

Consider these resources:

New York State HOPEline:

1-877-846-7369

Offering help and hope 24 hours-a-day, 365 days a year for alcoholism, drug abuse and problem gambling. All calls are free, multilingual, anonymous and confidential.

The Parent Helpline at:

1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373)

Is a statewide information and referral line that can help direct you to the services you need. It is free, confidential and multilingual.

More information at:

<https://preventchildabuseny.org/>

New York City has many free and low-cost services for people with drug and/or alcohol problems.

Call New York City's 24 hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week multilingual hotline for information and referrals at

1-888-NYC-WELL (1-888-692-9355)

Local department of social services:

For more information about resources available to you and your family, contact your local DSS.

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/localdss.asp>

My CPS Caseworker's Name:

My CPS Caseworker's Supervisor:

My CPS Caseworker's Phone:

My CPS Caseworker's Supervisor's Phone:



Office of Children
and Family Services

Capital View Office Park

52 Washington Street,
Rensselaer, NY 12144

Visit our website at: ocfs.ny.gov

For foster care and adoption information, call:
1-800-345-KIDS (5437)

To report child abuse and maltreatment, call:
1-800-342-3720

If you have concerns about a child care provider,
call the Child Care Complaint Line at:
1-800-732-5207

For information on the Abandoned Infant
Protection Act, call:
1-800-505-SAFE (7233)

For the phone number of your local APS unit
call the Adult Services Help Line at the Human
Services Call Center:
1-844-697-3505

*"... promoting the safety, permanency, and
well-being of our children, families, and
communities. ..."*

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the New York
State Office of Children and Family Services will make this
information available in an appropriate format upon request.

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Office of Children
and Family Services

Guidance for Parents Using Substances or in Recovery



The Role of Child Protective Services (CPS) and Tips for Working Together

ocfs.ny.gov

What does Child Protective Services (CPS) do?

CPS is required by law to investigate allegations of abuse or maltreatment against children to determine whether they are being safely cared for.

If they are involved with your family, it means that someone reported a concern to the Statewide Central Register about your children.

The fact that a report is taken doesn't mean that CPS will automatically agree with that report. They will want to talk with you and your family, but must complete their investigation whether or not you speak with them.

CPS has up to 60 days to complete the investigation. It's important to be open and honest so they can find the best ways to support and help your family.

Myth: If I tell CPS that I use drugs or alcohol, or if I relapse, they will use it against me and my family, and may remove my children.

Fact: CPS doesn't take children away if parents can care for them safely, even if you are using drugs or alcohol. CPS also understands that relapse is part of the recovery process and will work with you to find ways to keep your children safe if you do relapse.

CPS only removes children from their parents when necessary to protect the child and does so as a last resort. Ideally, CPS will look to you to help identify appropriate resources for your children should they need to temporarily leave your home.

Myth: Seeking inpatient substance abuse treatment will cause CPS to place my children in a home with strangers.

Fact: CPS will work with you to find safe alternative living arrangements, such as with trusted family or friends, while you get the help you need.



How will CPS know if my children are safe?

CPS will speak to you, your children and anyone else that might have information, like family members, teachers or neighbors.

They will ask you specific questions about how you keep your children safe in your home, especially if you are using drugs or alcohol. If needed, CPS will help you make a safety plan for your children.

Myth: CPS will make assumptions and judgments about my family without offering any real help.

Fact: CPS knows you are the expert on your own family, and they can help you find solutions and resources to meet your needs. CPS can make referrals for services on your behalf and try to connect you with supports in your community.

How can CPS help my family?

First, it is important that CPS understands how your use of drugs or alcohol affects your ability to care for your children.

As part of a safety plan, CPS can help with things like child care and counseling to help you and your family.

If you need drug and alcohol or mental health treatment, CPS can help you find those services.

Will I have to go away for treatment?

CPS can refer you to a drug and alcohol evaluation, where trained providers recommend a level of treatment that fits your needs.

If you enter inpatient treatment, CPS will work with you to identify caregivers for your children, including family or other supportive adults.

What should I do if I'm being investigated by CPS?

- **Be open and honest.** CPS is there to help, not to harm. Once a report is taken by the SCR, CPS is required by law to investigate. Being open and honest will help CPS to help you keep your children safe and strengthen your family.
- **Be available** and cooperative to expedite the CPS investigation process.
- **Be heard:** Remember, you are the expert on your family, and your voice is important. It is important that you express your beliefs, values and opinions regarding your family in a respectful way.
- **Be responsive:** Keep in contact with CPS—ignoring or delaying contact will only prolong your case.
- **Be proactive:** If CPS has a concern, do your best to address it as quickly and effectively as possible. Tell CPS about your support network that can help, like family, friends, church members, peer support groups, counselors, etc. Contact any family or close friends who can be a resource or help to your family.
- **Be a team player:** Establishing a strong network of family and friends to support you can be crucial toward having positive outcomes for your children and family.

