


Maintaining Connections Through Virtual Family Time

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Court Improvement Training
Academy (CITA)

Washington State Office of Public
Defense

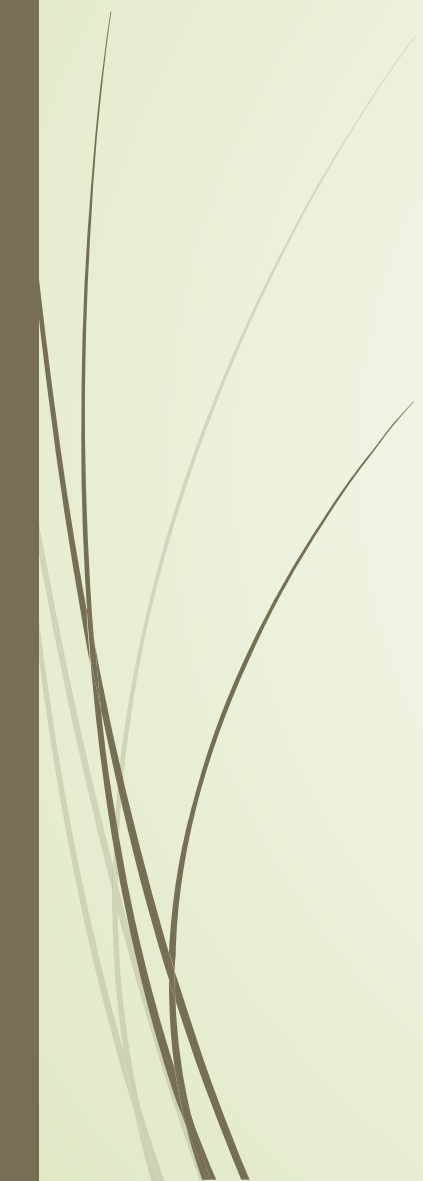


Using ZOOM

- ▶ In this course all participants will be placed on mute and the only picture will be of the presenter or the PowerPoint.
- ▶ The session is being recorded
 - ▶ You will not be seen in the recording
- ▶ Move your cursor and icons will appear.
 - ▶ Use chat to Gideon Newmark if you need technical help
 - ▶ Use chat to Kelly Warner-King if you have a content question, suggestions or issues you would like addressed



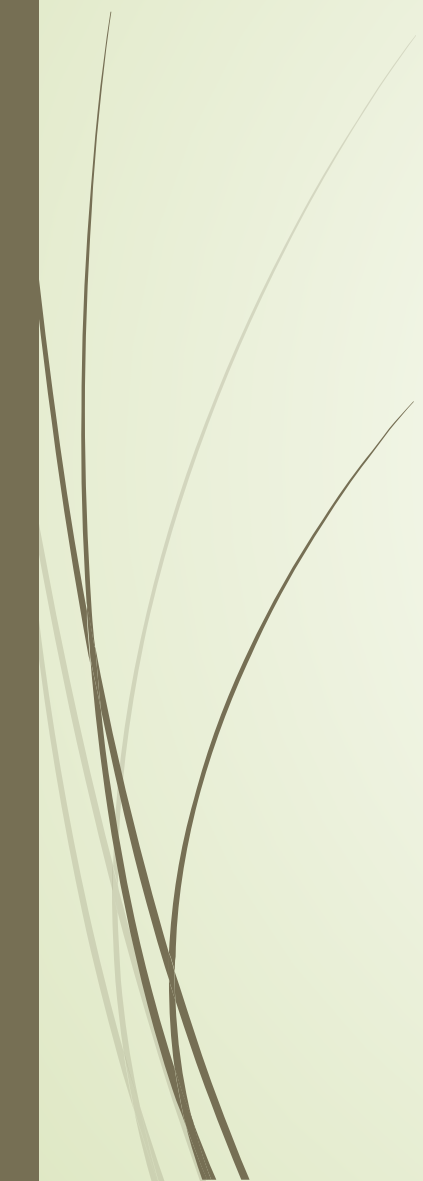
Introductions

- Brandy Otto, Office Chief for Child Welfare, DCYF
 - Kelly Warner-King, Co-Director, Court Improvement Training Academy at AOC
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Welcome

What we will cover

- Federal Guidance
 - State Policies
 - How virtual visits can occur
 - Children – by age
 - Families - supporting
 - Professionals – your role
 - What you need
- 



Federal Children's Bureau

March 27, 2020

- ▶ ALL legal mandates continue.
- ▶ In all cases, title IV-E requires that the following hearings be held and determinations made:
 - ▶ Contrary to the welfare (Pick up Orders, Shelter Care Orders, Dependency Orders)
 - ▶ Reasonable efforts to prevent removal (Shelter Care Orders, Dependency Orders, Permanency Planning Orders)
 - ▶ Reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan (Dependency Review Orders, Permanency Planning Orders)
 - ▶ Six-month review and 12-month permanency hearings
- ▶ Hearings in-person or by videoconferencing



Federal Children's Bureau

- ▶ Children kept in communication with their attorneys
- ▶ Case by case decisions – avoid blanket orders
- ▶ Ensure parents, children, and caregivers have access to technology
- ▶ Stipulated orders (agreed), when possible
- ▶ Consider whether children may be reunified with their parents in an expedited manner.
- ▶ Lack of, or inability to access, treatment or services due to provider closures during the pandemic should not be interpreted as a lack of parental compliance.



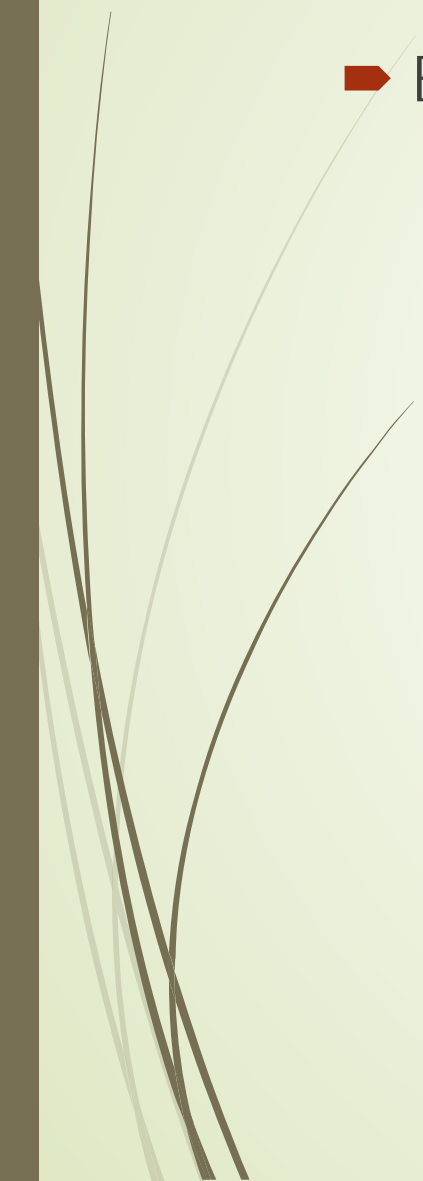
Federal: Visitation

- *Family time is important for child and parent well-being, as well as for efforts toward reunification.*
- Ensuring that family time continues.
- Become familiar with ways in which in-person visitation may continue to be held safely.
- Consider the use of family members to supervise contact and to engage in visitation outdoors.
- Encourage Resource Parents to support visits of all types.



Washington State

Directive of the Governor 20-02

- ▶ Effective April 1, 2020
 - ▶ Provide for video visitation
 - ▶ Utilize available funding to acquire and expedite the distribution of equipment
 - ▶ Prepare and distribute guidance regarding the use of video technology
 - ▶ Ensure technology support is readily available as needed
- 



Washington State Directive of the Governor 20-02

- ▶ Effective April 1, 2020
 - ▶ Conduct meetings with visitation providers to assess implementation of video visitation
 - ▶ To require foster parents to use available means for video visitation in order to support ongoing contact for children, parents and siblings




Changes to Visits

- Bad News
 - Limited in person visits
- Good News for virtual visits
 - No transportation issues
 - Easier supervision and observation
 - Less conflicts in scheduling
 - Monitors, visit supervisors, coaches can continue services
 - New courts orders not needed, in most cases
 - Physical safety is not an issue



Why family time is even more important now

- ▶ Children and Youth
 - ▶ Bonding and attachment is essential
 - ▶ Reduce trauma and loss
- ▶ Maintaining relationships beyond Mom & Dad
 - ▶ Siblings; Grandparents; Relatives; Friends; School
- ▶ Connections is the True Goal!
 - ▶ This is a time of physical distancing DO not make it a time of social and emotional distancing.



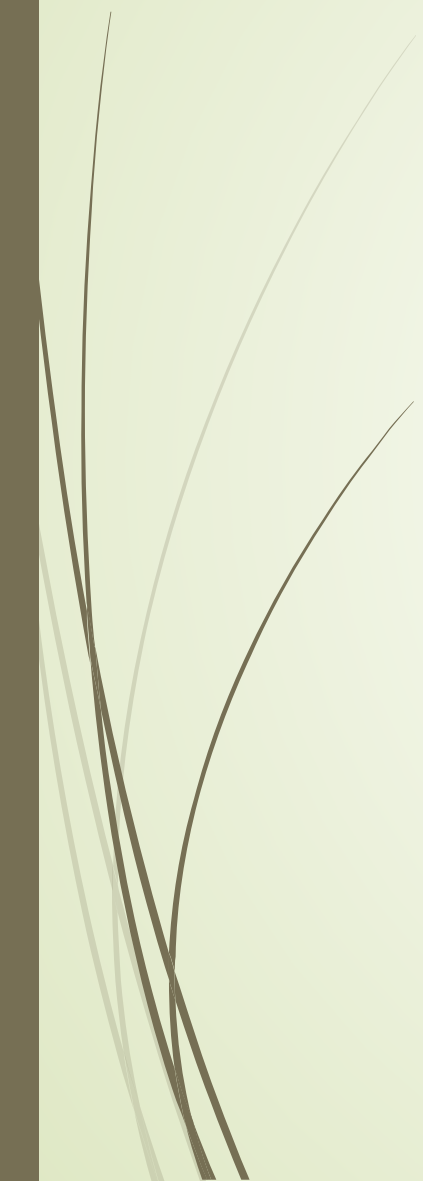
When in person visits are not possible

Some options are more powerful than others.

1. Audio and visual – Skype, Facetime, Zoom, etc.
2. Audio only – phone calls
3. Text only – live – SMS, chat apps
4. Recordings – no live interaction – recordings using audio and/or visual
5. Written and photos – US mail, email



Options and Creativity: What works

- Different ages = different approaches
 - Confidentiality
 - Safety
 - Engaging all parties in the planning
 - Internet has hundreds of ideas, apps, tools, etc.
- 



Roles & Responsibilities

➤ Parents

- More frequent but shorter virtual visits
- Opportunities to grow and learn during virtual visits

➤ Caregivers

- Support child's well-being
- Visits minimize traumatic and behavioral reactions
- Requires participation for activities
- Confidentiality can be maintained



Professionals

- Stay in contact with clients/families
 - Frequent contact via virtual visits
 - Address the emotions of children and families
 - Some In Person visits will be needed – follow guidelines
- Creativity is key
 - Make visits a priority
 - Prepare parents, caregivers and children for visits
 - Opportunities created by virtual visits
- Technology



Resources

- Websites

- CITA : www.wacita.org and <https://www.wacita.org/resources-for-family-time-in-the-covid-19-era/>

- DCYF: <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/coronavirus-covid-19/child-welfare>

- New resources being added regularly



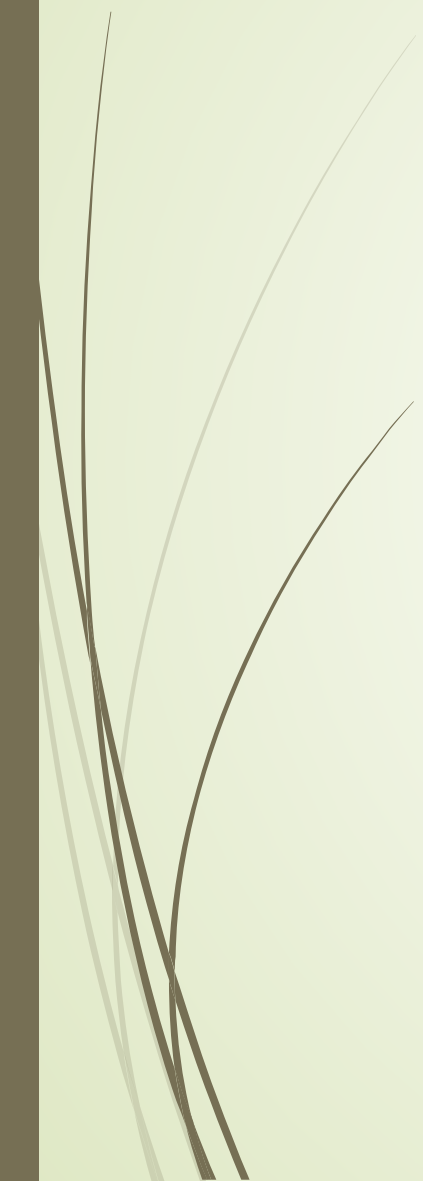
Resources

- Information – on these websites
 - Long distance activities and methods
 - Virtual Visits Recommendations and Resources
 - DCFY: Tips for parents, caregivers, workers, service providers, Family Time Interim Policy
 - Federal Letter
 - Governor's directives (20-02 and 20-33)
- Send Kelly Warner-King any resources or webpages you think should be shared.

Kelly.Warner-King@courts.wa.gov



What else do you need?

- ▶ Two polls to allow you to tell us what other topics you would like to have in future webinars.
 - ▶ You can select more than one answer on each poll.
 - ▶ You should see them one at a time on your screen.
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CLE or CJE credits

- If you would like CLE or CJE Credits for attending this webinar:
- **By April 29, 2020**, send an email to Susan Peterson at susan.peterson@courts.wa.gov with the following information:
 - Name & Date of the Webinar
 - Your name
 - Your WSBA#
 - Your court name (for judicial officers)



Open chat

- In the **Chat box**
- What is working well? And Why? What was in place to make it work well?
- Write our questions, needs, or concerns.
- If you want, please write where you work or give us an email so we can follow up on your comments or suggestions.
- After webinar: We hope to hear from you now and in the future. Send any comments, suggestions, resources or questions to Kelly Warner-King.

Kelly.Warner-King@courts.wa.gov

