

CLEARINGHOUSE ON SUPERVISED VISITATION

SPRING 2025 E-PRESS



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Reminders of the Dangers of “Safe Zones” ✱



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Questions from Directors



We have Spanish-speaking clients who need resources. Can you provide us with any?

Yes. We have created three new Spanish language handouts for parents, with their English version. See the handouts in this E-Press.



Do you have any material for managing conflict at my program? I want to avoid high-conflict episodes.

Yes. We have included some handouts in this E-Press that you can print out. We will discuss these during the March phone conference. Please mark your calendar for March 19 at noon Eastern.



**ATTENTION
PLEASE!**

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

We're sending this news article across the state to remind program staff of the risks inherent in non-supervised child exchange transfers. Karen Oehme has been invited to speak to judges in a training provided by OSCA to highlight the dangers of "Safe Access Zones."

[READ ARTICLE HERE](#)



Warning Signs in Child Development

Children are expected to reach specific developmental milestones at different stages of their life from birth to age five (Child Mind Institute, 2024). These developmental milestones are important because they offer insight into a child's growth and help determine if the child is on track or if they may need additional support and services to reach their full potential (Centers for Disease and Prevention [CDC], 2024). It is essential to pay attention to warning signs in child development so that action can be taken as soon as possible.

In supervised visitation, there is an opportunity to serve as an additional set of eyes and ears to help identify potential warning signs in a child's development. By carefully observing interactions and monitoring a child's development, one can spot indicators of underlying concerns and ensure that the child's well-being is prioritized (CDC, 2024). Any concerning observations can be reported to case workers or a guardian ad litem to help inform decisions regarding the child's care.



Key areas of development to monitor for potential red flags include:

- Social-Emotional
- Behavior
- Language/Communication
- Cognitive
- Movement/Physical Development

The warning signs will vary depending on the child's age and stage of life. Nonetheless, it's important to recognize them early to ensure the child receives the appropriate support and care (Child Mind Institute, 2024).

Social-Emotional

- Limited interaction or smiling in response to others
- Limited or complete lack of eye contact
- Shows an excessive amount or little to no affection for caregivers
- Demonstrates excessive fear or anxiety
- Avoidance of other children or difficulty joining group play

Behavior

- Prolonged tantrums
- Exhibits extremely hypervigilant or aggressive behavior
- A lack of curiosity
- Does not engage in fantasy play or interactive games
- Difficulty with self-regulation

Language/Communication

- Delays in receptive and/or expressive speech
- Problems forming sentences appropriate for their age level
- Does not respond to loud sounds
- Lack of interest in communication

Cognitive

- Delays in recognizing familiar faces or places
- Difficulty in following simple instructions
- Poor attention span and difficulty focusing
- Difficulty with problem-solving or understanding cause-and-effect

Movement/Physical

- Delays and challenges in fine and gross motor skills
- Poor coordination and balance
- Delayed hand-eye coordination

(Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service, 2024; Child Mind Institute, 2024; Children's International Pediatrics, n.d.; Rochester Regional Health, 2021; Sacks, n.d.)



Furthermore, a variety of factors can put the child at increased risk of experiencing developmental delays, including:

- Genetic conditions
- Environmental factors
 - Stress, trauma or injury
 - Lack of nurturing and responsive care
 - Exposure to toxins or infections
 - Malnutrition
 - Interactions with others in their environment

(CDC, 2023; Rochester Regional Health, 2021)

When warning signs are identified, early intervention can provide necessary support and resources to increase the child's ability to thrive.

Child Development Vignettes

What type of warning sign *might* this be:

1. A one-year-old child is not crawling or able to stand up without being supported. When seated, the child uses her hands to remain balanced or places her weight on one side. The father explains this behavior as the child being clumsy and uncoordinated.

Answer: Movement/Physical

2. A four-year-old child is extremely reserved and demonstrates signs of intense anxiety. She has trouble interacting with people outside of her family and shows limited communication and eye contact with staff or others in the program. The mother expresses that the child has always been shy and prefers to be alone.

Answer: Social-Emotional

3. A three-year-old child exhibits frequent tantrums and struggles with self-control when angry or upset. These outbursts can last for several hours, and interventions are ineffective in managing their intensity or duration. The father describes the child as dramatic and believes that giving them time to release their emotions helps them calm down.

Answer: Behavior

4. A five-year-old is easily distracted and struggles to focus on an activity for more than five minutes. He has difficulty distinguishing between reality and fantasy, and recalling stories and memories. He also has trouble recognizing familiar faces and appears disoriented in frequently visited places. The mother states that the child has a big imagination and an active mind.

Answer: Cognitive

5. A two-year-old is having difficulty learning new words and only babbles. She fails to understand simple phrases and is not receptive to others when being spoken to. The mother says that the child has never been much of a talker and likes to communicate in ways other than words.

Answer: Language/Communication

References

Centers for Disease and Prevention. (2024). *Watch me! Training modules*. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/watchmetraining/module1.html>

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Sacks, A. (n.d.). *Infant toddler development red flags*. Michigan Courts. <https://www.courts.michigan.gov/4a2bc8/siteassets/educational-materials/cws/supplemental-handouts/developmental-red-flags-birth-to-age-5.pdf>

Effective De-escalation Techniques for Children

1



Ensure Safety

Remove unsafe objects, create space.

2



Stay Calm

Speak softly and slowly; avoid anger or frustration.

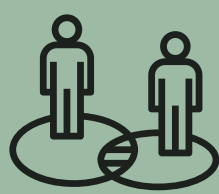
3



Model Emotional Regulation

Avoid power struggles and engage calmly.

4



Remove the Audience

Reduce attention-seeking behavior by stepping away.

5



Redirect Attention

Offer a calming activity or sensory tool (e.g., stress ball).

6



Keep Communication Simple

Provide one clear statement at a time.

7



Avoid Bargaining or Disciplining During Outbursts

Logic won't work in the moment; focus on reassurance.

8



Use Relaxation Techniques

Model deep breathing or counting to 10.

9



Respect Personal Space

Provide comfort or distance based on the child's needs.

Center for Children, Families, and Workforce Development, n.d.; Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, n.d.; Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, n.d.; Arkansas Children's Connection, 2023; NVFS, n.d.)



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MORE DE-ESCALATION SKILLS

- 1.** Be empathic and nonjudgmental
- 2.** Respect the individual's personal space
- 3.** Maintain non-threatening body language
- 4.** Be mindful of your emotions
- 5.** Allow the client to explore their feelings
- 6.** Avoid challenging questions
- 7.** Give simple, clear instructions
- 8.** Be flexible when addressing the client's needs
- 9.** Give the client time to think about the situation and make a decision



SKILLS TO PREVENT ESCALATION

Treat clients with respect

Be willing to listen

Consider client's circumstances

Be self-aware of reactions

Communicate in a calm manner

Value collaboration with clients

Respond using "I" statements

Avoid promises that cannot be kept



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Substance Misuse Resources

1. [Preventing, Identifying, and Treating Substance Use Among Youth in Foster Care](#)
 - a. Youth in foster care are at increased risk for substance use due to trauma and stressful circumstances, making it essential for caseworkers to prevent, identify, and support treatment for substance use. Addressing this issue requires collaboration with substance use treatment providers, families, and the community. This bulletin offers insights on the prevalence and impact of substance use, identifying at-risk youth, supporting treatment and prevention, and strategies for effective collaboration with professionals from other fields.
2. [Substance Misuse Prevention for Young Adults](#)
 - a. The Evidence-Based Resource Guide Series, developed by SAMHSA's National Mental Health and Substance Use Policy Laboratory, aims to provide information on effective practices and service models to prevent substance misuse and support individuals with substance use disorders (SUDs), serious mental illnesses, and emotional disturbances. The series offers research findings, emerging practices, and resources for healthcare providers, administrators, and communities to address behavioral health challenges, particularly focusing on preventing substance misuse among young adults. Each guide is informed by an expert panel of scientists, researchers, and policymakers.
3. [2023 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey](#)
 - a. Recent data from the 2023 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey (FYSAS) provides valuable insights into substance misuse among children and teens in Florida. The survey, conducted by the Florida Departments of Children and Families, Health, and Education, involved over 9,000 students across 134 schools. It assesses both the prevalence of substance use and the risk and protective factors influencing youth behavior.
 - b. [The FYSAS offers detailed statewide tables](#) that break down past-30-day prevalence rates of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) use by grade level. This data is crucial for understanding the scope of substance misuse among youth in Florida.
4. [NCDAS - Drug Use Among Youth: Facts & Statistics](#)
 - a. The webpage provides statistics on teen drug abuse, highlighting the widespread use of substances like alcohol and marijuana. It details that 8.33% of teens aged 12-17 used illicit drugs in the last month, with marijuana being the most common. The page also covers the rising trend in opioid and

stimulant abuse, including the increased misuse of prescription drugs like Adderall. For a more in-depth look at teen drug use patterns, you can explore the full data and trends on Drug Abuse Statistics.

5. [FADAA – 2024 Annual Report – Patterns of and trends in substance use in Florida](#)
 - a. Provides data and information about substance use in Florida and the U.S.

* THE POWER OF PLAY

Did you know that play is an essential component of a child's development?



BENEFITS OF PLAY FOR CHILDREN

- Play builds
 - communication skills,
 - problem solving skills and coordination,
 - gross and fine motor skills, &
 - self-regulation skills.
- Play helps children
 - communicate and express their feelings,
 - engage, explore, and interact with the world, &
 - collaborate with others.
- Play decreases both the parent and child's stress levels.

CHILDREN ENGAGE IN VARIOUS TYPES OF PLAY

- Babies first **entertain themselves** by observing others briefly and moving their own bodies.
- Then, they **observe others playing**, and engage with them but do not play with them.
- Toddlers first **play alone and are fully focused on their own play** instead of interacting and playing with others.
- Then, toddlers **play independently beside others** who are engaged in similar activities.
- **Pre-school aged** children **play with others and are actively engaging with other children** through the sharing of toys. Yet often there is no goal surrounding the activity.
- **Ultimately, school-aged** children **play with others for a shared purpose**.

PARENTS' ROLE IN PLAY

- Let the child choose the activity.
- Provide short verbal responses that match the child's tone and approach.
- Respect the child's space and let the child direct the action.
- Be present and patient. ♥



EL PODER DEL JUEGO

¿Sabías que el juego es esencial en el desarrollo de un niño?

LOS BENEFICIOS DEL JUEGO



- El juego desarrolla:
 - habilidades de comunicación,
 - habilidades para resolver problemas y coordinación,
 - habilidades motoras gruesas y finas,
 - y habilidades de autorregulación.
- El juego ayuda a los niños a:
 - comunicarse y expresar sus sentimientos
 - participar, explorar e interactuar con el mundo,
 - y a colaborar con los demás.
- El juego reduce los niveles de estrés tanto de los padres como de los niños.

LOS NIÑOS PARTICIPAN EN DIVERSOS TIPOS DE JUEGO.

- Los bebés primero se entretienen observando a los demás y moviendo su cuerpo.
- Luego, observan a los demás jugar y se involucran con ellos, pero no juegan directamente con ellos.
- Los niños pequeños primero juegan solos y están completamente enfocados en su propio juego en lugar de interactuar y jugar con los demás.
- Después, los niños pequeños juegan de manera independiente junto a otros que están involucrados en actividades similares.
- Los niños en edad preescolar juegan con otros y se involucran activamente con otros niños a través del intercambio de juguetes. Sin embargo, a menudo no hay un objetivo relacionado con la actividad.
- Finalmente, los niños en edad escolar juegan con otros ya con un propósito compartido.

PARENTS' ROLE IN PLAY

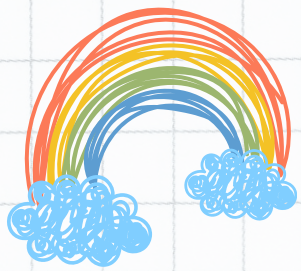
- Deja que el niño elija la actividad.
- Proporciona respuestas verbales cortas que coincidan con el tono y enfoque del niño.
- Respeta el espacio del niño y deja que el dirija la acción.
- Sé presente y paciente.



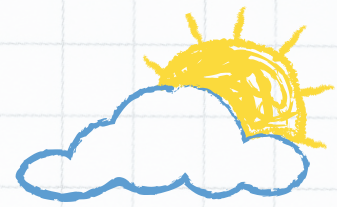
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THE MANY TYPES OF INTELLIGENCE



Understanding Intelligence

Intelligence is the ability to solve problems, adapt, and learn. Every person learns and processes information in different ways.

Identifying Skills in Children

Understanding how a child is intelligent can provide insight for parents. You can gain more knowledge on how to interact with and support your children. Watch your children to find out how they're smart!



Logical Mathematical Intelligence	Analyzing problems, thinking critically, and solving math problems
Linguistic Intelligence	Words, language, and writing
Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence	Physical movement, coordination, and body control
Musical Intelligence	Rhythm and music, understanding beat and tempo
Spatial Intelligence	Visual and spatial judgement
Naturalistic Intelligence	Seeing patterns and relationships in nature
Interpersonal Intelligence	Understanding and relating to people
Intrapersonal Intelligence	Self-reflection and introspection
Existential Intelligence	Understanding or asking questions about existence in world



LOS DIFERENTES TIPOS DE INTELIGENCIA

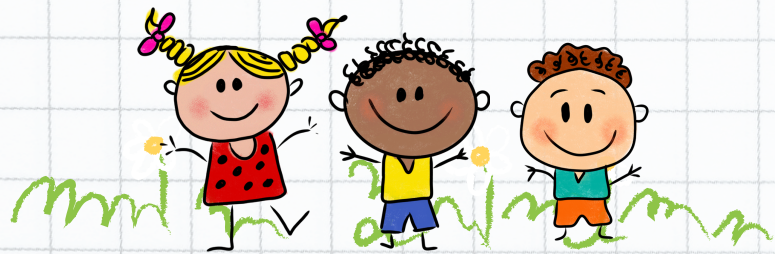


Comprendiendo la Inteligencia

La inteligencia es la capacidad de resolver problemas, adaptarse y aprender. Cada persona aprende y procesa la información de diferente manera.

Identificando habilidades en los niños

Comprender cómo un niño es inteligente puede brindarles a los padres información valiosa. Pueden adquirir más conocimiento sobre cómo interactuar y apoyar a sus hijos. ¡Observa a tus hijos para descubrir cuáles son sus fortalezas!

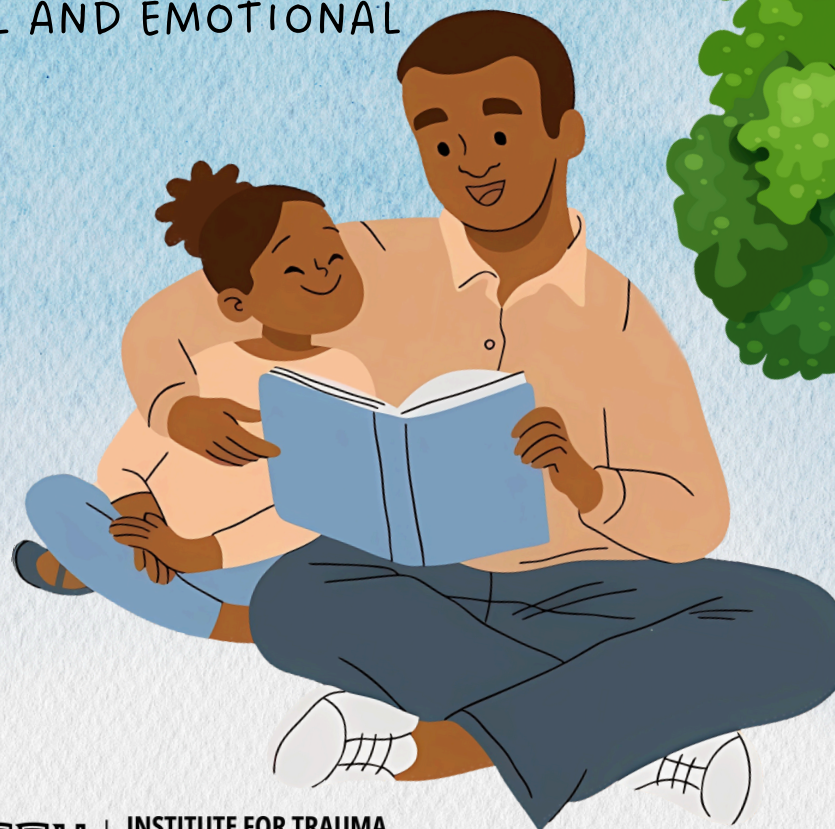


Inteligencia Lógico-Matemática	Analizar problemas, pensar de manera crítica y resolver problemas matemáticos.
Inteligencia Lingüística	Palabras, lenguaje y escritura.
Inteligencia Corporal-Cinestésica:	Movimiento físico, coordinación y control del cuerpo.
Inteligencia Musical	Ritmo y música, comprensión del compás y el tempo.
Inteligencia Espacial	Juicio visual y espacial.
Inteligencia Naturalista	Ver patrones y relaciones en la naturaleza.
Inteligencia Interpersonal	Comprender y relacionarse con las personas.
Inteligencia Intrapersonal	Autorreflexión e introspección.
Inteligencia Existencial	Comprender o hacer preguntas sobre la existencia en el mundo.

Reading Together Is Always Better

A FEW BENEFITS OF READING WITH YOUR CHILD INCLUDE:

- MORE PARENT/CHILD BONDING
- IMPROVED LISTENING SKILLS
- EXPANDED VOCABULARY
- INCREASED ATTENTION SPAN
- INCREASED CREATIVITY
- ENHANCED SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Leer Juntos Siempre Es Mejor

ALGUNOS DE LOS BENEFICIOS DE LEER CON
TUS HIJOS SON:

- ACERCAMIENTO ENTRE PADRE Y HIJO
- MEJORÍA EN EL HABILIDAD DE ESCUCHAR
- UN VOCABULARIO EXPANDIDO
- MAYOR CAPACIDAD DE ATENCIÓN
- AUMENTOS EN LA CREATIVIDAD
- UN DESAROLLO SOCIAL Y EMOCIONAL
MAS PROFUNDIZADO

