

When many of us started in the field of social work it was due to our desire to work with children and families: to assist and advocate for families, to ensure safety and permanency for children. Never before has our contact, and the quality of that contact been more important. What we are

learning through the Children and Family services Reviews is that the quality of our visits directly impacts: 1. Child Safety, 2. Permanency and 3. Family Well Being.

As a supervisor, your role in mentoring and teaching what constitutes a quality visit at the front line is critical



Quality Visits: The Supervisor's Role

and an integral piece to continuing to improve services for children and families in the state of North Dakota. The Child Welfare League of America (2005) reports that there is a significant relationship between caseworker visits and improved outcomes for children. When caseworkers were able to visit frequently with children in the child welfare system

and their families, children were reunified with their families or placed into other permanent living arrangements in a more timely manner. The Child Welfare Capacity Building Collaborative provides workers and supervisors tools that can walk us through the definition of what a "Quality Contact" looks like and ideas on how to promote this work on the frontlines.

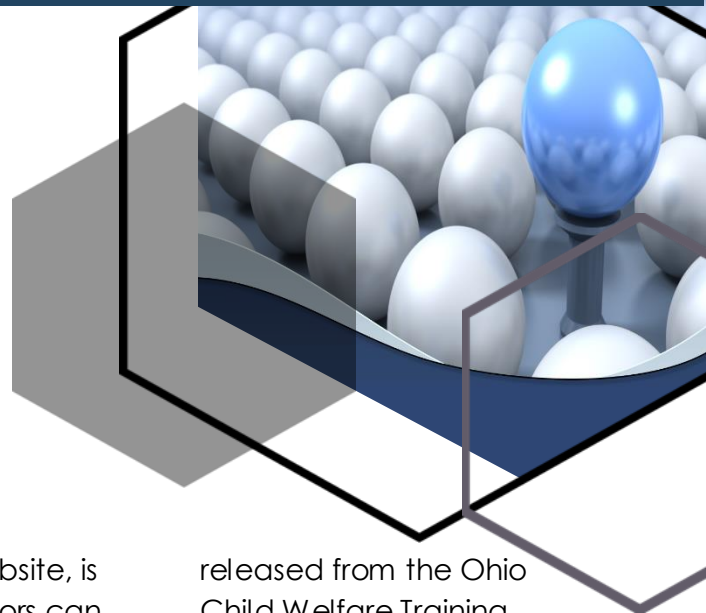
Ways Supervisors can Improve & Monitor Performance on Worker Visits

- Define clear expectations & policies around frequency and quality of visits with children, parents and caregivers.
- Clarify guidelines on responsibility for visits when multiple staff or services provided are involved
- Discuss the workers visits with children during supervision
- Conduct regular case review that target frequency and quality of the visits.
- Use data systems/reports to monitor worker visits with children, parents & caregivers.

Source: MNDHHS, 2004

Quality Visits

The Supervisor's Role



Quality Matters is a great website resource in helping workers and supervisors determine "What is a Quality Contact?" What is your role in ensuring that Quality Contacts takes place? Supervisors can identify core components and characteristics of a quality contact. It also has a Tip Sheet for Supervisors to determine "How can we support workers before, during and after visits?" What are some questions supervisors can ask in order to enhance critical thinking skills and how can supervisors use this in order to identify possible educational needs of the worker? Another helpful

resource on the website, is how we as Supervisors can prompt workers to prepare for quality contacts and ensure that ample documentation is in place after? The Quality Contact Casework Worksheet walks you through details to consider in documentation.

Quality Matters website also offers training videos (look under heading of "Learning Experiences" on this link) and discussion guides that can be used with staff as a means train and support workers in ensuring that quality visits and adequate documentation take place.

Additionally, another resource for Supervisors was

released from the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program: Effective use of Home visits: A Supervisors Companion Guide, provides a 3 part training module on planning, conducting and documenting effective home visits. It also offers ways to support staff in their duties surrounding quality visits.

While it is not possible for us to be at each and every home visit with our workers, setting clear expectations and training workers towards those expectations will lead to better outcomes overall.

References: Child Welfare League of America. (2005) CWLA 2005 Children's Legislative Agenda. Accessed 12-1-09 from <http://www.cwla.org/advocacy/2005legagenda04.htm>
Minnesota Department of Health & Human Services. (2004) PIP TIPS: Item13 visits with parents. Accessed 12-1-09 from http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/amin/groups/children/documents/pub/dhs_id_027244.ppdf.

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