

West Broward Academy VPK

Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome & Abusive Head Trauma Policy

Belief Statement

We, **West Broward Academy VPK**, 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 health development, providing quality childcare, 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.

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
 - Call 911 immediately upon suspecting SBS/AHT and inform the director.
 - Call the parents/guardians.
 - If the child has stopped breathing, trained staff will begin pediatric CPR.

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 facility:

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

Never:

- Shake a child.
- Drop a child
- Throw a child into the air or into a crib, chair, or car seat.
- Push a child into any object including walls, doors, and furniture.
- Strike a child's head, directly or indirectly.

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Staff acknowledgement form:

I, _____ (name) acknowledge that I have read and received a copy of the facility's Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma Policy.

Date policy given/explained to staff person

Staff Signature

Date

Parent acknowledgement form:

I, _____ (name) acknowledge that I have read and received a copy of the facility's Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma Policy.

Date policy given/explained to parent

Parent Signature

Date