



# Building Bridges

Supervised Contact Service

## **INFORMATION PACK FOR CHILD CONTACT SERVICES**

Building Bridges Supervised Contact Service

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## **BUILDING BRIDGES CHILD CONTACT SERVICES**

Building Bridges offers Supervised Child Contact and Handover services throughout Perth and the South West region. This service provides a safe, neutral and child focused environment for children to visit with a non-resident parent or other family member.

Supervised contact and Handover services can take place on weekdays, after school or weekends at a venue or location to suit the needs of the family. Building Bridges can also provide standby cover for overnight or extended visits where there are concerns about the child's ability to settle or effectively manage any concern or their anxiety. Both services are focused on the child's needs and fulfil requirements of court orders, providing reports based on factual observations. They may be ongoing or one off, started and ended at short notice as required.

Building Bridges is able to respond personally and expediently to individual client requirements. Building Bridges offers a cost effective service to clients at time of high stress and is understanding of the difficulties and uniqueness of each family's situation.

### **Supervised Contact Service**

A supervised contact should be offered when it has been determined that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering harm during contact, or when concerns have been raised. Referrals to Building Bridges can be self-referred and/or are accepted from the Family Court, the Department for Child protection and Family support, Lawyers, Family Mediators, Mental Health Professions or other agencies.

The supervisor, an impartial person provided by Building Bridges will monitor the visit, staying within hearing and or visual distance at all times. Wherever possible the same supervisor will attend each visit to provide consistent care and management for the child. Our supervisors will intervene when necessary in relation to any inappropriate conversation or behaviour, or if support is needed during a visit. Building Bridges can work professionally in a planned way with vulnerable children.

### **Handover Service**

This service allows children to visit with a non-resident parent or other family member without witnessing or being at risk of witnessing parental conflict. At an agreed time and location a parent or family member will leave the child with a Building Bridges supervisor for the other parent to collect. A 'handover' conducted like this eliminates the need for parties in high conflict to have contact and keeps the visit child focused.

### **Child Focus**

Building Bridges supports families to develop and sustain positive relationships between a child and their non-residential family while maintaining the child's safety. Building Bridges services assist families to ensure the child is able to visit with non-residential family without being exposed to adult conflict. Continued and consistent contact with non-residential family promotes and maintains positive relationships helpful to a child's self-esteem. Children who have good self-esteem have been found to have better life outcomes. Furthermore, Children are able to grow socially and emotionally when they feel safe. A child's social and emotional development is protected with supervised visits and can empower the child to manage family change and associated decision making and



life challenges effectively.

The long term benefits for the children using the service include: forming positive relationships with non-residential family members; a reduction in the number of court cases which have been found to be harmful to children's emotions and overall functioning; the opportunity to build confidence and self-esteem; a reduction in behavioural problems; better academic achievement; assistance for children negotiating difficult family relationships

## **VISIT REPORTS**

Building Bridges provide a combined report for up to eight visits or subject to Court Order requirements. Supervisors can prepare a report after each visit if requested, or if following assessment if felt necessary. These reports will document relevant discussion, observations and outcomes observed by the supervisor during the visit. Reports can be tailored to family need and this will be discussed during intake and assessment. Reports can be issued on request by either party, payment for the report will be the responsibility of the parent making the request if this is not in line with the requirements of the Court Order. Reports will be sent to both parties. Building Bridges will issue the report within seven working days once payment has been received. Please note that if you have one or more supervisors supervising your visits each supervisor will provide a report of their observations

## **REFERRAL PROCESS**

Referrals are accepted through Court Orders, Lawyers, Parenting Agreements or from a Child Protection and Family Support care plan. Building Bridges will also accept self-referrals if appropriate. Each Party is booked in to complete an intake and assessment over the telephone. This must be completed with each parent, relative or carer involved in the visits before any service can be provided. A full risk assessment will also be completed as part of the assessment process. Intake sessions are booked following receipt of registration fee. Building Bridges is unable to begin the booking process before the registration fee is paid. If this is a shared cost the other party will need to cover their registration fee at the time of booking. Copies of current Court Orders, VRO's or other relevant documents will need to be provided to the agency.

***All information provided during intake and assessment is completely confidential.***

## **CONTACT HOURS PROVIDED**

The amount of supervised contact (no minimum or maximum hours) Building Bridges will provide is dependent on many factors including:

- What is detailed in the court order
- What is considered appropriate following intake and assessment
- The child's needs
- Availability of supervisors in relation to area requested



Variation, progression and continuation of supervised contact is considered and based on agency monitoring visits and/or court order direction. Visits will normally continue until the matter goes before the court or until we are otherwise advised in writing.

## **SUPERVISOR**

Personal details of families and individuals are **kept strictly confidential**.

Supervisors remain impartial and non-judgmental at all times. The child is paramount, and the supervisor's role is to ensure their safety and wellbeing at all times.

1. All Supervisors must have a Police Clearance issued within the last twelve months and sighted at the time of their employment commencing.
2. Two references are required.
3. Supervisors must provide a Working with Children Check.
4. Supervisors have a range of qualifications relevant to the role including Psychology, Social workers, Teachers, Diploma of Early childhood Education and Child care.
5. Experience, work ethic, maturity, life skills and qualifications are all taken into account when the Agency is selecting Supervisors.
6. All Supervisors are interviewed, briefed and trained to ensure they have the skills and knowledge necessary to provide service of a high standard.
7. Building Bridges is very selective when employing supervisors and recognises the need for ongoing training. Training is provided in the following areas; child protection, family domestic abuse, report writing, dealing with high conflict, child focus work, and any relevant training needs identified.

### **Supervisor's Responsibilities**

- Supervisors will contact each party by SMS **24 hours** prior to **each visit** to confirm arrangements. If confirmation is not received they will notify the agency.
- The Supervisor will be familiar with the Court Orders. Any orders will be sighted by the Supervisor at the time of the first visit if Building Bridges has not received them in advance.
- Matters relating to Court Orders **will not** be discussed with the supervisor before, during or after scheduled visits. Any queries or concerns will be directed to Building Bridges manager.
- The Supervisor will not pass any messages from one party to the other. It is important the supervisor is a neutral party and seen to be neutral in all their actions.
- The Responsibility of the Supervisor is to care for the physical and emotional safety of the child/children during the visit. However, they are not a babysitter and are there to supervise the parent.
- ***Neither parent is to denigrate the other parent, especially in front of the children.*** Should this occur the supervisor will politely request this to cease and give a warning, if it continues they will terminate the visit.
- The Supervisor will arrive with identification. It is appropriate for the supervisor to show clients their Working with Children card.



- Any requested changes to the Court Order must be referred to your Legal Representatives or to the Family Court at your next hearing.
- The child/children must be seated in the Supervisor's rear car seats by the attending parent.
- A report based on factual observations will be completed by the Supervisor. **A Supervisor cannot and will not suppress anything from a report at the request of a party.**
- Payment for a copy of a report must be made direct to the Supervisor prior to the release of a copy.
- Any concerns or issues regarding a Supervisor **relating to the contact** must be in writing and sent to Building Bridges manager.

## **PARENT WITH WHOM THE CHILD/REN RESIDE**

1. A Supervisor will phone or SMS you 24 hours prior to each visit, after Building Bridges has passed on any relevant information. At this time the visit will be confirmed and payment received. A supervisor is not required to give you their phone number. Any medical conditions or dietary requirements for the child should be discussed in relation to the visit if not detailed on the visit plan. It is not the supervisor's role to talk to you at length before, during or after visits.
2. The supervisor will arrive 10- 15 minutes early on the first visit, to meet and greet. The child or children must be ready on time or a **"late fee" of \$17.50** will be charged to the residential parent by the supervisor for each additional **15 minutes**.
3. You must notify the supervisor as soon as practically possible if you are going to arrive late for a visit, they will need to notify the other party to ensure no crossover.
4. The contact time for the non-residential parent commences from when the supervisor arrives with the child or children. If you or the supervisor arrives late the visit will commence when Visiting Parent arrives. This ensures the visit length is not compromised.
5. Court Orders will be adhered to at all times. New conditions or concerns must be passed to the other party via their Legal Representative who in turn will advise Building Bridges in writing. No new conditions are to be placed on the supervisor at the time of the visit.
6. On return to the residential parent the supervisor is NOT expected to give a rundown on the events. Information may be passed on by the supervisor if immediate concerns have been identified in relation to the child.
7. The supervisor must be advised prior to the commencement of contact, in writing, if the child or children are to be returned to anyone other than the residential parent.
8. A minimum of 24 hours must be given to the supervisor in the event of a cancellation of services or a cancellation fee will apply. **This will be charged to the parent cancelling the booking regardless of reason given for cancellation.**

## **PARENT WITH WHOM THE CHILD/REN ARE VISITING**

1. Consideration is given to the location requested to ensure it is in the best interests of the child (Travel time for child, residence if factors relating to concern due to drugs or alcohol, etc) If a child's needs are not being met or it is specified in a court order restrictions will be put in place.
2. No others are to attend visits unless specified through a Court Order or through agreement through your Legal representatives, if others turn up at visits they will be requested to leave.
3. No phones calls or video calls to be taken or made during visit time. No video recording is permitted during visit time.
4. No excessive gifts to be given to children during contact time (consideration will given to birthday and Christmas)
5. No smoking is permitted on visits around the child.
6. You are to remain at the visit at all times, the supervisor is not there to take responsibility for your child during allocated visit time.
7. All conversation with the child is to be appropriate, especially take note that there is to be no conversation in relation to the current court case or any information about the other party.
8. If a visiting parent is to use their car to transport child/ren and or supervisor, they must provide to the agency a copy of their driving licence and vehicle registration number prior to the visits commencing not on the day of visit.
9. You must notify the supervisor as soon as practically possible if you are going to arrive late for a visit.
10. Supervisors only report on their observations and factual information during visits. Opinions and reasons for supervision or other information are not to be discussed during visits.
11. Please do not be anxious by the supervisor writing notes it is necessary for them to be able to do this so they can report accurately and without having to rely on their memory. Supervisors will write notes in a discreet manner at all times.
12. Setting reasonable boundaries and maintaining appropriate parenting for your child does not reflect badly on your parenting skills.
13. The supervisor is to stay within sight and hearing at all times, approximately 2 – 3 metres depending on location and noise. This is to ensure everyone's safety and well-being during the visit.
14. If a child needs to go to the toilet during a visit, if they are old enough to go on their own the supervisor will ensure the safety of the child whilst doing so. If a child needs to be assisted the supervisor will escort them to the toilet, or the parent and child if appropriate. The supervisor will where possible locate single toilets.
15. Supervisors will aim to arrive as close as possible to the arranged time of contact. Sometimes a delay in departure from the residential home or driving conditions may cause a late arrival. **Your contact time starts from the arrival time of the supervisor and the supervisor will notify you of their lateness as soon as practically possible.**
16. Please ensure that you are at the arranged venue at the agreed time, you are not to arrive early or hang around the location prior to the visit.
17. Please ensure you arrive at the agreed time, visit time will not be made up if you are late.





18. No alcohol or drugs are to be consumed prior to or during the contact visit or by any person attending the visit. The visit will be suspended by the supervisor if they suspect someone to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
19. The supervisor has the final decision as to where the children are to be taken on contact if safety is of concern. It is important that the appropriateness of location is considered. It is hard to supervise at some locations and Building Bridges will not supply supervisors at some locations. For example a public swimming pool has a lot of background noise. Therefore, it is not possible for supervisors to be within sight and hearing distance at all times.
20. If the supervisor has experience of certain situations that could jeopardise your contact time they may make requests or recommendations to assist you.
21. It is your responsibility to end your contact on time. The Supervisor may charge a late fee if a delay occurs.
22. Building Bridges recommends that you do not expect your parental duties to be completed by a supervisor. Contact is for you and your child and we encourage this quality time.
23. When you travel by car all children must be in seatbelts or age appropriate car seats in the back of the car and not in the passenger seat in the front. If appropriate seating is not provided you will not be permitted to travel with the child or supervisor.
24. If the supervisor's car is used for transport during contact, the non-residential parent must travel next to the supervisor in the front of the car and the Car Allowance of \$0.75 per kilometre rate will be charged.
25. Children may not travel without a supervisor at any time during a visit.
26. Supervisors are to be notified if relevant regarding prospective visits locations in order to be equipped with appropriate clothing if required.
27. 24 hours' notice of Cancellation must be given or the cancellation fee will apply.



## **BUILDING BRIDGES SUPERVISED CONTACT SERVICE AGREEMENT TERMS & CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

1. Supervised Contact and Supervised Handovers are services provided by Building Bridges to enable your child or children time with a non-residential parent, or other family member.
2. The aim of the service is to ensure the child or children are priority and to ensure their physical, emotional and mental wellbeing are paramount, and to ensure the purpose of complying with court orders or agreements made.
3. Copies of the Parenting, Consent and/or Restraining orders or Written Agreement between the parties must be provided to the agency or given to the supervisor on the first visit or handover. By providing copies and signing this agreement you are agreeing to Building Bridges keeping copies on file.
4. All information provided to Building Bridges and supervisors will be treated in strict confidence, unless it is disclosed that a person is at risk of harm or serious injury as we have a professional responsibility to pass this information on to the relevant agency, Building Bridges will notify you if this is the case.
5. Building Bridges is a reportable service. Information is kept on file and the court can subpoena file information at any time.
6. Building Bridges may require up to five working days to endeavour to provide a supervisor and for a visit to commence. No guarantees of availability will be given.
7. Building Bridges is under no obligation to respond to all requests, assessments determine appropriateness of service on all new referrals.
8. Consideration is given to the location requested to ensure it is in the best interests of the child (Travel time for child, residence if factors relating to concern due to drugs or alcohol, etc) If a child's needs are not being met or it is specified in a court order restrictions will be put in place.
9. Your supervisor will SMS you 24 hours prior to the visit to confirm the visit, you will need to confirm back.
10. Only matters relating to immediate concerns will be discussed with a parent/carer following a visit, if necessary the supervisor will contact building bridges in relation to concerns that are not immediate and the service will make appropriate contact.
11. Please note if your supervisor is not available due to illness, or personal circumstances on your allocated day we will allocate another supervisor but this is subject to their availability in relation to day and time.
12. Phone calls and emails to Building Bridges are available and responded to during office hours, 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday.
13. Changes to the arrangements are to be made through your relevant Legal Representative or requests to Building Bridges in writing, please note fees will apply.
14. Building Bridges reserves the right to withdraw the use of the service due to any inappropriate behavior, including disrespect to staff, failure to adhere to terms and conditions of service, or continuous cancelation of the booked visits or handovers.





## Service Fees

15. Both parties will each pay a Registration, Intake and Set-up fee direct to the service unless agreed that one party will cover the full cost. An invoice for amount will be sent when confirming your intake and assessment appointment in place. The fee must be paid by Direct Debit into Building Bridges Bank Account prior to intake and assessment appointment. The Agency Supervised Contact registration, intake and set-up fee is to cover the cost of assessment, sourcing detail and instruction from solicitors and parents and setting up the service between the parties and to source and brief a supervisor.
16. Fees are to be paid direct to supervisors at the time of the visit/handover unless otherwise agreed through the service. Cash payments of correct amounts are to be placed in an envelope and given to the supervisor in a discreet manner at the start of the visit/handover. Supervisors will provide you with a receipt for the amount and should not be required to request payment.
17. A weekly \$10 communication fee will apply following initial set-up of the visits if the agency feels this is warranted with continued requests for changes to your current visit plan.
18. If late attending a visit, or arriving late for pick-up a late fee will apply (\$17.50 per 15 minute blocks).
19. A minimum of 24 hours is required to cancel a visit or handover, a cancellation fee of \$70 will be charged to the person cancelling the visit.
20. Requests for a different supervisor will incur the booking fee each time to source and brief a new supervisor. An e-mail to the agency is required to detail reasons for request and this will be assessed for appropriateness.
21. Report fees will be requested by the supervisor to the person requesting the report, following receipt of payment reports will be sent to both parties from the service.

***I have read and accept these terms, conditions and fees and agree to abide by Service guidelines as listed above.***

Full Name.....

Signature.....

Date.....





## BUILDING BRIDGES FEE SCHEDULE

	SERVICE	COST
1	Agency Intake/Assessment/Set Up Fees for each Party	\$100.00
2	CPFS Referrals - Agency referral & Set Up Fee	\$120.00
3	Agency Communication Fee (Out of hours communication, additional e-mails, additional negotiation between parties, requested changes to booked visits)	\$10.00
4	Casual re-bookings for a supervisor	\$35.00
5	Supervised Visits per hour	\$70.00
6	Supervised visits - staggered arrival and departure times (15 minutes each end of the visit – total 30 minutes)	\$35.00
7	Subiaco Home Centre Supervised Visits per hour	\$75.00
8	Subiaco Home-Centre Supervised visits - staggered arrival and departure times (15 minutes each end of the visit – total 30 minutes)	\$37.50
9	Handover fee – per each handover	\$70.00
10	Subiaco Home – Centre Handover fee – per each handover	\$75.00
11	Additional phone calls/SMS messages to and requested from the supervisor – not including confirmation	\$5.00
12	Supervisor's travel time per 30 minutes at certain times without children i.e. to and from an aborted visit	\$15.00
13	Supervisor's Car Allowance per km between pick up and contact locations, and contact locations and drop off.	\$0.75
14	Sunday Surcharge	\$20.00
15	Surcharge for - Christmas Day	\$120.00
16	Surcharge for - Easter Sunday, New Year's Day	\$100.00
17	Surcharge for - Public holidays, Christmas Eve, Boxing Day, New Year's Eve, Good Friday, and Easter Monday.	\$60.00
18	Copy of the Supervisor's Individual Report (per page)	\$70.00
19	Copy of the Supervisor's Combined Report (per page)	\$70.00



20	Additional letters requested from agency	\$50.00
21	Court Appearance by Supervisor (Up to 2 hours- then hourly rate of \$70 applies)	\$150.00
22	Cancellation within 24 hours- fee payable to Supervisor (Responsibility of parent/carer cancelling visit)	\$70.00
23	Aborted Visit on the booked day, 1 hour fee Plus travel time at \$15.00 per half hour if applicable	\$70.00 \$15.00

***Building Bridges will invoice their Registration, Intake and set-up fee directly to both parties if shared or to parent responsible for intake at time when intake and assessment appointment is booked . The account is due before the service commences.***

***This service provides specialist care in good faith. We would not wish to cancel contact for your child/children due to non-payment of fees.***

***The supervisor is paid directly for each visit in cash, or by arrangement by bank transfer between you. They will provide you with a receipt. Please ensure correct amount is placed in an envelope prior to the visit and discretely handed to the supervisor at the start of the visit to ensure the children do not witness the transaction of payment.***

***If you have any queries in relation to fees please do not hesitate to contact Building Bridges manager for clarification.***

**0499 799 123**

**[info@buildingbridgesscs.com.au](mailto:info@buildingbridgesscs.com.au)**

**[www.buildingbridgesscs.com.au](http://www.buildingbridgesscs.com.au)**



### ***Other Support Resources***

***Parentline [www.parentline.com.au](http://www.parentline.com.au) 1300 301 300***

***Kidshelpline [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au) -1800 55 1800***

***Lifeline [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au) 13 11 14***

***Suicide Help Line [www.suicideline.org.au](http://www.suicideline.org.au) 1300659467***

***Domestic Violence Resource Centre [www.dvrc.org.au](http://www.dvrc.org.au) 1800 737 732***

***Women's Domestic Violence Helpline – (08) 9223 1188***

***Family Violence – 1800 RESPECT – [www,1800respect.org.au](http://www,1800respect.org.au) – 1800 737732***

***Mensline Australia – 1300 789 978***

***Beyondblue – 1300 22 4636***

***Mental Health in Multicultural Australia – [www.mhima.org.au](http://www.mhima.org.au) – (02)6285 3100***

***Money Help Website – [www.moneyhelp.org.au](http://www.moneyhelp.org.au) 1800 007 007***

***Department of Communities- Child Protection and Family Support – 1800 622 258***

***Family Court of WA – 1800 199 228***

***Community Legal Centres – National Office – [www.naclc.org.au](http://www.naclc.org.au)***

***Family Relationship advice line – [www.familyrelationships.gov.au](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au) 1800 050 321***