

Children have a Right to Protection from Abuse

CHILD PROTECTION INFORMATION SHEET

Tasmanian children and young people will have the best chance of growing up as healthy, happy adults if they:

- Are cared for by adults they know well and trust – this gives them security, stability and

CONTINUITY,

and if they:.....

- Feel they are important members of a family, neighbourhood and community – this gives them a sense of belonging and

CONNECTION,

and if they:.....

- Receive love, attention and guidance as well as adequate shelter, food, warmth, and clothing – this provides them with proper

CARE,

and if they:.....

- Feel safe and secure, in a home which is free of violence, abuse or neglect – this gives them

PROTECTION

In Tasmania, all our children have a right to have these basic needs met

To grow up to be healthy, happy adults, children need:

CONTINUITY

CONNECTION

CARE, and PROTECTION

- What happens to children when they are young can affect their whole lives.
- Children can be damaged very easily – both physically, and emotionally.
- Families have the primary responsibility for caring for and protecting their children.
- This is a very hard job and there are no experts – we all need help sometimes!
- The rest of the community can help families by supporting them in the demanding job of bringing up their children to be healthy and happy adults.
- The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is part of the support network in the community for children and families.
- More information on DHHS is available in this information sheet. However, remember that the government cannot provide continuity, connection, care and protection for children alone – supporting families and protecting children is everyone's responsibility.

Information about Child Protection Services in DHHS

- While the whole of the community shares responsibility for the care and protection of children, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has been given the legal responsibility to protect children if they are at risk of abuse or neglect.
- The *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* guides workers from the Department and other community members in carrying out their legal responsibilities.
- Child and Family Services (CFS) within DHHS has specific responsibility for receiving and assessing reports about the safety and wellbeing of children to determine whether they are at risk of abuse or neglect and to assist families who need support in caring for their children.
- Wherever possible, child protection workers will carry out their responsibilities through working in partnership with parents, families, communities and other support services to create safety for children.
- They may have to take matters to Court if there are serious concerns about the safety, health or welfare of a child or young person.
- If you are involved with child protection it is important that you know what is happening and who to contact if you have any questions.

Keep this information somewhere easy to find!

As a client of Child Protection Services, you have the right to be treated with:

- **Respect**
- **Fairness, and**
- **Integrity**

You have the right to know what is happening and to participate in the development of plans that affect you or your child.

WHO TO CONTACT

If you become a client of child protection, it is important that you know who to contact. Use this information sheet to write the name and contact details of the child protection staff member who is responsible for working with you at this time:

.....

Telephone number:.....

(This person will keep you informed about what is happening. If there is anything you do not understand, he or she is the first person to contact.)

If this worker is unavailable, you should contact:

.....

Telephone number:.....

Date:...../...../.....

Feedback regarding DHHS Child Protection Services

If you have suggestions about how we can improve our services in child protection or have a complaint, please contact the Child Protection Service State Office through (03) 62334745, or the Manager of one of the following child protection offices:

Child Protection Advice and Referral Service (CPAARS)

Telephone: 1300 737 639

Child Protection North - Telephone: 6336 2376

Child Protection South - Telephone: 6230 7650

Child Protection North West - Telephone: 6434 6308