



BUILDING AN ENHANCED MODEL  
OF SUPERVISED VISITATION:  
IMMERSION EXTENSION TRAINING PACKAGE

# SUPPLEMENTAL WORKBOOK



THIS WORKBOOK BELONGS TO



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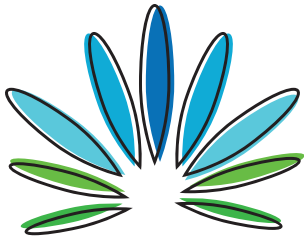
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## DEAR SUPERVISED VISITATION STAFF AND PARTNERS:

*Welcome to your Building an Enhanced Model of Supervised Visitation: Immersion Extension Training Package! These materials were designed to foster ongoing learning, self-reflection, and growth for supervised visitation center staff.*

At Inspire Action for Social Change, we are committed to lifelong learning, particularly when it comes to supporting families impacted by trauma and abuse. The field of violence prevention and intervention is ever-evolving and requires practitioners to stay educated and well-informed. We know that learning and improving our practice is not limited to single training events, but it is the most dynamic and effective when it is continuous and occurs in relationships with our peers.

Each of us holds a unique way of being in this work that is a gift. When we get so busy, stressed, and overwhelmed, we often lose sight of our gifts. This training package is meant to engage individual staff and teams in a process that will deepen your understanding of what brought you to this work, enhance your self-awareness, and provide opportunities that will help you stretch and grow. We encourage you to take the time and give yourself the space to explore and find what nourishes your passion and supports your ability to be fully present in your work.

Thank you for your willingness to continue your journey of new learning and discovery. We hope the tools and activities in this package provide opportunities for your team to continue to grow, connect, and enhance your practice with children and families.

**With gratitude,  
Beth McNamara, Jennifer Rose, & Erin Fairchild  
Inspire Action for Social Change**



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# MODULE 1

## Self-Reflection of Identity and Bias

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### MODULE 1, SEGMENT 1

#### Introduction to Identity and Bias

#### *Self-Reflection Writing Exercise*

-  What are your initial reactions to the video? Try not to censor yourself.

## MODULE 1, SEGMENT 2

### Microaggressions

#### *Self-Reflection Writing Exercise*

- 1** What are your initial reactions to the video? Try not to censor yourself.
- 2** Have you ever experienced a microaggression?
- 3** Have you ever enacted a microaggression? Try not to censor yourself or feel too much shame, as most people have. Recognize this is the first step to creating change.



4

**Why do you think it's important that we try to avoid microaggressions with each other and the families we serve?**

5

**What types of microaggressions do you think survivors of domestic violence may experience, specifically related to being survivors?**

*What might the impact of experiencing microaggressions be as a result of multiple intersecting identities?*

## MODULE 1, SEGMENT 3

### My Identities

Our identities are complex and multilayered. Some we create out of our interests and passions; some are assigned to us whether we like it or not; some people assume identities about us that may not be true. The families you serve are comprised of multiple people who also hold complex identities. Understanding our identities can help us understand others, including the families at our center.

 **Make a list of all the identities the world can tell about you:**

 **Make a list of the communities you belong to:**

 **Make a list of the identities you hold that others may not see or assume about you right away:**

 **Make a list of the identities you hold, if any, that don't always feel safe in all environments:**

 **Make a list of the identities you hold that you are proud of, that bring you joy, that invites community and connection into your life:**

## MODULE 1, SEGMENT 4

### Privilege and Oppression in My Life

#### *Self-Reflection Writing Exercise*

Look back at your self-reflection responses to the writing exercise from Module 7, Segment 1 (about the video we watched - “Power, Privilege, and Oppression”).

**1** Where do you think you hold privilege in your life?

**2** Where do you experience oppression or marginalization?

3

**If you do not believe you hold any privilege in life or do not think you experience marginalization based on your identities, reflect on what that feels like or means to you. *\*A reminder that experiencing discomfort is not the same as experiencing oppression.***

## MODULE 1, SEGMENT 5

### Unpacking Bias

#### *Self-Reflection Writing Exercise*

Everyone has biases about members of some groups, and everyone can unlearn them. Again, try not to censor yourself or feel embarrassed or ashamed as you unpack your biases.

Dictionary.com defines bias as 1. a particular tendency, trend, inclination, feeling, or opinion, especially one that is preconceived or unreasoned and 2. unreasonably hostile feelings or opinions about a social group; prejudice.

- 1** **Everyone can hold biases against social groups; however, not all social groups experience systematic oppression if someone is biased against them. For example, a youth might say, “I have a bias against adults, I don’t trust them.” But youth don’t generally, as a group, hold systemic and institutional power over adults. If an adult has a bias against youth (and many do), they do have systemic and institutional power over youth. Bias + power has the potential to cause more significant harm and discrimination than bias alone. Write about your response to this.**

**2**

**How do you think biases could negatively impact your work with families in supervised visitation?**

**3**

**How do you think that unlearning, or challenging biases, assumptions, and stereotypes may enhance your work with families in supervised visitation?**

**4**

**How do you think that unlearning, or challenging biases, assumptions, and stereotypes may enhance your personal and professional relationships?**

**5**

**What biases do you think you may have about a person who is a survivor of intimate partner violence and a person who uses violence in relationships? Think about gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, etc. Why do you think it's important to challenge these biases within yourself?**



## MODULE 1, SEGMENT 6

### Bias & Other People's Parenting

#### *Self-Reflection Writing Exercise*

- 1** What comes up for you when you think about working with parents at our center who have beliefs, attitudes, or practices that are very different than your own, and may feel at odds with your values?
- 2** When it comes to witnessing other people's parenting, are there any types of behavior or parenting styles that push your buttons?
- 3** Why do you think it pushes your buttons?

- 4** Think of a time when a bias you hold about gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, etc. came up in the context of someone's parenting. What did you do?

*What could you do differently now that you have identified that bias?*

- 5** How do you navigate situations with parents at the center when their parenting choices push your buttons (in this case let's assume no center rules are being broken, and the parenting choices or styles do not immediately compromise physical or emotional safety).

## MODULE 1, SEGMENT 7

### Bias & Flipping Your Lid

#### *Self-Reflection Writing Exercise*

Remember the concept of lid flipping - it's when your thinking brain goes offline during a stress response. When our lids are flipped, it is much easier for biases and stereotypes to take over. Even when we intellectually know these biases are wrong and we are trying to unlearn them! Look back at your responses to the previous writing exercise as you complete the following question.

- 1 In a situation where someone else's parenting style is pushing your buttons, how and why would you make sure your lid is down before reacting?**



# MODULE 2

## Healing Centered Engagement in Supervised Visitation Services

### MODULE 2, SEGMENT 1

#### Supporting Ourselves to Be Resilient in the Work

##### *Read Along*

“In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to *navigate* their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to *negotiate* for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways.”

- Dr. Michael Unger

##### *Self-Reflection Writing Exercise*

- 1 What does vicarious trauma, sometimes called secondary trauma, mean to you?

**2 Why do we need to be proactive about paying attention to vicarious trauma?**

## MODULE 2, SEGMENT 2

### Building Organizational Resilience

#### *Self-Reflection Writing Exercise*

- 1 Thinking back to our last session, what would being resilient, at work, look like for you?

#### *Group Discussion Questions*

- 1 What policies or elements of our workplace culture to support staff well-being and increase resiliency should we change or enhance?

*What ideas do you have?*



**How does access to your cultural traditions and your community help build resiliency?**



**What are some ways that culture is currently supported in our organization?**



**What are some additional ways we could support cultural traditions and community in our work?**



5

**How do we celebrate success as staff?**

6

**What are some ways we could strengthen this practice?**

## MODULE 2, SEGMENT 3

### Supporting Infants, Children, and Youth in their Healing Process

#### *For Reading Aloud*

#### **WAYS INFANTS, CHILDREN, AND YOUTH HEAL:**

Close, attached relationship with a safe caregiver and other safe adults.

A positive connection to culture.

Opportunities to master emotional regulation.

Experience mastery with sports, hobbies, tasks, academics, etc.

A connection to something larger than oneself.

Engage in movement and rhythm.

Have routine, ritual, and predictability.

#### *Self-Reflection Writing Exercise*

- 1** What can we do as a center to support infants, children, and youth in healing? What is within our scope of control, and what is not?

2

**What policies or elements of our workplace culture to support child and youth well-being, resiliency, and healing could be changed or enhanced?**

3

**All cultures have positive traditions. These traditions can be grounding, affirming, and healing. Cultures that are not rooted in the white American experience can feel pressure to assimilate or ignore traditions and environments that positively affirm their cultural identities. Supporting the positive cultural traditions of those who use our center services can be healing. It's important to note that sometimes power and control or other behaviors that cause harm can be framed by people who use violence, and even community members, as "culture." This can happen in white families, too, as white families also have cultural norms. For this reason, it's critical to remember that each family is unique, and the survivor parent and children should be consulted about engaging in cultural practices. Some survivors experience power and control through cultural norms, so assessing what feels safe to survivors is critical. No cultural practice should cause harm.**

*How does access to cultural traditions and community help build resilience for children and families we serve?*

*How do we currently support this practice?*

*What are some additional ways we can incorporate this into our practice?*

**4 How can we support the celebrations, successes, and milestones for families?**

*How can we do this while also working with the survivor parent and children to make sure that what is celebrated and honored during their time at the center feels safe to them and is not an aspect of power and control?*

**5 Can we build more routine and ritual into visitation processes?**

*Why is this important?*

*What can we do at the center to support more routine and ritual?*



# MODULE 3

## Enhancing Staff Teams

### MODULE 3, SEGMENT 4

#### Peer-to-Peer Support & Giving Feedback

##### TENETS TO PEER-TO-PEER CONNECTION AND FEEDBACK REMINDERS

- Get Curious
- Unpack and Dig Deeper
- Create a Partnership for Strategic and Thoughtful Action
- Celebrate Strengths
- Understand Growth Edges
- Be Non-Judgmental in your Actions and Words
- Be Authentic
- Offer Empathy
- Commit to Being Respectful
- Get Curious
- Celebrate Strengths
- Offer Gratitude
- Ensure the Process is Reciprocal and Mutual
- Trust that Feedback is an Offering, Not an Attack

## PROVIDING PEER-TO-PEER SUPPORT

- Describe what you have experienced as working well and describe the strengths you have observed of your partner.
- Offer considerations for enhancements and growth.
- If desired by the person receiving feedback, engage in problem-solving, and support.
- Before ending, the person receiving the feedback should take a moment to offer gratitude and share one thing they are thankful for from their partners.



## MODULE 3, SEGMENT 5

### How to Structure Peer-to-Peer Family Consultation Feedback

#### STEP #1

Divide the staff team into peer-to-peer support teams (based on your staff discussion to have small group feedback sessions or feedback sessions with the entire staff). Each person will have 10 minutes to receive support and feedback from their peers. Note: these times can be adjusted as needed.

#### STEP #2

The first person should take a minute to describe the experience or issue, which they would like to receive feedback.

#### STEP #3

Each staff team should take a moment to ask clarifying questions. It's important to be clear about the issue or concern.

#### STEP #4

Each member of the staff team should take the time to provide feedback. Since groups include multiple people, each person should take a turn. For each issue/area of concern that is brought up, groups should move through the following guidelines when giving feedback:

- Describe what you have experienced as working well and describe the strengths you have observed of your partner.
- Offer considerations for enhancements or growth.
- If desired by the person receiving feedback, engage in problem-solving/support.
- Before ending, the person receiving the feedback should take a moment to offer gratitude and share one thing they are thankful for from their partners.



**3** Are there any other types of situations that you can identify as hot spots?

**4** Can any of your hot spots be prevented by changing something in the environment, the relationship, your outlook, etc.? What can change to make those spots less hot?

**5** When these hot spots have led to lid flipping, what has helped you put your lid down?



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# MODULE 4

## The Practice of Meaningful Engagement: Checking-in & Connecting with Families in Supervised Visitation Programs

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### MODULE 4, SEGMENT 1

#### Purpose of a Meaningful Check-in

#### *Self-Reflection Writing*

- \* Think of a time you went to a program or a function. Share two ways you felt welcomed and two specific ways you felt uncomfortable or not welcomed.

## MODULE 4, SEGMENT 2

### The Practice of Check-ins: Creating an Ongoing Practice of Connecting with and Supporting Families

#### *Self-Reflection Writing*



What makes you feel most connected to others?



**Color or doodle while reading and processing the meaning of this quote.**

**"Connection is the energy that is created between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgment."**

**- Brené Brown at Courageworks**



**Read these two quotes from survivors who used a supervised visitation program.**

*“I love the staff! They are so caring. They can just look at me and tell if I had a bad day - they take that extra 30 seconds to ask how are you doing, how do you feel, how did this visit go? They definitely make me feel comfortable!”*

- Quote from a survivor using a supervised visitation program

*“Something I like is that [center staff] take my daughter to the visits, and they talk to me a little and ask me what’s going good and what’s going bad, and they give me resources; they help me, or they tell me you can go here, you can do this.”*

- Quote from a survivor using a supervised visitation program

**As you read these quotes, was there a specific example of a time when you felt you had a powerful connection? Write about this example:**



## MODULE 4, SEGMENT 3

### Checking-in and Connecting with Survivors of Domestic Violence

#### *Key Strategies*

*Supporting safety for adult survivors using a supervised visitation program.*

#### Key Strategy #1

Create an environment that interrupts and intervenes in power and control and abuse tactics, minimizes risk, and works to reduce opportunities for ongoing violence, which includes ensuring we aren't inadvertently colluding with abusive behaviors.

#### Key Strategy #2

Be flexible and open to safety strategies that will change over time.

#### Key Strategy #3

Be informed and knowledgeable about the dynamics of domestic violence so you can identify red flags and risk.

#### Key Strategy #4

Allow space for the complex feelings that adult survivors may have about the other parent.

#### Key Strategy #5

Let each individual survivor's experience of domestic violence inform your tailored response and their safety/visitation plan; as they are the experts in their own lives.

## MODULE 4, SEGMENT 4

### Checking-in and Connecting with the Person Who has Caused Harm

#### *Key Strategies*

*Working with a parent who has caused harm at a visitation center.*

#### Key Strategy #1

**Humanity as a leading approach.** Treating all people who use violence with respect, dignity, and fairness will help to reduce their anxiety and potentially minimize their hostility toward their partner. While it is important never to lose sight of the harm caused by people who use violence, seeing them as a whole person can help us build respectful, non-colluding relationships. Moving away from labeling people by their behavior (abuser) or their custodial status (visiting parent) makes it easier to engage the whole person. When staff genuinely care about the person who has caused harm, the person feels respected and are more willing to engage with the staff and more likely to make changes to their behavior.

#### Key Strategy #2

**Allow for imperfection.** There are often many unrealistic expectations for people who use violence in supervised visitation programs. If they have not completely changed or are not holding themselves fully accountable for the harm they have caused, program staff often dismiss incremental change. There is great value in honoring and acknowledging when something good happens. When you are able to support and encourage strengths, you will be more effective in addressing issues or problems. Acknowledging even the slightest change can be a motivator for further and ongoing changes.

#### Key Strategy #3

**Build strong non-colluding relationships.** Building relationships with people who use violence is the foundation of this work. If supervised visitation center staff do not build authentic, respectful, non-colluding relationships, the rest of our efforts will fail. It is important to show up with a genuine curiosity and allow people who use violence the space to share their story. Listening without judgment can be transformative for everyone. This does not mean being permissive of abusive behavior. We are suggesting that to create change and hold people responsible for their abusive actions; it is also important to build a genuine connection.

#### Key Strategy #4

**Be transparent.** Transparency is critical to our work, and a cornerstone of trauma-informed care. Taking the mystery out of supervised visitation services while being clear, direct, and open can help minimize some of the anxiety and frustration parents may feel when using center services. We are not suggesting that transparency will eliminate all the challenges you face as visitation providers; however, it will help reduce some of the issues that typically arise. Transparency is also foundational to eliminating punitive approaches. Punitive policies and practices are those that are arbitrary and usually grounded in subjective values. They often punish for the sake of punishing, without supporting the person to recognize the potential for healing and growth. When organizations are transparent about why and how each policy exists, both with themselves and the families they serve, punitive policies are more likely to be avoided. A move towards transparency will support you to identify policies and practices that should be amended or eliminated.

#### Key Strategy #5

**Use fatherhood ideals and values.** When the person who caused harm is also the father, leading with nurturing, warm, and responsible values around fatherhood is an important strategy for engaging with men. This can invite the type of change that can ultimately increase safety for everyone in the family: a father who is focused on the well-being of his children. Leading with positive fatherhood principles, and learning about his values as a dad, can help you better understand how he sees himself as a parent. By focusing on the type of father he wants to be to his children, you are demonstrating that you see his potential as a positive force in the lives of his children. Men who use violence may not have had positive, nurturing experiences with their fathers, and may need support to see themselves differently. Additionally, a growing body of evidence shows that a “two-generation”<sup>1</sup> approach to healing and recovery can prevent future violence while improving resiliency for both the father and his children. When fathers who have caused harm and their children can heal and grow in safe, connected contact with each other (like in supervised visitation), significant change can happen.

<sup>1</sup> Blue Shield of California Foundation, “Breaking the Cycle: A life Course Framework for Preventing Domestic Violence” (2019).



3

**How can the confidentiality of young people be respected at our center? What are your initial thoughts and ideas?**

4

**Logistically, how can our center support a check-in process with every child using center services? Think about when, where, and how this practice can happen at our center. What are your initial thoughts and ideas?**







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