

Children need to be safe to grow up strong and healthy.

The written law about keeping children safe in WA is called the *Children and Community Services Act 2004*.

Child Protection and your family

Making sure children are safe, or protected, is the main job of the Department of Communities, (often called 'Child Protection') and the Children's Court.

Child Protection help you and your family make things safe for your children. They also help you when you are pregnant to make sure your baby will be safe.



If you show everything is safe enough for your children, Child Protection has no need to work with your family.

When do children need protection?

The law says children need protection when:

- ◆ Their parents are dead, or the children have been left by themselves and the parents can't be found, or if found, the parents are not willing and able to care for the children, and no safe member of the children's family or another safe person can be found to raise them.
- ◆ The children have been hurt or are likely to be hurt by:
 - ◇ Physical abuse: when you do things like hit, kick or throw something at your children.
 - ◇ Sexual abuse: when there is sexual behaviour between your child and another child or between your child and an adult that is wrong. It can be things like touching in a way that is not right, seeing sexual acts or pornography.



- ◇ Emotional abuse: when you say things to your children that make them feel no good or scared or upset. It includes your children seeing or hearing fights, even word fights, between you and your partner or other family members.
- ◇ Neglect: when you don't look after your children it is called neglect. There are many things that might be called neglect, like:
 - ✧ not feeding your children,
 - ✧ letting your children go to dangerous places,
 - ✧ letting your children miss school a lot or be late for school a lot,
 - ✧ letting your children stay with dangerous people, or
 - ✧ when you don't know where your children are,



and the parents, have not protected or don't seem likely to protect, or stop these things happening in the future,

OR

- ◆ When children are:
 - ◇ not getting the care they need from their parents, or
 - ◇ not seeing the doctor or getting other medical help when they need to.

The law says harm for children is anything that happened or doesn't happen that is bad for your children's wellbeing.

Wellbeing includes the care, development, health, and safety of your children.

It is about protection from anything that will stop your children being healthy and safe.