



Extraordinary Education for the price of Ordinary Child Care

ABUSE POLICY/CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Preschool of the Arts, Inc. (PSA) has a responsibility to prevent child abuse and neglect of children enrolled in our program.

Child Abuse is defined as: (refer to Connecticut General Statutes, Section 46b-120.)

- Any non-accidental physical or mental injury (i.e. shaking, beating, burning, etc.)
- Any form of sexual abuse (i.e. sexual exploitation)
- Neglect of a child (i.e. failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, education, mental care, appropriate supervision)
- Emotional abuse (i.e. excessive belittling, berating or teasing which impairs the child's psychological growth)
- At risk behavior (i.e. placing a child in a situation which might endanger him by abuse or neglect)

All Child Care providers (Staff) are mandated by law to report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Hotline **1-800-842-2288** within 12 hours if there is actual or suspected child abuse or neglect or the imminent risk of serious harm of any child.

Child abuse or neglect is listed as the following (General Statutes Section 17a-101a-101d)

- (a) Presence of serious physical illness or serious physical injury.
- (1) When there is probable cause to believe that immediate removal of the child and custody of a child is necessary to prevent either the child's imminent death or imminent and serious danger to the child's physical well-being, and
- (2) The child's parent(s) or caretaker(s) is unable or unwilling to protect the child from such imminent death or imminent and serious danger to the child's physical well-being.
- (b) Presence of immediate physical danger from surroundings.
- (1) When the risk to the child appears created solely because the child has been left unattended at home, and the child's parent(s) or caretaker(s) has not returned or sufficient time has elapsed to indicate that the parent(s) or caretaker(s) does not intend to return.
- (c) Child unattended outside the home and all other circumstances involving immediate physical danger to a child from surroundings.

- (1) When there is probable cause to believe that immediate removal of the child and custody of the child is necessary to prevent either the child's imminent death or imminent serious danger to the child's physical well-being, and
- (2) The child's parent(s) or other such caretaker(s) is unable or unwilling to protect the child from such imminent death or serious injury.
- (d) Treatment by Christian Science Practitioner.
- For the purpose of these regulations, the treatment of any child by a Christian Science Practitioner in lieu of treatment by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts shall not of itself constitute maltreatment.

To report a suspected case of abuse or neglect:

- Call the DCF (open 24 hours a day) at 1-800-842-2288
- Call the Department of Public Health (DPH) at 1-800-282-6063 or 860-509-8045
- Call will be made within 12 hours of alleged abuse or neglect to the DCF Hotline
- Give reporter's name (required but may be kept confidential)
- Give the following information
 - Name of Child
 - Address of Child
 - Phone number of Child
 - Name of Parents/Guardians
 - Address of Parents/Guardians
 - Phone number of Parents/Guardians
 - Relevant information such as: physical or behavioral indicator, nature and extent of injury, maltreatment or neglect
 - Exact description of what the reporter has observed
 - Time and date of incident
 - Information about previous injuries, if any
 - Circumstances under which reporter learned of abuse
 - Name of any person suspected of causing injury
 - Any information reporter believes would be helpful
 - Any action taken to help or treat the child
- Seek medical attention for the child, if needed

It is the responsibility of the Director, Assistant Director, or person acting as Director to:

- Protect children (including notification of the parent or guardian) once there is an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child enrolled in the program or facility.
- Utilize the nurse as a collateral contact in determining if bruising/marks are more consistent with abuse
- If appropriate, take pictures of bruising that is considered to be consistent with abuse.

- Maintain yearly mandated reporter training.
- Complete the 136 form within 24 hours of initiating a referral to the DCF HOTLINE.
- Ensure that any ongoing concerns are consistently addressed with the parent/guardian prior to a DCF referral (unless there is reason to believe that the child would be in danger to return home).

The person in charge at the time of reporting will take appropriate steps to provide victims of abuse and neglect with needed medical services.

All employees of Preschool of the Arts, Inc. are required to comply with the following:

- Take attendance daily for children, recording time in and time out, verifying that parent/caretaker has signed them in and out.
- Discipline children using developmentally appropriate practice including positive guidance, redirection, setting clear limits that encourage children to develop self-control, self-discipline and positive self-esteem.
- The staff shall not engage in, nor allow abusive, neglectful, physical, corporal, humiliating, or frightening treatment or punishment, and shall not tie nor bind children and shall not physically restrain children except for the protection and safety of the child or others, using least restrictive methods as appropriate.
- The staff shall not engage in, nor allow, anyone else to engage in any sexual activity with the children in attendance in the program.
- The staff shall report actual or suspected child abuse or neglect, or in imminent risk of serious harm of any child to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) as mandated by section 17a-101 to section 17a-101e, inclusive of the Connecticut General Statutes (included in paragraph 4 of the Abuse Policy.)
- Any report shall be made to DCF within 12 hours by the mandated reporter.
- The staff understands what constitutes abuse, neglect, child protection and mandated reporting.

Staff are protected by law from discrimination or retaliation for reporting suspected abuse or neglect (CT GS, Section 17a-101e)

All phone calls to DCF shall be documented and kept on file at the center of Preschool of the Arts, Inc. A copy of all statements from staff and the DCF-136 shall also be kept on file.

The owners and management of PSA support a zero tolerance for abuse and neglect and will implement immediate action (suspension, reassignment of job duties, etc.) should there be an allegation that a staff member abused or neglected a child.

ALL STAFF are required to attend annual staff meetings, held in late August or early September, focusing on steps for reporting suspected abuse and neglect and the role of a mandated reporter. All new staff will be trained in these procedures prior to their start in the classroom.

This Abuse Policy will be included in Parent Handbook and posted on informational board at sign-in station

5-30-19