

# HOW DOES DOCS HELP FAMILIES?



## KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE AND FAMILIES TOGETHER

DoCS means the NSW Department of Community Services.

Our most important job is keeping children safe. DoCS helps families to raise children and young people who are happy, strong and healthy.

Children are precious and we all want the best life for our children. But many families need help or support to care for their children.

Some families have extra problems that make life harder, for example:

- No relatives or friends around for support
- Unemployment, sickness, isolation or loneliness
- Limited experience with parenting
- Problems with alcohol or drugs
- Violence in the household.

DoCS can help families who need support.

## HOW DOES DOCS HELP FAMILIES

Being a parent can be hard. Help and support can make a big difference.

DoCS funds services that provide help to families so that all children get a good start in life.

Programs like *Families NSW* and *Brighter Futures* provide help to families through services like home visiting, parenting programs and playgroups.

These programs build strong families and communities to promote the wellbeing of children and young people.

Our main job is to protect children and young people in NSW from abuse and neglect – this is called child protection.

DoCS works with other government agencies and community organisations to keep children safe.

## WHAT HAS THE LAW GOT TO DO WITH FAMILIES?

As parents we are responsible for protecting our children but sometimes families are not able to protect or care for their children.

The child protection laws are there to protect all children and young people under 18.

**It is against the law to hurt, harm, abuse or neglect children.**

**Neglect** is when parents don't meet a child's basic needs such as shelter, food, clothes and medical care.

**Physical abuse** is when a parent hurts a child by hitting, beating, shaking, burning or in other ways.

**Emotional abuse** can be not giving any love, threatening, bullying or exposing children to domestic violence.

**Sexual abuse** is any form of sexual activity with children.

## WHY DOES DOCS GET INVOLVED WITH FAMILIES?

DoCS works with families to help them stay together and look after their children.

DoCS is responsible for the care and protection of children and young people in NSW.

The DoCS Helpline receives many reports about children who are at risk of harm from abuse or neglect. DoCS will then work with families to make sure these children are safe.

When a child is not safe with their family, DoCS may need to find a safe home with a relative or a foster carer. This may be for a short time or for a longer time.

DoCS will not replace what the family and community can do for children.

## WHO CAN HELP?

<b>Parent Line</b> (24 hours)	132 055
<b>Family Information Service</b>	1800 049 956
<b>Tresillian Parent Helpline</b>	1800 637 357 (02) 9787 0855 (Sydney)
<b>Kids Help Line</b>	1800 551 800
<b>Domestic Violence Line</b>	1800 656 463
<b>Translating and Interpreter Service</b>	131 450
<b>DoCS Helpline</b>	132 111
<b>To make a complaint about DoCS</b>	Freecall 1800 000 164

Information on services for families is available at:

[www.community.nsw.gov.au](http://www.community.nsw.gov.au)

[www.families.nsw.gov.au](http://www.families.nsw.gov.au)

[www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au)



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