

Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings

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§3-802.

(a) The purposes of this subtitle are:

(1) To provide for the care, protection, safety, and mental and physical development of any child coming within the provisions of this subtitle;

(2) To provide for a program of services and treatment consistent with the child's best interests and the promotion of the public interest;

(3) To conserve and strengthen the child's family ties and to separate a child from the child's parents only when necessary for the child's welfare;

(4) To hold parents of children found to be in need of assistance responsible for remedying the circumstances that required the court's intervention;

(5) Except as otherwise provided by law, to hold the local department responsible for providing services to assist the parents with remedying the circumstances that required the court's intervention;

(6) If necessary to remove a child from the child's home, to secure for the child custody, care, and discipline as nearly as possible equivalent to that which the child's parents should have given;

(7) To achieve a timely, permanent placement for the child consistent with the child's best interests; and

(8) To provide judicial procedures for carrying out the provisions of this subtitle.

(b) This subtitle shall be construed liberally to effectuate these purposes.

(c) (1) In all judicial proceedings conducted in accordance with this subtitle or § 5-326 of the Family Law Article, the court may direct the local department to provide services to a child, the child's family, or the child's caregiver to the extent that the local department is authorized under State law.

(2) The court shall exercise the authority described in paragraph (1) of this subsection to protect and advance a child's best interests.

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