

Information about Child Protection



**Aboriginal Family
Violence Prevention
& Legal Service Victoria**
**Standing Firm Against
Family Violence**

The most important things to remember:

- 1. Make sure you and your children are in a safe place.**
- 2. Don't avoid DHHS Child Protection Unit (Child Protection).**
- 3. Don't sign anything or agree to any court order or any arrangement without talking to a lawyer first.**

If Child Protection calls you:

- Listen carefully to what the Child Protection worker says and where possible, make notes.
- Contact a lawyer for legal advice as soon as possible.
- If Child Protection want to meet with you have someone (support worker or lawyer) come to the meeting with you and if possible, attend without your children.

If Child Protection attends your home or contacts you face to face:

- Try to remain calm and arrange for somebody to support you.
- You can ask for a Lakidjeka or ACSASS (in Mildura) worker to be present. Even if they can't attend in

- person, they should be contacted by telephone and may be able to attend by way of teleconference.
- If at any time you don't understand or feel overwhelmed it is ok to ask for a break. You can ask to call a lawyer or support person. You can ask the Child Protection worker to put their concerns and comments in writing so you can look at this later when you are less overwhelmed.

If Child Protection are removing your children call a lawyer immediately!

If after hours, remember any court dates, listen carefully to what Child Protection say, take notes and call a lawyer first thing in the morning.

If you have ongoing involvement with Child Protection:

- Have a support person come with you when you meet with Child Protection.
- Remember all dates of meetings, appointments and court hearings. Write these down to make it easier to remember.
- Let your lawyer and Child Protection know if you can't attend any meetings or appointments, especially access with your kids.
- You must attend all court dates unless your lawyer tells you otherwise.
- Call your lawyer for advice

if you can't meet the conditions of an agreement or court order.

Important:

Any information or observation that Child Protection have of you and your family may end up in a court.

The law can change without notice. If your kids are out of your care, we strongly recommend you get ongoing and regular legal advice as soon as possible.

The Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria (FVPLS Victoria) can assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families where child protection is involved due to family violence.

This includes non-Aboriginal carers of Aboriginal children. If we are unable to assist you, we will find someone else who can.



FVPLS Victoria

**Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention
& Legal Service Victoria**

Standing Firm Against Family Violence

Servicing Victoria with offices in:

Melbourne

Warrnambool

Bairnsdale

Mildura

1800 105 303

Lakidjeka (run by VACCA)

Statewide – 03 9287 8800

ACSASS (Mildura) 03 5018 4100

The information in this card is general information only. It is not legal advice. You should contact a lawyer for legal advice.

The information is current at time of publishing in March 2017 but may change without notice.