

Rights of Parents of children in out of home care

An information sheet for the public.

As clients of Child Protection Services, parents of children or young people in the care of the Department of Health and Human Services have the right to be treated with:

Respect Fairness, and Integrity

Parents have the right to know what is happening and are expected to participate in the development of plans that affect them or their children, so long as their child's safety is not compromised.

While the safety and wellbeing of children must always come first, parents have a right to:

- be involved in care planning and informed of their child's progress and development
- be fully informed about the child protection process and the assessment of safety and risk (carried out in accordance with the Tasmanian Risk Framework) wherever possible
- have access to relevant and up-to-date information about the child protection process
- a comprehensive explanation of all matters and decisions in a clear and understandable manner
- provide an opinion as to whether or not they agree that the child/young person is at risk or in need of care and protection and to request reviews of decisions by applying to the manager or to the magistrate
- legal advice and representation in Court
- be told where their child is placed in care, unless Child Protection staff believe that this information would harm the safety, welfare and wellbeing of the child, their carer or their family
- be given relevant information about their child's carer, unless Child Protection staff believe that this information would harm the safety and wellbeing of the child or their carer and their family
- have an interpreter (language or signing) if required
- request services and supports which could help them establish and maintain a safe environment for their child and to return them to their care where possible and in the best interests of the children

- be treated with respect regarding their religious beliefs, cultural identity, family and community affiliations and sexuality
- involvement of an Aboriginal organisation, if they identify and are recognised as Aboriginal
- consider matters in private at any time
- attend meetings with a support person or advocate if they wish
- to be contacted by child protection to arrange a convenient time to meet or visit the home (unless there is risk to a child/young person's safety)
- expect their ideas, plans and suggestions to be considered seriously and accepted unless they are impractical, not in their child's best interests or are in breach of the law
- provide feedback and make a complaint to a senior worker or manager
- request a Family Group Conference in writing to review arrangements for the care of their child (under the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997*, two or more family members or a child can request an FGC to review the care plan)

Feedback regarding 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) 6233 4745, or the Manager of one of the following Child Protection Services offices:

Child Protection Intake (Statewide)	
Telephone: 1300 737 639, Fax: (03) 6230 7821, Email: cpaars@dhhs.tas.gov.au	
Child Protection Services (North West) Telephone: (03) 6434 6246 Fax: (03) 6421 7821 Email: CPInorthwest@dhhs.tas.gov.au	Child Protection Services (North) Telephone: (03) 6336 2376 Fax: (03) 6336 2525 Email: CPInorth@dhhs.tas.gov.au
Child Protection Services (South West) Telephone: (03) 6230 7650 Fax: (03) 6230 7653 Email: CPIsouthwest@dhhs.tas.gov.au	Child Protection Services (South East) Telephone: (03) 6230 7833 Fax: (03) 6230 7653 Email: CPIsoutheast@dhhs.tas.gov.au