



# Child Abuse in Child Care Centers

## *A Plan for Prevention*

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1. Develop and implement good personnel policies. Encourage input from staff, parents, board members, and seek additional information from other child care centers that have previously developed what are known as good personnel policies.
2. Establish good hiring practices.
  - a. Provide a time to observe applicants working with children.
  - b. Check references as they relate to the applicants previous experience with children. Don't stop with the first reference! Go back beyond those initial references.
  - c. Ensure that your personnel policies include a probationary period and grievance procedures.
3. Hold regular staff meetings and have discussions about practices that could be misconstrued by parents or other outsiders, i.e., a staff member taking a single child on an errand.
4. Be attuned to staff. Identify and deal with stress immediately.
5. Provide for ongoing staff training. Discuss appropriate discipline methods, including a definition of discipline and how inappropriate discipline can be misconstrued or can be child abuse. Discuss more effective ways to work with groups of children in the classroom. These and other items that can be dealt with in staff training will help the quality of your program and increase staff morale.
6. Build into your admitting procedures a time for the child's teacher and aide to meet with the parents and discuss ways each shows affection to a child. Also staff may use this time to discuss program, including toileting and napping procedures.
7. Create an environment which allows teachers to establish a good communication system with parents. Allow time for staff-parent interaction on a daily basis. Teachers need to share the day's happenings with the parents, including those small scrapes!
8. Establish and communicate to parents an "open door policy". Invite parents to visit their child's classroom and encourage and welcome visits on an unannounced basis. (Don't panic; twenty parents won't show up at the same time.)
9. Use team teaching models and provide for at least two staff members in each nap room.
10. Open up classrooms. Install glass windows indoors; remove doors where feasible; arrange classrooms so that all is visible to the eye instantly.