

## **CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES**

220 E. Main St.  
560-8424



### **PURPOSE**

Child Protective Services (CPS) is a legally mandated program whose purpose is to protect children from abuse, neglect and dependency as defined in state law (N.C.G.S. 7A-101). Child abuse can be of a physical, sexual or emotional nature. Child neglect can include the failure to provide for basic needs, inadequate supervision, or inappropriate discipline. Situations in which children are exposed to substance abuse and domestic violence are considered serious child neglect. Child dependency occurs when a youth does not have an able parent or caretaker. Any person with cause to suspect that a child is being abused or neglected is required by law to report it.

Trained CPS Assessment/Investigation professionals respond to all valid reports of suspected child abuse, neglect and dependency. We conduct a thorough “investigation” of all valid reports of suspected child abuse. The investigatory process includes notification to law enforcement officials, as well as medical examinations and psychological assessments when needed. We conduct a “family assessment” of all valid reports of suspected child neglect and dependency. The family assessment process is focused on identifying services to help parents protect their children.

Trained CPS In-Home Services professionals closely monitor situations in which we determine that children are at significant risk for child abuse, neglect and dependency. Child Protection Plans are established for the child and his/her caregivers if a need is identified. We follow System of Care principles and practices in this work, often establishing Child and Family Teams to ensure collaboration and teamwork among all persons who can provide assistance to the child and family. A Team Decision Making process is used to determine if children must be removed from their homes in order to be protected.

## **SERVICES**

- Intake services - receive reports of suspected abuse, neglect and dependency from the community
- Comprehensive investigations of reports of suspected child abuse
- Family Assessments of reports of suspected child neglect and dependency
- In-Home Services – to monitor Child Protection Plans when needed
- Substance abuse assessment and referral
- Interstate Compact requests – assessment and monitoring of children placed in Durham from other states
- Parenting education for families
- Team Decision Making process for determining the need for court involvement

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Child Protective Services are provided without regard to income. The suspected abuse, neglect and dependency must meet statutory definitions contained in N.C.G.S. 7A-101. The service is initiated through a valid report of suspected child abuse, neglect and dependency. Parents and caretakers also receive services as part of CPS. DSS does not have the authority to respond to reports of suspected abuse, neglect and dependency that is caused by someone other than a parent, relative or caretaker. Child day care providers are considered caregivers; however, public and private school teachers are not. Reports of suspected child abuse, neglect and dependency by persons other than a parent, relative or caretaker are referred to law enforcement.

## **APPLICATION**

Most reports of suspected child abuse, neglect and dependency are received by telephone calls, although they may also be received by letter or agency visit. Anyone who has “cause to suspect” child abuse, neglect and dependency is required by state law to make a report. Individuals can call 560-8424 from 8:15 until 5:30 Monday – Friday and ask to make a report to a CPS Intake Social Worker, or they may write or come to the above address to make a report. Reports can be made after hours, weekends, and holidays by calling 911 and asking for the After-hours CPS Social Worker. Reporters may choose to remain anonymous. Reporters should provide all relevant information that they have regarding the family and their concerns about child safety. CPS staff initiates the assessment process within 24 hours for suspected child abuse and within 72 hours for suspected child neglect and dependency.

## **REFERRALS**

We make referrals to many agencies. The most frequent referrals are made to:

Employment Security Commission, Vocational Rehabilitation, and other employment service providers  
Durham Housing Authority and other housing providers  
The Durham Center and mental health service providers  
Center for Child and Family Health  
Public Health Dept., local hospitals (DUMC, Durham Regional) and other health providers  
Durham Public School System  
Durham Exchange Club's Family Center  
Family Drug Treatment Court  
Dept. of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Call (919) 560-8424 and ask to talk to a CPS Intake Social Worker

Call 911 after-hours and on weekends and holidays and ask for the After-hours CPS Social Worker

**RELATED TOPICS:** Child Placement and Supportive Services (CPSS); Family and Children's Medicaid (NCHC); Child Care (DACCA); Food Stamps