



CAN THE DYP PLACE MY CHILD FOR A LONG TIME?

The *Youth Protection Act* (YPA) requires the Director of Youth Protection (DYP) to carry out an investigation when a credible report is made that a child has been abandoned, neglected or psychologically, sexually or physically abused, or if a child has serious behavioural problems that the parents are unable to correct.

If, at the end of the investigation, social services personnel determine that a child is really in danger, they must consider which solutions can be used to remedy the situation. They may recommend to the parents (or to one of them) that they participate in various programs to improve their parenting skills, but, if necessary, they may also recommend that the child be placed in a foster family or rehabilitation centre.

Initially, DYP personnel have the obligation to ask for the parents' cooperation. If the parents acknowledge the situation that is endangering the child's development or safety, they may undertake, in a written agreement, to remedy the situation in accordance with the proposed measures. If the parents disagree with the content of the written agreement, if they refuse to act or if they are unable to remedy the situation, social services personnel have the obligation to submit the matter to a judge who can order various measures so as to put an end to the situation endangering the child.

Under an agreement, the total duration of the remedial measures cannot exceed 2 years, except if the child is of school age and the 2 years finish during the school year, in which case the measures can extend until the end of that period.

In court, the proposed measures, including placement of the child, can extend until the child is 18 years old if the judge considers it necessary in order to ensure the child's stability. Before making such an order, **the court must ensure that assistance has been provided to the parents.**

If the parents choose to make their child a priority, to improve and to become a positive force in the child's life and the child is able to progress, grow and develop in his family environment, the DYP will no longer have a place in the child's life.

Parents and children have the right to consult a lawyer at every stage of the process.

**Legal Aid:
A Network
At Your Service**

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