

## 13 / Words and questions you might hear

For free legal information call Tasmania Legal Aid on 1300 366 611 or use the chat on [www.legalaid.tas.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.tas.gov.au), Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

If you are concerned about a child's safety or wellbeing, contact [Strong Families, Safe Kids](#) or call

**1800 000 123**

Tasmania  
**Legal Aid**

### What do Child Safety do?

The role of the Child Safety Service is to protect children and young people who are at risk of abuse or neglect.

### What is child neglect?

Neglect is about what parents and caregivers do not do for their children. Neglect is a breakdown in providing for the child's basic needs. Neglect can be physical, educational, or emotional.

### What is a Child Safety Officer (CSO)?

A Child Safety Officer is responsible for receiving, investigating, and assessing concerns about children who may be experiencing abuse and neglect. They are responsible for working with families and other professionals to resolve safety concerns. They also provide placement support for carers and children.

### What is a Case worker?

A child protection worker will write a 'case and care plan' for how a child will be supported while they are in care. This plan may cover their education, health and recreation, and their access to parents, siblings, or other family members.

### Lawyer

A lawyer is there to help you understand your rights, provide legal advice and if required, represent you in court. Getting legal advice can help you understand the choices you have and what is happening.

### Magistrate

The magistrate decides whether to make a child protection order and what type of order would help most to keep you safe. The magistrate will read documents and listen to what people involved in your care (like your parents and your CSO) have to say.

### Placed in care

If a child is placed 'in care', they will live away from parents:

- with another family: either a foster carer or relative
- in a family group home
- in a therapeutic care environment

### Intake services

Intake practitioners do most of their work via the telephone or email. It is not a face-to-face service and staff from Intake do not go out and see clients.

### Case Management Services

Where longer-term protective intervention is required, responsibility for planning to meet the best interests of the child is transferred to members of one of the Case Management teams.

### Out-of-home care

This is overnight care for children and young people under 18 who can't live with their families due to a range of child safety concerns, including having lost their parents.

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### Pathway Home

This is an organisation that provides assistance and support to allow young children to return to their family home. They are referred by the Child Safety branches.

### Mandatory reporter

In Tasmania, mandatory reporting requirements are outlined in the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997. People who are legally obliged to report child abuse or neglect are sometimes called 'mandatory reporters' or 'prescribed persons'.

Teachers, early childhood education and care practitioners, doctors, nurses and police.

### Charter of Rights for Children

These laws focus on the best interests of children and aim to make sure children are kept safe from physical or psychological harm and are properly cared for. These acts believe:

- the primary responsibility for a child's care and protection lies with the child's family
- a high priority is given to supporting and helping the family carry out that primary responsibility, in preference to starting legal proceedings

#### Charter of Rights for Children Poster:

<https://publicdocumentcentre.education.tas.gov.au/library/Shared Documents/Poster-Charter-of-Rights-Digital-Communities.pdf>

### Affidavit

At the hearing, the lawyers will ask the people involved in your care questions. The magistrate might also ask questions. When someone attends court to answer questions, they are called a witness. Before a hearing starts, the witnesses can sign a written document for the magistrate to read which sets out what they want the court to know about your care. This is a court document called an Affidavit.

