



Inspire Action for Social Change

VISITATION PLANNING IN SUPERVISED VISITATION CENTER SERVICES

A key method of fostering safety for families utilizing supervised visitation is to incorporate visitation planning as a regular and ongoing practice. The practice of visitation planning is similar to safety planning domestic violence advocates commonly use; however, it's explicitly designed to create safety for families before, during, and after visitation and exchange services.

Visitation planning should happen in partnership with the survivor parent, not independent of the person needing protection. Survivors of intimate partner violence are experts in their own lives, and our planning should be guided by their knowledge and understanding of what they need to stay safe. The partnership requires service providers have an active role in supporting the implementation of the plan and working with individuals to enhance safety. It is important to remember that safety is not static; needs and risk change. Visitation planning is a practice that starts during the orientation process and continues in an ongoing way during check-ins conducted before and after each visitation or exchange. Visitation planning should not result in creating a formal document or form the other parent could gain access to or have knowledge of the details.

While conducting each visitation planning session, visitation staff should consider and account for the following:

- What about this survivors' lived experience do we need to account for: 1) before each visit, 2) during each visit, and 3) after each visit?
- What about each child's lived experience do we need to account for: 1) before each visit, 2) during each visit, and 3) after each visit?
- How will the unique needs of each person in this family be addressed? 1) before each visit, 2) during each visit, and 3) after each visit?

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- For example, how, when, and where will the parent needing protection come to the program? And how, when, and where will the parent who uses violence come to the program?
- How will we support SAFETY while using the center?
 - What are the unique triggers?
 - What are the unique safety risks?
- How will we ensure we treat each person with RESPECT and DIGNITY?
- How will we lead with CARE and COMPASSION?
- How will we CONNECT with each parent and child in a deliberate, intentional, and thoughtful way?
- How will we be responsive to the BACKGROUND, CIRCUMSTANCES, and CULTURE of each person in this family?

Examples of tailored visitation plans:

- The parent needing protection will wait at home or a nearby location until the person who has caused harm has arrived at the program (regardless of custodial status).
- Determine if another supportive person could transport the children to the program.
- Allow for more extended staggered arrival and departure times.
- Accompany the survivor parent to and from their car or public transportation drop-off upon arrival and departure.
- Help survivors map out multiple safe routes to get to the program and identify secure locations along each route.

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Supervised Visitation Planning Tool

What about each child's lived experience
do we need to account for: BEFORE each
visit? DURING each visit?
AFTER each visit?

What about the survivor's experience
of intimate partner violence do we need to
account for: BEFORE each visit? DURING
each visit? AFTER each visit?

SAFETY

How will each person's humanity and
unique life circumstances be addressed?
BEFORE each visit? DURING each visit?
AFTER each visit?

HOW, WHEN & WHERE
will the parent needing protection
arrive & depart from the center?
HOW, WHEN & WHERE
will the parent who has caused
harm arrive and depart ?



**How will we support
SAFETY for survivor parent and
child using the center?**

- What are the unique triggers?
- What are the safety risks?

**How will we ensure we
acknowledge the HUMANITY
and UNIQUE life circumstances
of each individual?**

**How will we lead with
CARE and COMPASSION??**

**How will we CONNECT
with each parent and child in a
deliberate, intentional and
thoughtful way?**

**How will we COUNTERACT
the experiences/tactics of
intimate partner violence?**