



Positive Visitation Practices Ages 0-3

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Fort Bend County Court Team



- The Fort Bend County Court Team Project began 6 years ago with the assistance of Rep. Tom Delay and the Zero to Three Program out of Washington, DC. Fort Bend was the Pilot Project for the program.
- This project is meant to better meet the needs of parents and their young children while their case is involved in the courts.
- This project attempts to do this through a group effort by Judge Ron Pope, Fort Bend Child Protective Services (CPS), County Attorney's office, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Substance Abuse Programs, Early Childhood Intervention (ECI), Mental Health Providers, Attorney's and many others.



Project Goals

- Educate parents about the importance of early relationships and development of their child
- Ensure that their child receives appropriate developmental screenings
- Increase visits with parents and their child while they are away from home
- Connect families to services in their community that will help them work through their court issues
- Reunification/Relative Conservatorship/Adoption

CASA's Vision in Changing the Face of Visitation



- The project ended last year and we are no longer Zero to Three, but now refer to ourselves as the Infant and Toddler Court Team
- Visitation Process in previous years
- Using the visitation between Parent and Child as a teaching and learning experience
- Encouraging our volunteers to interact with the family during visits
- Training
- Tools



Assessing Your Families

- Parenting Skills
 - Many of our parents never learned how to “parent”
 - Observe and measure the parenting knowledge of our parents
 - Focus on parent-child interaction
- Look for the POSITIVE.
 - Build on the Positive no matter how small
 - Be practical



Preparing for the Parent- Child Visit

- Know all there is to know about your parent(s)
 - Assess their capabilities and needs through observation
 - Listen to parent(s)
- Begin to build a rapport
 - Ask the parent what they feel is special about their child
 - Build a rapport first before you use tools
- If possible visit the child at their placement before the visit
 - Bring a recent picture to Mediation or the first meeting
- Review ***Your Baby's Development*** Hand out.
- Prepare your visitation bag according to age



Visitation Bag

- Age appropriate toys and books – Dollar Store to purchase items
- Diapers/Wipes/Lotion
- Homemade toys – give some examples to parents
- Blanket for the floor
- Introduce diaper Bag (Visitation Bag) to Parent (s)
- Set Goals for the parent:
 - Encourage parents to put together their own visitation bag of their child's favorite things to bring to visits.
 - Favorite foods/snacks



Parent – Child Visitations

During the visit:

- Interact with parents as needed
- Parent Coach
- Encourage positive parenting techniques
- Introduce from your visitation bag, age appropriate developmental toys and activities



Visitation Timeline

Many parents have never spent one hour, one on one with their child(ren). By preparing a structured schedule for the visit, CASA is able to observe, interact and parent coach towards a more positive and productive visit.

- Welcome and Play 15 minutes
- Bonding/Sensory 5 minutes
- Sensory/lotion/massage (bath time)
- Snack 15 minutes
- Parents bring a healthy food from home or feed/bottle baby
- Clean-up/Diaper Change 5 minutes
- Story-time/Cuddling 10 minutes
- Goodbye <5 Minutes



Parent Visitation Assessment Form

- Easy way to report what was observed during the visit
- Use the Assessment Form after every visit
- Not during the visit
- A tool to use when writing the court report
- Tracks progress or lack of progress in the parent child relationship/parenting
- Becomes part of the case file
- Excellent tool in preparing to testify in a trial



Positive Visitation Video

Parent-Child Visit

- What did you observe?
- What things did she do that were positive?
- What things did she do that were negative?
- Take a moment after the video to fill out the Parent Visitation Assessment Form

Video Discussion and Questions

Panel Discussion