

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy

Procedure and Practices, including responsible person(s):

All observations or suspicions of child abuse or neglect will be immediately reported to the Child Protective Services hotline: 1-800-800-5556 within one hour upon discovery of the abuse/neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred.

The directors and all staff shall refrain from questioning children and suspected perpetrators beyond gathering information to report the suspected abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services. All staff involved in the reported incident will follow the direction of Child Protective Services regarding completion of written reports. If the parent or legal guardian of the child is suspected of abuse, staff will follow the guidance of Child Protective Services regarding notification of the child's parent or legal guardian. Reporters of suspected child abuse would not be discharged for making a report; unless it is proven that a false report was knowingly made.

Signs of suspected child abuse or neglect would be recorded on the Student Injury Report Form, which will be kept in a confidential file located in the director's office. If a staff member is suspected of abuse, parents or legal guardians of suspected abused child will be notified by one of the Co-Directors (Tammy Clark or Shannon Allen) immediately after contact with Child Protective Services is made.

Staff who is accused of child abuse will be suspended pending investigation of the accusation. However, no accusation or affirmation of guilt will be made until the Child Protective Services investigation is complete. The center shall at all times maintain the confidentiality of all information obtained regarding the suspected or neglect of a child. Caregivers found guilty of child abuse or neglect will be immediately dismissed.

When this policy applies: Whenever any staff member has reason to suspect that any child on the premises of this childcare facility or any child not under the care of this childcare center may have been abused or neglected by anyone.

Communication Plan for Staff and Parents: Staff and volunteers will receive a written copy of this policy in their New Employee Paperwork. All parents will receive a written copy of this policy in their Admission packet upon their child's enrollment.

Effective Date and Review Date: This policy is effective as of 5-1-2012 and will be reviewed annually or as needed.

References:

- Prevent Child Abuse Indiana - www.pcaain.org
- Caring for our Children - <http://nrc.uspsc.edu>
- Model Child Care Health Policies - <http://www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org>
- State Regulations

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

1. Call Child Protective Services 1-800-8005556 within one hour of occurrence
2. Call child's parent or legal guardian
3. Complete student injury report and file in confidential file

Deduction and Prevention of Child Abuse

Deduction

Physical Signs

- Bruises/injuries in various stages of healing
- Unexplained bruises, welts, burns
- Explanation of injury does not fit
- Lack of medical attention for injury/illness
- Head trauma
- Bulges or recession of "soft spot"
- Areas of missing hair
- Facial injuries/eye injuries
- Severely underweight/failure to thrive
- Not growing as expected
- Poor appetite/weight loss
- Very poor personal cleanliness/hygiene
- Inappropriately dressed
- Dark circles under eye
- Difficulty breathing
- Unusual vomiting (bloody)
- Bowel disturbance
- Untreated injuries or diaper rashes
- Blood in diaper
- Torn, strained, or bloody underclothing
- Discharge from genital or anal area
- Bite marks

Emotional/Behavioral Signs

- Sudden regression in a developmental area of a milestone (toilet training)
- Developmental lags not due to a disability
- Sudden major change in alertness/attentiveness
- Less creative or spontaneous play
- Less or little cooing or vocalization
- Less or little smiling, eye contact, exploring
- Poor social skills with peers

- Verbalizes abusive experiences or acts experience out with toys or puppets
- Acting out sexual or violent play
- Discussion of or interest in sexual body parts (beyond normal developmental curiosity)
- Sexual knowledge or unexpected behavior
- Excessive masturbation
- Seems fearful of physical contact
- Unusually passive or aggressive behavior
- Extreme agitation
- Sudden or pronounced new fears
- Nightmares/night terrors
- Easily frustrated
- Severely withdrawn/depression
- Excessive crying
- Showing no feelings

How caregivers can help to prevent child abuse

- By being aware of the signs of child abuse and neglect
- By knowing the state rules and regulations
- By implementing policies and procedures
- By offering resources and referrals
- By consulting with other professionals
- By being knowledgeable about child development
- By altering the environment and curriculum
- By using prevention strategies to reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect
- By being knowledgeable about what child abuse is and the risk factors that may contribute to child abuse and neglect
- Building positive relationships
 - important for healthy brain development
 - greeting—call by name
 - acknowledge requests
 - primary caregiver
 - consistent staff
- Building responsive interactions/trust—playing and conversing with the child
- Reinforcing repetition – learning
- Facilitating respect
 - Must be offered first
 - Include cultural consideration
 - Include parental input
- Establishing routines/schedules
 - should be predictable
 - consistent
 - incorporate learning
 - provide individual attention

