



Have a Heart...

Give a Child a New Start

About CFSA

We Are the Safety Net

The District's Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) is the local public organization authorized to protect child victims of abuse and neglect. Our mission is to improve the safety, permanence, and well being of abused and neglected children and young people up to age 21 in the District. We work to achieve four principal outcomes:

- **Keep children safe from abuse and neglect.**
- **Strengthen troubled families.**
- **Meet the developmental needs of children and teens in our care.**
- **Ensure children and teens we serve grow up in stable, nurturing families or have relationships with caring adults for life-long support.**

Child abuse is: putting a child in a dangerous situation; non-accidental injury of a child; adult sexual exploitation of, or adult sexual contact with, a child; or mental and emotional injury of a child caused by parental (or caretaker) behavior.

Child neglect is: inadequate food, shelter, supervision, education, or medical care of a child due to parental (or caretaker) behavior. By itself, lack of financial means to care for a child is not child neglect.

CFSA has over 900 employees, including about 480 social workers who directly serve children and families. Our major functions include:

- **Taking and investigating reports of child abuse and neglect** wherever they occur in the District of Columbia. We operate the city's child abuse/neglect hotline at (202) 671-SAFE (7233) and investigate child abuse and neglect 24 hours a day 365 days a year.
- **Helping parents overcome difficulties** so they can provide a safe, nurturing environment for their children and keep their family together. Through partnerships with numerous public and private agencies, CFSA connects families to services such as counseling, parenting classes, housing and child care assistance, and substance abuse treatment.
- **Removing children from home (with court approval)** when parents are unable or unwilling to provide a safe, nurturing environment. CFSA maintains a range of safe, temporary havens where children and teens live while we help their families overcome difficulties. The goal is to safely reunite children in foster care with their families within 15 months.
- **Finding new, permanent families** for children and teens in foster care who cannot return home safely. CFSA seeks stable, nurturing homes for these youngsters through legal guardianship (usually with relatives) or adoption.

As the local safety net, we are committed to doing all we can to stop child abuse and neglect **one child** and **one family** at a time. ■