



POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Policy

Staff with regular child contact. All staff with regular child contact have initial orientation training within three months of hire and ongoing training in all state, local, tribal, federal and program-developed health, safety and child care requirements to ensure the safety of children in their care; including, at a minimum, and as appropriate based on staff roles and ages of children they work with, training in: (K) Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect, in accordance with the requirement at paragraph (b)(5) of this section. (5) Safety practices. All staff and consultants follow appropriate practices to keep children safe during all activities, including, at a minimum: (i) Reporting of suspected or known child abuse and neglect, including that staff comply with applicable federal, state, local, and tribal laws; (b) A program must establish and implement a systematic approach to staff training and professional development designed to assist staff in acquiring or increasing the knowledge and skills needed to provide high-quality, comprehensive services within the scope of their job responsibilities, and attached to academic credit as appropriate. At a minimum, the system must include: (2) Training on methods to handle suspected or known child abuse and neglect cases, that comply with applicable federal, state, local, and tribal laws; *Head Start Performance Standards 1302.47 (4) (K) (5) (i) Safety practices: Safety training, 1302.92 (b)(2) Training and professional development.*

What must orientation for employees at my child-care center include? (3) An overview of your policy on the prevention, recognition, and reporting of child maltreatment, including: (A) Factors indicating a child is at risk of abuse or neglect; (B) Warning signs indicating a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect; (C) Procedures for reporting child abuse or neglect; and (D) Community organizations that have training programs available to employees, children, and parents; *Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers 746.1303 (3).*

Based on the above policies UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program staff will implement and enforce a system of health and safety practices that ensure children are kept safe at all times.

Procedure

1. All Early Head Start (EHS) personnel must be trained annually on Prevention and Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect.
2. The program's policies regarding child abuse and neglect shall be distributed to all personnel at the beginning of each school year. Health Advisory Committee and Policy Council shall also review the policies annually.
3. This procedure will be posted in all EHS Child Care Centers and/or EHS Classrooms.
4. Reports Required: A person who has cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall immediately make a report as required by law within 48 hours. Family Code 261.101 (a)
5. A professional may not delegate to or rely on another person to make the report. Family Code 261.101 (b).

To Whom Report: These reports shall be directed to any of the following: Any local or state law enforcement agency. The Child Protective Services division of the Texas Department of Protective

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and Regulatory Services: 1-800-252-5400. The state agency that operates, licenses, certifies or registers facility in which the alleged abuse or neglect occurs. Family Code 261.103

1. Every EHS employee, agent, or contractor who suspects child abuse or neglect must submit a written or oral report to at least one of the authorities listed above and notify Center Director/Center Manager. The Director/Center Manager will advise Grantee Director immediately.

Immune from Liability: Your report of child abuse or neglect is confidential, and you are protected from civil or criminal liability as long as the report is made in "good faith" and "without malice". "Good faith" means the person making the report took reasonable steps to learn facts that were readily available and at hand. "Without malice" means that the person did not intend to injure or violate the right of another person. Family Code 261.106;

Information in Report: This report shall contain, if known, the name and address of the child, the name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child, if available, and any other pertinent information concerning the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect. Family Code 261.104.

Failure to Report: A person commits a class B misdemeanor if he or she has cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect and knowingly fails to report as provided by law. Family Code 261.109. An employee who coerces another into suppressing or failing to report child abuse or neglect to a law enforcement agency a Class C misdemeanor offense. Penal Code 39.06

Confidentiality: Information given about a child and his/her family must not be shared with friends, other parents, one's own family or Early Head Start Staff who are not directly involved in handling the report of child abuse or neglect. A staff person has a "need to know" if the information is needed to properly care for and educate the child, and/or effectively provide support and services to the family.