

# **Policy and Prevention on SAFE SLEEP Shaken Baby Syndrome & Abusive Head Trauma**



## **Belief Statement**

Hearts and Hands Montessori, Inc. provides a safe sleep environment to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) for infants 0-18 months.

We believe that preventing, recognizing, and 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 child care, and educating families

## **SAFE SLEEP**

### **Sleep Position**

- All Infants will be placed flat on their backs to sleep every time, unless there is a physician, practitioner, or clinician signed sleep position medical waiver up to date on file. In the case of a waiver, a waiver notice will be posted at the infant's pack-n-play without identifying medical information. The full waiver will be kept in the infant's file.
- When an infant can easily turn over from back to front and front to back, they can remain in whatever position they prefer to sleep.
- Infants will not be placed on their side for sleep unless medical waiver has been submitted.
- Devices such as wedges or infant positioners will not be used since such devices are not proven to reduce the risk of SIDS, unless a medical waiver is on file.

### **Sleep Care/Safety**

Blankets of any weight must be removed when infants 12 months of age or younger are laid down for sleep. Sleep clothing, such as sleepers, sleep sacks, and wearable blankets that do not restrict the infant's arms will be used as alternatives to blankets

- Only one infant will be placed to sleep in each pack-n-play. Siblings, including twins and triplets, will be placed in separate pack n plays.
- Infants of any age may not be swaddled. Infants under 3 months of age may only be swaddled if medical documentation from a health care provider is on file at the facility.
- Infants who use pacifiers will be offered their pacifier when they are placed to sleep; pacifiers will not be put back in should it fall out once the infant has fallen asleep.
- Pacifiers will be checked for tears, and will not be coated in any sweet or other solution.
- Parents are asked to provide replacement pacifiers on a regular basis.

- Bibs and pacifiers will not be tied around an infant's neck or clipped on to an infant's clothing or crib during sleep.
- Infants will not be kept in car seats, swings, and bouncer/infant seats to sleep. "Baby holders" will only be used if Staff and Parents agree this is additional necessary assistance to development in our facility (i.e helping adjust to our child care center, helping reduce reflux discomfort, etc.).
- Infants will not be placed to sleep on any standard bed, waterbeds, couches, air mattresses, or on other soft surfaces.

### **Sleep Environment**

- Our program will use Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines for safety-approved Pack-n-play.
- The pack-n-play mattress will have a firm tight, fitting mattress covered by a fitted sheet. Fitted sheets will not be shared between infants.
- Pack-n-plays will be free from blankets, loose bedding, toys, and other soft objects (i.e., pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, etc.)
- All infants under the age of 18 months must sleep in a pack-n-play. At 12 months old an infant may sleep on a nap mat only if written consent is given from the parent to the provider
- To avoid overheating, the temperature of the rooms where infants sleep will be checked and will be kept at a level that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.
- Smoking will not be allowed in or near Hearts and Hands

### **Supervision:**

- When infants are in their pack-n-play, they will be within hearing of staff at all times (either in the active room with door cracked or with sleeping monitor).
- A staff member will visibly check on the sleeping infants frequently, including walking in to nap room, and promptly after any infant sound made.

### **Training:**

- All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at Hearts and Hands will be trained on safe sleep prevention and practices.
- Documentation that staff, substitutes, and volunteers have read and understand these policies will be kept in each individual's file.

# **Policy and Prevention on SAFE SLEEP Shaken Baby Syndrome & Abusive Head Trauma**

## **Shaken Baby Syndrome Abusive Head Trauma**



### **Background**

SBS/AHT is the name given to a form of physical child abuse that occurs when an infant or small child is violently shaken and/or there is trauma to the head. Shaking may last only a few seconds but can result in severe injury or even death. According to the Department of Public Health and Human Services - Child Care Licensing Division (DPHHS) each child care facility licensed for children up to five years of age shall develop and adopt a policy to prevent SBS/AHT. 37-95-169.

### **Procedure/Practice**

#### Recognizing:

- Children are observed for signs of abusive head trauma including irritability and/or high-pitched crying, difficulty staying awake/lethargy or loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing, inability to lift the head, seizures, lack of appetite, vomiting, bruises, poor feeding/sucking, no smiling or vocalization, inability of the eyes to track and/or decreased muscle tone. Bruises may be found on the upper arms, rib cage, or head resulting from gripping or from hitting the head.

#### Responding to:

- If SBS/ABT is suspected, staff will:
  - Call 911 immediately upon suspecting SBS/AHT and inform the director
  - Call the parents/guardians
  - If the child has stopped breathing, trained staff will begin pediatric CPR.

#### Reporting:

- Instances of suspected child maltreatment in child care are reported to the Early Childhood Services Bureau by calling 1-866-820-5437.

#### Prevention strategies to assist staff in coping with a crying, fussing, or distraught child

Staff first determine if the child has any physical needs such as being hungry, tired, sick, or in need of a diaper change. If no physical need is identified, staff will attempt one or more of the following strategies:

- Rock the child, hold the child close, or walk with the child
- Stand up, hold the child close, and repeatedly bend knees
- 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 walk around the school
- Turn on white noise or music

In addition, the facility:

- Allows for staff who feel they may lose control to have a short, but relatively immediate break away from the children
- Provides support when parents/guardians are trying to calm a crying child and encourage parents to take a calming break if needed

#### Prohibited Behaviors

Behaviors that are prohibited include (but 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
- Bouncing aggressively

#### Strategies to assist staff members understand how to care for infants

- All staff take training on SBS/AHT within the first two weeks of employment.
- Training includes recognition, responding to and reporting child abuse, neglect, or maltreatment as well as the brain development of children up to five years of age.
- Additional educational trainings relating to child growth & development, child guidance, and health and safety of children in a child care facility are required.

#### Parent Web resources & references

- The American Academy of Pediatrics [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)
- The National Center of Shaken Baby Syndrome: [www.dontshake.org](http://www.dontshake.org)
- The Period of Purple Crying: [www.purplecrying.info](http://www.purplecrying.info)

*Every staff member at Hearts and Hands follows the AAP safe sleep & SBS/AHT prevention & policies*