

## Children, Youth and Family (CYF) Referral Information

### Children, Youth and Family (CYF)

Website: [www.cyf.govt.nz](http://www.cyf.govt.nz)

Free phone: 0508 FAMILY (0508 326 459)

Email: [cyfcallcentre@cyf.govt.nz](mailto:cyfcallcentre@cyf.govt.nz)

If you are worried about a child or young person you know and would like some advice, give us a call. Our social workers will be able to listen to your worries, and they are trained to be able to help find solutions to family problems.

#### **If you are worried**

Every year we receive thousands of calls from people worried about a child or family.

In many of these cases, the family just needs some advice or to be connected with the right support services. There are lots of agencies that you can call and ask for advice, share your worries and get their support. They can help with things like parenting issues, and provide support if families are struggling.

#### **Should I say something?**

If you are worried that children you know are not safe or being well cared for, you might feel unsure about whether to let someone know.

At Child, Youth and Family we are here to talk through any worries you have. Our social workers are trained to work out what kinds of problems a family might be having, and find the best ways to help them get back on track.

Don't be afraid of getting it wrong: Let us know that you're worried. It's our job to work out if the family needs help, and what we can do to help them.

Trust your instincts: If you are worried that a child is being hurt or that they're not being well looked after, don't just hope someone else will speak up. Trust your instincts and let us know.

Remember, it's everyone's job to keep children safe: If there are serious problems, it's likely to go on until someone speaks up. Children cannot speak up for themselves, and the people involved may be too ashamed, distressed or caught up in the situation to ask for help.

Together we can help our children be safe, strong and thrive.

#### **Reporting a concern**

If you think a child is in immediate danger – phone the Police on 111.

If you suspect child abuse or neglect, or are worried about a child or young person, you can call us anytime to talk to one of our social workers.

Call us if you are worried about a child or young person, for example if you:

- think a child or young person may be unsafe or in danger of harm
- think a child or young person may be suffering from ill-treatment, abuse or neglect
- are concerned about a child or young person and want some advice
- are not sure whether you need to be concerned, and want to talk things through.

The social worker will determine the urgency of the concern, whether we need to do anything further, or if the child or young person's needs could be better met by another agency.

You can call our freephone number anytime, and you can also send a notification to us via fax or email

- Phone: 0508 FAMILY (0508 326 459)
- +64 9 912 3820 (from outside New Zealand)
- Fax: 09 914 1211
- Email: cyfcallcentre@cyf.govt.nz

### **Useful hints for when you contact us**

Please share with us as much information about the concerns as possible. This might include things like:

- the nature of your concerns
- details of incidents, including dates
- details about the child or young person and their family, for example names and addresses
- the reasons why you think this child is at risk, or suffering abuse and neglect
- if you're aware of any other times when the family, child or young person has been involved with us or the Police.

### **What happens when I call Child, Youth and Family?**

When you call us you will be able to talk directly with trained social workers. They will ask you questions to find out what's going on with the family or children you're worried about.

They will then look into the situation to find out what may be happening, whether we need to work with the family, or put them in touch with people in their community that can help.

Our social workers will work together with families to help them grow stronger and find their own solutions to any problems.

You should be contacted by us within the month to let you know how we followed up your call. It takes a while to assess the situation and help the family find the right solutions, so don't expect immediate results. But if the social worker thinks the child is in immediate danger, we will make sure we act on your call within 24 hours.