

STRENGTHENING STAFF SKILLS: ENGAGING WITH MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN SUPERVISED VISITATION CENTERS

Audio Conference Training Series for Supervised Visitation Grantees

DEVELOPING AND SUSTAINING A VISITATION CENTER THAT IS FAIR, RESPECTFUL AND PROMOTES SAFETY FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR MOTHERS WHO ARE BATTERED WOMEN IS AN IMPORTANT GOAL, BUT THIS CAN BE EASIER SAID THAN DONE! IT REQUIRES STAFF THAT CAN ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT A PROBLEM-SOLVING, SAFETY-ORIENTED PARTNERSHIP WITH CHILDREN, MOTHERS AND FATHERS. AND EVEN THE MOST EXPERIENCED AMONG US CAN BE CHALLENGED BY THE SKILLS REQUIRED TO BE ENGAGED WITH FAMILIES IN THIS WAY. PLEASE JOIN US FOR THIS AUDIO CONFERENCE TRAINING SERIES TO EXPLORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS THAT COMMONLY PRESENT DILEMMAS FOR CENTER STAFF.

Part 1: De-escalation and Conflict Management

February 11, 2010 ♦ 4:00-5:15 PM Eastern Time

FACILITATORS:

Part 1: Tracee Parker and Beth McNamara

Tracee Parker, has been the Project Coordinator for the City of Kent, Washington's Safe Havens grant since July 2003 and the Program Supervisor at the Safe Havens Visitation Center since November 2004. Her background includes domestic violence advocacy, community organizing, violence prevention, mediation, and nonviolent conflict resolution training. The Kent project was one of four National Demonstration Sites funded by the Federal Justice Department's Office on Violence Against Women and specializes in addressing the unique safety issues in

families referred to supervision due to domestic violence. All center policies and practices are designed to increase safety for adult and child victims of domestic violence and decrease further opportunities for abuse. Ms. Parker has recently co-authored an article with Jeffrey Edleson, Ph.D about the complexities of supervised visitation for domestic violence cases (Danger Zone) published in the November 2008 edition of the Sage Journal, Violence Against Women. She is member of the Family Law Workgroup of the King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence and a Lead Facilitator for the Alternatives to Violence Project in two Washington State prisons. Ms. Parker holds a B.A. from Washington State University, a M.S. from Nova Southeastern University and is currently enrolled in the doctoral program in Clinical Psychology at Antioch University Seattle.

Beth McNamara, is a social worker who received her degree from the University of Wisconsin. Beth is currently a program manager with Praxis International and the co-executive director of Inspire Action for Social Change. Beth also provides training and technical assistance as a consultant for ALSO and currently serves as a faculty member for the Family Violence Department for the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. Beth has been an advocate to end violence against women for the past 22 years. She was the director of the Family Service Agency, Family Visitation Center in San Mateo, California for thirteen years. Over the course of her career in supervised visitation she planned, designed and operated five different supervised visitation centers. She was responsible for program development, sustainability, training, direct service, advocacy, and the supervision and mentoring of staff and volunteers. Beth has also worked as a domestic violence and sexual assault advocate, in a psychiatric unit, and in an inpatient and outpatient chemical dependency center.

PART 1: DE-ESCALATION AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Managing emotions in any profession can be challenging especially when they are strong, unpleasant, and directed at you. This is even more difficult in supervised visitation and exchange settings where physical and emotional safety is paramount. Even the most skilled among us can get thrown off track by an angry and confrontational parent. This audio conference session will offer some techniques and considerations for dealing with conflict and threatening behavior.

Session Outline

- A. Welcome and introductions
- B. Overview of fear
- C. Types of conflict
- D. Verbal escalation continuum
 - a) Cues
 - b) Staff responses
- E. Break for questions
- F. Underlying factors which may cause acting out behavior
- G. Power struggles
- H. Techniques and considerations for dealing with conflict and threatening behavior
- I. Break for questions
- J. Wrap-up and closing