



# Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Councils

## Visitation & Exchange Advisory Committee

### **Requirements for Center Staff**

#### ***Education:***

Director or Site Manager - Bachelor (Masters preferred) in social work or related field or equivalent work experience working with families and children

Staff - Bachelor in social service area or related field and/or equivalent work experience

#### ***Preferred Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:***

Experience working with families and children

Able to work with individuals in high conflict situations

Crisis management and conflict resolution skills

Excellent communication skills

Understanding of child development

Good organizational skills

Good interpersonal skills

Ability to learn and adapt to new situations

### **Training Topics**

- ◆ **Understanding the dynamics of domestic violence and sexual abuse.** Training should include how perpetrators of domestic violence and sexual abuse inappropriately use a pattern of dominance, entitlement, manipulation, and threats to control their partners, children, other family members, and often the system to their benefit. All staff must understand how the dynamics of domestic violence and child sexual abuse will often impact a family's capacity to function and the staff's ability to perform their work. Direct service staff may be the only "agency" people who will identify the presence or the depth of battering/grooming behaviors in a family and staff must have the tools to work through the resulting complications.
- ◆ **Stalking and grooming behaviors.** Training should include the impact of these behaviors on the safety of participants, family members and staff.
- ◆ **Recognizing personal biases** related to sexism, racism, and classism and how these will influence their observations of families, and, consequently, their documentation.
- ◆ **Setting boundaries and balance** in meeting the needs of multiple constituencies: parents, children, court system, private attorneys, etc. Gaps in services, inconsistencies in agency and/or system protocols, and conflicting personal views on parenting, court decisions, etc. can create frustration for direct service and administrative staff. Staff will experience less stress and frustration if they understand how agency policies and guidelines provide flexibility in meeting families' needs and protecting children. Agency policies and guidelines should be routinely reviewed by staff, volunteers, and service recipients.
- ◆ **Procedures.** Understanding environmental emergency responses, mandated reporting, when the child is placed in the middle by one or both parents, agency documentation, critical incidents, confidentiality, community systems protocols and function, available community resources and legal issues including orders of protection, custody & visitation, divorce, paternity.
- ◆ **Personal development** in conflict resolution and redirection.
- ◆ **Safety planning** considerations for participants and staff
- ◆ **Child development** including appropriate behaviors in different age groups from infant through school age