



# Supervised Visitation Monitor Training

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## Helping Families- Issues Relating to Substance Abuse, Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse, and Domestic Violence, Part I

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

In this segment, we will discuss issues related to substance abuse, child abuse, sexual abuse and domestic violence AS IT RELATES TO OUR ROLE.

Obviously, there is a lot to learn about any of these issues and we cannot cover them all in their entirety. We will be leaving some of the information to our clients’ therapists, support groups, parenting classes, mediators, attorneys, judges and bailiffs.

For now, we will focus on what we need to know to do our job correctly.

### Substance Abuse

Many of our Visiting Parents have issues related to substance abuse. You will see this in the Protective Order or the Supervised Visitation Order. You may also find out about their substance use history when you do an arrest search or a case search with your County.

The fact that the Parent has a prior history of use, abuse and/or arrest isn’t our primary focus. We are not there to judge them based on their past. We are there to provide a safe visit between the Parent and Child.



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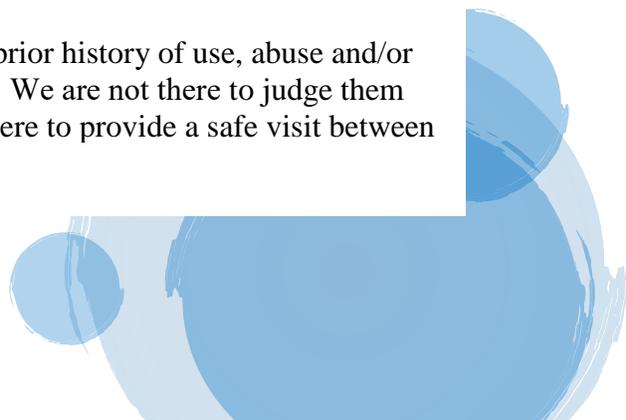
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Part of having a safe visit is to have a sober Parent. If we notice that the Parent appears to be under the influence, we must terminate the visit. We don't need to drug test them. If the Parent appears to be under the influence, we stop the visit.

Do you remember when you did the Mandated Reporter portion of the training? We don't have to know that abuse happened, we just have to suspect it to make a report. It's similar with suspected drug or alcohol use. We don't have to be absolutely sure that the Parent is currently drunk or high, we just need a suspicion that something isn't right.

What is that something? Let's take a look at the effects that substances can have on a person.

Alcohol – a person intoxicated with alcohol may...

- stagger when they walk
- slur their words
- appear uncoordinated
- be slow to move or respond (impaired reflexes)
- have a glossy look to their eyes
- carry the smell of alcohol on their breath or clothing

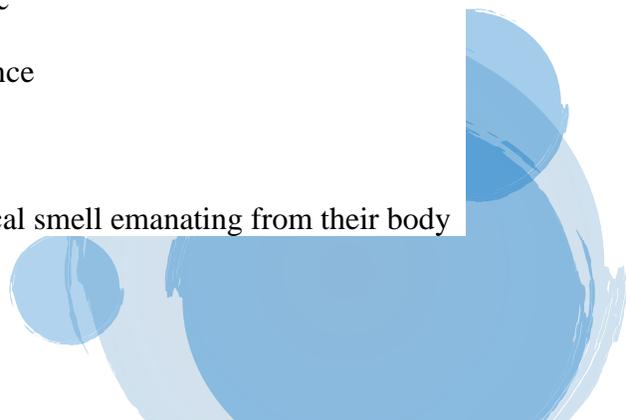
Marijuana (cannabis)- a person intoxicated with marijuana may have...

- a mellow or relaxed mood
- signs of anxiety or hallucinations
- red eyes
- an increased appetite; desire to snack
- poor muscle coordination
- a distinct "skunk-like" smell on their hair or clothing

Even though marijuana has been legalized in many locations, the use of marijuana before a visit is not okay.

Methamphetamines – a person on methamphetamine (base, ice, speed, crystal meth) may...

- act twitchy or energetic
- scratch at their skin
- have a sallow appearance
- talk fast or a lot
- appear hyper-alert
- clinch their jaw
- have a pungent chemical smell emanating from their body





Opioids- a person intoxicated with opioids (such as heroin, or prescription drugs like Fentanyl, OxyContin, Vicodin and Codeine) may...

- appear drowsy and disoriented
- slur their words
- have poor muscle coordination with slow response
- have poor memory and attention
- let their personal hygiene and grooming decline

Benzos- a person under the influence of benzodiazepines (such as Valium, Xanax, Restoril or Klonopin) may...

- appear drowsy, dizzy or confused
- have blurred vision
- slur their words

Opioids and Benzos are both depressants, meaning they have a depressant effect on the Central Nervous System. The effect of the drugs are similar. We don't need to differentiate between a Parent's possible use of one or the other.

If you notice any of these warning signs, you must stop the visit.

It is not considered physically or emotionally safe for a child to be around an intoxicated Parent. Not only is there an increased risk for harm due to reduced judgement and reflex, the child can be emotionally damaged by seeing their Parent in this state. I have worked with children who have referred to their Parent as "monster," "creepy," "weird" and "psycho."

If you have to stop a visit due to suspected drug or alcohol use, document what happened- specifically the signs of use, and notify all parties involved.

## References

Alcohol:

<https://www.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/studentrights/policiesandprocedures/sdfcampus/effect>

Marijuana: <https://americanaddictioncenters.org/marijuana-rehab/how-to-tell-if-someone-is-high>



Methamphetamine: <https://druginfo.sl.nsw.gov.au/drugs/a-to-z-of-drugs/ice-speed-other-methamphetamines>

Opioids: <https://www.narconon.org>

Benzodiazepines: <https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/addiction/benzodiazepine-abuse#2>

Thank you for watching. I'll see you again at the next video, Issues relating to Substance Abuse, Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse, and Domestic Violence, Part II.

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

You can find FCCS online at [www.HealPlayLove.org](http://www.HealPlayLove.org).

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

