

Supervised Visitation can be a positive alternative for children and their non-custodial parent when there are issues such as: an unstable home environment, divorce, domestic violence or substance abuse. Other relevant situations are a long-term separation between the parent and child, or when there have been allegations of abuse made against a parent.

Parents have a shared responsibility for their children. Most often, children benefit from having regular contact with both parents, regardless of the parents' relationship. Supervised Visitation and Exchange services are for the benefit of children who may not have safe, conflict-free contact with one or both parents without the intervention of a neutral person or persons.



About the Program

The CONNEXTIONS Program provides a safe, structured and comfortable environment for children to visit their non-custodial parent or other relatives when supervised visitation is required by family court or the department of social services. Our staff are trained to focus on the safety and well-being of the child while maintaining a high level of professional respect and courtesy to both parents.

The CONNEXTIONS Program strives to:

- Allow the non-custodial parent/child relationship to continue or develop
- Reduce friction between the parents
- Prevent further abuse or acts of violence in the presence of the child, or directed at the child.

SERVICES OFFERED



Supervised Visitation

- Will take place in a child-centered play room, which will provide the parent and child with a safe and comfortable atmosphere for visitation.
- At no time will the parent and child be left unsupervised during the visitation.
- A qualified visitation supervisor will be present to monitor, observe and note the interaction between parent and child.
- Guidelines for parent/child interaction are enforced in order to protect the well-being of the child.
- The visitation supervisor will intervene when these guidelines have been violated.

Therapeutic Supervised Visitation

Is a structured process that builds upon the child's and visiting parent's strengths. A qualified therapist will be in the room and will intervene as needed. Their role is to make sure the child feels safe and to help the family set goals and intervention plans that will lead to healing and mending of the painful, strained relations between parent and child. Our goal is to strengthen their bond, teach improved parenting skills when needed, and to assess any additional needs that the child(ren) may have.

Monitored Exchange

Is available to provide a safe, secure, neutral site for the drop off and pick up of the child(ren) by the non-custodial parent for unsupervised visitation. This service is useful in preventing further conflicts between parents. Monitored exchange is an option when one parent has an order of protection against the other parent, yet visitation must continue. This service is provided in coordination with program hours and availability.

Hours of Operation

The CONNEXTIONS Program operates Monday through Thursday and Saturday. Due to limited space, appointment times are assigned as they become available.

Program Requirements and Fees

- In order to initiate visits, a Court Order and a Referral Form must be sent to the CONNEXTIONS Program from either the court or the attorneys.
- The parties named in the court order are required to attend an orientation and agree to abide by the guidelines of the CONNEXTIONS Program before services are rendered. Orientations are scheduled separately respectively. Children are not required to attend.
- **A non-refundable \$20 fee for both parties respectively** is required for this mandatory orientation. Until the fee is paid, client will not be considered compliant with program rules and visitation will not be scheduled.
- Periodic reports will be provided to the courts throughout the duration of the visit, provided that the case is still open and pending litigation. We will provide notes if the case has been closed, once the case has been re-petitioned.
- If a case is sent back to court for non-compliance, an updated court order must be received in order to re-instate the case with the CONNEXTIONS Program.
- This is a fee based program, therefore, each parent is charged a separate fee for supervised visitation or monitored exchange services.
- During the orientation, the fee for visitation will be determined by each parent's income respectively, on a sliding fee scale, ranging from \$15 to \$55 per/visit (for regular Supervised Visitation) and from \$20 to \$70 per/visit (for Therapeutic Visitation). **Proof of income is required.**
- The monitored exchange fee is a flat rate of \$5 per parent, per exchange.
- Referrals are accepted from:
 - The court system, or
 - The local Department of Social Services

If the non-custodial parent is ordered to pay fees for both parties, that arrangement must be outlined in the court order.

Please note: A court order MUST be in effect which outlines the visitation guidelines.

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The CONNEXTIONS Program has the right to refuse and/or terminate a visitation or exchange at any time.

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The CONNEXTIONS PROGRAM will not accept a case if reasonable safety for all family and staff members cannot be ensured.

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If families do not comply with stated terms and conditions, the CONNEXTIONS Program reserves the right to terminate services.

Affiliations:

The YWCA of the Tonawandas CONNECTIONS Program is a member of the **Supervised Visitation Network, an International Network of Child Access Providers**, bringing parents and children together for safe, conflict-free visits.

Why Choose and SVN Provider?

- **SVN Members** access professional forums for networking and sharing of information about supervised child access services.
- **SVN Members** agree to abide by standards for practice of supervised visitation and exchange services.
- **SVN Members** attend local, regional and national trainings to improve the quality of services they offer.



Funding for YWCA Victims Services is provided by Niagara County Department of Social Services and the United Way of the Tonawandas



United Way

What should I expect from an SVN Member Provider?

Respect: A member treats each person in a caring manner, being mindful of individual differences and cultural as well as ethnic diversity.

Integrity: A member acts honestly and responsibly and promotes ethical practices in his/her own work and on the part of the organization.

Ethical Behavior: A member remains aware of ethical principles, alert to ethical dilemmas and uses this awareness to guide their practice of SUPERVISED VISITATION.

Excellence in Service: A member knows and follows the SVN Standards for Supervised Visitation Practice and the Code of Ethics and does his/her best to implement best practices as they evolve. A member maintains the best interest of his/her clients as the primary professional obligation.

CONNECTIONS Supervised Visitation

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Member of NYS Chapter of the Supervised Visitation

YWCA of the Tonawandas

CONNECTIONS Supervised Visitation Program



*Working towards
Strengthening families*

**eliminating racism
empowering women**

ywca

tonawandas

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