Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma Policy

We, Forever Kids Preschool and Daycare, 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 care, and educating families.

What is Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS)?

Shaken baby syndrome usually occurs when a parent or caregiver severely shakes a child in frustration or anger, often because the child won't stop crying. Permanent brain damage or death may result.

Symptoms include irritability, difficulty staying awake, seizures, abnormal breathing, poor eating, bruises, and vomiting.

Treatment will vary depending on complications related to shaken baby syndrome. In rare instances, breathing support or surgery may be needed to stop bleeding in the brain.

How Does SBS happen?

Babies have weak neck muscles and often struggle to support their heavy heads. If a baby is forcefully shaken, his or her fragile brain moves back and forth inside the skull. This causes bruising, swelling and bleeding.

Shaken baby syndrome usually occurs when a parent or caregiver severely shakes a baby or toddler due to frustration or anger — often because the child won't stop crying.

Shaken baby syndrome isn't usually caused by bouncing a child on your knee, minor falls or even rough play.

What are the symptoms of SBS?

- Extreme irritability
- Difficulty staying awake
- Breathing problems
- Poor eating
- Tremors
- Vomiting
- Pale or bluish skin
- Seizures
- Paralysis
- Coma
What is Abusive Head Trauma (AHT)?
Abusive head trauma is also called shaken baby syndrome. It's a form of child abuse that can be deadly or leave a baby seriously injured for a lifetime. Most often, victims of this kind of abuse are less than 1 year old, but it can happen with children up to age 5.

How does AHT happen?
Abusive head trauma happens when a baby is shaken violently, hit in the head, thrown, or dropped on purpose. It usually happens at the hands of an overwhelmed parent or caregiver who can't cope with a baby's long periods of crying and the demands of caring for a young child. Violently shaking a young child or hitting him or her in the head causes the child's brain to shake back and forth inside the skull. This is especially true in babies whose neck muscles aren't fully developed. The movement causes your child's brain to swell, bruise, and bleed from the tearing of blood vessels, nerves, and tissue.

What are the symptoms of AHT?
- vomiting
- irritability
- unusual drowsiness
- trouble sucking or swallowing
- no interest in eating
- stiff appearance
- changes in consciousness
- no smiling, babbling, or talking
- differently sized pupils
- inability to lift his or her head
- inability to focus eyes or track movement

Our center will practice
Recognizing:
- Children are observed for any of the above signs of SBS/ABT.
- Children are observed for any signs of bruising. Bruises that may be on the upper arms, rib cage, or head.

Responding:
IF SBS/ABT is suspected, staff will:
- Call 911 immediately and inform the director.
- Call parents/guardians.
➤ Preform any first aid or CPR as needed.

Reporting:

➤ Our center will report any suspicion of child maltreatment within the child care facility to the Department of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) by calling 1-800-859-0829 or by emailing webmasterdcd@dhhs.nc.gov.
➤ If our center suspects child maltreatment in the home, we will report it to the county Department of Social Services at 910-875-8725.
➤ If it is after 5:00 P.M. our center will report it to the local police department.

Our Center will prevent SBS/AHT by any and all of the following when it comes to a crying, fussy, or sick child. After the caregiver checks to make sure the physical needs of the child have been met, such as dry, clean diaper, and fed. The caregivers will do any or all of the following:

➤ Rock the child, hold the child close, or walk with the child.
➤ 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.
➤ Bicycle his legs while he lies on his back
➤ Check the child’s clothes to make sure they are not too tight or the child is not too hot.

In addition, the center will do the following:

➤ Allow staff who feel they may lose control to have a short, but relatively immediate break away from the children.
➤ Give support to parents/guardians who may be trying to calm a crying child. We will encourage parents to take a break if needed.

None of the following behaviors will be permitted:

➤ Shaking or jerking of a child
➤ Tossing a child into the air or into a crib, chair, or car seat
➤ Pushing a child into walls, doors, or furniture

Strategies to assist staff members understand how to care for infants

➤ The five goals and developmental indicators in the 2013 North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development, ncchildcare.nc.gov/PDF_forms/NC_Foundations.pdf
➤ How to care for infants and Toddlers in Groups, the National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families, www.zerotothree.org/resources/77-how-to-care-for-infants-and-toddlers-in-groups
Strategies to ensure staff members understand the brain development of children up to age five years of age.

All staff will be trained on SBS/ABT within the first two weeks of employment. Training will include recognizing, responding to, and reporting child abuse, neglect, or maltreatment as well as the brain development up to five years of age. Other information to be reviewed and discussed:

- Brain Development from Birth video, the National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families, www.zerotothree.org/resources/156-brain-wonders-nurturing-health-brain-development-from-birth

Websites:

- Abusive Head Trauma-How to Protect Your Baby
  https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Abusive-Head-TraumaShaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx
- The National Center on shaken Baby Syndrome http://dontshake.org/family-resources
- The Period of Purple Crying: http://purplecrying.info
- The American Academy of Pediatrics: www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx
- Preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/kh/trprev/Preventing_SBS_508-a.pdf
- Caring for Our Children, Standard 3.4.4.3 Preventing and Identifying Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma, http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView.cfm?StdNum=3.4.4.3&=

References:

- The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome, www.dontshake.org
- NC DCDEE, www.nccildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/general/mb_ccrulespublic.asp
- Shaken Baby Syndrome, the Mayo Clinic, www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/shaken-baby-syndrome/basic/symptoms/con-20034461
- Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED, American Red Cross, www.redcross.org/images/MED1A_CustomProductCatalog/m4240175 Pediatric ready reference.pdf

Application

This policy applies to children up to five years of age and their families, operators, early educators, substitute providers, and uncompensated providers.

Communication
Staff

➢ Within 30 days of adopting this policy, the child care facility shall review the policy with all staff who provide care for children up to five years of age.
➢ All current staff members and newly hired staff will be trained in SBS/ABT before providing care for children up to five years of age.
➢ Staff will sign an acknowledgement form that includes the individual’s name, the date the center’s policy was given and explained to the individual, the individual’s signature, and the date the individual signed the acknowledgement.
➢ The child care facility shall keep the **SBS/ABT staff acknowledgment form** in the staff member’s file.

Parents/Guardians

➢ Within 30 days of adopting this policy, the child care facility shall review the policy with parents/guardians of currently enrolled children up to five years of age.
➢ A copy of the policy will be given and explained to the parents/guardians of newly enrolled children up to five years of age on or before the first day the child receives care at the facility.
➢ Parents/guardians will sign an acknowledgement form that includes the child’s name, date the child first attended the facility, date the operator’s policy was given and explained to the parents, parent’s name, parent’s signature, and the date the parent signed the acknowledgement.
➢ The child care facility shall keep the **SBS/ABT parent acknowledgment form** in the child’s file.

*For purposes of this policy, “staff” includes the operator and other administration staff who may be counted in ratio, additional caregivers, substitute providers, and uncompensated providers.

Effective Date: