

# The Guardian ad Litem Bulletin



## Supervised Visitation Centers

June 2024

There are many options and interventions Guardians ad Litem (GALs) can recommend to minimize risk to children (as well as protective parents) during exchanges and parenting time with an abusive parent. In addition to including protective conditions, a GAL may recommend the use of a supervised visitation center. Supervised visitation centers are good options if the abusive parent is unsafe to be with the child alone. Supervised centers provide third-party supervision to ensure a visit is safe from multiple forms of abuse. Centers can also be recommended as a first step in a step-up parenting plan, or during the period an abusive parent is attending batterer intervention programming.

To know if supervised visitation or exchanges are the right fit for a family, it is important that both GALs and courts fully consider the nature, context, and effects of domestic violence when tailoring their responses. GALs and courts must also become acquainted with the resources in their jurisdiction, including knowing if a supervised visitation center exists in the community, and if the center is following best practices. The [Revised Chapter 4 Model Code](#) (Section 404) includes best practices for supervised visitation centers.

What if there is no supervised visitation center? GALs may be inclined to use a family member, friend, or other nonprofessional supervisor; however, the Model Code suggests supervision by someone who has the ability to ensure the necessary safety conditions are met. Family and friends may have a difficult time enforcing safety rules. If there is no supervised visitation center in your community, take a look at this [Blueprint](#). It provides a place to start, or can help make improvements to a current program. If you have specific questions reach out to [Inspire Action for Social Change](#) (the national training and technical assistance provider on supervised visitation centers) at [info@inspireactionforsocialchange.org](mailto:info@inspireactionforsocialchange.org).

Want to weigh in on this conversation? Register [here](#) for access to the discussion board and additional resources. For individual technical assistance email us at [NLCCDV@bwjp.org](mailto:NLCCDV@bwjp.org).

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## Whats Next?

GAL Bulletin:

Co-occurring issues of DV,  
mental health, and  
substance use

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GAL Webinar Series 3 of 4  
on July 24, 2024 at 12pm  
CT/1pm ET: Co-occurring  
issues of DV, mental health,  
and substance use with  
Carole Warshaw  
(NCDVTMH)

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GAL Webinar Series 4 of 4  
on August 28, 2024 at 12pm  
CT/1pm ET: Addressing  
secondary trauma and  
vicarious trauma from GAL  
work with Angela Lewis  
Demello (Northeast Youth  
& Family Services,  
Minnesota)

Click this [link](#) to register for  
the GAL Webinar Series