

Saint Jerome Regional School Little Lions Preschool Abusive Head Trauma Policy

This policy is designed to prevent, recognize, respond to and report incidences of Shaken Baby Syndrome or Abusive Head Trauma. SJRS Little Lions Preschool believes that a major function of our job as childcare providers is to keep children safe, protect their healthy development, provide quality childcare and educate families. This function is accomplished by having policies such as this in place and practicing them daily.

According to the Mayo clinic, Shaken Baby Syndrom or Abusive Head Trauma (SBS/AHT) is “a serious brain injury resulting from forcefully shaking an infant, toddler or young child. SBS destroys a child’s brain cells and prevents his or her brain from getting enough oxygen. SBS is a form of child abuse that can result in permanent brain damage or death.”

Procedures and Practices

A. Recognizing Symptoms:

- a. Children are observed for the following signs and symptoms of SBS/AHT:
 - i. Irritability and/or high-pitched crying
 - ii. Seizures
 - iii. Bruises on upper arms, rib cage or head (maybe a result of gripping or hitting the head)
 - iv. Lack of appetite
 - v. Vomiting
 - vi. Poor feeding
 - vii. Lack of smiling or vocalization
 - viii. Difficulty staying awake or altered consciousness
 - ix. Inability to lift head or rigidity
 - x. Inability to focus the eyes or track movement
 - xi. Unequal pupil size

B. Response:

- a. If SBS/AHT is suspected, staff will:
 - i. Immediately call 911 upon suspecting SBS/AHT and inform the Program Director.
 - ii. Call parents/guardians
 - iii. Administer CPR if the child stops breathing. Staff trained in pediatric CPR will begin this process until medical professionals arrive and take over.

C. Reporting:

- a. Instances of suspected SBS/AHT or other maltreatment of a child will be reported to the Pa Department of Human Services Childline Hotline using one of the following methods:
 - i. Calling Childline at 800-932-0313
 - ii. Using the online reporting system for staff members.

SBS/AHT Prevention Strategies to Assist Staff in Coping with Fussing, Crying or Distraught Child

Staff will first determine if the child has any physical needs such as being hungry, tired, sick or in otherwise in need of care. IF all physical needs have been met, staff will attempt one or more of the following strategies:

- Speak or sing to the child in a soothing voice
- Redirect the child with a soothing activity
- Offer music
- Take child for a walk

Additionally, SJRS Little Lions Preschool will:

- Allow staff who feel overwhelmed to take a short, but relatively immediate break from children.
- Provide support for parents/guardians working with challenging behaviors.
- Share information with parents concerning successful strategies used on site with a particular child.

A. Prohibited Behaviors:

- a. Behaviors that are prohibited include (but are not limited to):
 - i. Shaking or jerking a child
 - ii. Tossing children into the air
 - iii. Pushing a child into walls, doors or furniture

B. Strategies to Ensure Staff Members Understand the Brain Development of Children:

- a. All staff will take PA DHS New Hire Orientation within 60 days, including modules on SBS/AHT. Training includes recognizing, responding to and reporting child abuse, neglect or maltreatment of children.

Staff Acknowledgement:

Name

Date

Parent Acknowledgement:

Name

Date

Saint Jerome Regional School-Little Lions Preschool Representative Acknowledgement:

Name

Date

This policy was created August 2022 to comply with CPSL Pa. Code § 3270.32(a), § 3280.32(a), and § 3290.32(a), which states that all DHS licensed Childcare programs must have a policy on file to identify, recognize, prevent and report SBS/AHT incidents.

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