

Preventing Child Abuse in Classrooms and Programs

Use this checklist to make sure you and your team are doing everything you can to keep children safe.

Protecting Children from Child Abuse at Home or in the Community

- I know each child and family by name.
- I talk to families regularly about their lives at home (stressors, jobs, deployment, child-care arrangements, questions about their child's development, etc.)
- I know the signs of stress in families.
- I model positive child-guidance techniques.
- I provide parent education or community resources.
- I encourage families to spend time at the program.
- I talk to children regularly about their friends and experiences at home.
- If I notice a strange bruise, mark, or injury, I ask the child about it.

Protecting Myself from Allegations of Child Abuse

- I make sure adult-to-child ratios are posted, understood, and followed at all times.
- I use active supervision strategies; I can see and hear all children at all times.
- I complete written incident reports whenever an injury or potential injury occurs.
- I minimize opportunities for adults to be alone with children.
- If I am alone with children, I welcome or request visits from my supervisor.
- I understand that cameras or other surveillance equipment is a tool that can protect me from allegations.
- I do not allow unauthorized visitors in my classroom. All visitors must sign-in at the front desk.

- I question adults who are not wearing name tags or visitors badges.
- I conduct a daily health screening when the child arrives. I write down any illnesses, marks, or bruises. If I notice any unusual marks, I ask the child and parent what happened.
- I make sure that the windows to classrooms are uncovered, so supervisors and others can see in all classrooms.
- I do not allow children to go into closets, sheds, or workrooms (with or without an adult) where they cannot be seen.
- I never use, or threaten to use, corporal punishment like paddling.
- I never force a child to be touched (hold my hand, hug, be carried, have his/her back rubbed, etc.).
- I make sure children never leave the facility with a staff member or volunteer without written permission from parents.
- I do not transport children alone in my personal vehicle.
- I know and use positive guidance techniques. I know strategies to prevent challenging behavior. I know how to respond in a positive way.
- I have (or my program has) a written policy about discipline, guidance, and appropriate touch. I have read these policies and understand them.