**CHILD FIRST**

**(Child and Family Information, Referral and Support Teams)**

**WHAT IS CHILD FIRST?**

Child FIRST is an easily accessible, community-based point of entry for children, young people and families needing support. All families need support to meet their own and their children’s needs. Some families need a family support service when they are experiencing difficulties that make them more vulnerable, and impact on their parenting and family life.

A referral to Child FIRST may be the best way of connecting vulnerable children, young people and their families to the services they need to protect and promote their healthy development.

**A Child First referral is preferably made with parental consent and input.**

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| **Criteria For Child FIRST Referrals:** |
| * Significant parenting problems that may be affecting the child’s development * Serious family conflict, including family breakdown. * Families under pressure due to a family member’s physical or mental illness, substance abuse, disability or bereavement. * Young, isolated and/or unsupported family. * Significant social or economic disadvantage that may adversely impact on a child’s care or development.   **Child FIRST intake 1300 775 160** |

**WHO PROVIDES CHILD FIRST?**

Child FIRST is staffed by Family Service practitioners, with experience in assessing the needs of vulnerable children, young people and families.

**HOW TO MAKE A REFERRAL TO CHILD FIRST**

Phone Child FIRST (Western Child and Family Service Alliance -Maribyrnong, Wyndham, Melbourne, Moonee Valley, Hobsons Bay) on 1300 775 160. A discussion will take place with the duty worker. The duty worker will email an electronic copy of the referral form.

**MORE INFORMATION**

<https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-first-and-family-services>