

What Parents Need to Do

Your participation and cooperation in the programs described in this brochure is very important. We ask that you cooperate in the following ways:

1. Keep scheduled appointments and arrive on time for all meetings.
2. Sign the necessary Authorization for Release of Information forms.
3. Keep an open mind about how the program can help your relationship with your child.
4. Cooperate with program rules and protocols.
5. Share your opinions and concerns in a way that shows respect for everyone in the process.

For additional information, contact the Court Support Services Division – Family Services Office in your Judicial District. Contact information is available at The Superior Court – Court Service Center.

Telecommunications Relay Service

TDD/TTY Users: Call 711 or
1-800-842-9710

Voice Callers: Call 711 or 1-800-833-8134

For more information, you may go to the Judicial Branch website at: www.jud.ct.gov

The Judicial Branch of the State of Connecticut complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you need a reasonable accommodation, in accordance with the ADA, contact a Judicial Branch employee or an ADA contact person listed at www.jud.ct.gov/ada/.



www.jud.ct.gov

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Access and Visitation Federal Grant Contracted Programs

**Connecticut Judicial Branch
Court Support Services Division
Family Services**



Introduction

The State of Connecticut Judicial Branch and Department of Social Services are working together to help support relationships between children and their parents who do not live with them by offering supportive services under the Access and Visitation Federal Grant. Community-based service providers, under contract with the Judicial Branch's Court Support Services Division, offer two programs to help parents build relationships with their children:

- Supervised Visitation
- Transitions in Parenting

The goal of these services is to help parents who do not live with their children achieve meaningful, healthy, and productive interactions with them.

These services are offered at no cost to the clients for a limited amount of time. The agencies that provide the services are located in or around Bridgeport, Hartford, Norwich/New London and Waterbury. You may contact your local Court Support Services Division – Family Services office for more specifics.

A referral to either of these programs is only possible if the parents have an active case in Family Matters before the Superior Court. Family Services will make the referral to the community agency after a court order. A Family Relations Counselor will be the coordinator between the Court and the contracted service provider. Family Services will become involved if significant concerns come up while you are taking part in the program by bringing the matter back to court.

Supervised Visitation Program

The purpose of the Supervised Visitation Program is to provide a safe, substance-free, closely-monitored and controlled environment for children to have contact with their parent. The Supervised Visitation Program is not intended to be a long-term solution to maintaining contact between a parent and child. Referrals are time-limited, with a court date scheduled for reviewing the matter to avoid putting unnecessary restrictions on a parent's access to their child for long periods of time.

When the period of supervised visits is over, Family Services will review the information provided by the visitation supervisor and help parents put together a long term visitation/access plan. The Family Relations Counselor will also prepare a report that lets the Court know that the period of supervised visitation is finished and will share any visitation/access plan the parents agree to for the future.

Transitions in Parenting

The Transitions in Parenting (TIP) program deals with the complex emotional issues involved when a parent re-enters a child's life after a long separation or enters the child's life for the first time.

TIP is not therapy, but rather a program that provides a supportive environment and professional guidance for families during the process of establishing or re-establishing relationships between a child and a once absent parent. The goal is to help the parent and child to develop the groundwork for a relationship that is healthy, positive, and able to be maintained over time.

This program is free and intended for parents involved in the Family Court who are struggling financially. Most families' involvement in the program lasts for three months. If parents agree to participate in the TIP program the Judge will make that agreement a court order. The family is then referred to meet with a Family Relations Counselor who will act as a liaison between the court and contracted service provider. The Family Relations Counselor will explain the process and their role to the parents, connect the family with the contracted service provider, and will report on the progress being made to the court.

As part of TIP, several meetings will be scheduled by the contracted provider for the parents and child. The TIP provider will talk about possible strategies for maintaining and strengthening this relationship. The TIP provider will also discuss progress with the parents at various points in the process.

Most families will return to Court after the first 3 months in TIP to review the progress being made. After the TIP program has ended for the family, the Family Relations Counselor may meet with the parents to see if they can agree to a regular visitation/access schedule. Some families may need to move to a more structured access plan, and a referral to the Supervised Visitation Program may be the next step. The Family Relations Counselor will prepare a report that lets the Court know that the family has finished TIP and will share any visitation/access plan or next steps the parents agree to for the future.