

Child protection and the Childrens Court



Why is Child Safety Services involved with my family?

Child Safety Services becomes involved with your family if they are concerned about your safety or whether someone is looking after you properly.

Child Safety is part of a government department called the Department of Communities. You may have heard it called another name like 'DOCS', 'the department' or 'child safety'.

If Child Safety is involved in your life, you might still live at home, or with a carer, or in care.

Why is the Childrens Court involved with my family?

The law says children and young people need to be safe where they live. If Child Safety is concerned about your safety and wellbeing, they can ask the Childrens Court to make an order (decision) for them to check out your situation, or for you to be placed in care.

Going to court doesn't mean anyone is in trouble. The court's role is to hear the facts about your situation and then make a decision about how to take care of you and keep you safe. Because the decision affects you, you can have a say about it (if you want to).

What is child protection law about?

Child protection law aims to:

- Make sure you are safe from 'harm' – harm can mean your body being hurt, or your feelings being hurt, or that you are not being looked after properly.
- Find out whether your parents can take care of you and keep you safe from harm.
- Make sure that if you are in care, Child Safety has a case plan for you that is about the things you need. Your case plan explains how Child Safety, your parents, and other important adults in your life will take care of you and keep you safe. A case plan usually explains things like who you live with, where you will go to school, and how you will spend time with your family.
- Work out whether the order Child Safety has asked the court to make is the best order to make sure you are safe.