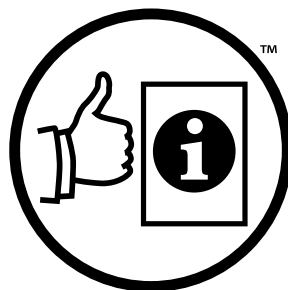




Going to court

Working Together for Kids Guide 2

Child and Youth Protection Services



Easy English

Hard words



This book has some hard words.

The first time we write a hard word

- the word is in **blue**

- we write what the hard word means.

You can get help with this book



You can get someone to help you

- read this book

- know what this book is about



- find more information.

About this book



This book is written by Child and Youth Protection Services or CYPS.



This book is about

- CYPS
- what happens at the ACT Childrens Court or the court
- why you need to go to court
- how to bring your family back together.



About us



CYPS are part of the ACT government.



We can

- make sure children who live in the ACT are safe and well cared for



- help families get the support they need to look after their children



- work with the government, community services and police to take care of children who might **not** be safe or well cared for.

What the court does

The court decides what can happen to your child if



- they are **not** safe and well cared for
- they have a **Care and Protection Order**.



A Care and Protection Order helps keep your child safe and well cared for.



A Care and Protection Order could include rules about

- who can visit your child and when



- drug tests for parents



- where and who your child can live with.

What happens at court



At court your child will have a **representative**.

A representative is a lawyer who



- does **not** work for us



- wants to make sure your child is safe and cared for.

The court will choose your child's representative.



You should have a **lawyer** too.

Your lawyer can

- help you get ready for court



- tell you what will happen at court

- go to court with you



- talk to people at court for you.

We can help you find a lawyer.

Case Management Conferences

A **Case Management Conference**

- is a meeting to talk about how to keep your child safe and well cared for



- will happen at the court.



People at the Case Management Conference could include

- you, your lawyer and a support person



- us



- your child's representative



- a **registrar**.



A registrar is a person in the court who can make an order if everyone agrees.



If everyone can **not** agree on any decisions the registrar will ask a **magistrate** to make the decisions.

The magistrate is a judge at the court who can make the final decisions.

Types of Care and Protection Orders



There are 2 types of Care and Protection Orders.

1. Interim Care and Protection Order

An **Interim Care and Protection Order**



- is for a short amount of time



- gives the court time to see if your child is safe and well cared for with the rules in the order



- gives you time to get the support you need

- gives you time to change things that could make your child safe and well cared for at home.



If you work with us to change things that could make your child safe and well cared for it is more likely that your child will come back home to you.

If the court makes an Interim Care and Protection Order they will tell you when you need to go back to court.



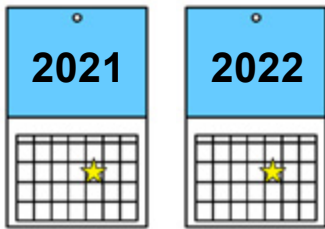
2. Final Care and Protection Order

If the court still thinks your child is **not** safe and well cared for after an Interim Care and Protection Order they can make a **Final Care and Protection Order**.



A Final Care and Protection Order can be for

- 1 year
- 2 years
- until your child is 18 years old.



If you do **not** follow the rules in a Care and Protection Order you might break the law.

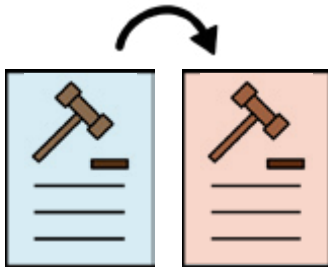
Changes to the Final Care and Protection Order



The court can look at the Final Care and Protection order every 12 months.

We will make a report for the court that says

- what has changed
- if we think the order needs to change
- if we think your child is safe and well cared for and the order can stop.



The report will also be given to

- you and your lawyer
- your child
- the person who looks after your child.





If you think the Care and Protection Order should be changed or stopped

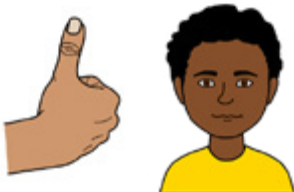
- you can tell us



- you can tell the court.



You can ask for a change or stop to the Care and Protection Order before 12 months if lots of things have changed for you to make your child safe and well cared for.



Any change to the Final Care and Protection Order **must** be to make things better for your child.

If you do not go to court



If you do **not** go to court the magistrate can still make decisions about Care and Protection Orders.



We **must** show the magistrate that you knew about the court date.

How to get ready for court



To get ready for court you should

- get a lawyer



- make sure your lawyer has all the information they need



- make sure your lawyer knows what you have done to help make your child safe and well cared for



- make sure you know when you have to go to court



- think about how you could answer any questions you will be asked



- find someone you trust to look after your child.



When you are at court you should

- be early



- turn your phone off



- tell someone if you do **not** understand something so they can explain it to you.

Who might be in the courtroom



Lots of people could be in the courtroom including

- a magistrate



- our staff



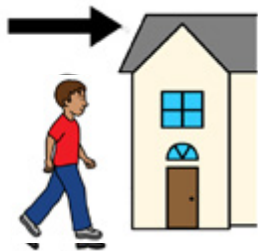
- your child's representative

- people who have made a report for the court.



Your child will **not** be in the courtroom.

How to get your child to come home



We will try to get your child back to you as soon as we can.



We **must** believe that your child will be safe and well cared for before they can come home.



To make sure your child will be safe and well cared for when they come back home we will make a **restoration plan**.



A restoration plan

- has goals you need to reach to make sure your home and family are safe



- says the times you will meet with us to talk about your goals



- says what you need to do to reach your goals.



Things in your restoration plan could include

- therapy or parenting courses



- taking medications a doctor has given you



- how to have better relationships between your child and people in your family



- ways to slowly get your child back to you and your family



- how we can support you to get your child to come home



- how long we can support you.

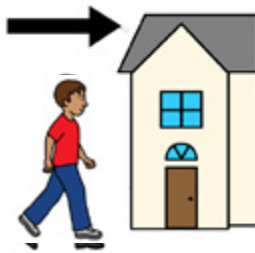


You need to

- have a copy of the restoration plan
- understand what the restoration plan says
- reach the goals in the restoration plan.



When can your child come home?



The restoration plan should say how long it might take to get your child to come back home.



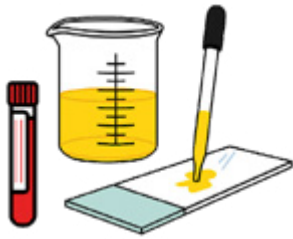
When your child will come home can depend on

- what is happening with your family



- how old your child is
- how long it might take to reach the goals in the restoration plan.

Drug tests



You might have to do drug tests to show that you are **not** on drugs.

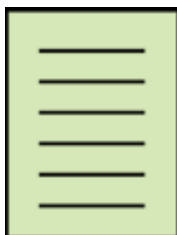
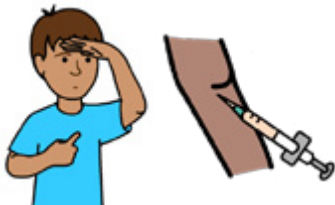


The results of your drug tests can help us see if your child will be safe and cared for at home.



We might ask you to do drug tests if we think

- your child might **not** be safe or cared for when you use drugs
- the money you use for drugs means you can **not** keep your child safe and well cared for
- your child might see people use drugs.



If you need to do drug tests it will be in your restoration plan.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT



The restoration plan will say

- how often you will need to take a drug test
- what type of drug tests you will need to take
- where you will need to take the drug tests.

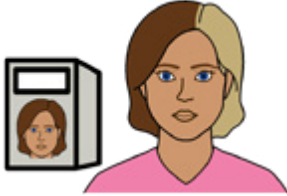
If you have to do a urine test to check for drugs

- you will need to give a sample of your urine
- you will need to go to a collection centre
- you might need to give samples at different times each week
- you might need to give samples for up to 3 months.



If you have to do a hair test to check for drugs

- you will need to give us about 4 cm of hair



- it will still work if you dye your hair.



When you go for your drug tests you **must** show the staff your licence or an ID card.



We will get a report with the results of your drug tests.



The results can be used in court

- by you



- by us.

More information



For more information contact
Child and Youth Protection Services.



North team 6207 1069

South team 6207 1466



To make a child concern report
1300 556 729



If you need help to speak or listen

Contact Child and Youth Protection Services
through the National Relay Service or NRS.



Call the NRS help desk
1800 555 660



Go to the NRS website
communications.gov.au/accesshub/nrs



Legal Aid ACT

Call

6243 3411

or

1300 654 314



Email

legalaid@legalaidact.org.au

Australian Red Cross Birth Family

Advocacy Support Service



Call

6234 7600



Email

birthfamily@redcross.org.au

This Easy English booklet is based on the 'Working Together for Kids' series, developed in partnership by Child and Youth Protection Services and the Australian Red Cross Birth Family Advocacy Support Service. This Easy English document was created by Scope (Aust) Ltd. in November, 2021 using Picture Communication Symbols ©1981–2021 by Tobii Dynavox. All Rights Reserved Worldwide. Used with permission. Boardmaker® is a trademark of Tobii Dynavox. This document must not be sold to third parties. The images must not be reused without permission. For more information about the images, contact Scope on 1300 472 673 or visit scopeaust.org.au

