

KEEP THEM SAFE

A shared approach to child wellbeing

PREAMBLE TO POLICY DEFINITION OF SIGNIFICANT HARM

Keep Them Safe: A shared approach to child wellbeing is the NSW Government's response to the Report of the Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in NSW. Keep Them Safe recognises the importance of the wellbeing of all children and young people, with the aim of providing appropriate support to families earlier, to prevent children and young people from requiring statutory child protection intervention. To achieve this, Keep Them Safe encourages families, communities, government agencies, and non-government organisations to work together to support children, young people, and families.

Members of the community and mandatory reporters who suspect that a child or young person is at "risk of significant harm" (the statutory threshold) should report their concerns to Community Services. This new statutory threshold has replaced "risk of harm" in the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*.

A child or young person is at risk of significant harm if the circumstances that are causing concern for the safety, welfare or wellbeing of the child or young person are present to a significant extent.

Proposed policy definition

What is meant by "significant" in the phrase "to a significant extent" is that which is sufficiently serious to warrant a response by a statutory authority irrespective of a family's consent.

What is significant is not minor or trivial and may reasonably be expected to produce a substantial and demonstrably adverse impact on the child's or young person's safety, welfare or wellbeing.

In the case of an unborn child, what is significant is not minor or trivial and may reasonably be expected to produce a substantial and demonstrably adverse impact on the child after birth.

Significance can result from a single act or omission, or an accumulation of these.

