Preventing Child Abuse in Your Program

Use this checklist to reflect on whether you and your program are protecting children from abuse and neglect.

**Protecting children from child abuse at home or in the community**
- I know each child and family by name.
- I talk to families regularly about their lives at home (stressors, routines, jobs, deployment, child care arrangements, etc.).
- I build trusting positive relationships with each child and family.
- I know the signs of stress in families.
- I model positive guidance techniques.
- I provide parent education or community resources.
- I encourage families to spend time at the program.
- I talk to children regularly about their friends and experiences at home.
- If I notice a strange bruise, mark, or injury, I ask the child and family about it.
- I provide information to families about child development and parenting.
- I help build connections between the families in our program by promoting social events and making introductions.
- I know how to help families find resources they need like food, shelter, financial support, etc.

**Program policies that protect children from abuse and neglect**
- I make sure the appropriate ratio for my family child care home is followed at all times.
- I use active supervision strategies; I can see and hear children at all times.
- I complete written incident reports whenever an injury or potential injury occurs.
- I conduct a daily health screening when children arrive. I write down any illnesses, marks, or bruises. If I notice anything unusual, I ask the child and the parent what happened.
- I do not allow children to go into closets, sheds, or workrooms where they cannot be seen.
- I monitor restrooms, for children, and the amount of time they have been gone.
- I never use or threaten to use corporal punishment, such as paddling.
- I never hit a child even in play.
- I never force a child to be touched (hold my hand, hug, be carried, have his back rubbed, etc.)
- I make sure children never leave the program with another adult without written permission from parents and management.
- I use the buddy system when on field trips or outside of the facility. I insist children never use the restroom by themselves or go off by themselves.
- I do not transport children in my personal vehicle without permission.
- I know and use positive guidance strategies.
- I have review my program's written guidance and discipline policy. I understand them and follow them.