

## Napa County Child Welfare Services

### Visitation Guidelines

*The purpose of these guidelines is to support a positive, ongoing relationship with your child.*

#### **REGULAR POSITIVE VISITS ARE THE BEST WAY TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR CHILD/REN!**

- Enjoy your child! You are encouraged to bring activities to do with your child/ren, including arts and crafts, puzzles, games, and snacks/meals.
  - Talk with your social worker prior to your visit if you'd like anyone to join you for the visit. The social worker has to approve their participation prior to the visit taking place, otherwise they will not be able to visit.
  - After you greet your child check in with the visitation supervisor, foster parent or transporter who brought your child/ren to the visit so you can get an update on your child/ren. For example, you can ask about when your child last ate, went to the bathroom or if anything significant has occurred since the last time you saw your child.
- Arrive on time for your visits so your child/ren know what to expect and you are able to have the most time with your child/ren.
  - Please Note: Visits will be cancelled if you arrive more than 15 minutes after the visit start time.
- You can talk with to your social worker or the visitation supervisor about how to answer difficult questions. During visits, the visit supervisor will help you redirect any conversation away from specifics about your case.
  - Be honest with your child/ren. Sometimes this is hard because it hurts to be away from children. Please think about what you want to tell your child/ren and how you will explain this is not their fault. Some parents say, "This wasn't your fault. Mommy/Daddy is going through some tough times so you can't live with me right now. But I still love you and this is not your fault. I am trying to get some help to make this better for us".
- Questions about your case or visitation plan should be directed to your social worker. The role of the visit supervisor is to support a positive and safe visit for you and your child. Your visit supervisor is not able to make decisions about your case or make changes.
- If you seem to be under the influence and having trouble interacting safely with your child a social worker will speak with you and your visit may end.



Reminder: This is a weapons/smoke/drug/alcohol free campus.

**The First Greeting:**

Being away from each other is hard on the whole family. Children can respond in a variety of ways. Children can run to their parents, hide or not do anything. All of these responses are how children try to process the recent change in their life. Here are some tips for greeting your child for the first time.

- Focus on your child/ren when you enter the lobby.
- Your child/ren will be looking to you on how to respond. Be open, friendly and happy to see them
- Respond to your child/ren's cue. Hug and kiss them, pick them up if that's what they want from you. If they pause before coming to you start with telling them you're happy to see them and then approach them at their level.

**Help With Ending Visits:**

Saying goodbye is hard for you and your child. Some things you can do to make this easier for you and your child are:

- ◇ Hold or hug your child
- ◇ Let your child know about ten minutes before the visit ending time so they can prepare to say goodbye.
- ◇ Help your child gather their belongings and pick up the games/toys that were used during your visit.
- ◇ If possible, provide your child with something to take with them (i.e. a photo, a small toy, a picture you colored together. Preferably not candy or soda).
- ◇ Tell your child when you will see them again. Remember, it is okay to talk about how hard it is to be apart.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR YOUR VISITS:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Staff signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_