



**BUILDING AN ENHANCED MODEL OF
SUPERVISED VISITATION:**

IMMERSION EXTENSION TRAINING PACKAGE

Facilitator Guide



Written by Inspire Action for Social Change
Erin Fairchild, Beth McNamara, &
Jennifer Rose

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Dear Director, Supervisor, or Staff Meeting Facilitator:

Welcome to your Building an Enhanced Model of Supervised Visitation: Immersion Extension Training Package!

These materials were designed to foster ongoing learning, self-reflection, and growth for programs that have already completed the two in-person supervised visitation immersion training events - Supervised Visitation Immersion Training and Working with Infants, Children, and Youth in Supervised Visitation Immersion Training - conducted by Inspire Action for Social Change in partnership with the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women. We have created a full training packet of everything you need to lead your colleagues in discussions and learning exercises to supplement and enhance learning from each Immersion training and beyond.

At Inspire Action for Social Change, we are committed to lifelong learning, particularly when it comes to supporting families impacted by trauma and abuse. The field of violence prevention and intervention is ever-evolving and requires practitioners to stay educated and well-informed. We know that learning and improving practice is not limited to single events and training, but it is the most dynamic and effective when it is continuous and occurs in relationships with our peers. The contents of this Extension Package are designed for this type of ongoing, multifaceted learning. As your knowledge grows, we want to make sure your practice, policies, and procedures can adapt and blossom as well.

It is without question that the work of providing supervised visitation services is hard, requires a steady head and heart, and has the ability to create meaningful and lasting change for individuals and families.

Inspire Action for Social Change's ["Change is Possible: An Enhanced Model of Supervised Visitation for Families Impacted by Domestic Violence"](#) was created to offer a roadmap for visitation providers working with families who have experienced domestic violence. The aim of the

enhanced model is to foster a sense of safety, honesty, trust, and well-being by creating an environment that increases the adult victim and child's sense of safety and allows for reparative experiences and opportunities in a warm, caring, and humanistic environment. We encourage you to download this publication from our website <http://www.inspireactionforsocialchange.org/resources> if you want to explore this model in more depth.

Instructions for Use:

We have designed this Immersion Extension Package so that it can be used as staff enrichment training during your existing staff meetings, individually with staff members during one-on-one supervision meetings, or for longer staff training or retreat functions. The Extension Package includes training modules with separate segments within each module. The modules are designed to build from each other; however, to address the unique or immediate needs of your team each module and each segment within each module can be completed as stand-alone training or out of order as you see fit. We have made a note when a segment may require you to reference a previous module.

For Use in Staff Meetings:

You will see that each segment offers a facilitator guide with discussion points, small and large group activities, guided individual self-reflection work, materials needed for each segment, supporting resources, supporting videos and supplemental worksheets for each participant. You can use the training segments exactly as they are presented. We also encourage you to be creative and use them in a manner that suits your team best. We have provided you with the approximate time to complete each segment to support your planning and time management during the training, but please feel free to decide how much time to devote to discussions and learning activities based on your team's individual needs and interests. We envision centers integrating activities from the Immersion Extension Package into staff meetings, for about 30-60 minutes regularly or setting aside multiple longer training sessions. This practice fosters a culture of ongoing learning with a commitment to change and adaptation. It

also provides some breathing room from what can often feel like crisis-driven daily operations, which is common for agencies that serve people impacted by trauma. By committing to set aside time for group learning and self-reflection, you are investing in the growth and sustainability of your center and your team.

Depending on how much time you devote to Immersion Extension Package discussions in each staff meeting, there is enough content to spread out over a long period of time. Do not feel pressured to rush the materials; rather, focus on quality learning and relationship building - we encourage you to go slow and allow for a process of growth and team building.

Some of the training segments include training video links, in addition to using the links as they appear in this guide you can access all training videos using the “Info @InspireAction” YouTube channel with this link: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTWBXmBPmADBOJah1tI0IFA/playlists?view_as=subscriber. Once you click on this link please select “PLAYLIST” from the menu bar and then click on “Enhanced Model of SV Immersion Extension Package” playlist. You can then select “VIEW FULL PLAYLIST” and choose the video you need for the corresponding segment.

For Use in Individual Supervision:

Another way to use the Extension Package is as a guide for individual supervision content. Many of the activities involve paired or small group discussions. If you would like to use any of those prompts or activities in individual supervision sessions, we recommend you engage in the content with staff and ask them to think about required components as “homework” in between supervision sessions.

You can lead these discussions with individual staff and can choose segments based on the needs and learning goals of each person on your team. The self-reflection prompts can also be assigned for individual reflection, and we encourage you to create a workplace culture where the staff has time for self-reflection. Self-reflection work should be an ongoing practice and will enhance service provision, productivity, and reduce the

impact of vicarious trauma. We would encourage you to also utilize the [“Self-Reflection Journal for Supervised Visitation Staff”](#) to further support staff in a dedicated practice on ongoing exploration and growth. More information about the Journal can be found on our website <http://www.inspireactionforsocialchange.org/> if you want more details about this publication. When you hire new staff, you can also get them started with Immersion Extension Package activities, discussion, and self-reflection activities - but keep in mind the content works best as a supplement to the in-person Immersion training events - so new staff may find completing some of the training modules difficult.

We hope the Immersion Extension Package is a useful tool for your center, leading to growth, connectedness and enhanced practice. Thank you for doing the work you do for children and families!

Beth McNamara, Jennifer Rose, & Erin Fairchild
Inspire Action for Social Change
www.inspireactionforsocialchange.org

Introduction

Enhancing Supervised Visitation Through On-going Learning from the Field, Systems Change, and Practice Change

As promising practices, new research findings, and dispatches from the field develop, we want to support supervised visitation centers to develop alongside these advances. This Immersion Extension Training Package to support building an enhanced model of supervised visitation offers many ways to plan reflection and learning time into your existing staff convenings. Inspire Action is committed to helping you to adapt as the field of domestic violence intervention and prevention expands to become more effective and inclusive of the diverse experiences of adult and child survivors.

Recent research supported by Blue Shield of California Foundation¹ indicates that there is a need to re-evaluate the “punitive paradigm” that has largely been implemented in most dominant culture, system-based responses to domestic violence. The study indicates that it is vitally important to hold people who use violence accountable, but focusing primarily on punitive approaches may actually do more harm than good for some victims. For women of color, in particular, this research demonstrates that criminal justice responses to domestic violence had a negative impact on survivors over time. This highlights that what may work for one community may not work for another. Additional findings from this study indicate that there are several key promising approaches to creating change and advancing methods for ending domestic violence: 1) focus on “two-generation” interventions that serve both the parents and the children; 2) re-evaluate punitive approaches and systems as a response to domestic violence and 3) view prevention through an equity lens. Supervised visitation programs can intentionally align with each of these promising practices, and the Enhanced Model can support your efforts.

¹ Blue Shield of California Foundation, “Breaking the Cycle: A life Course Framework for Preventing Domestic Violence” (2019).

“Two-generation” interventions that serve both the parents and the children

Supervised visitation centers are in a unique position compared to many others working in the field of domestic violence. Where many programs work either with the survivor parent OR the parent who used violence or the children, supervised visitation works with everyone in the family.

Supervised visitation providers have the ability to connect with the parent who uses violence about their hopes around their parenting, the relationship they want with their children, and the person they want their child to become as an adult. These are all crucial connection points for creating compassionate accountability for people who use violence while creating tangible pathways for healing and change. The fact that supervised visitation providers also work with the children and survivor parents means that you can integrate real-time considerations for safety and empowerment. Batterer’s Intervention programs, for example, may not have this continuous thread to weave in to supportive and survivor-centered accountability.

Re-evaluate punitive methods

By moving from seeing supervised visitation as an "agent of social control to an agent of social healing," your center can hold space for transformative healing and change. You will see that the Enhanced Model supports your center to be transparent about why the center exists, the role of the center, and why participant guidelines support healing directly. Punitive measures are to be avoided, and individualized approaches should be put in place to be directly connected to each person’s unique needs, thereby supporting safety and creating the possibility for change and healing.

View prevention through an equity lens

Oppression and marginalization can impact people deeply; our approaches must allow people to show up with their full humanity - we must make every effort to reduce oppression and marginalization within our services.

Successful interventions for heterosexual people often vary significantly from LGBTQ people; likewise, approaches that work for white families may

not work for families of color, etc. The Enhanced Model emphasizes the importance of self-reflection particularly related to privilege and oppression for both individuals and organizations. This can prevent us from developing practices and policies rooted only in dominant culture world views, and instead encourages us to develop practices and policies that are responsive to the lived experiences of the extremely diverse families supported by supervised visitation.

Other crucial elements of Inspire Action's Enhanced Model are connection, cohesion, and community among staff working in supervised visitation centers. By building trust and sharing in advanced learning, teams will be more equipped to challenge the narrow cultural norms that often permeate social services and our values related to domestic violence perpetration and victimization - to see each person as a complex human being, deserving of relevant interventions. The Enhanced Model will support your team in building a stronger foundation from which to do this complex work.

An enhanced supervised visitation model is a strengths-based, optimistic approach centered on the belief that change and healing are possible, and people can bring about the change they wish to see. The starting point of such change are the strengths, resilience, and capacities of the person seeking change.

The aim of an enhanced model of supervised visitation fosters a sense of safety, honesty, trust, and well-being by creating an environment that increases the adult victim and children's sense of safety, and allows for reparative experiences and opportunities in a warm, caring, and humanistic environment. An enhanced supervised visitation model provides an opportunity for people who use violence to cause no further harm to their partner and children, create a healthy, safe and caring relationship with their children, and potentially change their behavior. A key component to the implementation of an enhanced model of supervised visitation is centering each survivor's self-determination and safety. While it is understood that each parent and child will have unique needs, ensuring

that no further harm comes to adult and child victims has to be paramount to any enhanced practice.²

Strategies that support an enhanced model of supervised visitation and can reduce further harm to adult and child survivors are as follows:

- ❖ Prioritize building trust with survivors. Adults and children need to know they can talk to providers about ongoing risk and harm that may be occurring.
- ❖ Create regular and ongoing opportunities for checking-in and building relationships with survivors.
- ❖ Ensure every aspect of the supervised visitation program is grounded in equity and racial justice.
- ❖ Create policies and practices that are grounded in a deep and complex understanding of domestic violence and battering.
- ❖ Hold regular staff meetings and supervision sessions with all staff.
- ❖ Facilitate and provide the time and resources necessary for staff to engage in self-reflection work to support the well-being and care of staff.

The Guiding Principles for Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange, U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women³ were developed as a guidepost for the development and administration of supervised visitation programs that provide services to adult victims of domestic violence and their children. The Guiding Principles are as follows:

- Equal regard for the safety of children and adult victims
- Valuing multiculturalism and diversity
- Incorporating an understanding of domestic violence

² McNamara, B. and Rose, J. (2017). *Change is Possible: An Enhanced Model of Supervised Visitation for Families Impacted by Domestic Violence*. Inspire Action for Social Change.

³ The Guiding Principles were developed by a national steering committee for the Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Program, U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, 2007.

- Respectful and fair interaction
- Community collaboration
- Advocacy for children and adult victims

Building an Enhanced Model of Supervised Visitation: Immersion Extension Training Package incorporates and fully supports the Guiding Principles for Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women (Guiding Principles). Each module was developed to enhance our shared understanding of the Guiding Principles in action, as outlined below.

Module 1: “Self-Reflection of Identity and Bias,” provides you and your staff multiple opportunities to unpack how our identities, and where we experience both privilege and oppression, can shape how we work with families, as well as how we structure our policies and practices. The overarching goal of this module is to create a practice for deepening self-analysis, as well as organizational analysis, around creating environments that are welcoming, inclusive, and equitable. This module directly supports the Guiding Principles. Specifically, the principles of: “Valuing Multiculturalism and Diversity” and “Respectful and Fair Interaction.” To be respectful and fair in our interactions with diverse, multicultural families, our services and organizational cultures must commit to continuous learning and evaluation with equity and inclusion at the center.

Module 2: “Healing Centered Engagement in Supervised Visitation Services” focuses on creating trauma-informed environments that allow space for every person in a family to heal and recover. Healing centered environments support the Guiding Principles of “Incorporating an Understanding of Domestic Violence” into center services. Building our capacity to understand, support, and hold the needs of survivors at the forefront of our work requires our organizations first to build resilience and support the well-being of the staff. The well-being of the families we serve directly links to the well-being of our organizations and the staff.

Module 3: “Enhancing Staff Teams” works to support the development of

strong and diverse staff teams that build an organization's capacity to be informed and responsive to the individuals and the community it serves. This module works to support each of the Guiding Principles as foundational groundwork for visitation programs providing services to adult victims of domestic violence and their children. The stronger our teams are, the stronger our service provision is.

Module 4: “The Practice of Meaningful Engagement: Checking-in & Connecting with Families in Supervised Visitation Programs” is an essential practice for visitation programs. The practice of checking in with every person in a family works to: establish and maintain an ongoing dialogue; learn about changing conditions and circumstances; facilitate an understanding of ongoing and changing safety needs for survivors and their children; build meaningful relationships with parents and children; increase our understanding of the unique needs of families; support our ability to conduct meaningful visitation safety planning and account for ever-changing risk; allow us to learn about other needed services and offer meaningful referrals; and support our ability to connect to strong advocacy support. Conducting check-ins in supervised visitation is a foundational practice that works to support each of the Guiding Principles, and serves to establish a promising practice in the provision of safe visitation and exchange services and in the overall community response to children and adult victims of domestic violence.

To learn more about the standards of practice established by Guiding Principles for Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange use this link: <https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/ovw/legacy/2008/08/06/guiding-principles032608.pdf>



Inspire Action for Social Change

16 Bitterroot Mountain Road
Montana City, MT 59634

Written by:
ERIN FAIRCHILD, CONSULTANT
With Inspire Action for Social Change

BETH MCNAMARA, CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
406.558.9334 beth@inspireactionforsocialchange.org

JENNIFER ROSE, CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
505.490.9058 jennifer@inspireactionforsocialchange.org

MORE INFO AND STAFF AND CONSULTANT BIOS
www.inspireactionforsocialchange.org
info@inspireactionforsocialchange.org

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