



Supervised Visitation Monitor Training

The Role of a Supervised Visitation Monitor- Safety and Security Procedures

Hi. Welcome to part five of the Supervised Visitation Monitor Training, brought to you by Family & Children’s Counseling Services, Inc.

In this segment, we will learn about the Role and Responsibilities of the Supervised Visitation Monitor- specifically, Safety and Security Procedures.


Let’s look at Standard 5.20


Section g, Safety and Security Procures, reads...


(g) Safety and security procedures


All providers must make every reasonable effort to assure the safety and welfare of the child and adults during the visitation. Providers should establish a written protocol, with the assistance of the local law enforcement agency, that describes the emergency assistance and responses that can be expected from the local law enforcement agency. In addition, the professional provider should:

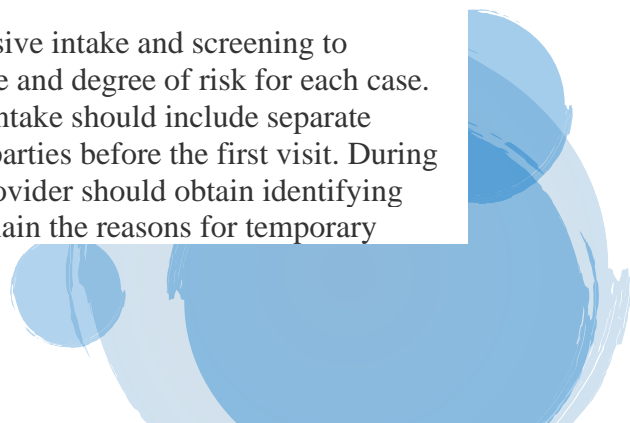
- (1) Establish and state in writing minimum security procedures and inform the parties of these procedures before the commencement of supervised visitation;
- (2) Conduct comprehensive intake and screening to understand the nature and degree of risk for each case. The procedures for intake should include separate interviews with the parties before the first visit. During the interview, the provider should obtain identifying information and explain the reasons for temporary

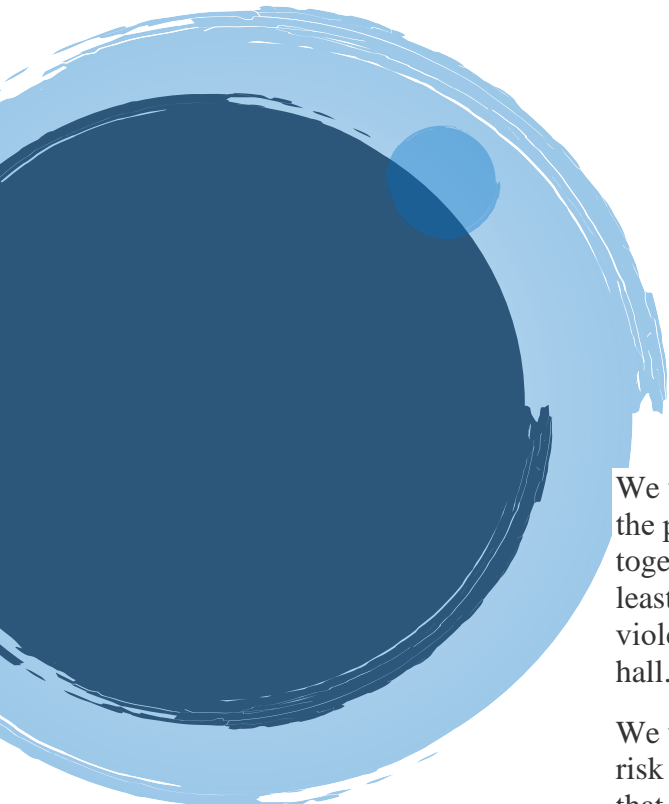
 561 E. Lindo Ave.
Ste. B
Chico, CA 95926

 800-430-4490

 onlinetraining@healplaylove.org

 www.HealPlayLove.org





suspension or termination of a visit under this standard. If the child is of sufficient age and capacity, the provider should include the child in part of the intake or orientation process. Any discussion should be presented to the child in a manner appropriate to the child's developmental stage.

We will be conducting separate Interviews and Orientations for the parents. We don't want the Parents to try to have a meeting together. In most cases, there is an emotional backstory with at least some conflict. Oftentimes, there is a history of domestic violence. We don't even want them to run into each other in the hall.

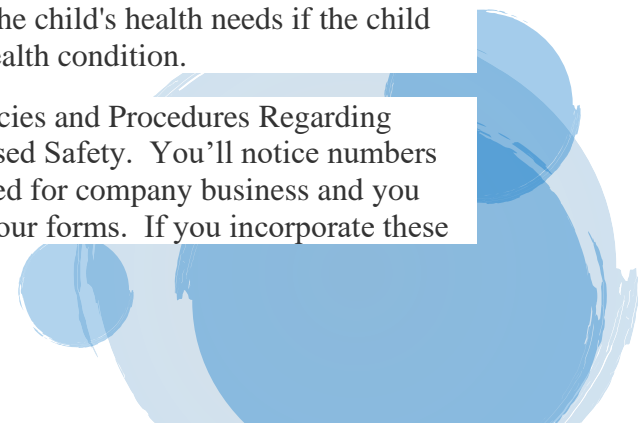
We use an Interview packet that contains questions related to the risk factors involved in the case. Each parent gets a questionnaire that they fill out and turn in. The person conducting the Interview will go over the questionnaire and gather the other documents that are required.


NOTE: Not all Monitors do Interviews and Orientations. Some agencies have "Intake Coordinators;" others have Supervisors or licensed professionals conduct the Interviews and Orientations. Ask your Supervisor if you will be conducting Interviews and/or Orientations.

According to Standard 5.20, the minimum required documents are...

- (A) Copies of any protective order;
- (B) Current court orders;
- (C) Any Judicial Council form relating to supervised visitation orders;
- (D) A report of any written records of allegations of domestic violence or abuse; and
- (E) An account of the child's health needs if the child has a chronic health condition.

Take a look at the FCCS Policies and Procedures Regarding Personal and Community-Based Safety. You'll notice numbers on the policies. These are used for company business and you don't have to keep them on your forms. If you incorporate these





policies into your own Policy and Procedures Manual, you will number your polices according to the format you use.

NOTE: Your agency may or may not use these exact Policies. However, every agency should have safety policies in place. Please ask your Supervisor for the Policies related to Personal, Office and/or Community-based Safety. The FCCS policies are used here for illustrative purposes.

9080 Personal Safety

- - remain aware of your surroundings at all times
- - visualize your exit route
- - install a silent alarm panic button app on your personal phone
- - make sure you can dial “emergency call” from locked keypad on phone
- - practice non-violent self-defense (NSD)

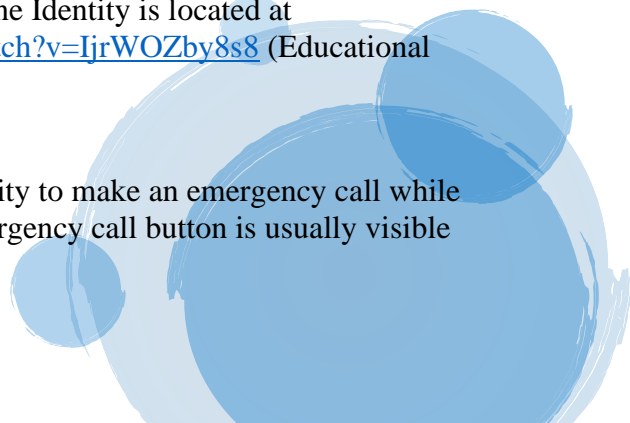
When you are aware, you are not just aware of the Visiting Parent. You are aware of the environment, and the other people who are in proximity. These could be coworkers, employees and customers at the restaurant or patrons at the library.

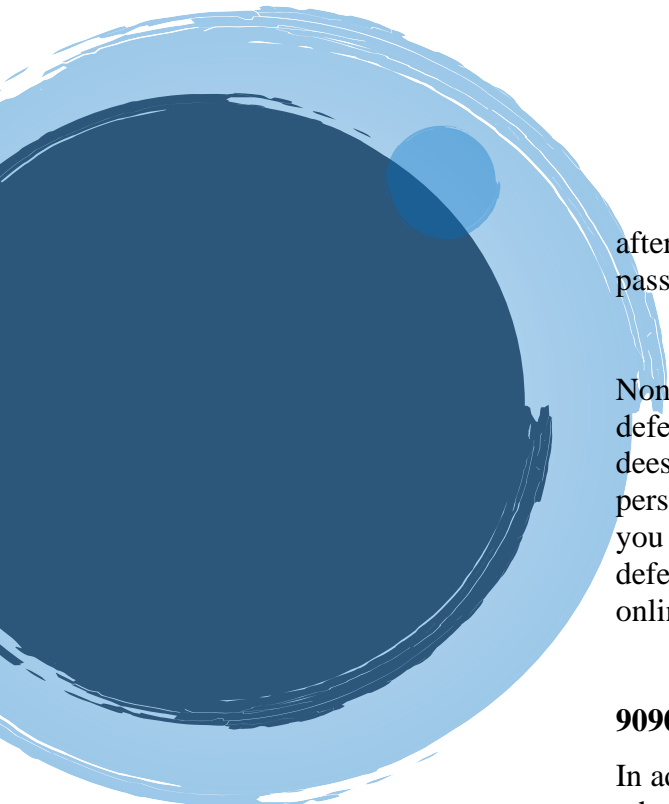
You want to know your exit route at all times. If you’re in your own office, you will be familiar with the layout. Have at least two different exit routes planned prior to meeting with any clients.

If you are in the community, you will need to plan an exit route every time you go to any location. If you saw the movie, The Bourne Identity, there is a scene where he knows who can fight how fast he can run at that altitude. Be Jason Bourne.

The Diner Scene of The Bourne Identity is located at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjrWOZby8s8> (Educational license.)

Check your phone for the ability to make an emergency call while the phone is locked. The emergency call button is usually visible



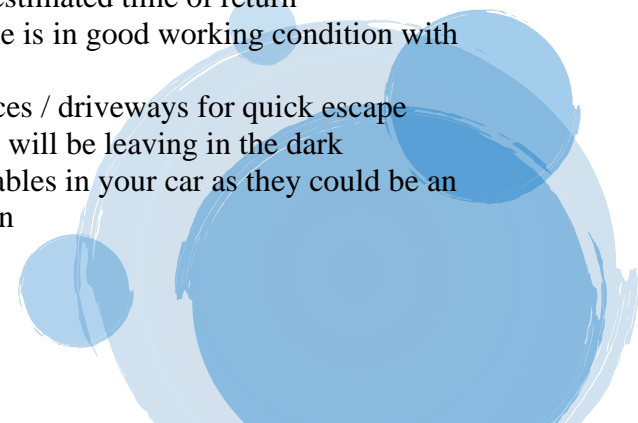


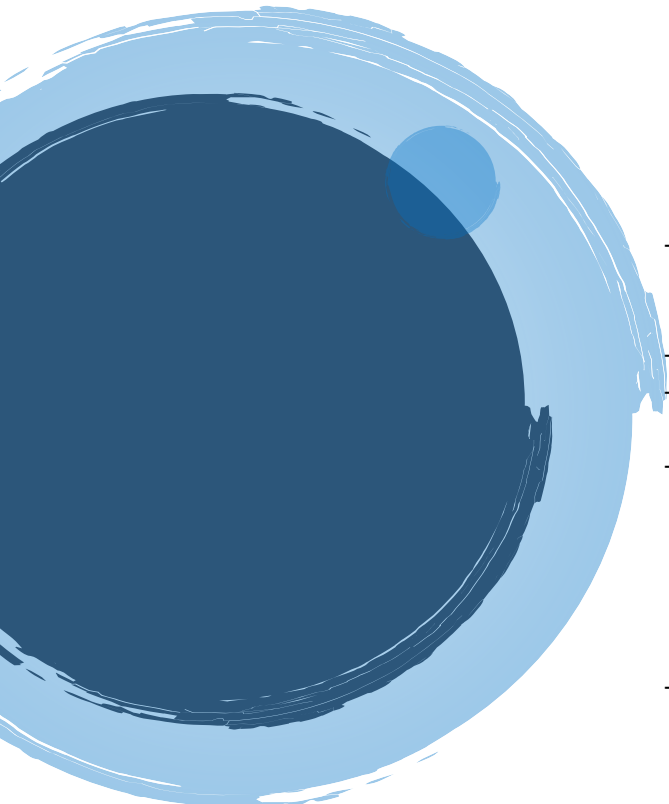
after you wake up your screen, but before you enter your passcode.

Non-violent self-defense is also known as psychological self-defense. It's a set of skills we use to keep a person clam or to deescalate a potentially violent situation. It involves awareness, personal presence, body language, boundaries and consistency. If you are interested in learning more about non-violent self-defense, there are many articles and other resources available online.

9090 Safety During Home and Community Visits

In addition to following the Personal Safety guidelines, all Staff who visit with clients in their homes or in the community should have their own safety plan which may include:

- learn about the new client's history of violence (This is part of our Interview process; we check potential clients by using a variety of online resources. These are different, depending upon your state and county.)
 - familiarize yourself with the client's neighborhood and watch for potential dangers (known gang or cult activities)
 - o this does not apply to Supervised Visitation clients, as we do not do visits in Visiting Parents' homes
 - drive by the home one time to see if anything looks suspicious
 - o see above
 - watch for animals that might be dangerous
 - assess individuals / family to see if they are under the influence or agitated
 - position yourself near an exit
 - scan the environment for weapons or other hazards
 - keep personal items (such as your purse) in your car
 - drive with your doors locked and windows up
 - leave information at the office to let others know where you will be and your estimated time of return
 - make sure your vehicle is in good working condition with plenty of gas
 - back into parking spaces / driveways for quick escape
 - park near lights if you will be leaving in the dark
 - do not leave any valuables in your car as they could be an incentive for a break in
- 



- keep your keys in your hands as you approach your vehicle (point keys outward through your fingers to use as a weapon, if necessary)
- check your backseat before entering the vehicle
- if anyone tries to force you into your car, throw your keys to distract them and run if possible
- if you are driving a client, try to have them next to you so you can see them
 - o this does not apply to Supervised Visitation cases. If you move the visit from one location to the next, have the Visiting Parent follow you in his or her own vehicle.
- if someone in your car is forcing you to drive, turn on your flashers, honk horn, stop suddenly, get out and run
 - o worst case scenario, you may cause a car accident, but not the loss of life
- if you are in your car and face an intruder, push on your horn and drive off quickly
- if stranded, ask for identification of anyone who stops to help, including police
 - o tell them someone is on their way to help you
- keep your home address unknown from clients
 - o check with various online resources (Spokeo, Google, etc.)
- trust your instincts

Adapted from Be Careful: Personal Safety for Social Workers. Harkey, Jane.

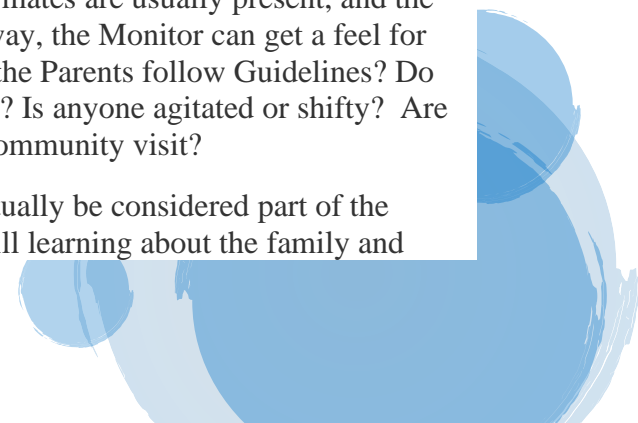
<http://www.ceuschool.com/librarydocs/soc235.pdf>

We will discuss handling emergencies in another segment.

Preventing Chaos and Other Shenanigans

At Family & Children's, we start visits off at the office. It is a confined space, all our office mates are usually present, and the building has cameras. That way, the Monitor can get a feel for the family. For example, do the Parents follow Guidelines? Do the children follow directions? Is anyone agitated or shifty? Are the children too hyper for a community visit?

The first few visits should actually be considered part of the Interview process. We are still learning about the family and





what the interactions between Visiting Parent and Children look like. We may discover that we need a back-up Monitor, security personnel, or that we are not a good fit for the family.

When and if we decide there is no apparent safety risk, and as long as the Court order has allowed it, we move visits into the community... the park, the trampoline place, a restaurant, an art studio, and so forth.

This allows the visiting parent to interact with his or her children in a more natural and relaxed environment. Of course, safety is always key. If the location the family has chosen is too loud or has places to hide, for example, then it should not be selected as a visit location. This may mean certain family-based locations are going to be off-limits until the case moves to unsupervised.

In some cases, it may be necessary to have metal detectors and security staff on site. The California Department of Justice recommends having these security elements in place for all visits. FCCS has chosen not to take on cases that are extremely high risk. If you like to walk on the wild side, you can choose to take on these cases, but I suggest you take the security measures seriously- for the safety of the children and yourself.

NOTE: If you work for an agency, your agency will determine the risk level. If you have a concern regarding the risk level of clients you will see, please speak with your Supervisor.

A sad but smart way to evaluate any situation is to think about a worst-case scenario. What are the dangers? What could go wrong? How will you justify your choice in allowing a visit to happen in such a place? What are you going to say if this ends up on trial? Like I said, worst-case.

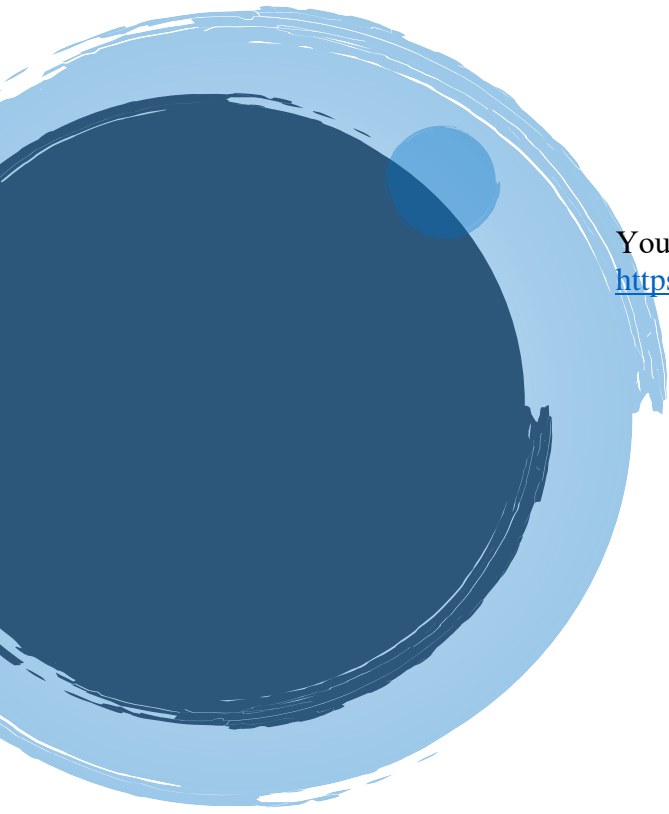
And always remember, safety first.

Thank you for watching. I'll see you again at the next video, The Role of the Supervised Visitation Monitor-Ratio of Children to Provider

Family & Children's Counseling Services, Inc. is a California LMFT non-profit Corporation directed by Melinda Haynes, MA, LMFT 102308.

You can find FCCS online at www.HealPlayLove.org.





You can find Melinda's therapy channel, Can We Talk?, at <https://www.youtube.com/canwetalk>

