Why use CARES?

CARES is based on the belief that parents love their children, want them to be safe, and want to grow together as a family. Sometimes parents may need help to make that happen. CARES can provide that help.

Some parents struggle with keeping their children safe. When this happens, Children’s Services must respond by conducting a thorough assessment and investigation to assess and promote child safety.

CARES is an alternative response open to all but the most serious reports of child abuse and neglect.

Two Pathways to Help Ensure Child Safety

Traditional Response

➤ Always required for reports of sexual abuse, abuse resulting in serious injury, and whenever children are determined to be in serious and immediate risk of harm
➤ May involve court intervention
➤ Will result in a determination/finding about the allegation

CARES

➤ Used when reports of abuse or neglect do not allege serious or imminent harm
➤ Involves safety-focused partnerships with families
➤ Does not result in a determination/finding about the allegation

How Can We Help Your Family?

Getting involved with NYC's Administration for Children's Services (ACS) can be intimidating and confusing for families. While there are many ways to access ACS services, you have become involved because somebody made a report to the state regarding a safety concern about your child or children. In response to the concern, ACS will assign a Collaborative Assessment, Response, Engagement & Support Child Protective Specialist (CPS) to meet with you if you are interested.

You and your CARES CPS will discuss the situation, as well as the events and actions that may have caused this situation, to determine the best ways to protect the safety of you and your child. Your CARES CPS will ask you about your family's strengths and challenges and how you can work together to address any needs or safety concerns. Together you will create a plan with child-centered, family-focused, and strength-based solutions to keep your child or children safe. If there are no serious or immediate risks of harm to your child or children, you can choose to accept or refuse the services offered. In CARES, ACS's Family Assessment Response program, no determination is made about the report of concern so there is no indication or unfounded report on your record.

Our Goal Is To Work With You By:

Engaging
Establishing common goals to assess and promote your child's or children's safety, well-being and permanency.

Partnering
Developing respectful and meaningful connections with your family to achieve shared goals.

Assessing
Gathering information about your family's strengths and needs.

Planning
Developing strategies, outlining tasks and setting goals with you.

Implementing
Identifying and applying the most effective services and resources for your family.

Evaluating
Monitoring outcomes of service plans and programs to see if they meet the desired goals for your family.

Advocating
Providing intervention for your family to get needed resources from other groups or organizations.

Demonstrating Cultural & Diversity Competence
Learning and honoring your family's diversity within and across cultures.

Communicating
Effectively sending and receiving information through various methods.

Collaborating
Maintaining mutually beneficial and well-defined relationships.