

CHILD ABUSE

POLICY: Our center will not tolerate any adult behavior which is abusive to children. Our center will not use punishment which is harmful. Our staff will report observed or suspected abuse of children to authorities as required by law.

PURPOSE: To safeguard the children in our care.
To comply with the state mandatory reporting laws.

PROCEDURE:

1. Prohibited Practices:

- a. Corporal punishment of any kind (any action which causes physical pain, i.e., spanking, pinching, hitting, shaking, pulling hair or limbs, etc.)
- b. Denial of food, rest, or bathroom opportunities.
- c. Abusive, threatening, or derogatory language, including yelling and belittling.
- d. Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical harm.
- e. Any form of emotional abuse including rejecting, terrorizing, ignoring, isolating, or corrupting a child.
- f. Any sexual acts of any kind, including inappropriate touching.

2. Suspicion of Abuse May Include:

- a. Child has unexplained bruises or bruises which don't match the explanation.
- b. Child displays unusual or intense fears.
- c. Child has sexual knowledge beyond their level of understanding.
- d. Child is dirty, unkempt, tired, or withdrawn much of the time.
- e. Child verbalizes being abused or makes concerning statements that lead you to suspect possible abuse.

3. Reporting Abuse

San Francisco Department of Public Health
Child Care Health Program
333 Valencia St. 3rd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103

- a. All observations or suspicions of abuse or neglect will be immediately reported to the child protective services (CPS) agency no matter where the abuse may have occurred. The childcare center should still make a report **even if** the parent/legal guardian tells you the situation has already been reported to CPS.
- b. **Phone number for reporting in SF: 1-800-856-5553 or 415-558-2650.**
- c. Follow the instructions of the CPS intake person.
- d. Submit a written report within 36 hours.
 - i. See section D-5 for the Suspected Child Abuse Report Form, or visit <https://www.sfhhsa.org/services/protection-safety/child-protective-services/mandated-reporters-child-abuse>
- e. If you are unsure if your concerns are reportable or not, call the CPS reporting hotline and ask if the situation is considered a mandated report.
- f. Discuss every CPS report or potential report with the center Director.

4. Report of Abuse by Childcare Staff

- a. Contact Licensing to report an unusual incident.
 - b. Inform parents of child involved in the report.
 - c. Suspend caregiver without pay pending the investigation or reassign to a role not involving the care of children.
 - d. If abuse is substantiated, terminate the staff.
 - e. If cleared, reinstate staff with all back pay.
5. All center staff must complete Child Abuse Mandated Reporter Training every 2 years per licensing requirements. Citations can be issued by licensing if staff are not up to date on their training. Link to training: <https://mandatedreporterca.com/>

