

SCDSS – Child Protective Services

If you need to report possible abuse or neglect, or have a question about reporting possible abuse or neglect, please contact your local (county) DSS office: <https://dss.sc.gov/contact/>

Web address: <https://dss.sc.gov/abuseneglect/child-protective-services/>

Street Address: 1535 Confederate Ave. Ext. Columbia, SC 29201-1915

Mailing Address: PO Box 1520 Columbia, SC 29202-1520

Contact information: Phone: General Information: (803)-898-7601

Mission: Child Protective Services (CPS) is the part of DSS that investigates reports of child abuse and neglect by parents, guardians, and caregivers. The best hope is that children are kept safe so they can stay in their own homes with their families. Even if there are some worries, DSS can work with families to keep children safe in their homes. Child safety is always the first concern of Child Protective Services.

Geographic area covered: Statewide/County Based

Services Provided:

Investigation/Assessment

After receiving a report of child abuse or neglect, Intake looks at all the available information and decides whether the report meets the state law's definition of child abuse and/or neglect. If it does, it is forwarded to Investigations so the family can be assessed. The investigator needs to find the answers to the following questions:

- What worries do we have about the children's safety?
- How has the family been able to keep the children safe in the past?
- What needs to happen to keep the children safe in their home?

In many cases, a safety plan can be developed with a protector or kinship caregiver in place to ensure the child's safety and well-being while DSS works with the family to lower the risk and increase the family's ability to protect.

In-Home Services

Children are best served when they can safely remain in their homes with their families intact. Sometimes, children might need to be temporarily placed outside of their home while DSS puts resources in place to meet a family's specific needs. The purpose of the resources is to help a family change the behaviors that put their children at risk and increase the behaviors that can keep their children safe. If the family situation cannot be sufficiently improved to provide safety for the children, permanent placement outside of the family home might need to happen and DSS coordinates this process.