



CAP ACTION EBLAST



Do Something! Do One Thing! One Thing Counts!

The Child Abuse Prevention Action Committee is a collaborative group involved in the planning and promotion of child abuse prevention efforts throughout Oklahoma.

Volume 2, Issue 2

“a publication of CAP ACTION and its partner agencies”

November 2013

Child Abuse Prevention and Child Care Providers

Caregivers and Reporting: That ‘Someone’ Might Be Me

As the news reports incidents of suspected child abuse, they usually include someone who said they suspected something, but they either didn't know for sure or didn't want to get involved. They might say why didn't “someone” do something? A hard part of being a caregiver and following reporting requirements is the fact that small children do fall down and hurt themselves. They get bruises and bumps. Even if they are old enough to talk, they sometimes can't say what happened to them when asked. At times, a childcare provider might think, “*What if I'm wrong in my suspicions*”. The childcare provider is responsible for telling the proper authorities (not another caregiver or the child's family) of their suspicions. That means that when a suspicion is reported to the **Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline**, trained staff will investigate whether or not the bruises are truly suspicious, or just normal injuries related to the development of the child. We can't forget suspected incidents of neglect too (malnutrition, consistent unclean appearance might be initial concerns) or inappropriate sexual play that goes beyond normal curiosity. Asking for advice through the Child Care Warmline is another way to be proactive **1-888-574-5437**.

Children can't always stand up for themselves and may need the caregiver to do it for them. Instead of wondering whether they were right in being concerned and whether or not something was happening to a child, they could be the one that stops horrible abuse or even death by their suspicions. To make a report is to request an investigation and to have someone gather facts and protect a child if the child needs protecting. Even if a caregiver is not certain, they should call, provide the information (report) and turn over the decision on whether further action is needed to the professionals that are accustomed to making that determination. The caregiver's responsibility is to look out for the well-being of every child they come into contact with. It is best to act on the side of caution and to pass information on so that someone can investigate to confirm or deny, or even have inconclusive determination. In a mobile society, families move from location to location. Their address may stay the same, but their caregiver might change.

Ask yourself... Are you that “someone” who needs to do something? Could you make a difference in a child's life by reporting a suspicion?

Licensing Requirements for Child Care Programs states that any caregiver who has a reason to believe that a child has been abused is required to promptly contact the statewide toll-free Child Abuse Hot Line at **1-800-522-3511**. Additional information can be found in Supplement II in each Child Care Requirements Book.

<http://www.okdhs.org/programsandservices/cc/prvdrs/lic/docs/requirements>

Please note: Oklahoma State statute requires **EVERY** person who has reason to believe a child under 18 is being abused or neglected, or is in danger of being abused or neglected, to promptly report the suspicion. Failure to report child abuse is a misdemeanor offense.

Do just one thing! Your one thing counts!

As Caregivers...

- ✓ Keep an observant eye on the children in your care.
- ✓ Value and nurture parents. Involve the parents when possible (ask them to help with a special event or to share a talent or skill with your class).
- ✓ Share news with parents about their child and their child's day (the good as well as any challenges).
- ✓ Link families to services and opportunities. Provide resources when needed on issues related to child development, behavior and guidance, or resources in the community (i.e. food pantries, clothing closets, parenting groups, etc).
- ✓ Set up a parent resource area or table for all parents.
- ✓ Respond to family crisis.
- ✓ Integrate the Strengthening Families Five Protective Factors into your center:
<http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families>

Agency Spotlight

OKDHS requires licensed programs to meet safety standards for the facility and the caregiver. Unannounced, on-site visits are conducted at least three times annually. Since 2008, a completed Criminal History Review Request must be submitted prior to employment or operating a new program. The steps for background requirements can be found at <http://www.okdhs.org/cc>.

Fingerprint checks have been added as part of the criminal history background review. New hires must pass fingerprint checks as of November 1, 2013. Individuals hired prior to 11/1/13, will submit cleared fingerprint checks as of November 1, 2015.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming CAP ACTION meetings:

- Wed, January 17, 2014, 10:00am
- Wed, March 21, 2014, 10:00am

CAP Day at the Capitol & Mini Conference:

Tuesday, April 8, 2014

Follow Us/Like Us – Click!



EARLY CHILDHOOD
TIP SHEETS

2014 Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Action begins now! [Sign Up](#) today to join efforts!