



## WHAT IS A CHILD IMPACT REPORT?

A Child Impact Report is prepared by a Court Child Expert, following an order of the Court. A Court Child Expert is usually a qualified Psychologist or Social Worker that has experience in assisting separated families.

The Court Child Expert will meet with all members of the family. Their report usually provides recommendations for the children's future living arrangements.



### Factors considered

In deciding their recommendations, the Court Child Expert will take into account various factors including:

- the presence of risk factors, such as family violence, drug or alcohol abuse, parental incapacity or other risks;
- the child's development;
- any views expressed by the child;
- the capacity of the parents to provide for the child's needs;
- the child's relationships with their parents and other persons; and
- any other circumstances the Court Child Expert considers relevant.



### Confidentiality

A Child Impact Report will become part of the evidence before the Court and usually is released only to both parties, their Lawyers and the Registrar or Judge. Unless the Court gives permission, the report must not be disclosed to any other person. To do so is a criminal offence under the Family Law Act.

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## WHAT IS A CHILD IMPACT REPORT?

Child Impact Reports are often useful evidence for the Registrar or Judge as they are prepared by experienced professionals that have met with each party and the children. However, the Registrar or Judge is not bound to follow the recommendations within the report.

To prepare their report, the Court Child Expert also reads all Court material filed by each party, and reviews any subpoena records if they are on the Court file. This may include Police, Child Safety and supervised contact service records.

Child Impact Reports can also be useful to the parties in negotiating. The assessment and recommendations often assist the parties in reducing the number of issues in dispute, or even reaching an overall agreement.



### A few tips

- Any information you provide to the Court Child Expert is not confidential - it may be included in their report and become evidence in the Court proceedings;
- If you have concerns for your safety, let the Court Children's Service know well prior to your meeting date and time, to arrange a safety plan;
- You can bring a support person with you in the waiting area, but it is up to the Court Child Expert whether they can be included in the interview; and
- Get independent legal advice from a family law Solicitor prior to your Child Impact Report interview, and also following release of the report.



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