

HOW TO GET MY KIDS BACK

PARENT PEER SUPPORT PROJECT



Work on Yourself Talk to Parents That Have Been Through This

The first battle you need to engage in is the battle with yourself - not with the system - accept that you might have changes to make in your life. Take the Department's concerns seriously.



Create a life and a home for your child to come home.



You might need to find different accommodation- there are services that can help you with this.



Work on yourself - what could make you a better parent, how can you increase the safety of your child and importantly how can you improve your own well being.



Find a service that can help you with addiction - drugs, alcohol, gambling or whatever

Find a counsellor that suits you and work hard with them to address emotional and psychological issues



Keep a diary / record of all the work you have done, programs you have attended and progress you have made.

Come up with a plan of action you need to take



Get legal advice about the changes, and the evidence of those changes, the Court will require

Go to services that will help and support you to make you the best parent you can be. Take this seriously. OR satisfy the Department that your children are safe with you.

Find out the reasons your child was removed

Consider how you can reduce the incidence and impact of domestic violence - there are specific programs for men and women.

Find out what changes the Department think are important



Change your social circles and end unhealthy or dangerous relationships and friendships

Enrol in further study with a goal toward future employment



Attend parenting groups

Make different choices about your lifestyle



HOW TO GET MY KIDS BACK

PARENT PEER SUPPORT PROJECT



Work the System

Co-operate with workers and listen to their concerns even if you don't agree.

Work positively with the Department, other OOHC Agencies, carers, workers.



Be respectful but assertive about what you need to do get your kids back and to keep them safe. Do these things even if you don't agree with them.

Ask for more time with your kids and ways you can interact with them while they are in care.



Try not to put energy into fighting the system and feeling powerless and defeated.

Keep your own records of visits, calls, email and other communication with your kids

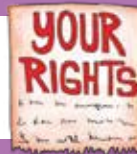


Keep a record of when visits or calls are cancelled and why.

Get legal advice about the type of evidence you need to collect to demonstrate you are resolving the Department's concerns.



Research your rights as a parent - talk to a lawyer experienced in child protection.



Take responsibility for things that you can control.

Ask if you can meet the carers and try to build a good working relationship with them.



Keep appointments for contact with your kids as a priority, even when it is hard.



"As much as it is a truly nightmarish experience for any parent to have to go through, for what it is worth, I am glad I went through it. I am 100 % a better person for it"

"There are a few programs out there that can help. You have to find the ones that are right for you. I did as many as I could. They helped me look at things differently."

"I brought them back, always at agreed hours, and it was always open communication with the department to make sure you were doing the right things and not stepping over those boundaries"

The Family Inclusion Strategies in the Hunter website has lots of services and programs suggested by parents

<http://www.finclusionh.org>

