

SPENDING TIME WITH MY KIDS WHILE THEY ARE IN CARE

PARENT PEER SUPPORT PROJECT



Children and young people need regular contact with parents and family when they are in care.

TIPS FROM PARENTS

- Be there for visits and be there on time.
- Plan what you might do together. Bring activities and games that you know your child will enjoy and which can be played with, in the time you have.
- It is OK to bring gifts but try to keep them simple. What your kids need most is you.
- Be present for your kids - turn off your phone unless you are taking photos.
- Suggest activities that you and your child will be comfortable with and will enjoy like swimming, picnics and parks.
- Ask if your child can join you for important family events such as weddings and birthday parties or that you go to the kids sporting events, school presentations or parties.
- Suggest a communication book with your child's carer.
- Ask for a regular meeting with the caseworker and the carer to discuss your child's needs and the time you spend with them.
- Suggest other ways of having meaningful contact such as using text, phone calls, video calls, email, mailing cards or letters.
- Ask why you have supervised time and about how you can reduce that supervision.

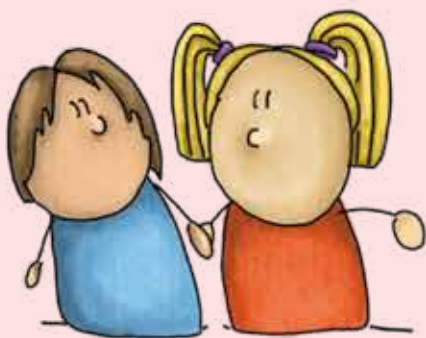


"My visits were supervised - I felt judged the entire time. It's really hard to focus - that this is about connecting to your child."

"A supervised visit at a park is better than a supervised visit in a hot room, -it's more normal and the kids can be active"

"The hardest thing for a parent is to leave your kids and then have to leave. The frustration and distress you feel when you say goodbye.. you have to grieve again every time"

Look after yourself after time with your kids. Plan ways to manage your emotions - do something nice or call and talk to a friend or counsellor. Try not to resort to any bad habits you may have previously used to manage your feelings - especially drugs and alcohol.



More ideas from the FISH website:

<http://www.finclusionh.org>



ABSEC has some helpful information for Aboriginal kids and families:

<https://www.absec.org.au/aboriginal-kids-in-care.html>



The Department website also has information:

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/families/out-of-home-care/children-in-oohc/rights-in-care/chapters/keeping-contact-with-your-family>

