



Being a Citizen of Louisiana and the United States



Working together



Rules



Civic virtues



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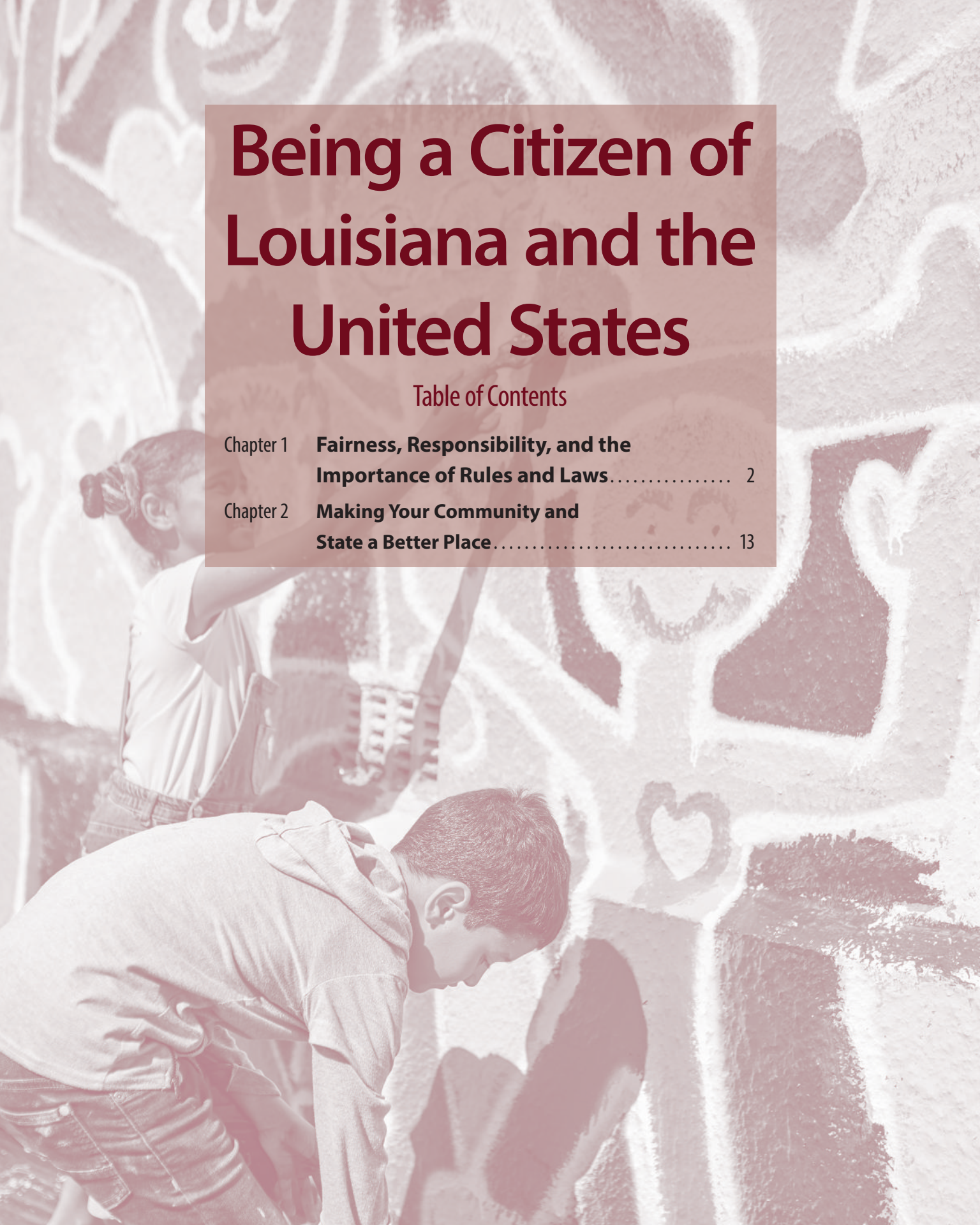
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Being a Citizen of Louisiana and the United States

Table of Contents

Chapter 1	Fairness, Responsibility, and the Importance of Rules and Laws	2
Chapter 2	Making Your Community and State a Better Place	13

Fairness, Responsibility, and the Importance of Rules and Laws

Rules are guides for how to act in a community. Rules tell us things we can and can't do. They also tell us how we should do things. In the classroom, we follow rules to keep us safe and to help us learn.



Rules help everyone stay safe. For example, playground rules help stop accidents from happening. Adults follow safety rules, too. Important rules about driving keep everyone safe. One example of a driving safety rule is stopping at a stop sign.



Rules also help keep things fair. When we play games, rules tell us how to play and when to take turns. This means everyone has a fair chance. Your classroom might also have rules like taking turns to be the line leader.



Different places have different rules. They make different rules because each place has its own needs. Have you ever wondered how a community decides its rules?



In most classrooms, the teacher makes the rules. For example, your class may have rules about listening when the teacher is talking. You may need to raise your hand to talk. These rules help us learn. They also help us be respectful of others.

Here are some rules we should follow every day, no matter where we are:

1. Share and take turns. This is an important part of working together. Taking turns gives everyone a chance to join in.



2. Play fair. It feels good to win. But it's important to play by the rules. Playing fair shows that we are thinking about others.





3. Respect others and ourselves. Everyone has the right to be themselves and to be treated with respect. Taking care of our personal belongings and being mindful of other people's belongings are two ways we can show respect.

4. Disagree respectfully. Sometimes we disagree with others. We may even disagree with a rule. If you disagree, you can say that in a respectful way. You can ask questions and suggest changes.

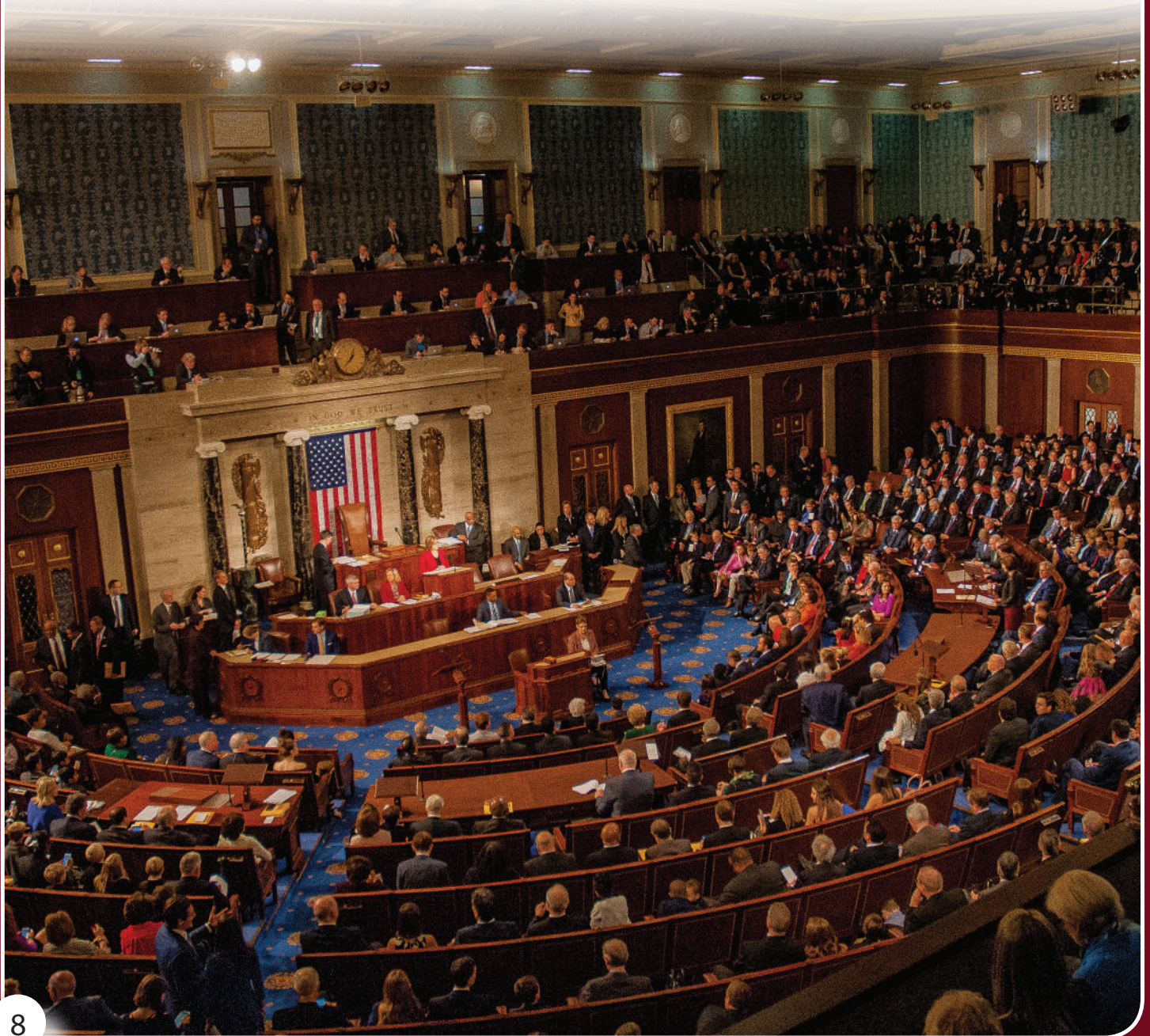


5. Tell the truth. Telling the truth means sharing what really happened. Truth is important in a community. Being honest helps us trust each other.



6. Take responsibility. It is important to follow through. This means finishing the tasks we are asked to do, like chores at home or classroom jobs. It also means accepting consequences when we break the rules or do something wrong.

In a community like a city, people choose others to make the rules, or laws. Laws are rules that an entire community follows. Governments make laws for cities, states, and countries. In the United States, we elect, or vote for, leaders who make the laws.



We decide on which leaders we want to vote for based on what they say about important things. The leaders we vote for represent us. It is our leaders' job to do the things that people voted for. The U.S. government works like this.



The state government of Louisiana works like this, too. Its job is to make the laws for Louisiana. Our state has many different kinds of laws.

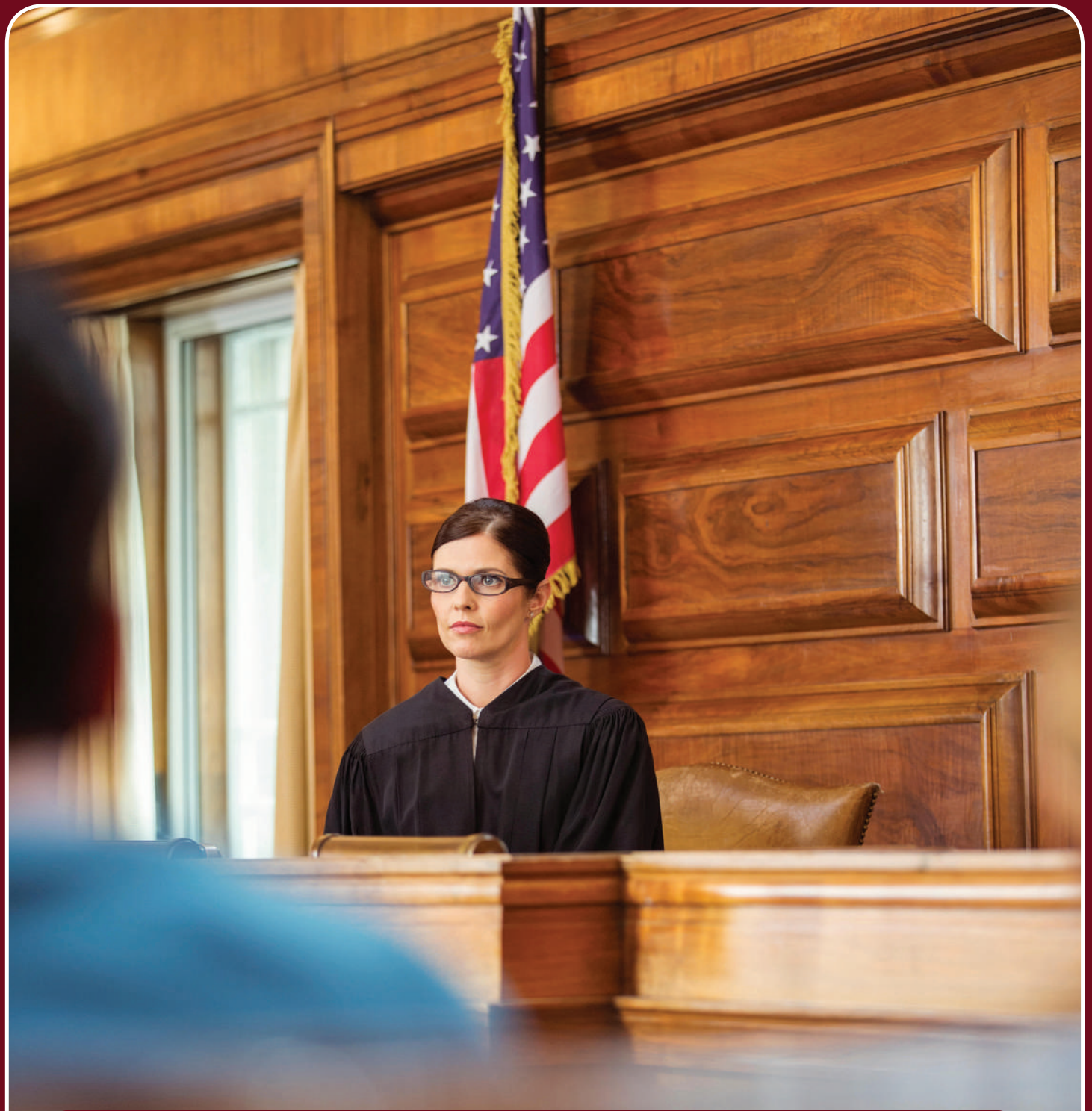


One law says that people should not throw trash onto streets and highways. Another law makes you take a special test before getting your driver's license. When you pass the driver's test, it means you are allowed to drive.



Part of being a good citizen and a member of a community is following the laws. Communities have several ways of making sure people follow the laws. Police officers are there to help and to make sure people follow the laws. When people drive too fast, the police write tickets. They also arrest people who have committed a crime.





Judges decide whether people have broken the laws of a community. They also decide what happens when people don't follow the laws. For example, a person who littered may have to pick up trash as a consequence.

Making Your Community and State a Better Place

Civic virtues are an important part of being a member of a community. They are also part of being a citizen of Louisiana and the United States. We show civic virtue when we work to make our community and state a better place. Let's learn about ways we can show civic virtue!



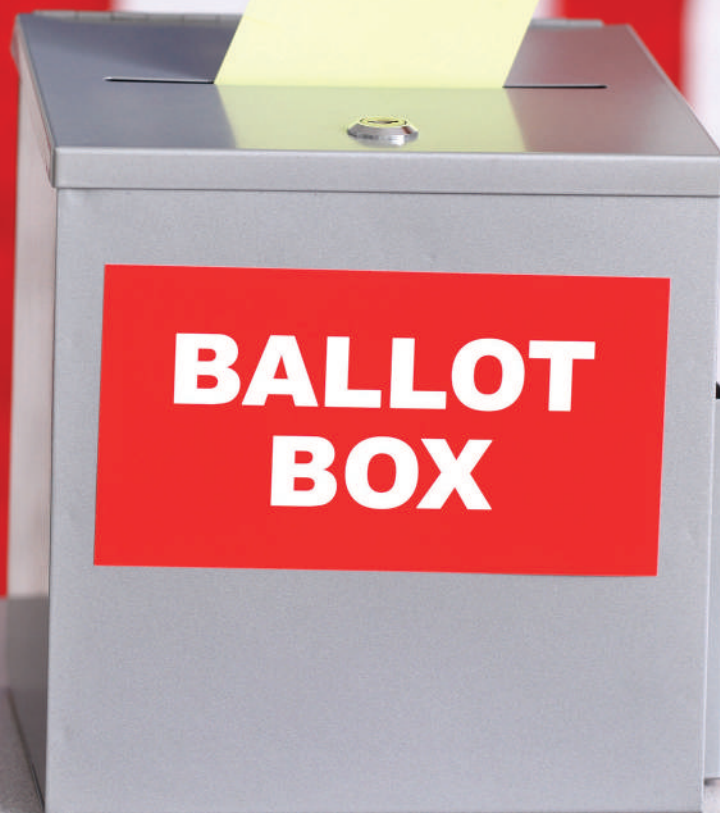
One example of a civic virtue is using your voice to speak up for changes in your community. You might speak up for yourself if you feel something is not fair. You can also speak up for others.



A committee is a group of people who work together for a common goal. Some committees work on small projects, like painting a community mural. A mural is what we call art on a large public building or wall. Other committees work on bigger issues that affect a community or a state, like Louisiana.



In the United States, people who are eighteen or older can vote in elections. Voting is one way citizens can share their views about how well the government is doing. Voting is an important way of communicating to the government what kinds of laws are needed.



Another way to make your community better is by becoming a leader in the government. You can do this by running for office. There are many different government leaders in Louisiana. They work together to make our state better every day!





You can help your community by finding out what the people in it need. Maybe you have an older neighbor who has trouble getting around. Or maybe you can help plant a garden to grow food that can be given to those in need. You can show civic virtue by volunteering to make your community better.



The state government of Louisiana has many jobs. One job is to pass laws. Another job is to help people during emergencies. The Louisiana government makes sure the state is ready for natural disasters.

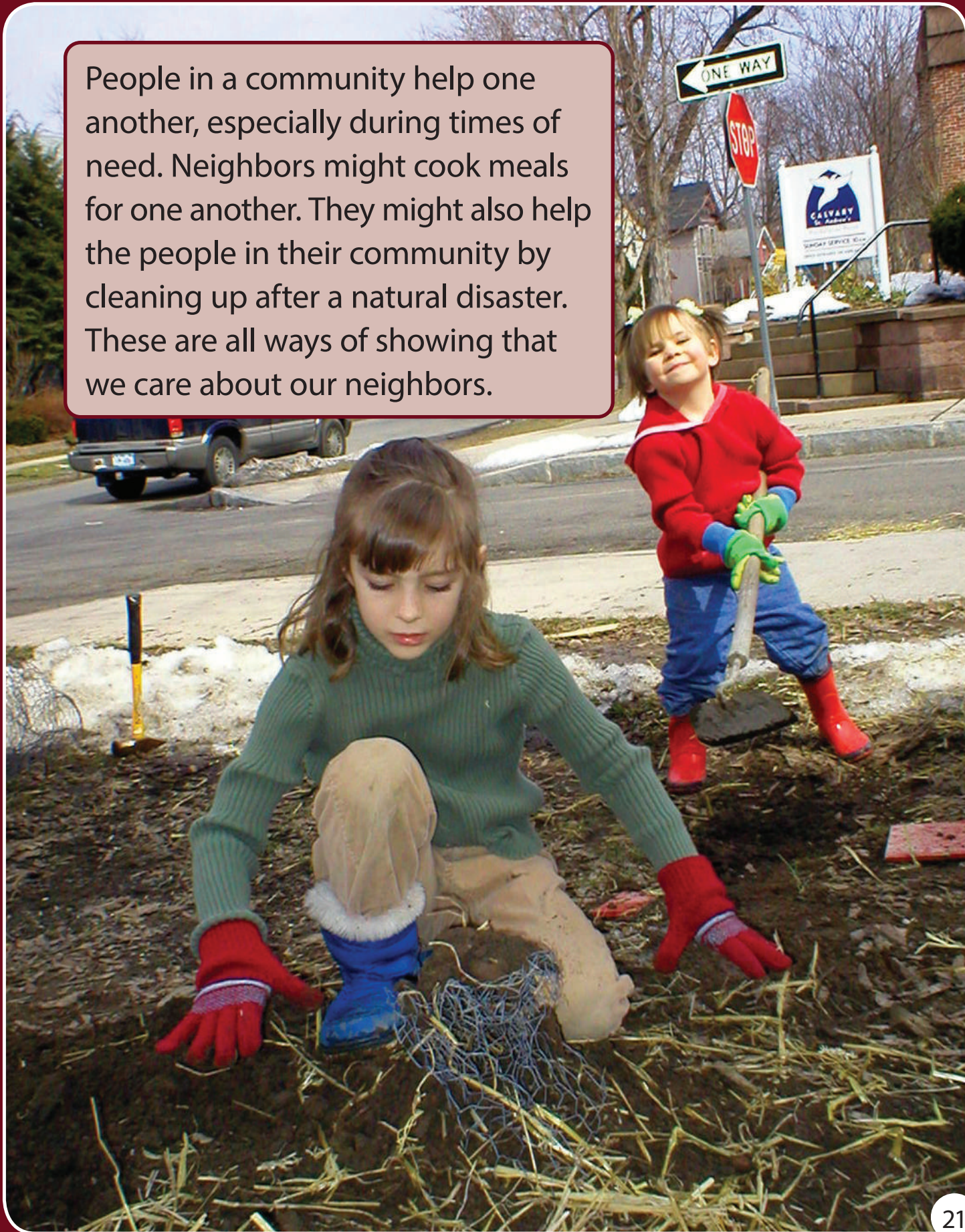


We can also show civic virtue by being ready for disasters. This could mean having a safe place for your family, friends, and neighbors. Or it could mean having supplies ready to give to others in case of a disaster.



During events like hurricanes, the state government may give special instructions. We can show civic virtue by following these instructions. This helps keep us and other Louisianans safe.

People in a community help one another, especially during times of need. Neighbors might cook meals for one another. They might also help the people in their community by cleaning up after a natural disaster. These are all ways of showing that we care about our neighbors.



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