

Reporting concerns about Unborn Children

An information sheet for the public.

Can I report my concern about an unborn baby?

A report can now be made to either Child Protection Services or to the new Gateway Services about potential danger to an unborn child. This will allow planning to take place before the birth of a child, where that child may be at risk.

Planning is to

- provide support to the mother and/or her partner on a voluntary basis, to reduce the risk to the baby. and
- to prevent the need for Child Protection Services to become involved once the baby is born.

What sort of things should be reported?

Any concerns about the safety or welfare of a baby after their birth should be reported.

Some factors that may lead to concerns for the baby upon their birth may include, but are not limited to:

- Significant alcohol or other drug abuse by caregiver/s*,
- Significantly reduced ability to provide parenting as a result of considerable intellectual disability of caregiver/s,
- Significantly reduced ability to provide parenting as a result of mental illness of caregiver/s,
- Family violence involving the caregiver/s, or
- Previous abuse or neglect of another child or children by someone who the baby will live with once born.

*NB: In this context the term 'caregiver/s' includes the pregnant woman, and/or any other adult living in the home of the pregnant woman, or who is intending to provide care for the child once born.

How do I make a notification for an unborn child?

Notifications for unborn children can be made to either of the following Statewide services:

Gateway Service: 1800 171 233
Child Protection Intake: 1300 737 639

What should I do if I am not sure whether to make a report?

You may have concerns about an unborn baby, or believe that the family needs some support to assist them before, or after the birth of their child. By contacting the Gateway Service your concerns can be discussed and, if appropriate, support services will be offered to the family. If these supports are accepted by the family, the Gateway will help with the concerns while the mother-to-be is pregnant. This will hopefully mean that Child Protection will not need to become involved after the baby is born.

There is a Child Protection worker based in each of the four regional Gateway Services, so you can be confident that if Child Protection needs to be involved upon the child's birth, the Gateway Services will directly refer information on to Child Protection services.

What happens if the family refuses the support services that are offered?

If the mother and/or family members do not want to accept the support services offered to them, or if, after a short period of time, they stop participating with the support service, Child Protection Services will be advised and may need to become involved with the family after the birth of the baby to ensure the baby's safety.

The mother and/or family members' decision to be actively involved in the support services offered (or not) will be a key factor taken into consideration when the baby is born and the family is assessed to see if the baby is at risk.

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: CPlnorthwest@dhhs.tas.gov.au	Child Protection Services (North) Telephone: (03) 6336 2376 Fax: (03) 6336 2525 Email: CPlnorth@dhhs.tas.gov.au
Child Protection Services (South West) Telephone: (03) 6230 7650 Fax: (03) 6230 7653 Email: CPlsouthwest@dhhs.tas.gov.au	Child Protection Services (South East) Telephone: (03) 6230 7833 Fax: (03) 6230 7653 Email: CPlsoutheast@dhhs.tas.gov.au