



**National Association of Counsel for Children**

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You have been appointed as the child's attorney and you have also been appointed by the court to serve as the child's GAL. John is your client. He is an 11-year-old child who was removed on an emergency basis because of allegations that his mother discontinued her prescription medication for bi-polar disorder against medical advice, and has left John home alone, for days at a time when she is manic. At the upcoming adjudication hearing, you learn that DFCS is requesting a finding of dependency and a disposition that the child remains in DFCS custody while John's mother works a reunification case plan.

John tells you that he wants to go home. He says he is not sure whether his mom is taking her medication or not but that he has not noticed any change in her behavior, toward him or otherwise. He says that he has a trusted neighbor whom he could go to for help if he ever needed it – but reiterates that he has never needed it because he can take care of himself.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What steps do you need to take to determine whether you have a conflict?
2. After going through those steps, what is your determination and why?
3. If you determine that you may have a conflict, is there a way to use your out of court advocacy skills to resolve that conflict? If so, how?