ACTIVITY AND PARENTING GUIDE FOR HUMBOLDT COUNTY FAMILY CONNECTION CENTER

By

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ABSTRACT

ACTIVITY AND PARENTING GUIDE FOR THE HUMBOLDT COUNTY FAMILY CONNECTION CENTER

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Humboldt County Child Welfare Services opens a case and gets involved with a family when the safety and well-being of a child is compromised. When a child is removed from the parents care due to abuse or neglect, one of the key factors in the chance for family reunification is appropriate and positive visitation. The reunification process is supervised at the Family Connection Center and parents might have difficulties with choosing creative activities to engage in with their child or difficulties knowing how to positively interact with their child during these activities. The tool I created for this project gives parents the opportunity to strengthen parenting skills and bypass the necessity for taking time to come up with creative ideas to interact. The activity book uses resources already available at the Family Resource Center and offers a list of activities for various age groups of children along with parenting tips that help to interact with the child during each activity.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Child Welfare Services in Humboldt County gets involved in a child's life in cases of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. Not all referrals are substantiated, but when CWS decides to open a case, children may be brought into protective custody, or removed from their parents or current guardians, to ensure their safety. The child is placed with an appropriate caregiver through foster care, non-related extended family member (NREFM), or relative. When efforts are made towards family reunification, one of the key elements becomes court ordered supervised visitation. Research indicates that maternal visitation is associated with reunification (McWey, L. M. and Mullis, A. K., 2004). Proper visitation is considered an important part of the reunification process and having structured, concrete activities is considered helpful in maximizing bonding times (Leathers, 2002). Often visits at the FCC are two hours or less, so parent/child bonding time is limited. Time spent thinking of creative ideas to bond takes away from time spent interacting and can be bypassed by having ideas for activities readily available and on hand. When visitation begins, a parent can be given an opportunity to consult with a Family Connection Center Coach, see available activities and decide ahead of time what they and their child might enjoy participating in. Strength based activities provide meaningful interaction and create plans that leverage the strength of both parent and child (Rapp, Saleebey & Sullivan, 2008).
Project Aims

This project is aimed at creating a useful tool to help parents positively interact with their children during supervised visitation. The activity and parenting guide will be incorporated into the first meeting between the family coach and the parent so parents can have activities for engagement readily available to them, and each parent will get a copy to have as an ongoing resource for structure in parent/child interaction.

Project Approaches

This project considered the concerns of the employees of the Family Connection Center (FCC) around a lack of training tools (see Appendix C) and utilized parenting books, various activity guides and activities already available at the FCC to create a comprehensive guide for parents.

Anticipated Outcomes

It is anticipated that the availability of this activity and parenting guide will create more ease in choosing activities, which will lead to more ease in parent/child interaction and an increase in bonding during visitation. It is anticipated that simplification in child/adult interactions will be empowering to parents during visitation. Initial parent/staff interaction around the use of this activity and parenting guide will also
facilitate communication in the initial phase of supervised visitation and allow a venue for parents to reach out to staff as the need arises.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Supervised visitation gives parents who have been separated from their children because of neglect or abuse the chance to spend time with their children in a safe and supervised arena. Positive and strength-based interactions can create attachment and relationship skills that are key protective factors in a child's coping skills (Smith, G.T., Shapiro, V.B., Sperry, R.W., & LeBuffe, P.A., 2014).

Visitation structure is helpful in families working together to heal themselves (Gerring, Kemp, & Marcenko, 2008), and having tools parents need to easily engage with a child available and easily accessible makes that engagement less difficult (Smith, et al, 2014). Research indicates structure and planning in visits is helpful to a child's resilience (Smith, et al, 2014). Having easy access to activities can be useful in focus, resilience and working towards parent/child goals (Smith, et al, 2014).

Barriers to Healthy Development in Children

In families that have experienced adversity and have been separated, barriers to healthy relationships can exist (Swick, 2007). Separation itself is one of these barriers and can impede the attachment relationship between parent and child (Swick, 2007). With limited bonding time during visitation, a lack of enriching, developmental activities between parent and child becomes another barrier (Swick, 2007). It is significantly noted
in research within the U.S. and across other countries, that without enriching parent/child interaction, children can be limited in their ability to learn and grow (Swick, 2007).

A deficit in parental knowledge on how to positively interact with children has been cited as another barrier to healthy development in children (Swick, 2007). If a parent has never seen a positive parenting role model and hasn't been parented positively themselves, they do not have any good examples to draw from. Empowering that parent/child relationship through provision of creative and enjoyable activities can create learning and growth experiences for both parent and child (Swick, 2007). Modeling proper and positive parenting skills to parents who have had a lack of role models creates structure that helps foster caring relationships (Swick, 2007) (Smith et al, 2014).

**Support of Staff**

Research indicates that support from staff at visitation centers, helps parents to overcome their feeling of fear and rejection brought about by guilt stemming from the court ordered removal of children (Gerring, Kemp, & Marcenko, 2008). Judgment free and empathetic support by staff is essential for moving beyond confusion, anger, shame and grief (Gerring, Kemp, & Marcenko, 2008). A staff member offering empathy rather than participating in shaming activities like pointing out when a parent is late or misses a visit can help that parent let go of negative emotions and focus on positive interaction with their child (Gerring, Kemp, & Marcenko, 2008).

In *The Connections Project Evaluation*, a qualitative study that interviewed birth families, foster families, separated children and employees of several visitation centers,
staff who provided suggestions about parenting and discipline without undermining
parents authority or using a condescending tone of voice that implied they knew more
than the parents, would put parents at ease rather than making them feel "policed"
(Gerring, Kemp, & Marcenko, 2008).

**The Importance of Fun and Play**

Visitation data was kept over several years in this same study, and it was noted
that when parents brought games they knew their child enjoyed and participated in those
games with them, children responded positively and engaged more quickly with parents
(Gerring, Kemp, & Marcenko, 2008).

"Play is the process through which children learn" (Jones, 2004). In the article,
Playing With Your Child, by Rose B. Jones, it is noted that because children learn
through play, it is strongly suggested that parents not only encourage as much play as
possible, but also play along side their children. The claim is that if parents are only
observing their child play, they are not fully engaging with their child, and therefore not
creating bonds with their child (Jones, 2004).

In *The Incredible Years*, a book about parenting, the authors emphasize that play
is important. Play is how children learn what they like, what they are good at, and how to
interact with others. Play strengthens the muscles in the hands, which prepares children
for writing and strengthens the muscles of the core, which is necessary for all physical
activity (Stratton, 2005). Stratton makes the point that you are never wasting time by
playing with your child. Being a part of fun activities encourages laughter and laughter is infectious (Smith et al, 2014).

**Structured Activities**

Strengths-based approaches to supervised visitation in child welfare, talk about the importance of structured activities during visitation. An activity book, with activities separated by age and including parenting suggestions, creates a structure that in turn creates more stability in visits. Structure can also empower parents to make decisions (Smith et al, 2014). Parents feel they have more control when they can choose an idea on their own, especially if they are validated by a staff person in the choice they make (Smith et al, 2014). Having an activity book available during a visit allows for easier access to activities and leaves more time for play and interaction with children (Smith et al, 2014). Structured activities are good for goal setting as well. For instance, if a parent wants a toddler to learn to walk, a good activity might be pushing wheeled toys like a play vacuum or lawn mower (Stratton, 2005).

**Summary**

The literature review discussed the importance of visitation and what barriers might exist that prevent positive interactions during supervised visitation, like limited bonding time. The literature review also discussed why structure is important for creating stability in visits and how judgment free staff support can aid in creating positive visits.
Finally, the importance of play was discussed as it is considered the main way in which children learn and develop their ability to interact with others. It is significantly noted in research within the U.S. and across other countries, that without enriching parent/child interaction, children can be limited in their ability to learn and grow.
METHODS

This project originated as a request from the staff at the Humboldt County Family Connection Center for more structure and training tools. After various meetings between myself and staff members at the Family Connection Center, as well as a lot of research and brainstorming, an activity guide for parents was pinpointed to be an important tool for the center.

Process and Participants

An overall needs assessment was conducted as a collaboration between the author, Megan Shewmaker (a fellow student researcher), Robin Andrews (FCC supervisor) and utilizing staff input. Megan Shewmaker conducted interviews of the staff members, asking open ended questions regarding what was needed, or could be improved upon at the FCC (Shewmaker, 2015). Demographic and identifying information was not collected as it was not pertinent to the project.

The list of needs was extensive (see Appendix D) and a meeting was called between Robin, Megan and myself to narrow down the scope of the projects and gather input regarding what were the most current and pressing needs of the Family Connection Center. Training tools for both coaches at the FCC and for parents were high on the Center's list of priorities, and therefore the project involved creating an activity and parenting guide that would be helpful for parents as a guide for interaction with children.
and as a useful way for coaches and parents to start a conversation about how to fully utilize the FCC.

Design

The project inventoried the Humboldt County Family Resource Center to find out what activities, toys, books and games, were already available for use (see Appendix B). Each room at the center was inventoried separately and a guide was created to what is available to use in each room. I then scoured various web sites to find additional activities and games that would create positive interaction between parent and child and put them in the guide. The county utilizes two parenting books, *The Incredible Years* (Stratton, 2005) and *Parenting With Love and Logic* (Cline & Fay, 2006) in parenting classes, so I read both of these books to find helpful parenting tips to add to the activity guide. After each activity, or game there are parenting tips pulled from these books. They are broken down by activity as well as by age group (see Appendix A). For instance, there are tips on how to praise your child, how to pick your battles and why play is important. There is also a part of the guide that talks about leaving the Family Connection Center, why outside activities might be beneficial and a list of options for where to go (see Appendix A) Examples of outside activities are, for instance, a walk on the boardwalk, going to the zoo or going to the mall.
Results

The purpose of this project was to create a useful training and resource tool for parents, children and staff. This tool has been created but not yet incorporated into training at the Family Connection Center.
DISCUSSION

Implications to Population

This project will have implications for parents and children in supervised visitations as well as implications for the staff at the FCC. The implications for the parents will be a greater awareness of available activities during visitations. Creating more simplicity during visits will lead to more time interacting with children. As it follows then, the implication for the children is that they have more interaction with their parents. They participate in more enjoyable activities and ideally have more attention focused on them. Because the parenting guide encourages parents to understand that play is important and worthwhile, and offers suggestions of how to enjoyably interact with children, the outcome is more engagement for everyone. The staff at the FCC will use the guide as a tool in the first interaction with parents and have a discussion about fun activities they can participate in with their kids. This interaction between staff and parent can create a bonding and communication between them that will hopefully carry on through visitations.

Implications to Social Work

One of the main goals of Child Welfare Services is the reunification of families, and positive and successful visitation is a key element in reunification. It is discussed in the literature review that a deficit in parental knowledge on how to positively interact
with children has been cited as a barrier to healthy development in children. The implication of the activity and parenting guide is an easily accessible knowledge that eases parent child interactions and encourages parents to move past the shame of separation. The implication is that creating positivity in interaction will encourage consistent visits and that positive, consistent visits will lead to reunification.

**Theory**

In 1976 Solomon introduced the theory of empowerment in social work. His idea was that people go through various processes that increase their personal power and allow them to take more control over their own lives. Since that time, many theorists have taken on the concept of empowerment, but an overall idea of personal empowerment relates to the way people think about themselves as well as the knowledge and skills that they possess. "Personal empowerment is associated with increased levels of self-esteem, assertiveness, self-determination, social responsibility, critical consciousness, participatory competencies, and hope (Boehm & Staples, 2002, pg. 271)".

There is a general consensus that empowerment cannot be created for another person, but social workers can help facilitate the process (Boehm & Staples, 2002).

Self-determination, which is considered a strong component of empowerment, consists of persevering in the face of adversity, the ability to take risks, proactivity and initiative, and the ability to express opinions (Boehm & Staples, 2002).

Creating a safe space for visitation, where there are helpful staff who encourage parents to positively interact with their children, is a distinct step towards encouraging
empowerment. Availability of tools that parents can utilize, but also having the option to create their own environment, is another step towards empowerment.

**Ethical Considerations**

An ethical consideration of creating a guide about parenting based on the parenting books I drew from, is that those particular books are not written for families that have experienced court ordered separation. There is a level of trauma that is experienced by families that have been separated that is not being addressed in the literature I found. I was not able to find specific parenting books that dealt with that high level of trauma or that addressed court ordered separation. Some of the assumptions in the books I used were that children would respond in a positive and calm manner when given praise and attention. They are not taking into account the extreme behavior issues that can follow the trauma of separation. I tried to pull out only the points in the books that pertained to the demographic of families that is being served by the FCC.

Another ethical concern is personal bias. Any project or research is affected by the researcher, what they have prior knowledge of, and their life experiences. I, as a researcher, was affected by the parent/child interactions that I have been a party to, and some assumptions about the way parents and children would interact were made based on said assumptions.
Limitations of Project

One limitation of this project is time. As a graduate student taking 16 credits a semester and interning at Child Welfare Services, there is not a lot of time left over for all I would have liked to do on this project, and narrowing it down was a necessity. I started out expecting to be able to create an entire training plan and set of training tools for the center but not only is my time limited, but the members of my committee are limited in the time they have to work on this with me. In an ideal world I would have liked to address more of the needs of the center.

Sustainability

The created guide can be easily updated to include new and other activities and therefore can be used as an ongoing tool as long as it is still helpful for parents and staff. If other staff members or parents want to input their creative ideas or if the Center buys new games, toys, etc. they can be easily added to the template and another set of pamphlets printed. The pamphlets will be printed at a copy shop that will have the template and this will be shared with the Center. I am also hoping to stay on at Humboldt County Child Welfare so will have ongoing interaction with the FCC as a social worker. In this way I can encourage continuing use of the guide or help with any updates to improve upon the tool.
SUMMARY

Research points to the importance of visitation in family reunification. A tool that helps create communication between parents and staff and empowers parents to create an environment to positively interact with their children, is helpful in overcoming barriers (Swick, 2007, Smith et al, 2014).

It is significantly noted in the literature review that, without enriching parent/child interaction, children can be limited in their ability to learn and grow (Jones, 2004, Stratton, 2005).

The implication of the activity and parenting guide is an easily accessible knowledge that eases parent child interactions and encourages parents to move past the shame of separation. Structured activities that encourage play create positivity in interaction and encourage consistent visits. Those positive, consistent visits are important for engagement and important for reunification (Smith et al, 2014).
REFERENCES


The Toddler Years Must Do List. Retrieved February 14, 2015, from http://creativewithkids.com/toddler-years-must-do-list-activities/
Activity Book

Do you need some fun ideas of what to do with your child at the Family Connection Center?

Here are some activities you can do with different ages of children using what is available right here at the center.

After each activity you will find helpful tips to interact with your child during activities.

**Play is important!** That's how children learn what they like, what they are good at, and how to interact with others. Play strengthens the muscles in the hands, which prepares children for writing. **You are never wasting time by playing**

INFANTS- with infants you are going to be busy responding to their needs—holding them, feeding them, changing them, waiting for them to wake up from
their naps, etc... but when you get some time in between...

**Walk Around**

Being carried offers the perfect way for your baby to see things. Walking is comforting to a baby and because everything is new to them, everything around them is interesting and stimulating.

**tips**- the more cuddling and smiling and talking to your baby you do, the more connected they will feel to you.

**Tummy Time**

Before they can walk but after they can hold their heads up, it is important that babies use and develop their muscles and **core strength**.

Simply put them on their bellies on the floor of the room and sit with them. You can shake rattles or place a colorful object in front of them. **Make sure it isn't sharp or small enough to fit in baby's mouth and choke on!**

**tips**- Keep talking to them even though they can't talk back. Tell them they are doing a great job and that you love them. **Hearing the words is the first step towards learning to talk and babies love positive interaction.** Make funny faces and laugh and they will laugh too. Be sensitive to babies needs and if they are starting to look upset or cry, you've probably had enough tummy time. Remember not to over stimulate your baby.
CRAWLING INFANTS

you can crawl too!

If your baby is crawling they might think it's fun if you get down and crawl too. If it makes them laugh, chase them a little bit.

You can also put a towel or soft ball on the ground- anything that they can touch and will excite their senses but nothing too small that they might put it in their mouths and choke on it.

peek-a-boo
hide behind your hands or an object and then show your face, smiling and saying peek-a-boo. They will usually laugh and try and play too.

**hide and seek**

encourage movement by hiding a bright toy and letting them find it.

**tips** - Don't place the toy too far away or hard to find or they will forget about it. And don't forget to get excited for them when they find it. They will love it if you clap.
**TODDLERS**- once they've started walking and have developed some motor skills, your toddler can do all sorts of things. What activities you can do will depend on the temperament of your child. Some toddlers will sit and play quietly and some will run around the room in endless circles. They have so much energy! If you can get them to sit still for some time...

![Puppets](image)

**Songs and Stories**

**read books together.** This is one of the most important thing you can do with a child of any age to contribute to their development!

**tips**- you can let them pick a book and if they want to read the same book more than once, that's normal. They are learning from the repetition!
Let them turn the pages and touch the people, animals and objects in the book. Ask your toddler what and who they are? They will usually answer something even if they are pre-speech. They know what they are saying. Don't forget to tell them what a good reader they are!

sing a song


You can also make up a song that has directions in it. "Put away your toys, put away your toys..."

tips- They love to hear you sing and will try and sing along. If there is movement that goes along with the song, even better. Movement is great for those toddlers who don't like sitting still.

have a dance party

A spur of the moment dance party is great if you can play some music or just dance along to what you are singing. It is fun and good for motor skills.
tips on dancing- don't worry if you aren't a great dancer. You can probably find a room by yourselves and your toddler will think you are very entertaining just for shaking your booty.

Push Toys

Learning to Walk. Toddlers will pull themselves up on just about anything when they are trying to stand and walk. The center has some good push toys right at toddler level that not only help toddlers practice walking, they look pretty and they make fun noises.

tips on tantrums

70% of toddlers have at least one tantrum a day. It doesn't mean you are doing a bad job of parenting. Tantrums can mean yelling, crying and throwing toys or hitting you. Let them know that everything is okay. Speaking in a calm manner helps them to calm down. If you get upset at them for having a tantrum, they will continue to tantrum. Be calm, use a soothing voice and let them know you are there for them.

They will settle down eventually.
If you feel like you need help, tell a coach at the center. Sometimes you need an extra pair of hands. **And remember to breathe!**

**You can also try the then, when rule!** When you are calm, then we can walk around!

**CHILDREN 3 TO 8-** There are so many fun things to do with this age group and the children are really able to join in with games and activities of all kinds.

**Drawing and Coloring**

The center has markers and crayons for drawing and your child can use paper, a coloring book or a white board to create art. Your child might want to do this alone, if they are more independent or want you to draw along with them.

**tips-** You can ask your child if they want help and they will let you know. Even if you are not drawing with them, you can ask them about what they are drawing. **Children are so creative.** They will gladly tell you a story about what they are drawing if you ask.
Play Driving

There are plenty of toy trucks and cars and ramps to drive them on as well as carpets with road systems, so you can play right on the floor.

Follow the Leader

Have your child follow you around the room and copy the way you walk. Be silly.

March, turn in circles and wave your arms around. Then they can take a turn being the leader.
Eye Spy

This game can be adapted to your child's age and abilities. For younger kids, say, "Eye Spy something yellow!" if you are looking at a yellow toy truck. As they get older you can use letters. "Eye spy something that begins with the letter F!" for a frog, or say, "Eye Spy something that a teacher would use!" for a piece of chalk.

Make Believe

Pretending is great for creativity and learning!

Play Kitchen- use one of the play kitchens at the center to make pretend dinners with your child. There is some play food you can cook with, or you can play store and make purchases with your child to work on numbers.

Play workshop- use the tool table to build a birdhouse or a bed or shelves or whatever pretend thing your child wants to pretend build.

Play Store- use the play food and a table to play grocery store or make a pile of books to play bookstore.

Tips on make believe- if you are worried that you are not good at making up stories, don't be, your child will make up a story and you just play along.

and don't worry about things being like real life when you play pretend. Your child will have to deal with reality soon enough. There's no hurry.
Puzzles and Games

For kids at this level try an easy puzzle with less than 50 pieces

tips- sit with your child and provide support and praise but don't do it for them. They will let you know if they want help or you will sense if they are frustrated and you can put in a few pieces for them. Remember, there is no hurry and if your child gets bored that's fine, move on to the next activity.

The games at the center say on the box what age level the game is best for.

Bowling or Twister might be good for this age if your child wants to move around.

Try a Memory game, Candyland or Let's Go Fishin if they are feeling calm and need a challenge.
tips on praise-

Your child might not understand the game or play it according to the rules but praise isn't just for perfection. Tell them they are doing great no matter what. Play is for encouraging their self-worth so don't try and beat them in a game or get into an argument about how to play it. Any play encourages learning and self-worth.

Phrases to help you praise your child-

I like it when you....

Your are a great helper because....
Great idea!

You are listening so well

You've done a good job of...

I'm proud of you for...

Look how well you did it!

Beautiful! Great! Gorgeous! Tremendous!

**CHILDREN AGES 9 TO 17.** At this age your child has the ability to really express themselves. Peer relationships become more and more important and they are also more self aware. Creative activities that help them express their individuality and strength are key, so be open to the things they come up with.
**Art**

By this age we don't just call it drawing and coloring, we call it art! It's no problem to find paper, pencils and crayons at the center so encourage your child's talents. You can model for them. Sit still while they draw you and then you can draw them.

**Games and Puzzles**

Try a puzzle with more pieces or a game made for older kids like **Bingo, Taboo** or **Boggle**. You can also play cards games like **Crazy Eights, Concentration or Go Fish** with a regular deck of cards. Ask someone at the center if they know the rules to these games if you don't.

You can play **Hangman** or **Tic Tac Toe** with paper and pencils. These are fun ways to interact without having to leave the center.

**Simon Says** is a game that you can play without anything but your voices and can involve siblings. You can be Simon and direct your child or children to touch their toes or touch their head or turn in a circle but you say "Simon says touch your toes, touch your head", etc.... The players have to copy Simon's action, but if Simon says to do an action without saying "Simon says" first, the players shouldn't do the action. If they do, they are out. Simon tries to trick the kids into doing the actions by doing them him or her self. This is always fun.
**Treasure Hunt.** Kids love finding hidden objects. You can hide things in the room when your child isn't there and write notes with clues on them like "this blue guy is way up high". When they find the blue object there can be another clue with it to find the next hidden object.

**Charades.** Have your child think of a movie or TV show, a kind of animal or any silly thing and try and get you to guess it by acting it out. Now it's your turn.

**Blindfolded walk.** This is a game for building trust and it is important that your child agrees to it. Blindfold them and lead them around the room using only your voice to give directions. You can lead them to an object and ask them to guess what it is.
Reading

Books can be read out loud at any age. If your child is a tween or teen you can even find a book for young adults and have your child read out loud to you.

Go out on the town if possible

The center has a great list of places to go so ask someone for a suggestion. You can simply go for a walk along the waterfront. **Walking is a great way to find things to talk about because you can discuss what you see in the world around you.** You can also try the mall, the zoo, a park and various nature trails around town.

tips on attention-

**Your child wants your attention** and if they don't get positive attention, they will try and get negative attention. In other words, they will try and upset you so you will yell at them. If you give them positive attention, even for a short time during the visit, they will not have to try so hard for negative attention. **So ask them how they are! Listen!** Ask about school. Tell them they are **strong, smart, brave and amazing.**

tips on distraction-

Distraction tactics are good to know for any age child. When a child is heading for a tantrum or meltdown and trying to calm them down isn't working, **change** what's going
on around them. For toddlers it can be simple, like showing them a new toy or saying

**something silly**, like "I just saw a rhinoceros behind you!"

or **singing a song** they like.

**Food can be a helpful diversion** for toddlers and children a bit older. Keep animal crackers around or whatever they enjoy. You could **hide two different treats** behind your back and have them guess which hand. Either way they win and are distracted.

**Distraction for tweens and teens** isn't quite as simple but don't forget that you can just **let some things go**. Don't get drawn into a fight and don't forget you can still change the scene or change the subject.

**You can ask** if there's something they would rather be doing or offer to play a game they like. You can go for a walk. You can change the subject by asking them something about a subject you know they are interested in.

**If none of this works**, give them some time to calm down. You can leave the room if it is safe and that way you both get some time to calm down. Adults need time-outs too.
tips on picking your battles-

Your child may be angry with you if they don't see you all the time. They miss you and are afraid of the very same things you are afraid of. Fear can look like anger. If your child directs their anger towards you, calls you names, accuses you of things, don't yell back or call them names. Remain calm and try and talk things out together.

There may be a time when you do need to confront your child, for instance, if they are about to hurt themselves or you or put themselves in an unsafe situation. This is when you can raise your voice and attempt to stop them from what they are doing in a safe manner by holding them.

Do not confront them if they are angry but not unsafe. Let them work through their emotions and listen so they know you understand.
**APPENDIX B**

**Family Connection Center Fun**

What you will find to play with, do or read in each room

**Room 105**

books to read to babies and toddlers

work table with tools

play oven

cars that can be driven on carpet. carpet has roads on it!

legos

paper blocks

**Hallway outside room 105**

2 white boards to draw on

the other side of the white board has paper to draw or paint on

animal map of the world

books for all ages

**Room 104**

big trucks

toy cars with a ramp

plastic toys for learning letters

kitchen with stove, fridge, microwave, pots and pans and plastic food

push toys to help toddlers learning to walk
paper and crayons
lincoln logs

Room 103
small room with comfy recliners and changing table
and more toys for toddlers

Shelves in the hallway outside 103
puzzles of varying difficulties
games for all ages- Elefun, Pop the Pig, Cootie, Memory games, Bowling, Twister,
Candyland, Boggle, Let's Go Fishin, Bingo, Taboo, Rummikub, Have you Ever
Wondered?, Ants in Pants, Perfection, Are you Smarter than a 5th Grader?, Hed Banz,
Monkey Math

Room 102
hopscotch rug
white board
chalk board
push toys
play kitchen
learn your numbers poster
APPENDIX C

contcerns of SSAs (family coaches)

-lack of training

-being pulled from supervision to babysit and transport children

-not enough information on case initially

-communication flow between SSAs and SWs (SWs aren't aware of what's happening at visitation and SSAs don't know if visit will be cancelled, if child has changed placements, new behavioral issues, etc...)

-safety issues

-working over 40 hours

-public health nurses don't visit center

-SSAs not involved in meetings with family, SW.

-parents have issues with being watched(policed)

-no clear understanding about how to interact with parents

-no foster parent involvement. no communication about what happened at visits passed to foster family

-lack of training tools
APPENDIX D

To Do List For the Family Connection Center

- overall needs assessment for center
- community resource list for parents
- activity book for center and outside activities
- recommendations for visitation center environment, games, toys and activities
- create plan for meeting schedule- what meetings will occur, what they will look like
- address communication problem between Social Workers and staff at FCC
- create mental health assessment tools for children
- general safety recommendations for FCC
- create visual tools for mapping out visitation
- assess cultural competence. how is Humboldt practice model being incorporated?
- needs assessment for training SSA's/coaches?
- training for SSA's/coaches interaction with parents. How do we decide what level of interaction should be as far as modeling parenting skills., coaches being part of visit or not. Attempting to avoid "policing" parents.
- power point for training SSA's/coaches
- assessment for locations. How are families getting to visits? look at roadblocks to visitation in more rural areas
- look at how to include foster parents in visitation process