

Executive Summary

Course Title: Purposeful Visitation

Course description: Recent studies have found that visitation is highly correlated with successful reunification. Visitation that is focused and purposeful can not only strengthen families but also help social workers with case planning and documentation. Participant will learn how to get the most from visitation and learn strategies to improve their visitation plans.

Target Audience: This class is designed for new or experience workers and their supervisors.

Course Objectives

1. Participants will have a working knowledge of the purposes of visitation
2. Participants will have a list of activities that families can do on visits.
3. Participants will know the phases of visitation and structure visits for each phase to increase success.
4. Participants will learn how to meet case plan objectives during visitation.
5. Participants will have strategies for making visits successful and beneficial to all involved.

Ways Supervisors Can Support the Transfer of Learning from the Classroom to the Job:

Before the training:

Discuss with the worker visitation policy in the county.

Discuss creative ideas workers in the agency have had to make the frequency of visitation easier.

Share a case that was reunified and discuss how visitation was a major part of helping the family reunified.

Explore the workers caseload and look for cases the worker can use to apply the material in Purposeful Visitation.

Select a case and explore how a worker can identify when parents have met the objectives on a case plan. Discuss needed to see the parents interact with their children.

After the Training

1. Talk with the worker about an upcoming visit. Ask what the goals of the visit are. Ask how these goals are related to the case plan.

2. Select a case and ask the worker what phase of visitation the family is in. Ask the worker what activities the family will be doing on the next visit that fit with the phase.
3. Ask the worker to choose a case where visitation is difficult. Brainstorm ways to increase the frequency of visitation.
4. When worker talk about any visit ask the purpose of the visit it and what activities will be done and how those activities are related to the goal.
5. After a visit ask the worker how they engaged with the family during the visit, how the prepared the family for hello and goodbye, how they modeled parenting ideas.
6. When working with a foster parent ask about what the worker has done to facilitate the relationship between the birth parent and foster parent.
7. In a new case ask the worker who is on the team and what they have done to build the relationships on the team.
8. Ask the worker what fun things they have done with families lately on visits. Explore how this helps a family be together.

Brief outline of the Training:

The class begins by looking at activities parents and children do in everyday life. These activities are then related to visitation and to case planning. The class uses this to build on the purpose and importance of visitation. Research and practice around the county is discussed. Attachment and grief and loss are explored and how visitation lowers the trauma for children and families. The class then focuses on the details of visitation such as frequency, rolls, location and supervision. Participants explore ways to get it done. The class then focuses on building a bridge between foster parent and birth parents. A movie is shown that models the benefits of this and the struggles.

The rest of the day focuses on the phases of visitation. This is done through the use of a case. They prepare the family for visitation and then plan each phase for the family. The initial phase focus on building a team and preparing everyone on the team for visits. The middle phase focuses on activities that demonstrate that parents have mastered the behavior in the objectives. Participants examine how we can teach parents during visits and what activities work for different objectives. The last phase focuses on preparing families for being together full time with an emphasis on safety.