



Shaken Baby (Abusive Head Trauma) Policy

School Year: _____

Date: _____

Student's Name: _____

Grade/Teacher: _____



This policy is designed to prevent, recognize, respond to, and report instances of Shaken Baby Syndrome, or Abusive Head Trauma. Saint Miriam Academy believes that a major function of our job as childcare providers is to keep children safe, protect their healthy development, provide quality childcare, and educate families.

This function is accomplished by having policies such as this in place and practicing them daily. According to the Mayo clinic, Shaken Baby Syndrome or Abusive Head Trauma (SBS/AHT) is "a serious brain injury resulting from forcefully shaking an infant or toddler. Shaken Baby Syndrome destroys a child's brain cells and prevents his or her brain from getting enough oxygen. Shaken Baby Syndrome is a form of child abuse that can result in permanent brain damage or death."

[Reference: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/shaken-babysyndrome/symptoms-causes/syc-20366619>]

Procedure and Practices A. Recognizing Symptoms Children are observed for the following signs and symptoms of SBS/AHT:

- Irritability and/or high-pitched crying
- Seizures
- Bruises on upper arms, rib cage, or head (may be a result from gripping or hitting the head)
- Lack of appetite
- Vomiting
- Poor feeding/sucking
- Lack of smiling or vocalizations
- Difficulty staying awake or altered consciousness
- Difficulty breathing and/or blue color due to lack of oxygen
- Inability to lift the head or rigidity
- Inability to focus the eyes or track movement
- Unequal pupil size

Procedure and Practices B. Response If SBS/AHT is suspected, employees will:

- Immediately call 911 upon suspecting SBS/AHT and inform the preschool director
- Call the parents/guardians
- Administer CPR if the child has stopped breathing. Staff trained in pediatric CPR will begin the process until medical professionals arrive and take over. Reporting Instances of suspected SBS/AHT or other maltreatment of a child will be reported to the Pennsylvania Department of Children and Families' Abuse Hotline, using the methods listed below:
 - Calling the hotline at 1-800-422-0313

SBS/AHT Prevention Strategies to Assist Staff in Coping with a Fussing, Crying or Distraught Child:

Staff will first determine if the child has any physical needs such as being hungry, tired, sick, or in need of a diaper change. If all physical needs have been met, staff will attempt one or more of the following strategies:

- Sing or talk to the child in a soothing voice
- Offer a pacifier or try to distract the child with a rattle or toy
- Turn on music
- Take the child for a ride in the stroller
- Gently rub or stroke the child’s back, chest, or stomach
- Stand up, hold the child close, and repeatedly bend knees
- Rock or walk with the child

In addition, Saint Miriam Academy will:

- Allow for staff who feel they may lose control to have a short, but relatively immediate break from the children
- Provide support when parents/guardians are trying to calm a crying child
- Encourage parents to take calming breaks if needed
- Share information with parents concerning successful calming strategies with a particular child

The following behaviors are prohibited include (but are not limited to):

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

The following are strategies to Assist Staff members Understand How to Care for Infants; Staff reviews and discusses:

- The five goals and developmental indicators in the 2013 North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development
[Reference: 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
[Reference: www.zerotothree.org/resources/77-how-to-care-for-infants-and-toddlers-in-groups]
- The Science of Early Childhood Development, Center on the Developing Child
[Reference: developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/inbrief-science-of-eecd/]

For Parents:

- The American Academy of Pediatrics: www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx
- The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome: <http://dontshake.org/family-resources>
- The Period of Purple Crying: <http://purplecrying.info/B.ForFacilities>
- Caring for Our Children, Standard 3.4.4.3 Preventing and Identifying Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma: <http://nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/3.4.4.3>



Parent or Guardian Acknowledgment:

I acknowledge that I have read this Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma Policy. I acknowledge that a copy of this policy is available to me.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

