

# KEEP THEM SAFE

A shared approach to child wellbeing

## CWUS FOR ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED HEALTH SERVICES

*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.*

*Workers from Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services can call the NSW Health Child Wellbeing Unit to discuss concerns about the safety, welfare, and wellbeing of children or young people. You can ask to speak with an Aboriginal Assessment Officer in the Child Wellbeing Unit if you would prefer to discuss your concerns with an Aboriginal person.*

Child Wellbeing Units (CWUs) were established in January 2010 in response to the Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in NSW.

### Where are the CWUs?

CWUs operate in the government agencies that account for the majority of reports to the Community Services Child Protection Helpline: NSW Health (including local Health Districts and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services), NSW Police Force, Department of Education and Communities, and Department of Family and Community Services (Juvenile Justice; Housing; and Ageing, Disability and Home Care).

### CWU functions

CWUs:

- help workers identify the level of suspected risk to a child or young person, including whether matters require a report to the Community Services Child Protection Helpline
- provide advice to workers about possible service responses by the

agency or other services to assist children, young people, and families, and in some cases initiate direct referrals

- work towards better alignment and coordination of services to enable better responses to vulnerable children, young people, and families.

### When may you call a CWU?

If you are a mandatory reporter in an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service you may call the NSW Health CWU:

- for advice and assistance to determine whether your concerns about a child or young person meet the suspected risk of significant harm threshold
- where the Mandatory Reporter Guide advises you to do so
- for advice and assistance to plan actions, referrals, and services to support the child, young person, and their family



# KEEP THEM SAFE

A shared approach to child wellbeing

## CWUS FOR ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED HEALTH SERVICES



- for assistance with using the Mandatory Reporter Guide and/or information exchange provisions.

### What to expect when you call the CWU

As indicated above, when you ring the CWU you can ask if an Aboriginal Assessment Officer is available, if you would prefer to discuss your concerns with an Aboriginal person.

You can expect that the CWU will:

- record your contact details, including your workplace and professional role
- discuss the reason for your call and document your concerns for the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person
- obtain details of the child or young person, significant family members and contact details for the family
- provide advice and assistance about using the Mandatory Reporter Guide to determine any suspected risk of harm
- discuss the information exchange process (Chapter 16A of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*) and how this works in order to share information relevant to the safety, welfare, and wellbeing of children and young people
- provide service advice relevant to your local area
- provide feedback about decisions and actions taken by the CWU.

### For further information

- Contact your supervisor or manager
- Contact your NSW Health Child Wellbeing Unit on 1 300 480 420 ([www.health.nsw.gov.au/Initiatives/kts/cwu.asp](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Initiatives/kts/cwu.asp))
- Visit: [www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au](http://www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au)

