

WORKING WITH THE DEPARTMENT

PARENT PEER SUPPORT PROJECT



GO TO MEETINGS

Get legal advice as early as possible - Legal Aid can help you find a lawyer.



It's important to attend all the appointments and meetings. If you can't make it, call the caseworker and reschedule.

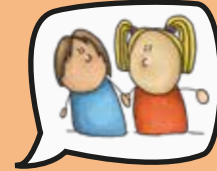


KEEP RECORDS

You have the right to have the Department clearly explain the reasons your child has been removed and exactly what you need to do to have your child returned to your care. Ask for this in writing.



It can help to write down what you would like to say before a conversation - especially if you are upset.

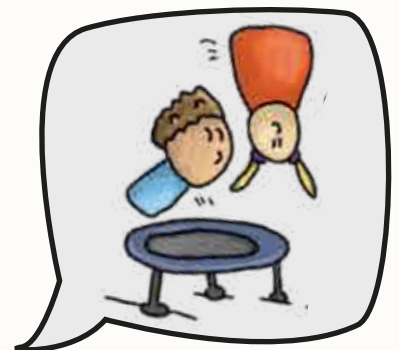


ASK ABOUT YOUR KIDS

Keep a copy of all the communication that happens between you and the Department. Keep emails, letters and phone records. Write down what was said in conversations. Ask caseworkers to send you an email copy of what they have said.



Ask to spend time with your child ASAP.



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Its ok to ask about your children and how they are.



It is ok to take a support person with you when meeting with caseworkers. This can be a worker, a friend or anyone you trust.



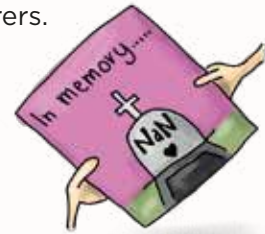
"My last caseworker was really helpful... I learnt she could make a big difference to what happened with my kids."



You can ask to be invited to any meetings where decisions are being made about your children.



It is ok for you to ask that important information about your child be passed on to carers.



It is also OK for you to ask for this person to speak on your behalf if you are feeling very upset - you can also ask to take a break during a meeting or call back if you are on the phone.



If you don't know the carers of your child, it is OK to ask to meet with them. The Department or the Carers may say no, or not at first.



But dont give up...

"When my son was removed...I was vengeful and very, very, angry, and I hated FACS and I was just hell-bent on proving them wrong... I went to the group for parents with kids in care and it really helped me, I suppose realising where I went wrong and learning how to work with FACS, learning how to communicate with them in a healthy manner I suppose."



The Family Inclusion Strategies in the Hunter website is developed for parents - find out more information and about events for parents with other parents
<http://www.finclusionh.org>



Communities & Justice

The Department 's website has important information for parents
<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/families/out-of-home-care>



LAW AND JUSTICE FOUNDATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES

