



DEPENDENCY COURTS

These guidelines were developed for the Edelman Children's Courthouse. Only the inclusive design guidelines that can be extended to other settings are included here (ADA guidelines must also be followed).

ENTRANCE AND LOBBY

The Court's entrance and lobby provide a reference or orientation point for the

building. They create an initial image for visitors so it's critical that these spaces make a bold statement about the character of the building.

The initial entry into a site, either by foot or by car, should have a clear view to the building's main entrance (Figure 2). Easy and safe access and understandable signage are key. The architecture,

landscaping and site elements must clearly communicate that this place is about children and families.

The entrance should be one or two story, with maximum natural light. The perceived scale of the building is essential to creating a friendly entrance. Provide a transition from the drop-off zone into the building with outdoor rooms, gateways and trellises that create

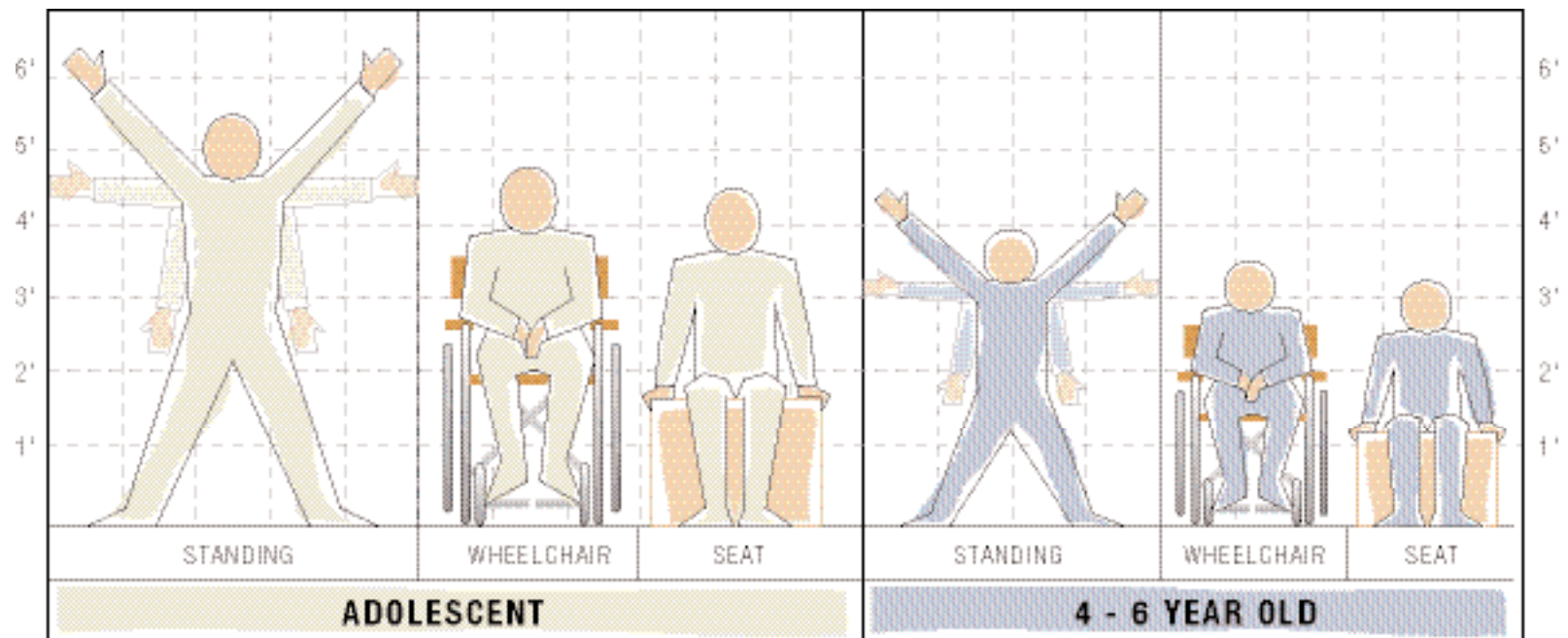


Figure 1. The anthropometric scale for children brings buildings and furniture down to appropriate heights.

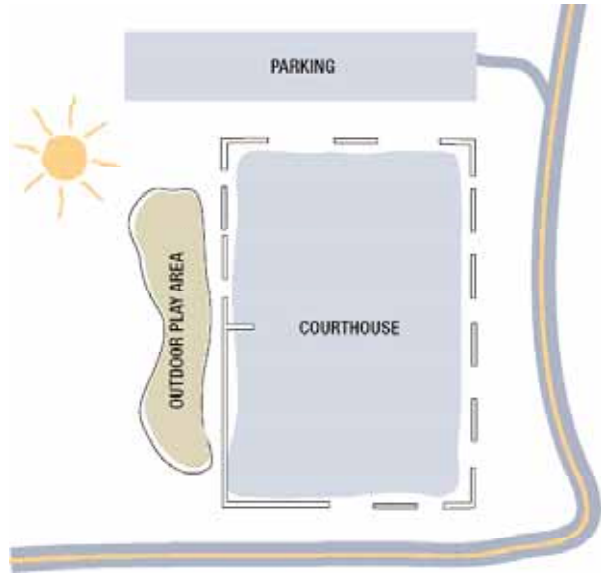


Figure 2. The building orientation places the play area in the sun and ensures that the parking structure is not so visible from the highway.



Figure 3. Children feel less intimidated by an entrance with more natural and familiar forms and plants.

an intimate setting. Use window details, color, vegetation and artwork to enhance the intimacy (Figure 3). Provide numerous places to sit.

The lobby should have a feature that causes people to stop and look around them. The feature should be symbolic or spiritual, providing an interpretation of family and the spirit of childhood.

BUILDING APPEARANCE

Dependency court buildings should reflect a friendly yet dignified appear-

ance. A *friendly* building possesses the following attributes:

- Human-scaled dimensions and proportions, especially in windows, doors, stairways, roofs, columns, canopies and ceiling heights (Figure 1)
- Continuity between elements such as between the building façade, approaches and entrance
- Plants and vegetation to soften building lines and edges
- Warm materials such as brick, wood and canvas
- Views out of the building

- Daylight entering through skylights and windows

A *dignified* building appearance can be achieved with:

- Clean, simple geometric lines
- Geometric, symmetrical spaces
- Well-defined gateway entrances
- Subdued colors
- Durable, contrasting materials such as marble, stone, brick and steel
- Proper use of symbols of authority

CIRCULATION

Create clear orientations through the lobby with a brightly lit reception desk about 50 feet into the lobby, and information boards behind. Create an easy transition to elevators (Figure 4). If security is required, orient the security to one corner. It should be clearly visible so people know someone is watching, but should not make people feel locked in. Provide direct, clearly marked circulation routes between the reception area, waiting areas and other rooms (Figure 5).

CORRIDORS

Avoid creating long, cave-like corridors. Break them up with windows in walls and doors that offer views outside or into other activities. Differentiate corridor segments by varying colors and widths (Figures 6 and 7).

PUBLIC WAITING AREAS

Public waiting areas should be more than a space for passing time; through proper design and management, the setting should help reduce the child's and family member's anxiety as they prepare for the hearing process. It should be a comfortable setting near the family mediation and interview rooms.

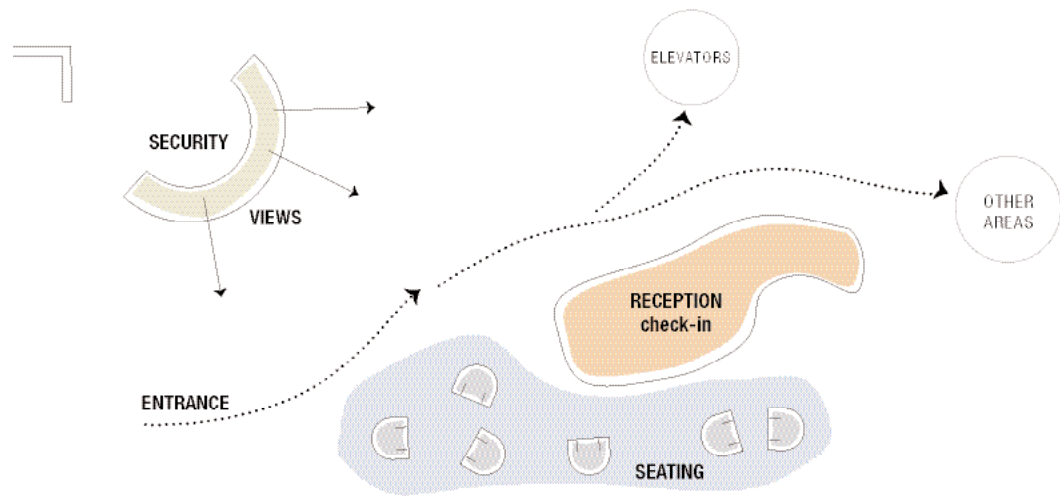


Figure 4. The lobby area sets the tone and ambience for the entire building.

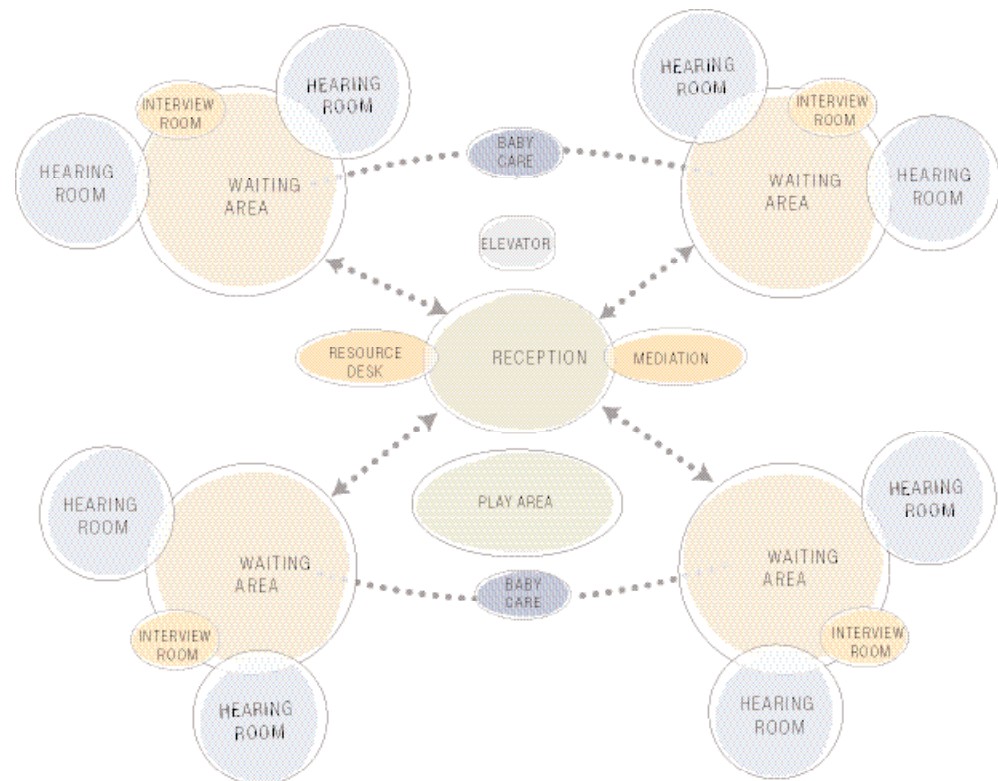


Figure 5. Hearing rooms require support facilities including areas for waiting, interview rooms, reception and information materials, and play.