

# Is DCJ talking to you about your kids?

Your questions answered



## Why is DCJ asking about my kids?

The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) is the main government agency in NSW that protects children. In the past, DCJ has been called FACS and DOCS.

DCJ might be talking to you because it is worried about your children's safety.

DCJ might also be talking to you because something is happening for your kids that you need to know about.

Just because DCJ is involved with your family does not mean your children will automatically be taken away. If possible, DCJ will work in partnership with you, your family and your community to keep your children safe and well cared for.

It's really important that you understand why DCJ is involved, what they are asking you to do and why.

## What will DCJ ask me to do?

Each family is different and may be asked to do different things. You might be asked to sign something, go a meeting, visit a counsellor or do a course. You might just need to talk to DCJ.

You are entitled to have a say in this process and so is your family. It's really important your voice is heard.

## What help can I get?

**Legal Aid NSW** can help explain your options and how the law works. Legal Aid NSW are independent from DCJ and can give you independent, free legal advice.

The Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT) (ALS) has specialist family law services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The ALS helps mums, dads, grandparents or other family members worried about what is going on for kids.

Legal Aid NSW or the ALS can also talk to DCJ for you, and in some cases can represent you or give you some advice about alternative dispute resolution (sometimes called ADR, Family Group Conferences or FCGs).

## How do I get legal help?

You can call the numbers below, or you can let your caseworker know you want some advice and we will call you.

### **LawAccess NSW**

LawAccess NSW is a free government service that provides legal information and referrals for people in NSW. LawAccess NSW can refer you to a Legal Aid NSW family lawyer or book an appointment for you at your local Legal Aid NSW office. Call them on **1300 888 529** or access their webchat function at [www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au)

### **Aboriginal Legal Service**

Call **1800 733 233** for family matters or visit [www.alsnswact.org.au/care](http://www.alsnswact.org.au/care)

This publication is a general guide to the law. You should not rely on it as legal advice, and we recommend that you talk to a lawyer about your situation.

The information is correct at the time of printing, however it may change. For more information contact LawAccess NSW on **1300 888 529**.



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For more information about Legal Aid NSW services:



### Do you need help to contact us?



If you need an interpreter, call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on **131 450** (9am – 5pm) and ask for LawAccess NSW.

### Do you find it hard to hear or speak?



If you find it hard to hear or speak, call us through the National Relay Service (NRS) on **133 677** and ask for LawAccess NSW or visit:

[www.relayservice.gov.au](http://www.relayservice.gov.au)