

## How Can We Help?

### Our lawyers can:

- Give you advice and options;
- Read DCP paperwork and tell you what it means;
- Talk to DCP for you;
- Write letters;
- Help with Court documents;
- Go to Court for you; and
- Explain child protection orders.

### Our Client Support Officers can:

- Give you information and referrals;
- Go to appointments with you;
- Go to meetings with you; and
- Help you find support services.

## Legal Advice is Important!

If you are worried DCP might become involved with your family, you should get legal advice as soon as possible. There might be better ways to make sure the kids are safe. For example, going to the Federal Circuit and Family Court before DCP get involved.

The information in this brochure is general information only. It is best to see one of our lawyers for legal advice about your individual circumstances.



## Contact Us



<https://www.fvlsac.org.au/>

<https://www.facebook.com/FVLSAC>

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## Acknowledgment to Country

Family Violence Legal Service Aboriginal Corporation (SA) acknowledges the traditional owners of the lands across Australia and particularly the traditional owners in Port Augusta, Port Lincoln, Ceduna and Adelaide, the lands on which the FVLSAC offices are situated. We pay our deep respects to Elders past, present and future.

## Child Protection



Family Violence Legal Service  
Aboriginal Corporation (SA)



## What is Child Protection?

- Child Protection is about keeping kids safe from harm.
- The Department for Child Protection (DCP) are the mob in charge of keeping kids safe in South Australia. Some people call DCP 'welfare'.
- DCP can get involved with a family if they are worried kids are not being looked after properly or are at risk of harm.
- If your family has been contacted by DCP, you can get legal advice and non-legal support from our service.
- It is best to get advice and support as soon as possible.
- DCP can work with families to find ways to make the home safer. This might be a safety plan or asking parents to do counselling.
- If DCP are very worried, they can take kids into foster care. If this happens, DCP will choose who the kids will live with.
- The Youth Court makes child protection orders to say how long the kids will be in foster care.



## Care and Support

Child removal is one of the hardest things a family will go through. It is okay to reach out for help.

Our Client Support Officers can connect you with counselling and support services or you can ask your doctor about getting a mental health care plan.

If you are in crisis, call 13YARN or 13 92 76. This service is open 24 hours/7 days or [www.13yarn.org.au](http://www.13yarn.org.au)



## The Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

There are special rules about how Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander kids are cared for. DCP should follow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child placement principle. DCP should try to place kids with -

- A member of their family – such as an Aunty, Grandparent or Cousin;
- A member from the same community; or
- A person of the same cultural background.

If kids can't be placed with family, they should be given the chance to have contact with their family, community or culture.

Ask DCP if you want a person or a family to look after your kids. DCP will decide if this person is safe and can care for the kids.

## What can you do?

- Talk to a lawyer - get legal advice as soon as possible.
- Write everything down - dates, meetings, names of people you speak to.
- Keep all paperwork.
- Go to all meetings with DCP.
- Go to all contact visits with your kids.
- Always go to Court.
- Make it easy for DCP to contact you.
- Try to do the things DCP ask you to - go to counselling or enroll in a parenting course.
- Ask for help! Get support from people and services that will help and speak up for you.
- Be careful what you put on social media and the internet – it can be used in Court.
- Respect yourself and others through this journey (including foster carers).

