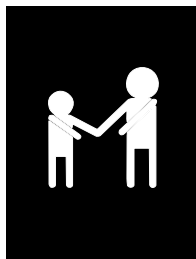


Supervised Access



What is Supervised Access?

When parents separate, access visits with children may be a problem. Sometimes, difficulties arise at the time of the exchange of the child between the parents, or between the parent and a relative, such as a grandparent. Other times, there may be concerns about the visits themselves.

The Supervised Access Program offers separated families a way to deal with some of these problems. Supervised access centres provide a setting where **visits** and **exchanges** can take place under the supervision of trained staff and volunteers.

Ministry-funded supervised access centres provide fully supervised on-site visits in a group setting and supervised exchanges when access occurs off-site.

What are the Objectives of Supervised Access?

- To provide a safe, neutral and child-focused setting for visits between a child and non-custodial parent or other family member.
- To ensure the safety of all participants, including staff.
- To provide trained staff and volunteers who are sensitive to the needs of the child.
- To provide reports of factual observations about the participants' use of the service.

When might Supervised Visits Occur?

Supervised access centres address a number of different situations, which may arise in custody and access disputes. Supervised visits may be appropriate in cases where there are concerns about the safety of the child and/or the custodial parent; the non-custodial parent has a drug or alcohol problem or a psychiatric condition; there has been a lengthy separation between the parent and the child; or there is a risk of abduction.

When are Supervised Exchanges Appropriate?

When there is unresolved conflict between the parents, a neutral place to exchange children for visits makes access easier to arrange and reduces tension for the child. Supervised exchanges may also be appropriate when it is necessary to determine if the parent who is visiting with the child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In other cases, there may be a concern about the safety of the custodial parent during the exchange.

How do I Apply for Supervised Access Services?

Referrals to the program can be self-made and/or are accepted from lawyers, mediators, the courts, mental health professionals and other agencies.

A court order for supervised access is preferred but not required. If there is no court order, the parents must have some other signed written agreement.

Each adult participant must complete an intake interview and agree to follow centre policies and procedures before using the service. All services are pre-arranged. Details will be worked out between both parties and the centre supervisor.

The program reserves the right to determine provision of service. Dates and times of access visits/exchanges are determined by the availability of staff and the facility. All referrals are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. If space is not available, you will be placed on a waiting list and contacted as soon as space becomes available.

Are there Costs Involved?

The Supervised Access Program is provided by non-profit organizations. Program user fees are usually shared between both parties unless otherwise stated in a court order. Fees are on a sliding scale or may be waived if a client is unable to pay. Reports can be prepared for the parties and legal counsel upon request at an additional fee. All fees will be reviewed at intake.

How do I Contact the Centres?

- Algoma**
(705) 945-5050 / 1-800-461-2237
- Brant**
(519) 751-0466
- Cochrane**
(705) 360-2100
- Dufferin**
(519) 941-1530
- Durham**
(905) 619-4565
- Elgin**
(519) 637-1667
- Essex**
(519) 252-7900
- Frontenac/Lennox-Addington**
(613) 542-8533
- Grey/Bruce**
(519) 371-5991
- Haldimand-Norfolk**
(519) 428-4838
- Halton**
(905) 637-5256
- Hamilton-Wentworth**
(905) 522-9922
- Hastings/Prince Edward**
(613) 968-7362
- Huron/Perth**
(519) 508-6101 / 1-888-508-6101
- Kenora**
(807) 223-8572 / 1-800-465-7203
- Kent**
(519) 355-1127
- Lambton**
(519) 336-0917
- Lanark**
(613) 284-1900 / 1-877-284-1947
- Leeds-Grenville**
(613) 345-6007 / 1-877-417-6007
- Manitoulin**
(705) 377-6080
- Middlesex**
(519) 858-9905
- Niagara North/Niagara South**
(905) 384-9551
- Nipissing**
(705) 472-0678
- Ottawa-Carleton**
(613) 725-3601

- Oxford**
(519) 533-1379
- Parry Sound**
(705) 386-0570 / 1-800-563-4201
- Peel**
(289) 470-5327 / 1-866-243-9925
- Peterborough/Northumberland/Victoria-Haliburton**
(705) 742-3803
- Prescott-Russell**
(613) 632-2333 / 1-877-632-2332
- Rainy River**
(807) 274-0381 / 1-800-465-7764
- Renfrew**
(613) 735-1093
- Simcoe/Muskoka**
(705) 526-1095
- Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry**
(613) 933-1253 / 1-888-426-9177
- Sudbury**
(705) 566-5866
- Thunder Bay**
(807) 473-1350
- Timiskaming**
(705) 567-9201 / 1-866-229-5437
- Toronto**
(416) 304-1221
- Waterloo**
(519) 743-1460 / 1-800-653-2256
- Wellington**
(519) 822-4141 / 1-866-321-4141
- York**
(289) 470-5309 / 1-866-243-9925

Further Information:

If you would like further information, more copies of this brochure or have any comments regarding the Supervised Access Program, please contact:

Supervised Access Program Manager
Ministry of the Attorney General
700 Bay Street, 3rd Floor
Box 171
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1Z6
Tel: (416) 212-2028 / 1-877-661-9977
Fax: (416) 212-2032

Or visit our website:
<http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca>