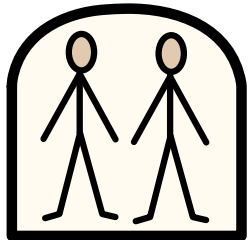
For example, you will need to work out how much money you are given each week and what you need to spend on things like food and rent and travel. If you have any money left over, you can save it or spend it. This is called setting a budget.



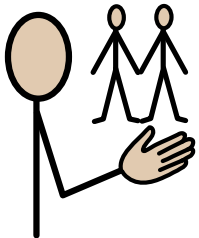
The way you get benefits might change when you are 16. You will probably need to have a new check up at the benefits office. They will decide how much money you will get a week.



You do not have to deal with legal and financial stuff on your own. Your parents can help you. They can show you how they do it. They can go to court so they can speak up for you.



There are organisations that can help you. Mencap have a phone line you can call if you have a question.



Your social worker can also help you to learn how to deal with legal and financial stuff.



Please ask us if you have any questions.