



## January 2014 EPress

### Questions from Directors

***Someone from our community came to my program and said she wanted to start her own supervised visitation (SV) program. I tried to be helpful, but I am very concerned that this person will not be creating a safe program. For example, she plans to go to people's homes. Her degree is in a subject related to families, but it's from several years ago. I'm afraid that she does not understand the security problems we experience daily. Also, she will be competing for the same funding that I receive. What can I do?***

First, it was extremely nice of you to give her the tour of your program and speak to her at length about the process of supervised visits. I recommend that your next step is to send her to us. Give her the email address and phone number, and we will provide her with crucial information. And then, we'll invite her to the phone trainings/conferences, where we talk about safety issues and recent news in SV. I understand your concern about her relative inexperience and perhaps even naivety. Remember, even emerging programs that have not yet opened their doors are welcome to the phone conferences. That way, everyone has access to the same important information. You are not, however, obliged to train her, unless you affirmatively want to do so, or have some training clause in your contract with the CBC. The issue of funding is more complicated. Programs have been, unfortunately, forced to compete for limited local funding. It is an issue that

arises every single year, and my best advice is to ensure that the funders know about the value and safety of your program. Make sure they understand the depth of your experience and your knowledge about the complexities of family safety, mental illness, substance abuse, family violence, and child abuse. Don't wait until a challenge for funds arises: lay the groundwork now. Be sure your audits are positive. Keep a line of communication open about your successes and hard work, whether that's through a written report (recommended) or telephone/email conversations with your grant manager (although it leaves less of a long-term record).

## **RESEARCH SUMMARY: ENSURING SAFETY, WELL-BEING AND PERMANENCY FOR OUR CHILDREN**

FINDINGS, PRACTICE AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS FROM LONGSCAN: THE 20 YEAR LONGITUDINAL STUDIES OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

The Longitudinal Studies of Child Abuse and Neglect (LONGSCAN) studies shed light on complex issues of preventing and addressing child abuse. As technology has advanced, studies on child abuse have become more efficient and cohesive. Key findings from more than 130 peer reviewed publications and 25 doctoral dissertations were reviewed to identify the findings with the most impact on how children can be protected and cared for after maltreatment. This information was discussed at small group meetings to identify implications related to practice and policy. More than 900 children were followed during seven interview waves over a 14- year span. The 20 year study continues as participants are still being followed into their young adulthood. The study focuses on safety and health, permanency, and well-being. Key findings include the following:

Children need to be **identified** for abuse and neglect risk as early as **before birth** and at birth by **assessing parent's mental health and adverse situations** such as possible violence in the home or drug use. Children need to be assessed for **witnessed violence** in addition to physical violence. Witnessed violence, either male to female or female to male, can have negative effects on children even if it

is not directed at them. **Public awareness** should be increased, as well as **professional training** for witnessed violence. Early neglect, which is more difficult to identify than physical abuse, and psychological maltreatment can be especially harmful to children. Children who are victims of maltreatment need to be assessed for **suicide** risk. Maltreated children are often exposed to multiple forms of maltreatment. This produces negative outcomes such as early sexual activity and poor physical health. Maltreatment assessment should be multi-dimensional.



Instability and safety in permanent placements can be risk factors for maltreatment. Placements are not always permanent, many changing caregivers multiple times. Children should be followed beyond foster care and the concept of stability should be expanded. Maltreatment can occur in every **permanent placement** type and a **stable environment** is not always ensured. There can also be more forms of instability other than different caregivers, including school changes and multiple moves. Services should be made available to parents, families and children.

Fathers should be more involved with their children and feel **more competent in parenting**. **Father involvement** and the role of the father are very important in well-being including better cognitive development and competence. Caregiver's **social support**, and social support programs, reduces the risk of maltreatment. In addition to the role of the father and social support, a **public health approach** to preventing child maltreatment should be used. "The health and well-being of children exposed to multiple risks, including child maltreatment, is a long term public health issue, and is not limited to children with founded maltreatment."

SUMMARY BY CHRISTINE DUSOME

## **Remember – Free Online Training!**

**There are two free trainings on the Protective Factors on our website!**

**Have your staff take them both:**

**<http://familyvio.csw.fsu.edu/clearinghouse/manuals-and-materials/>**

**Click on E Books!!!**

## **Kinship Care 101**

### **What is it?**

Kinship care refers to the guardianship of a child by family members who are not the child's biological parents. Kinship care can be an informal, private arrangement between the parents and relative caregivers. In other situations, the child welfare system is involved in placing the child in a safe environment or providing the guardians with the resources they need.

A broad definition of kin is defined as relatives and other kin, such as those who have an established relationship with the child, including godparents, close friends, neighbors, and others.

A narrow definition of kin is defined as relatives (only those related by blood, marriage, or adoption) being treated differently than other kin (godparents, neighbors, etc.).

The state of Florida, along with 18 other states, uses the narrow definition of kin when determining kinship care.

### **Characteristics**

- Kinship care can either be seen as formal or informal:

- Formal Kinship Care is when the child welfare system is involved in placing the child in a home and providing the resources to services the family needs.
- Informal Kinship Care is when the child is being cared for by relatives or family members but the child welfare system was not involved in placement.
- More than six million children in the US live in households headed by relatives other than their parents. These caregivers provide full-time care, nurturing and protection. Of these children, 4.5 million are cared for by their grandparents. Other known caregivers are great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, and older siblings.
- A majority of kinship caregivers are single, older females.
- There are many instances when siblings are taken into kinship care together.



### **History and Present Day**

Traditionally, kinship care was a separate and informal system, a service that family members provided for each other. There wasn't much involvement on the part of child welfare services.

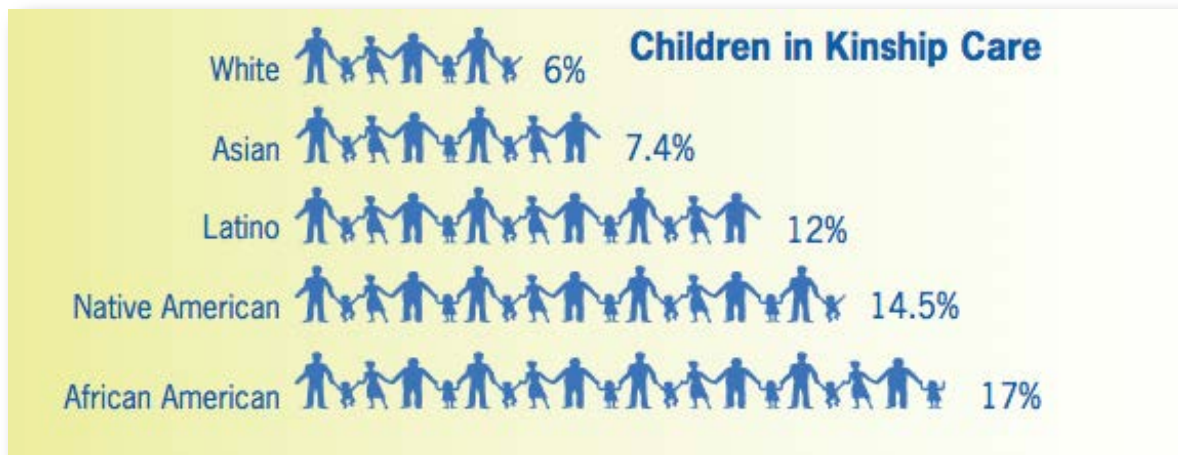
By the late 1980's the child welfare system began to place children with relatives. Kinship care has become more formalized because of the limited resources of many of the families.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 encouraged states to look at responsible and willing adult relatives as a first choice when deciding child placement (instead of non-relatives).

The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 called for more attention to kinship care as a unique type of foster care placement.

This can be compared to children living in one parent homes. It has been found that 16% of children who live with one parent are in poverty and 10% of children with one parent don't have health insurance. These issues may change with the new Affordable Care Act.

### Children in Kinship Care



- About one-third of children in foster care are being looked after by their relatives.
- One in three live with a caretaker who does not have a high school degree.
- One in two live with a caretaker who does not have a spouse.
- Nearly one in five live in households with four or more children.

Family members and other relatives become stand-in parents when it becomes clear that the parents can't adequately care for the child. This inability to parent can be caused by many factors, including:

- poverty
- lack of affordable child care
- homelessness
- substance abuse
- teenage pregnancy
- child abuse or neglect
- incarceration
- death

- chronic health issues
- family violence
- unemployment
- mental health problems
- divorce
- military deployment

Many children in kinship care enter state custody because of neglect and/or parental substance abuse issues. Case workers found that mothers were most likely to surrender children because of a problem with substances.

### **Cultural Competence**

There is a need for case workers, supervised visitation providers, and all “helpers” who interact with families to be culturally competent. They need to be aware of the cultural strengths of different types of families. Customizing any interventions necessary to the client's individual needs will be more effective in producing long term results. Social service providers need to be aware of cultural values and natural helping traditions, and should see cultural competence as a learning process.

### **Needs of Caregivers**

Studies show that caregivers in formal and informal kinship care look similar, in terms of needs and demographics. It is most common to see kinship care involving grandparents and taking place in urban cities and areas. There are times when these caregivers will require extra help. For example, about two-thirds of kinship caregivers (both formal and informal) are children’s grandparents. There are times when grandparents need specific assistance from child welfare services. In many of these cases, the kin caregivers may have planned to care for the child without agency help. However, in many dependency cases, caregivers may qualify for “Relative Caregiver” financial assistance from the state. However, there are situations where an unexpected circumstance forces the caregiver to seek help from the child welfare agency. For instance, the child may develop the need for special services, the caregiver may become ill, or the caregiver may lose a job and no longer be in a position to offer complete financial support.

The child welfare worker may be able to help arrange services for the kin caregiver or arrange other placements for the children. It is also important for case workers to discuss future plans with caregivers who have chronic health problems. The case worker needs to know what the next steps are in the event the caregiver is no longer able to care for the child.

Another example is the issue of poverty. It is more likely that a grandparent-maintained family would live in poverty and be uninsured than a parent-maintained family. Several statistics on children are as follows:

- 20% of children in relative-headed homes are impoverished
- 27% in grandparent-maintained homes have no insurance coverage.

### **Wellbeing of Children in Kinship Care**

Many individuals assume that children separated from their biological parents and placed with relatives do not experience the same degree of separation trauma that children placed with non-relatives do. These children do experience many emotions when their family and living situations change. The children need age-appropriate help understanding why their parents can no longer take care of them. They will also need help coming to terms with how their family's living arrangement and the authority within the family has changed. Being placed in kinship care does come with its own risk factors. These can be inadequate services, exposure to other family risk factors, and prolonged involvement with child protection services.

### **References**

Administration for Children and Families. (2007). Kinship Caregivers in the Child Welfare System. Retrieved from

<http://www.childwelfarepolicy.org/resources?id=0006#kinshipcare>

Casey Kinship Foster Care Policy Survey. (2007). Data by State-Florida. Retrieved from [http://www.childwelfarepolicy.org/maps/state?id=10&subtopic\\_id=68](http://www.childwelfarepolicy.org/maps/state?id=10&subtopic_id=68)

Casey Kinship Foster Care Policy Survey. (2007). Glossary of Terms. Retrieved from <http://www.childwelfarepolicy.org/resources?id=0006>



Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2010). How the Child Welfare System Becomes Involved in Kinship Care. Retrieved from [https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f\\_kinshi/f\\_kinshi2.cfm](https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_kinshi/f_kinshi2.cfm)

Child Welfare Information Gateway (2010). Kinship Caregivers and the Child Welfare System. Retrieved from [https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f\\_kinshi/](https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_kinshi/)

Child Welfare League of America. (2013). Kinship Care. Retrieved from <http://www.cwla.org/programs/kinship/bestpractice.htm>

Elders as Resources. (2005). Basic Data: Kinship Care. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/upload/publicationfiles/factsheet.pdf>

Maurer, K. (2002). Information Packet: Kinship/Relative Care. Retrieved from [http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/downloads/information\\_packets/kinship-pkt.pdf](http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/downloads/information_packets/kinship-pkt.pdf)

## **Cultural Awareness and Diversity for Supervised Visitation Workers**

### **Introduction**

As the nation continues to become more diverse, many supervised visitation workers may find themselves with clients, co-workers and supervisors that may not be from the same place, speak the same language, or use the same mannerisms as they do. However, it is important that supervised visitation workers are constantly respectful and culturally appropriate when dealing with others. Although it can be tough to understand or even recognize cultural bias, there are many actions that can be taken to make sure that their employees are not only culturally aware but appropriate and respectful.

### **Tips for Creating Cultural Awareness and Diversity: The Client**

Fostering a harmonious relationship between an employee and a client in a supervised visitation setting is both important and essential for a healthy relationship. Creating cultural awareness within employees assists them to not

only foster this relationship but allows clients to feel respected and active within interactions rather than passive as recipients. Below are tips that supervisors can give to employees to assist them in becoming more culturally aware.

### **Know Yourself First**

- Encouraging employees to have a sense of their own cultural background can further assist them in gaining a sense of respect and appreciation for their client's cultural differences.
- It is important that employees are knowledgeable about their own stereotypes and cultural biases so that they can better manage and control that aspect when dealing with clients.
- Urging employees to pay close attention to their use of colloquial phrases and choice of words, although small and sometimes obvious, can really help them to become more aware of exactly how and what they are saying when interacting with client.

### **Know Your Clientele**

- Supervisors should always stress that employees get to know their clientele, should include noting details about the clients background.
- A part of being culturally aware also comes with learning about other cultures. By promoting education about other cultures supervisor can assist employees in being better prepared in terms of dealing with a diverse clientele and more specifically learning respectful behavior.
- Although being culturally aware can seem to deal on a more international level, gaining entry into the community and developing a relationship with



the population can also assist employees in being more culturally aware and foster a healthy relationship.



### **Communication Tips**

- Learning to listen is a valuable skill for employees. It is important that they listen to what clients say.
- Learning to listen can be especially helpful when dealing with clients who have heavy or thick accents or use English as a second language.
- It is important to put focus on what the client is attempting to say and not how they are saying it.
- Communicating clearly and efficiently is vital when dealing with clients in general. Employees should make sure that clients clearly understand what is being communicated which can be done through asking questions to test for understanding, and then paraphrasing or clarifying more complex terminology.
- Supervisors should encourage employees to use language that fosters trust and alliance and to always have a calm and positive attitude.

### **Culturally sensitive practices**

- Actions that can be distressing to clients from different cultural backgrounds include:
  - Referring to people by their first name.
  - Touching
  - Holding a person's gaze when they are speaking
  - Coughing and blowing one's nose

### **Tips for Creating Cultural Awareness and Diversity: The Work Place**

Although many only think about being culturally appropriate in terms of the client, it is very important to maintain a culturally aware and diverse work place for employees. Doing activities and creating policies that show diversity not only makes the environment more professional but gives employees a comfortable and gratifying place to work. Below are tips and practices for creating a culturally aware environment for employees.

### **Foster diversity within the hiring process**

- It is important that supervisors recognize that the one of the first and initial steps to obtaining a diverse and accepting environment is by implementing requirements that foster diversity within the hiring process.
- Contrary to popular belief, teams and work places with a diverse skills sets and knowledge levels as well as ethnic and cultural diversity perform better than those with identical skills.

### **It is important to make sure applicants:**

- Have little bias toward diverse groups through ethical evaluations or questioning
- Have worked in environments with diverse clientele
- Are aware that the job requires employees to work with diverse populations that require cultural awareness and sensitivities
- Have a personality type that is conducive to working in pressured situations in which they may face individuals who are adversarial in nature
- Is professional and patient in all situations when dealing with different groups of clientele

### **Fair vs. The Same**

- Employers should always note that treating everyone “the same” when delegating tasks, objectives, or instructions may not always be the fair thing to do.



- It can be helpful for supervisors to make culturally aware adjustments that allow every employee to feel comfortable regardless of culturally specific variables. Paying attention to aspects such as English language proficiency, terminology and the use of colloquial language in the work place can assist supervisor in promoting cultural diversity.
- Although many may not make a fuss about not being able to understand instructions or objectives as clearly as others for fear of looking inferior, it is important that employers attempt to make adjustments such as taking extra time to explain important information or refraining from colloquial words or phrases.

### **Consider Religious and Cultural Holidays**

- Considering culturally specific or religious holidays are a very good way for supervisors to let employees know that they not only respect their culture but value the employee's beliefs and rituals.
- Many cultures use a different calendar to determine holidays such as New Year's or Christmas, which can sometimes land on different days from Western cultures. This can affect deadlines and appointment meetings since many religious holidays are a necessity for some employees.
- A cultural calendar is helpful when determining time limits and other time related activities so that employees can successfully meet deadlines and meetings without causing interruptions to the work place or personal events.



## **Promote programs and activities that educate employees about cultural sensitivity and appropriateness**

- Supporting programs and activities that are culturally sensitive is not only beneficial but necessary when dealing with clients.
- These programs help to make employees more aware of things that may or may not be culturally appropriate and also mannerisms that maybe considered offensive to some cultures.
- Given that employees in a supervised visitation setting commonly interact with clients from diverse background cultural sensitivity and appropriateness training may also assist employees in improving the actual relationship held with the client and result in a generally better experience for both.
- Reading, seminars and fact sheets are great ways to educate employees on aspects of various cultures.
- Simple discussion during staff meetings about professionalism and appropriateness when addressing someone from a different culture are also conducive to a more culturally aware environment.
- Supervisors should also consider requiring diversity training as a part of initial training after employment or as a possible staff activity to further support a culturally aware environment.

### **Note to Supervisors:**

- Managing Diversity is Different from Affirmative Action
  - Even though managing diversity does involve the underrepresentation of women and minorities in the workplace, promoting diversity involves and is more inclusive of all cultures, races and ethnicities.
  - It is important to note that diversity does not focus on one specific group, but works to include and acknowledge everyone.
- Consequences of Ignoring Diversity
  - Ignoring diversity within the workplace not only affects both the employees and clients but also has a negative effect on time, money and the level of efficiency in the workplace.

- A lack of diversity can cause unhealthy tensions; increased conflict; complaints and legal actions; poor rapport with clients and employees; and a disharmonious work place.

## **A Closer Look: Social Media Safety for Preteens and Teenagers**

### **Why Internet Safety Matters**

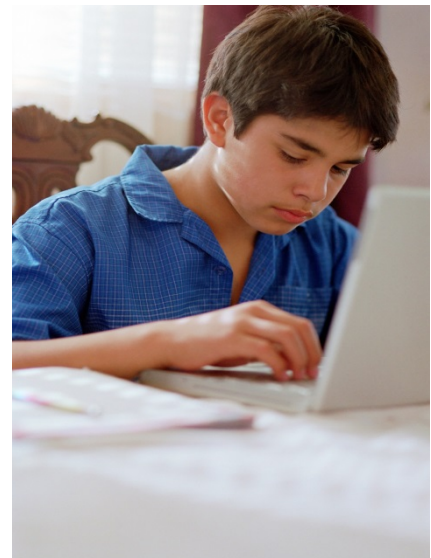
The internet is filled with vast amounts of useful information on millions of topics that can be both educational and fun for young children, especially preteenagers and adolescents. However, the internet is also a place where children can connect with millions of people across the world in seconds through chat rooms, blogs, video chatting and instant messaging which can lead to potential danger especially in cases where too much information is exposed to the public.

Parents should be aware that any information posted on the internet without safety regulations can be viewed by mass numbers of anonymous audiences, even long after the information has been deleted.

### **Staying Current and Connected**

It is important that parents stay current with social media types and what they allow members to do along with the language that many adolescents are using to communicate with friends. Staying informed allows parents to have a better perspective on what is going on in their children's digital lives and ensure their safety.

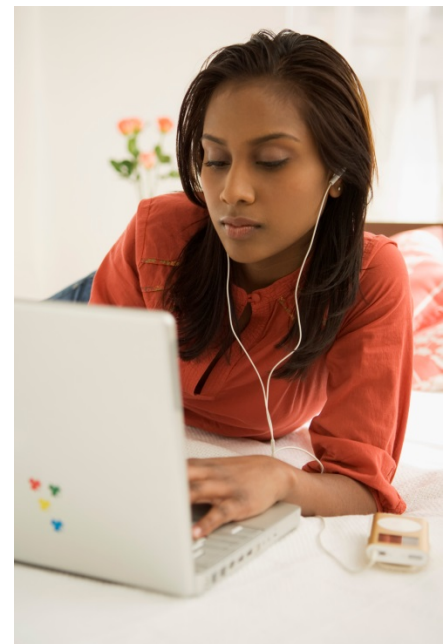
Listed below is a list of commonly used social networking sites along with several acronyms that are used to communicate on these sites, instant messaging forums and chat rooms.



- **Facebook, Twitter and Myspace:** Facebook, Twitter and Myspace are free social networking sites that can be accessed on the web or on mobile devices. It allows members to share photos, videos, create groups and discuss daily activities along with common interests and viewpoints through posted statements and instant messaging. Although all three sites have age requirements before joining there is no background check to verify the age of the member, therefore anyone with an email account can create a profile. These three sites are the most commonly used sites by American teenagers.
- **Instagram, Pinterest and Tumblr:** Much like the sites listed above, Instagram, Twitter and Pinterest are sites used to share pictures and text. Users are connected with friends through similar interests and searches, and have access to a multitude of databases and documents.
- **YouTube:** YouTube is one of the fastest growing video-sharing websites in the world today. Users can upload, share and watch videos on a multitude of topics and interests. As with many other sites, creating a profile is free and can be created at any time with an email account.
- **Snapchat, Vine, cellphone apps:** These applications on cellphones can be used to share videos, pictures, and talk with both friends and strangers. Unlike texting and calling, parents cannot easily trace who their children are talking to and what they are talking about.

### Signs Your Child May be At Risk

- **Posting inappropriate pictures and videos.** Self-expression is always welcomed on the internet however, posting inappropriate pictures or videos (including those with sexually explicit content, personal information or illegal activity), can expose children to unwanted audiences or behaviors such as stalking, sexual victimization, and unwanted contact with strangers.





- **Spending long amounts of time in chat rooms.** Even though many chat rooms do have rules and regulations about discussions and what is appropriate, when children interact with strangers without being monitored, they pose many of the same risks that they do in person. Interaction with unknown people on the internet can expose children to predators and people with harmful intent.
- **Visiting age inappropriate sites.** It is very important that children recognize that age appropriate sites are for their safety. Sites that they are not of age for have increased dangers which include: exposure to unwanted audiences, explicit and inappropriate content and less parental restrictions.
- **Missing history information or increased secrecy.** Missing history information or sudden acts of secrecy by children such as hiding the computer screen when adults are around or quickly switching windows could be a sign that the child is at risk for being put in danger. It is very important for parents not to make children feel uncomfortable but discuss what is going on and make sure that their child is being safe.

### Tips for Parents on Internet Safety Basics

- **Talk to children about internet safety basics.** Parents should communicate with their children on what should and should not be put on the internet. It is important that adolescents know that information such as their location, explicit pictures and phone numbers on any social networking site can be very harmful.



- **Take advantage of parental and privacy control setting.** Each network listed above along with many other social sites has privacy settings that allow users to customize the amount of information viewed by the public. Parents should sit with their children and discuss and adjust privacy settings

together so that the parent is not only involved with the child's digital interactions but aware of what can be seen.

Parental settings can also be adjusted on sites such as YouTube which may have content to graphic for some users. Parents can take advantage of these options by filtering the information that their child can see while using the internet.

- **Keep the computer in a common area that can be easily monitored.**
- **Encourage discussion about internet activity and healthy internet habits.**  
Although many adolescents can be resistant to discussing their social lives with parents, it is important that children know that they can comfortably discuss their digital lives.
  - **Points that should be highlighted in discussion:**
    - Limiting contact with strangers.
    - Rules and regulations about the amount of time spent on the internet
    - Visiting age appropriate sites
    - Agree on appropriate downloads
- **Keep track of your child's internet activity.**

## **Resources**

<http://socialmediatoday.com/node/195917>

<http://www.fosi.org/downloads/resources/fosi-parent-tips.pdf>

<http://www.internetsafety.com/internet-safety-tips-for-parents.php>

<http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/parent-guide>

<http://www.commonensemedia.org/advice-for-parents/internet-safety-tips-middle-school-kids>

<http://mashable.com/2013/08/16/teens-social-media-chart/>

## Review of Supervised Visitation Research

The bibliographies below are scholarly reviewed articles and dissertations on supervised visitation and its relevance from 2012 until today. As recently published articles, this list contains updated research and new findings in relation to domestic violence and supervised visits.

Melanie F. Shepard, Annelies K. Hagemeister. "Perspectives of Rural Women Custody and Visitation with Abusive Ex-Partners". *Affilia* May 2013 vol. 28 no. 2 165-176.

*The article reflects a rural Minnesota study conducted with 23 mothers in domestic violence support groups. The study measures their perceptions toward visitation arrangements with their ex-partners. Most mothers reported abusive, controlling, and threatening behavior by their ex-partners requiring counseling and legal services. The mothers claimed visitation exchange sites, supervision visitation, and support groups to be the most useful services.*

Michael Sainia, Melissa Van Werta, Jacob Gofmanb. "Parent–child supervised visitation within child welfare and custody dispute contexts: An exploratory comparison of two distinct models of practice". *Children and Youth Services Review* Volume 34, Issue 1, January 2012, Pages 163–168.

*This paper is a legal analysis of social science literature aiming to clarify the specific roles, duties, and expectations of supervised visitation services in facilitating parent–child contact. The authors construct a general framework for understanding supervised visitation services. A Canadian study, their visitation policies are outlined and two distinctive practices are explored. They share limited research outcomes for children and families after utilizing supervised visitation services.*

John W. Putz, Robin H. Ballard, Julia Gruber Arany, Amy G. Applegate, Amy Holtzworth-Munroe. "Comparing the Mediation Agreements of Families With and Without a History of Intimate Partner Violence". *Family Court Review*, Volume 50, Issue 3, pages 413–428, July 2012.

*This article discusses the differences between families receiving mediation services with and without a history of IPV (intimate partner violence). Studies show no differences in many variables being tested including supervised visitation or exchanges of children in public places, the community clinic study did however examine key differences in family whom have experienced violence amongst partners.*

Daniel Borg. "The Parent-Child Relationship when Parents' Contact with their Children is Supervised". PhD diss., University of East London, 2012.

*This study outlines research done on the relationship between a parent and child when contact is supervised. External factors and influences are discussed as well as the theories, approaches, and data collected from the studies. It also touches on the presence of the supervisor and the triadic relationship it creates.*

Rhonda Nese. "Parent Training during Child Welfare Visitation: Effects of a Strength-Based Video Coaching Program on Developmentally Supportive Parenting Behaviors". Electronic Diss., Ph.D., Department of Special Education and Clinical Sciences, University of Oregon.

*There has been little to no research on the effects of parent training programs as well as little research on the effectiveness of these programs during supervised visitation times for parents who have lost custody of their child. This article measures the evaluated effects of a program called Microsocial Video Parenting (MVP). The study follows mothers who have lost their children and are now participating in supervised visitation via the Department of Human Services.*

Morrison, Fiona, and Fran Wasoff. "Child Contact Centers and Domestic Abuse Victim Safety and the Challenge to Neutrality." *Violence against women* 18.6 (2012): 711-720.

*This article outlines policies and researches that child contact centers can play in facilitating contact. It focuses on the safety of the child who has suffered from violence through these factors. The author highlights the contact between the child and the nonresidential father.*

## **Food & Family-Friendly Meals: *Affordable Family Recipes***

### BREAKFAST

Cereal, milk, juice, and fruit are inexpensive options for a healthy breakfast, but we're thinking "beyond the box!"

#### **Cheese Quesadillas with Scrambled Eggs and Tomatoes (\$2.00 per serving)**

- large/medium flour tortillas
- grated cheese - either mild or sharp cheddar, or Monterey Jack
- olive oil or butter
- 6 Large eggs
- 2 medium tomatoes
- salt and pepper

#### Directions

1. Heat a frying pan to medium high heat. Add a small amount of oil (about 1/2 teaspoon) and spread it around the bottom of the pan with a



spatula (you could use butter as well). Take one tortilla and place it in the pan. Flip the tortilla over a few times

2. When pockets of air begin to form, take a handful of grated cheese, sprinkle over the top of the tortilla, making sure that the cheese does not land on the pan itself. When the cheese is starting to melt, lift up one side of the quesadilla and flip on top of the other side. Remove from pan and cut into wedges.
3. In a skillet over medium heat, scramble eggs until almost done. Remove to a plate.
4. Return skillet to medium heat, and stir in tomatoes. Cook 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in salt and pepper. Return eggs to skillet; cook, stirring, about 1 minute more.

### **Ricotta Banana Pancakes** (\$0.80 per serving)

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup whole-milk ricotta
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 small ripe banana, mashed
- Caramel sauce, optional
- Sliced banana, optional

### **Directions**

1. Preheat oven to 200°F. Whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder and salt in a medium bowl. In a large bowl, whisk together ricotta, egg, milk, butter,

vanilla and banana. Gently stir flour mixture into ricotta mixture until just blended.

2. Grease a large nonstick skillet over medium heat with cooking spray or melted butter. Drop tablespoonfuls of batter into skillet. Cook pancakes, turning once, until golden brown on both sides, about 4 minutes total. Keep pancakes warm on a plate in oven while cooking remaining pancakes.
3. Stack pancakes on dessert plates, top with caramel and sliced bananas, if desired, and serve.

### **Multigrain Chocolate Chip Pancakes** (\$0.78 per serving)

- 1/4 cup oat bran
- 1/2 cup whole-wheat flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup plain whole-milk yogurt
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1/3 cup miniature chocolate chips
- Maple syrup, optional

### **Directions**

1. In a large bowl, combine oat bran, flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. In a medium bowl, whisk yogurt, milk, egg and oil to combine. Pour yogurt mixture into oat bran mixture and stir until not quite combined (you should still see lumps of flour). Fold in chocolate chips until just mixed. Let stand 10 minutes. Preheat oven to 200°F.
2. Preheat a griddle or large skillet over medium-low heat. Mist with cooking spray (or brush with melted butter) and drop batter by 1/4 cupfuls. Cook until underside is golden (gently lift with a spatula to check), 2 to 3 minutes.

Flip pancakes and cook until browned on other side, about 1 minute longer. Keep pancakes warm on a heatproof plate in oven while cooking remaining pancakes. Pass warm maple syrup at the table with pancakes, if desired.



## LUNCH

### **Grilled Cheese and Ham Sandwich**

- 1 slice yellow onion, separated into rings
- 2 slices Italian style loaf bread
- 4 slices cheese (any kind)
- 2 slices deli sliced ham
- Butter

### **Directions**

1. Melt 1/4 tablespoon of butter in a cast iron skillet. Add onion rings and saute over medium heat until edges are slightly crispy. Remove from pan.
2. Spread butter on one side of each slice of bread. Place 2 slices cheese, 2 slices deli sliced ham, grilled onions, and then the remaining 2 slices of cheese on top of the non-buttered side of bread. Place the other side of bread on top of the ham and cheese toppings, butter side up.
3. Melt 1/2 Tablespoon butter in previously used cast iron skillet. Turn heat to medium and place the sandwich in the skillet. You want it to “sizzle”.
4. Cook for 2 minutes or until one side of the sandwich is a nice, golden brown. Flip the sandwich over and cook the remaining side until cheese is melted and bread is a nice, golden brown.

### **Turkey Meatball Subs** (\$1.79 per serving)

- 1 pound ground turkey
- 1/2 cup seasoned bread crumbs



- 1 large egg
- 1/4 cup finely grated Parmesan
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 24-oz. jar low-sodium tomato sauce
- 6 small Italian hero rolls
- 6 slices provolone

### Directions

1. Combine turkey, bread crumbs, egg, Parmesan, salt and garlic powder in a large bowl. Mix gently with hands. Form into 1 dozen 2-inch balls.
2. Warm oil in a large nonstick pot over medium heat. Cook meatballs, turning occasionally, until brown on all sides, 6 to 8 minutes. Add sauce, bring to a simmer, reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until meatballs are cooked through, about 15 minutes.
3. Preheat broiler to high. Line a baking sheet with foil. Remove doughy centers from rolls and place 1 cheese slice in each. Broil until cheese melts, 1 to 2 minutes. Spoon meatballs and sauce into rolls and serve immediately.

### **Southwestern Burgers** (\$1.75 per serving)

- 1 ripe avocado, peeled, pitted and coarsely chopped
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped shallot
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1 pound ground chuck
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 4 whole-wheat hamburger buns

## Directions

1. Preheat broiler to high; place a rack about 8 inches from heat source. Combine avocado, shallot, lime juice, crushed red pepper and 1/2 tsp. salt in a bowl. Lightly mash avocado with back of a fork to break up chunks. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing directly onto surface of guacamole, and chill until ready to serve.
2. Sprinkle beef with chili powder and 1 tsp. salt. Mix gently with your hands to distribute seasonings. Shape into 4 patties. Broil hamburgers until they reach desired doneness, turning once, about 8 minutes for medium-rare. Serve hamburgers on buns with guacamole on top.

## DINNER

### **Pork Chops with Smashed Potatoes and Peas** (\$2.22 per serving)

- 1 pound medium red potatoes, cut into 2 inch pieces
- salt and pepper
- 1 package frozen peas
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 boneless pork chops (about 3/4 inches thick)

## Directions

1. Place the potatoes in a medium saucepan with enough water to cover and bring to a boil. Add 1/2 tsp salt, reduce heat and simmer until tender, 12 to 15 minutes, adding the peas during the last 2 minutes of cooking.
2. Drain and gently smash with 2 Tbsp oil, 1/2 tsp salt and 1/4 tsp pepper.
3. Meanwhile, heat the remaining Tbsp oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Season the pork with 1/2 tsp each salt and pepper and cook until golden brown and cooked through, 4 to 6 minutes per side; transfer to plates.

### **Spanish-Style Tortilla with Salami and Potatoes** (\$1.96 per serving)

- 1/4 pound thinly sliced salami, halved
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 medium red potatoes, cut in 1/2 inch pieces
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- salt and pepper
- 8 large eggs
- 1 cup sharp white Cheddar, shredded
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard

#### **Directions**

1. Heat oven to 400°F. Cook the salami in a large oven-safe nonstick skillet over medium heat until beginning to brown, about 1 minute per side; transfer to a plate.
2. Add the onion, potatoes, 1 Tbsp of the oil, 1/2 tsp salt and 1/4 tsp pepper to the skillet and cook, stirring occasionally, until the potatoes are golden brown and just tender, 10 to 12 minutes; stir in the salami.
3. Whisk together the eggs and cheese, pour into the skillet and stir to distribute the ingredients. Transfer the skillet to the oven and bake until the tortilla is puffed, brown around the edges and a knife inserted in the center comes out clean, 10 to 12 minutes.



4. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, whisk together the vinegar, mustard, remaining 2 Tbsp oil, and 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper. Serve the sauce with the tortilla.

### **Spice-Roasted Chicken, Red Onions and Carrots** (\$1.83 per serving)

- 2 medium red onions, cut into 1/2-in. wedges
- 1 1/2 pounds medium carrots, cut into 3-in. sticks
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Kosher salt and pepper
- 4 small chicken legs, split (4 thighs, 4 drumsticks)
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

#### **Directions**

1. Heat oven to 425°F. On a large rimmed baking sheet, toss the onions, carrots, oil, and 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper. Transfer half of the vegetables to a second large baking sheet.
2. Season the chicken with the paprika, cinnamon, 1/2 tsp salt and 1/4 tsp pepper. Nestle the chicken pieces among the vegetables and roast for 15 minutes. Switch the positions of the baking sheets and roast until the chicken is cooked through and the vegetables are golden brown and tender, 15 to 20 minutes more.

### **Vegetable Fried Rice** (\$2.40 per serving)

- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 5 cups cold cooked rice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

- 4 scallions, white and light green parts, chopped
- 12-oz. bag mixed frozen vegetables
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil

### Directions

1. In a small bowl, stir together soy sauce and sugar. Heat 2 Tbsp. vegetable oil in a wok or large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add eggs and cook, stirring once or twice, until just set. Transfer to a small bowl and wipe out pan.
2. Heat remaining 2 Tbsp. oil in same pan. Saute garlic for 30 seconds. Add rice and salt and stir-fry until heated through and starting to crisp, 3 to 4 minutes. Add soy sauce mixture, scallions and vegetables and stir-fry until heated through, 3 to 5 minutes. Return egg to pan and stir-fry until just combined. Drizzle with sesame oil and serve.

## 10 School Lunch Ideas



1. Ham and cheese wrap
2. Gourmet peanut butter and jelly sandwich
  - a. heat the sandwich on a frying pan with butter until the bread is toasted and warm

3. Cheese quesadilla
4. Chocolate peanut butter sandwich
  - a. melt some chocolate chips into peanut butter and it makes a whole new spread
5. Cream cheese and jelly toasted sandwich
6. Pita bread mini pizza
  - a. combine red sauce, cheese, and any other toppings in pita bread and microwave/bake
7. Grilled peanut butter and banana sandwich
8. Chicken fingers or chicken nuggets
9. Pasta salad with salami and mozzarella
10. Grilled cheese and tomato sandwich

## Keep Costs Low: Shopping Tips for Families



- *Plan Ahead:* Figure out how much food you need and plan meals according to that. Don't overbuy, then food won't go to waste. Instead, buy only what you need and don't spend on extras like sweets or specialty drinks like soda or sugary juices. Focus on picking from the healthiest foods and options that you can.
- *Be Prepared:* Prepare to shop by looking for coupons and making a meal plan for the week based on current deals. Set aside the amount of money

you need to cover your food costs and stick to your budget and plan. Don't shop when you are hungry.

- *Bargain Shop:* Buying the generic brands instead of brand names can offer savings. They are usually just as good as the brand name, but they cost less. If you have a freezer, and have planned ahead, you may even have a little extra money to use for buying meats or frozen vegetables to store for later. Also, buying non-perishables on sale can offer food options you will be happy to have available for your entire family.
- *Eat In:* Buying breakfast, lunch, and/or dinner out for you and your family can add up quickly, so it should be treated as a luxury if trying to stick to a budget. When possible, prepare your own meals. If you can plan ahead, you won't be wasting money on restaurant meals. And if you have planned your meals ahead of time, you won't need to make the last-minute decisions that may cost more.
- *Use Available Resources:* The Internet offers many sites with information on food choices and available options. Spend some time online researching which foods you can – and should – be replacing in your child's diet. Parents may also want to check with their child's pediatrician. You can also ask your grocer or seek out local programs and initiatives that are meant to help educate communities on healthy food choices. It is also helpful to look in the newspaper for coupons and any important news on food in the nutrition section.

**The following article reminds us of the important role security plays during supervised visits.**

## **Missing Jacksonville Girl Found Unharmed**

<http://www.tallahassee.com/article/20131231/NEWS0102/312310006/Missing-Jacksonville-girl-found-unharmed>

A 6-year-old girl abducted by her mother in Jacksonville on Friday was located unharmed during a Sunday traffic stop near Perry, Ga.

Charity Chatman, 38, of Jacksonville, and her daughter Onnika Fisher, were found traveling south on I-75 after Amber Alerts on their whereabouts were sent out Friday evening and throughout the day Saturday. Chatman was arrested on an outstanding warrant for interference with child custody, according to the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO).

A JSO investigation began Friday after Chatman took Fisher from the Jewish Family and Community Services Center in southeast Jacksonville after a visit.

Fisher had been in foster care but was able to receive visits from her mother under caseworker supervision. A judge needs to approve such visits and it's typical for parents to get a chance to say goodbye at the end, said John Harrell, northeast region communication manager for the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Following the visit, Chatman, the girl and a caseworker with the community center walked out to Chatman's car. Chatman said she had Christmas presents for her daughter, but when she opened the back driver's side door, she pushed the child inside. The caseworker was just feet away. Chatman then got in the driver's seat and drove away, Harrell said.

The incident happened so quickly that the shocked caseworker was unable to stop Chatman, who was physically larger than her.

"Even if the case worker had somehow been able to physically stop that woman, she would not have been able to overpower her," Harrell said.

The caseworker immediately ran inside and called 911. Her name is confidential under state law, Harrell said.

Chatman's 2000 dark green Buick Century was pulled over at around 11:30 p.m. Sunday. She was taken into custody in Georgia without resistance, according to Jacksonville Sheriff's Office assistant chief Chris Butler on Monday.



Currently there is no information as to what Chatman's motive was or where she was heading. An investigation is ongoing, said Shannon Hartley, public information officer for JSO.

Around 800 visits between foster parents and parents occur in the Jacksonville area each year, Harrell said, but the situation Friday afternoon was "very rare, extremely rare." During Chatman's previous visits "there had been no previous incidents at all."

The Jewish Family and Community Services Center is a subcontractor of DCF. The agency is reviewing the incident.

"We're always open to improvement," Harrell said.

"The person who really did wrong here was the mother," he said. "She deceived us."

Fisher is back in DCF custody and is receiving a medical check-up. She will be offered counseling and therapy as well.

"We want to ensure the safety and stability of this child," Harrell said.