

were placed in Federline's custody and Spears, who reportedly had not slept for several days, was hospitalized and held two days for an emergency mental health evaluation. As a result of this evaluation, a series of legal decisions imposed new conditions on Spears: She was involuntarily hospitalized due to mental disorder; her visitation rights were suspended indefinitely; and conservatorship (that is, control of her business and financial decisions) was granted to her father and attorney. In addition, a restraining order was granted that forbade a former business associate, who was suspected of exerting a negative influence on Spears, from having contact with her. (Subsequently, additional restraining orders were placed on two former associates.)

The case of Britney Spears is an excellent illustration of how the civil justice system can be used to help resolve many different difficult situations, ranging from family disputes to concerns over people's ability to manage their own business affairs or make decisions about health care. It also illustrates how psychologists (and other mental health professionals) can assist the justice system to resolve these disputes. Although the results of Spears' mental health assessment and treatment remain private, there has been considerable speculation that she suffered from mood and substance-related disorders that played a major role in her personal problems. The good news is that there appears to have been a slow but steady improvement in her personal problems since her hospitalization in early 2008. She has regained some visitation rights, and the charges against her in connection with the motor vehicle accident were dismissed. She has even regained some of her former glory as an entertainer: Her 2008 album, *Circus*, and the associated concert tour (see Figure 3.1) had excellent sales, garnered her widespread acclaim, and received numerous awards. Hopefully, the worst of Britney's troubles are behind her.

CIVIL FORENSIC ASSESSMENT: MAJOR DOMAINS OF PRACTICE

Think of an area of your life—any area—and you will discover that there are laws that govern it. There are also probably one or more forms of civil forensic assessment conducted by psychologists that are relevant to it. Let's take a quick look at some of the questions addressed by psychologists in three major domains of practice in civil forensic psychology: