

Did you know?

March 2005

CHILD PROTECTION

If you think a child, any child, is being abused or neglected you must tell the Ministry of Children and Family Development. That is the law. Phone your nearest Ministry office (the number is listed in the blue pages of the phone book) and ask to speak to a child protection social worker. You can also get help by calling the Helpline for Children: 310-1234. There is no need to use an area code.

What will happen after I call the Ministry?

Many people are concerned about what will happen after they call the Ministry. When you call, the social worker will listen to your concerns and ask you some questions. They may also meet with the parents and child, and speak to teachers, doctors or other people who know the child and can provide relevant information.

Can I have a say in what happens to the child after I call the Ministry?

If you wish to be a part of the planning for the well being of the child, make sure the Ministry knows this. The Ministry will work with the parents, and with others who are close to the child to develop a 'plan of care'. The plan of care describes what is going to happen to protect and support the child.

How do I get involved in the plan of care for a child?

One of the ways that you can be involved in the plan of care for a child is to be a part of the **family group conference** that the Ministry will conduct in the plan of care for the child.

The purpose of a family group conference is a way for people close to the child to come together to make some decisions and a plan that will:

- Protect the child from harm
- Serve the best interest of the child
- Respect the wishes, needs and role of the family
- Respect the culture and community of the child

For more information:

Visit the website for the Ministry of Children and Family Development at www.mcf.gov.bc.ca, Child Protection Division

Phone: In Victoria 250- 387-7071

You can also get more information about child protection law from the Law Line at 604-601-6100.

You can also call the Helpline for Children at: 310-1234