

FACT SHEET

Children, Young Persons and Their Families Amendment Bill 2009

The *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Amendment Bill 2009* legislates for the first phase of recommendations of *The Report on Child Protection Services in Tasmania*, released in October 2006. In addition, the Bill also implements a recommendation of the *Review for the Secretary DHHS of Resident Safety at Ashley Youth Detention Centre*.

The Bill provides —

- broader powers allowing the sharing of information relevant to the best interests of a child between Child Protection Services, a Non-Government Community Based Intake Service (a ‘Gateway’) and Non-Government service providers. This amendment enables Child Protection to seek information regarding the child, young person or their family when making an assessment, undertaking an investigation, or undertaking case management;
- the ability for mandatory reporters under section 14 of the Act to notify concerns to the proposed Gateways as an alternative to notifying the Secretary. This amendment will ensure vulnerable children and families who may require access to community services, rather than a statutory child protection response, are referred appropriately in the first instance;
- the Secretary with the ability to receive information concerning unborn children and take appropriate action, including assessing the likelihood that the child, once born, may need protection, and offering help and support to both the pregnant woman and her partner where appropriate;
- greater options for permanent care arrangements in cases where reunification of a child with their birth families is not an option; and
- for the creation of an Ashley Youth Detention Centre Residents’ Advocate position within the Office of the Commissioner for Children to assist in promoting the interests of young people in custody.