

CJ 140 Project One Scenario Family Visit to Jail

A female enters a correctional facility with her three minor children, ages three, five, and nine, to visit her husband, who is incarcerated. When she enters the facility, she signs in and follows the procedures to prepare for her visit. As she signs a form in which she acknowledges that she is in a correctional facility and therefore her person, property, and vehicle are all subject to search at any time, and that audio and video recordings are taking place throughout her visit, she frowns and shushes her children.

Her husband is brought to a visitation room. A sign advises all visitors and inmates that audio and video recording is taking place. The design of the room prevents the inmates from having any physical contact with their visitors. The room and each visitor are actively monitored via closed-circuit (CCTV) surveillance by facility officials. The inmate and visitor speak with each other via handset using an internal phone system. Their conversation is recorded.

During the visit, the guard watching the interaction believes that a form of nonverbal communication is taking place between the female and her husband. The husband and wife are not speaking English, and the guard listening does not understand the language they are speaking. It also appears as if the husband is tapping the plexiglass in a pattern, and then the female responds with a similar tapping. The guard also believes that the female removed an object from her mouth and placed it in a small gap between the plexiglass and the desk. The guard observing the situation silently signals to the guard at the exit. The facility continues to monitor the interaction, without intervening, and the female repeats this action one more time.

While this interaction is taking place, the guard also notes that the female continually bounces her leg, the children all sit silently against the wall with slouched shoulders, and the inmate nods his head any time he is not tapping on the glass.

After they conclude their visit, the female leaves the area silently. The guard opens the door for her and walks alongside her, creating a space between her and her children.

As a matter of procedure, after each visit, all visitors and inmates are removed from the visitation room, the room is cleared by a prison official, and the room is then cleaned by a trustee-inmate in preparation for the next group. Before the trustee-inmate gains access to the room, prison officials tell him to wait. The trustee-inmate raises his eyebrow when told not to enter the area, but he silently complies with the guard's order. A guard goes in and closely inspects the area where the female appeared to place the object. They find contraband.

The guards direct the female to a waiting room and kneel down to address her children before they leave the prison. The situation begins to escalate as the female and her children are separated by the guards.