



ALS

Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT) Limited

FaCS report: at risk of significant harm

- Information for parents and carers -

Do you know a child who is at risk of significant harm?

'Risk of significant harm' are the words the law uses. These words describe children who may be in an unsafe situation, or may be at risk of being hurt, or may be hurting themselves.

Examples of when a child is at risk of significant harm:

- a child has been physically or sexually abused
- adults in the family are violent towards one another and a child sees or hears the violence

- a child is injured and no one can explain how the injury happened
- a parent fails to get proper medical advice and attention for a child
- a parent fails to meet a child's basic needs for food, shelter and care.
- a parent has a drug and/or alcohol problem which means that they are not properly able to care for their child
- a child is not being sent to school by their parents.

If a child is believed to be at risk of significant harm, FaCS must investigate.



Please note, DoCS is now called FaCS, or the Department of Family and Community Services.

Risk of harm reports

FaCS gets information about children from the Child Protection Helpline who may be at risk of harm.

Any person can make a report to the Helpline about a child who may be at risk.

Some people work in jobs where they **HAVE** to make a report to the Helpline if they believe a child is at risk of significant harm. These people are called 'mandatory reporters'. This means they must report to the Helpline if they see or suspect a child is at risk of harm.

Mandatory reporters are people who work with children in the areas of health (doctors, nurses, speech pathologists), education (teachers, child care workers) and police officers.

Other members of the public or community can also make a report to FaCS if they have reason to believe a child is at risk of significant harm.

Neighbours, family members or friends can make a report to the Helpline.

It's the job of FaCS to investigate reports to see what is going on and make sure children are protected.

If a child is believed to be at risk of significant harm, FaCS must investigate.

The ALS Care and Protection Law Practice is focused on keeping Aboriginal children safe and if possible with family. When parents of family members seek the return of children back to their care, we advocate on their behalf. When children can't return home, we advocate for them to be placed with family first.



Care and Protection
Law Practice
WE CAN HELP

Phone
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