

LESSON 5: OUR FAMILY

Law & Citizenship Course • *Ghid practic de educație juridică - „Elevul și legea”* • Judecător Cristi Danileț



HOME SAFE BY LAW



Families work when care and responsibility go together. The law protects children, supports parents and sets fair limits so everyone's dignity is respected at home.

LESSON CONTENTS

PART 1

FAMILY IN LAW

Who counts as a parent; how parentage is established; duties of parents toward children; guardianship basics

PART 2

PARENTS AWAY OR APART

Parents working abroad; separation and divorce; custody, residence, child support, and the child's right to contact; relatives and in-laws (kinship)

PART 3

SAFETY & RESPECT AT HOME

No corporal punishment; domestic violence is a crime; respect for relatives and for the deceased

PART 4

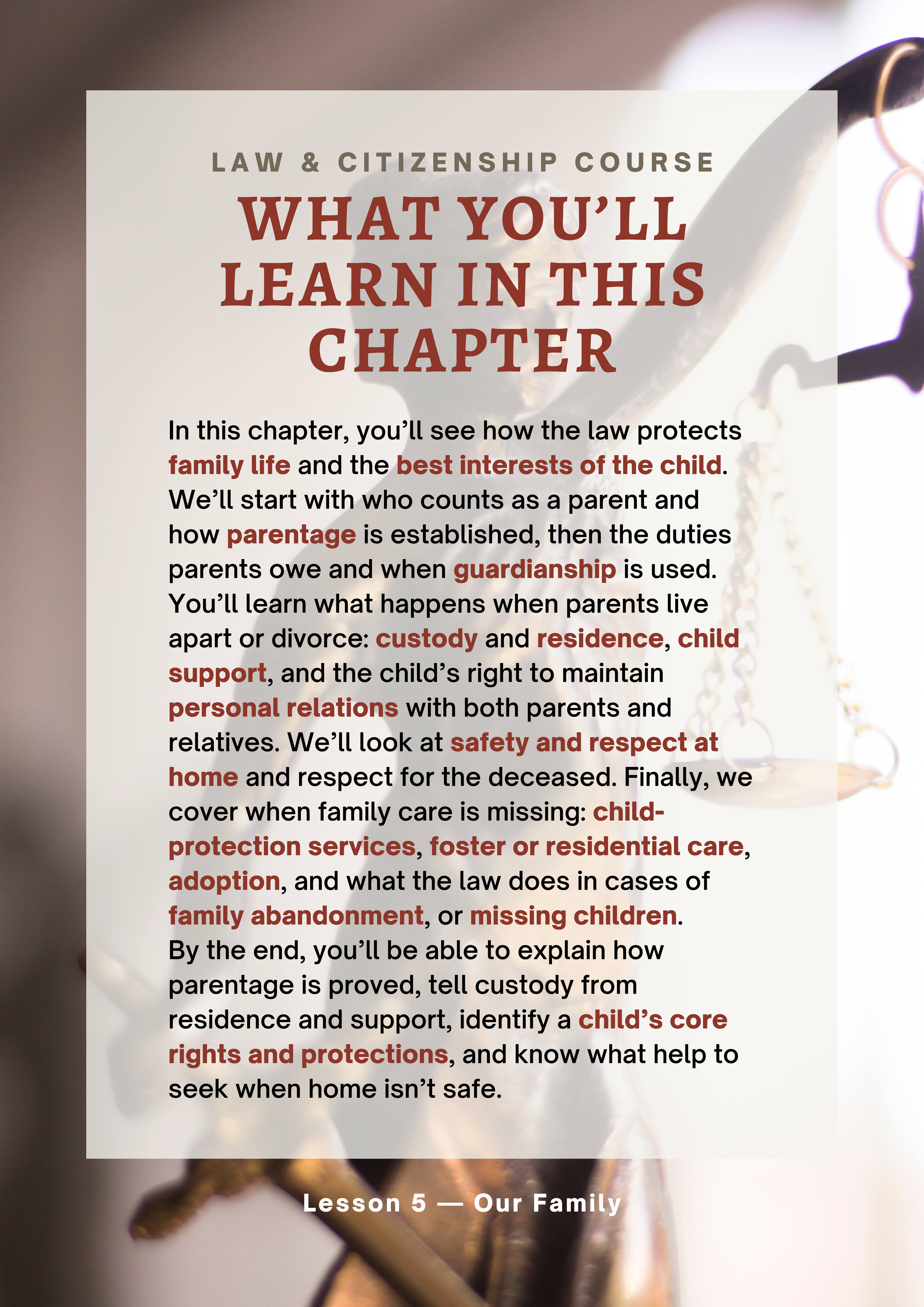
WHEN FAMILY CARE IS MISSING

Protection services for children without parental care; foster or residential care; adoption; family abandonment; missing and child abduction

PART 5

REVIEW & PRACTICE

Quiz, key concepts, and reflection tasks — review what you've learned and apply it



LAW & CITIZENSHIP COURSE

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

In this chapter, you'll see how the law protects **family life** and the **best interests of the child**. We'll start with who counts as a parent and how **parentage** is established, then the duties parents owe and when **guardianship** is used. You'll learn what happens when parents live apart or divorce: **custody** and **residence, child support**, and the child's right to maintain **personal relations** with both parents and relatives. We'll look at **safety and respect at home** and respect for the deceased. Finally, we cover when family care is missing: **child-protection services, foster or residential care, adoption**, and what the law does in cases of **family abandonment**, or **missing children**. By the end, you'll be able to explain how parentage is proved, tell custody from residence and support, identify a **child's core rights and protections**, and know what help to seek when home isn't safe.

HOW FAMILY LAW ACTUALLY WORKS

HOME SAFE BY LAW

WHY FAIR RULES PROTECT FAMILY LIFE AND EVERY MEMBER'S RIGHTS

Families are built on care and responsibility, but also on rules. The law defines **who counts as a parent**, how **parentage** is established, and what **duties** parents and children owe each other. When parents live apart, the law ensures **custody**, **residence**, and **child support** are fair, so every child can keep close **personal relations with both parents**. Clear rules don't divide families — they **protect them**, keeping everyone's **dignity** and **safety** respected.



Warm-Up Activity



Write one rule that helps families live together better — at home or in school. Why does it help? Share your answer with a classmate.

Rules protect care, not control.

WHEN PARENTS ARE AWAY OR APART

Families sometimes live in different homes — because a parent works abroad or parents separate/divorce. The law keeps the child’s **best interests** first: it protects the child’s right to **care, contact**, and **support** from both parents and helps **relatives stay involved**. Arrangements are written in a **parenting plan** or **decided by a court**. **Parental authority** usually remains **joint** unless it risks the **child’s safety**.



Parents Working Abroad

Parents may work in another country. They still keep parental responsibility and must stay in touch and support the child.



Right to Personal Relations

Children have a right to regular contact with both parents and close relatives, unless contact would harm them.



Separation & Divorce

Courts (or an agreement) decide practical things: where the child lives, time with each parent, and how decisions are made.



Best Interests First

No parent “owns” the child. Plans must fit the child’s age, school, health and safety, not adult conflicts.



Custody, Residence, Support

Parental authority is usually joint. Residence = where the child mainly lives. Child support = money to meet needs.



Agreeing & Mediating

Parents should make a parenting plan; mediation can help. Big moves (like relocation abroad) need both parents’ consent or a court order.

Imagine and Reflect

A parent works abroad; another family is divorcing; a third plans to move cities with the child. In 2–3 sentences each, say what the child keeps (contact/support) and who must agree or decide.

SAFETY & RESPECT AT HOME

Safety



No Corporal Punishment

- Hitting, humiliating, or degrading treatment of **children** is **forbidden** at home and in school.
- Discipline must be **non-violent** (rules, guidance, consequences that don't harm).

Protection



Domestic Violence Is a Crime

- Violence can be **physical**, **psychological**, **sexual**, or **economic control**.
- Courts can extend **protection**; victims can access **shelters**, **counselling**, and **legal aid**.

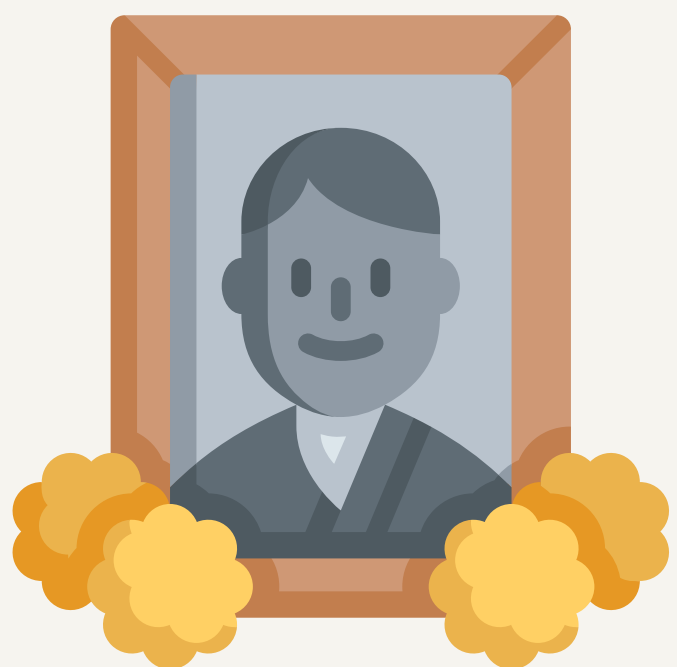
Respect



Respect for Family & Relatives

- Children have a right to **maintain personal relations** with both parents and relatives.
- **Child support** helps meet the child's needs when parents live apart.

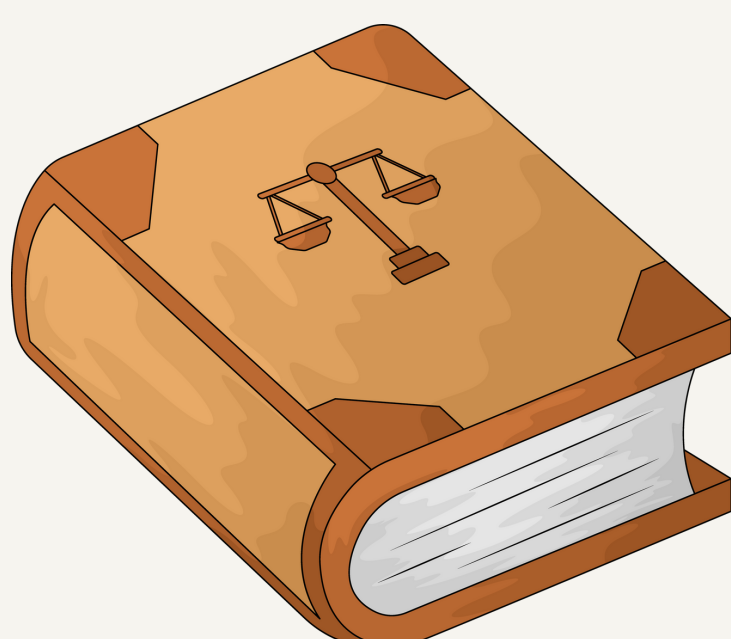
Dignity



Respect for the Deceased

- Families must **register the death** and follow lawful **burial/cremation** procedures.
- Desecration of graves or remains is **illegal**; funerary rites deserve **dignity and respect**.

Key terms



Mini-Glossary

- **Protection order** = court or police order keeping victims safe from aggressors.
- **Parental authority** = rights/duties to raise and represent the child.
- **Kinship** = legal ties with relatives (grandparents, aunts/uncles, in-laws).

WHEN FAMILY CARE IS MISSING

When a child isn't safe or properly cared for, the state must act in the **best interests of the child**. Anyone can **alert authorities**; professionals (teachers, doctors, police, social workers) have a duty to do so. **Safety comes first**, then a plan that protects the child's **health, education, identity**, and **ties to family** whenever that's safe.



CHILD-PROTECTION SYSTEM

Specialized services investigate concerns, speak with the child, and assess risks. If needed, emergency measures are taken and a court can order protection. A legal guardian may be appointed when parents cannot act.



CARE OPTIONS

The first choice is kinship care (with relatives) or a foster family. Residential homes are used only when family-type care isn't available. Contact with parents and relatives continues unless it harms the child. Every placement is reviewed regularly.



ADOPTION

If a safe return to birth family isn't possible, adoption offers a permanent family. It requires verified consent or a court decision, checks on adoptive parents, matching, and post-adoption support that respects the child's identity and story.



WHY SUPPORT MATTERS

Counselling, schooling, health care, and mentoring help children heal and thrive. Keeping important parts of identity — name, language, culture — builds stability and dignity.

FROM RISK TO CARE

Report & First Response

Anyone can report neglect, abuse, abandonment, or a missing child.



Report it

Assessment

Social workers interview the child and family, collect evidence, and check risks/needs.



Assess needs

Temporary Placement

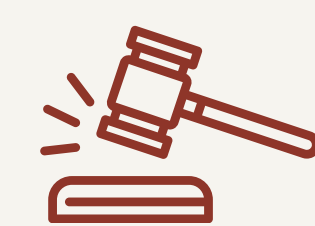
If home isn't safe, the child is placed with relatives or a foster family. Contact with parents is arranged when safe.



Place safely

Court Decision & Care Plan

A judge confirms measures, sets custody/guardianship, and approves a care plan with clear goals: reunification, long-term foster/kinship care, or adoption.



Judge decides

Review, Reunification or Adoption

Progress is reviewed. Families get support to fix problems. If reunification fails, long-term care or adoption secures a stable home.



Follow up

So what for me?

Your voice matters if a friend isn't safe. Tell a trusted adult (parent, teacher, school counsellor) or contact child-protection services. Don't confront abusers or investigate yourself — staying safe and reporting quickly helps professionals act.

Try it: List two safe adults and one local helpline a teen could contact about a home problem. When should each be used?

QUIZ — Lesson 5

Check what you've learned about family life, protection, and care. Read each question carefully and choose the correct answer.



- 1** When is parentage legally established?
 - a) By family consent only
 - b) Through civil registration or court decision
 - c) Automatically when a child is born
- 2** Which duty belongs to both parents?
 - a) Deciding the child's religion alone
 - b) Sharing care, education and supervision
 - c) Choosing the child's residence separately
- 3** What does joint custody mean?
 - a) Parents share decisions
 - b) Only one parent has rights
 - c) The child lives equally in two homes
- 4** The best interests of the child means...
 - a) What makes parents' lives easier
 - b) What is most convenient for the court
 - c) What benefits the child's wellbeing and development
- 5** When parents separate, who sets child support?
 - a) The school counsellor
 - b) The court or a legal agreement
 - c) The child decides freely
- 6** Guardianship applies when...
 - a) Parents cannot fulfil their duties
 - b) Parents disagree about custody
 - c) The child turns 18
- 7** What is the first step when a child is abandoned or neglected?
 - a) Criminal trial
 - b) Protective intervention by social services
 - c) Permanent foster placement
- 8** Which statement about adoption is correct?
 - a) It's always temporary
 - b) It creates a new, full parent-child bond
 - c) They guarantee that popular groups always win conflicts
- 9** Domestic violence law protects...
 - a) Only adults in marriage
 - b) Everyone in the household, including children
 - c) Only children under 14
- 10** Foster care means...
 - a) Long-term residence in an orphanage
 - b) Temporary family care for a child in need
 - c) Independent living for minors

QUIZ — Lesson 5

ANSWER KEY



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KEY CONCEPTS FROM LESSON 5



PARENTAGE

Legal recognition of who a child's parents are, based on birth, acknowledgment, or a court decision.



PARENTAL AUTHORITY

The combined rights and duties of parents to raise, guide, and protect their child.



CUSTODY

The right and duty to decide on a child's upbringing and daily life after separation or divorce.



RESIDENCE

The place where a child normally lives; it can be shared or primarily with one parent.



GUARDIANSHIP

Legal protection for a child when parents cannot care for them. A guardian takes key decisions until the parents can or the child turns 18.



KINSHIP CARE

Temporary care by relatives when parents are absent or unable to provide for the child.



FOSTER PLACEMENT

Professional or volunteer family care arranged by child-protection authorities, aiming at stability and safety.



ADOPTION

A permanent legal process that creates a new family tie and ends the previous parental rights.



BEST INTERESTS PRINCIPLE

The rule that every decision about a child must primarily benefit their wellbeing and development.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Any act of physical, emotional, or economic abuse within a family, punished and prevented by law.