Child Protection Policy

The Peter Toms Early Learning Centre’s approach to child protection is based on the following principles:

- Children have the right to feel safe, secure and under the protection of responsible, caring, trustworthy, adults at all times.
- Children will be respected and in no way degraded, endangered, exploited, intimidated or harmed psychologically or physically.
- Warm words and loving touch are basic needs throughout life. The loss of spontaneous affection would be detrimental to both children and staff.
- Physical contact is part of the nurturing of children and helps create and sustain trusting relationships and add to feelings of security.

Strategies for child and staff protection

- Staff in children’s services can be open to allegations of reportable conduct unless care is taken to implement protective strategies for staff and children.
- It is the responsibility of the Director to carefully monitor the supervision of children throughout the day and ensure that the following strategies are implemented:

  1) Individuals or groups of children are not permitted to be withdrawn into areas where they are not visible by other staff members or taken into rooms that can be locked.
  2) Staff are to be directed to ensure that they at all times remain readily accessible and within the visibility of other staff while with the children when possible.
  3) Students and volunteers are to be directed to ensure they are not alone with children in a direct, unsupervised capacity.
  4) A minimum of two staff to be on the premises while there is a child on the premises of a service
  5) Any major changes in behavior that is observed in children should be documented

 Notify the Director should you have any concerns regarding a child or adult’s behaviour.

General indicators of abuse and neglect:

- Marked delay between injury and seeking medical assistance
- History of injury
- The child give some indication that the injury did not occur as stated
- The child tells you someone has hurt them
- The child tells you about someone he/she knows who has been hurt
- Someone (relative, friend, sibling) tells you that the child may have been abused

Types of abuse include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and domestic/ family violence/ abuse.
Documentation

It is essential that the centre maintain well kept and accurate documentation. This is required should a report to the appropriate authorities need to be made. When making a report or notification, it is important to have as much information as possible.

Notification of abuse/ neglect procedures:

If you believe that a child is at risk of harm or that the child and their family are requiring support/referral inform the Director of the incident. The following procedures will be followed when responding to concerns:

If there is a need for immediate protection due to a significant risk of harm contact Child Protection (Southern) 1300 655 795 OR after hours on 131 278

If you have significant concerns that a child and their family may need support or a referral contact Child First 1300 762 125.

Legislative Requirements

Sources
Department of human services child protection. A step-by-step guide to making a report to child protection or child first.

Review
The policy will be reviewed annually.
The review will be conducted by:
- The Peter Toms Early Learning Centre Staff
- Families

Policy created date: 20th July 2011