WHY IS CHILD PROTECTION WORKING WITH ME WHILE I'M PREGNANT?

KEEP EM SAFE

If you are pregnant, the Department of Communities (sometimes called Child Protection) will want to meet with you if they have worries about your baby being safe.

Child Protection will meet with you and any family members or friends you have to support you. They will also meet with your social worker at the hospital who is helping you with your pregnancy.

What happens at the meetings?

Usually you will have three meetings with Child Protection before your baby is born. These are called 'pre-birth signs of safety meetings'.

At the meetings, everyone will be working together to try and come up with a plan to make sure things will be safe enough so your baby will go home with you after the birth. For example, if one of the worries is you being in a relationship with a person who is violent towards you, you might agree to stay away from that person.

At the last meeting, you will find out if Child Protection agree with the plan for your baby to go home and live with you.

Who decides if the plan is good enough to keep my baby safe?

The District Director of Child Protection has the final say about whether your baby can go home with you. The District Director might say the plan must change to make it safe enough for your baby to go home.

If the District Director says the plan does not make it safe enough for you to take your baby home, the law says Child Protection can take your baby from your care.

Child Protection can put your baby with the father if your baby will be safe with him. If your baby will not be safe enough with the father, or another family member, like a grandparent, Child Protection will start a court case about your baby in the Children's Court.

Do I need a lawyer?

It is good for you to talk to a lawyer if Child Protection is thinking about taking your baby away from you after it is born.

It is good to talk to a lawyer before the baby is born.

A lawyer can go with you to the pre-birth meetings.