

Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma

Belief Statement

I, _____ (name of home provider), believe that preventing, recognizing, responding to, and reporting shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma (SBS/AHT) is an important function of keeping children safe, protecting their healthy development, providing quality child care, and educating families.

Background

SBS/AHT is the name given to a form of physical child abuse that occurs when an infant or small child is violently shaken and/or there is trauma to the head. Shaking may last only a few seconds but can result in severe injury or even death. According to the State of Florida, Department of Children and Families, providers that care for infants must have a written policy and procedure to identify and prevent shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma. The policy and procedures must require completion of the safe sleep training by child care personnel, as outlined in I. Personnel B.6.

I. Personnel B.6. Safe Sleep/ Shaken Baby Syndrome Training, All child care personnel who work in a home that offers care to infants must have training regarding guidance on safe sleep practices, preventing shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma; recognition of signs and symptoms of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma; strategies for coping with crying, fussing, or distraught child and the development and vulnerabilities of the brain in infancy in early childhood within 30 days of hire at the home. For child care personnel to satisfy this requirement the training must be accomplished through one of following methods: the Department's Health Safety and Nutrition course, Department's Safe Sleep course, or the Early Learning Florida's Safe Sleep Practices course. Documentation of training must be maintained on the Department's training transcript in the child care personnel record.

Procedure/Practice

Recognizing:

- Children are observed for signs of abusive head trauma including irritability and/or high pitched crying, difficulty staying awake/lethargy or loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing, inability to lift the head, seizures, lack of appetite, vomiting, bruises, poor feeding/sucking, no smiling or vocalization, inability of the eyes to track and/or decreased muscle tone. Bruises may be found on the upper arms, rib cage, or head resulting from gripping or from hitting the head.

Responding to:

- If SBS/ABT is suspected, staff will:
 - o Call **911 immediately** upon suspecting SBS/AHT.
 - o Call the parents/guardians.
 - o If the child has stopped breathing, trained staff will begin pediatric CPR.

Reporting:

- Instances of suspected child maltreatment in child care in Florida are reported to: Florida Department of Children and Families' Florida Abuse Hotline. An online abuse hotline is available for professionally- mandated reporters to report suspected cases of abuse, neglect, abandonment, or exploitation of children or vulnerable adults at <https://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us/> or you can call **1-800-96-ABUSE**

Contact the local child care licensing agency:

Pinellas County License Board – Child Care License Program for Children’s Centers and Family Child Care Homes: Main phone: 727-507-4857 Mon – Fri 8 AM to 5 PM, After hour number – call 727-262-0247

• **Prevention strategies to assist staff in coping with a crying, fussing, or distraught child**

- Staff first determine if the child has any physical needs such as being hungry, tired, sick, or in need of a diaper change. If no physical need is identified, staff will attempt one or more of the following strategies:
 - Rock the child, hold the child close, or walk with the child.
 - Stand up, hold the child close, and repeatedly bend knees.
 - Sing or talk to the child in a soothing voice.
 - Gently rub or stroke the child's back, chest, or tummy.
 - Offer a pacifier or try to distract the child with a rattle or toy.
 - Take the child for a ride in a stroller.
 - Turn on music or white noise.

In addition, the home:

- Allows for staff who feel they may lose control to have a short, but relatively immediate break away from the child.
- Provides support when parents/guardians are trying to calm a crying child and encourage parents to take a calming break if needed.

Prohibited behaviors:

Behaviors that are prohibited include (but are not limited to):

- shaking or jerking a child
- tossing a child into the air or into a crib, chair, or car seat
- pushing a child into walls, doors, or furniture

Training Required:

- All staff will have shaken baby syndrome training
- All staff will have safe sleep training.
- All staff will have training on recognizing, responding to, and reporting child abuse, neglect or maltreatment as well as brain development of children up to five years of age.
- All staff will be informed of the policy and consequences of not following it.
- Web site resources will be available to all staff as additional training.

Provider: _____ Date: _____