



SAFETY MATTERS RISK MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE

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- SCHOOLS PROGRAMS AND REQUIREMENTS
- FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND PREVENTION FACTORS
- SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING OF CHILDREN
- RESOURCES

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

OBJECTIVE To recognize the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse and neglect.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, which recognizes the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse and neglect. Schools play a significant role in the prevention and reporting of child abuse. The following helps support families and communities in reducing the likelihood of child abuse and neglect.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND REQUIREMENTS

Mandated Reporters:

School employees are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect as found in California Penal Code Section 11165.7. The employee must report to the appropriate authorities any reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused or neglected. Responsibility for investigating suspected abuse lies with law enforcement or other appropriate legal authorities.

School-Based Prevention Programs:

Designed to provide child abuse prevention and safety information to school children, these programs teach youth about personal safety including inappropriate touching, internet safety, and bullying. School-based prevention programs increase a child's knowledge, self-protection skills and the likelihood of telling a trusted adult about abuse.



Children and Family Services



CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

April 2024

Make the safety and well-being of children and families a priority

District Polices:

Adopt or update your Board Policy. Include in your Administrative Regulation district-wide safe and appropriate boundaries for adult-to-student and student-to-student interactions.





AWARENESS AND PREVENTION FACTORS

Employee Training:

In California, Assembly Bill 1432, effective as of Jan. 1, 2015, requires all LEAs to train all employees each year on what they need to know to identify and report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. "All employees" includes anybody working on the LEA's behalf, including teachers, teacher's aides, classified employees, and any other employees whose duties bring them into direct contact with and supervision of students. LEAs must also develop a process to provide proof that employees received training. Training should also be provided on district-related policies and procedures for inappropriate behaviors. Educate students and parents on the importance of understanding and respecting safe and appropriate boundaries.

School districts, county offices of education, state special schools and diagnostic centers operated by the State Department of Education, and charter schools that do not use the online training module provided by the State Department of Social Services shall report to the State Department of Education the training being used in its place.

Abuse/Neglect can be...

- A physical injury inflicted on a child by another person other than by accidental means.
- The sexual abuse, assault, or exploitation of a child.
- The negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child by a person responsible for the child's welfare under circumstances indicating harm or threatened harm to the child's health or welfare. This is whether the harm or threatened harm is from acts or omissions on the part of the responsible person.
- The willful harming or endangerment of the person or health of a child, any cruel or inhumane corporal punishment, or any injury resulting in a traumatic condition.

Protective Factors

Protective factors are conditions or attributes that, when present in families and communities, increase the well-being of children and families and reduce the likelihood of maltreatment. Identifying protective factors helps parents find resources, support, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively — even under stress.

There are six protective factors:

- Nurturing and attachment
- Knowledge of parenting and child and youth development
- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Concrete support systems for parents
- Social and emotional competence of children

For more information about protective factors, see Protective Factors to Promote Well-Being.





SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Parental Resilience:

Parental resilience is the ability to cope and bounce back from the challenges and stressors of everyday life. A parent's ability to cope effectively with the stressors of raising children can help secure emotional bonds and attachment between parent and child. Providing parents with positive coping strategies or lending a hand to a parent in need

Social Connections:

Social connections are a vital resource in helping parents and caretakers build resilience. Parents and children benefit from social connections, which can include family, friends, neighbors, or any other community member who can be called for help, provide a listening ear, or offer advice.

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development:

Research demonstrates a link between what parents know about parenting and child development and how they behave with their children. Parents with more knowledge are more likely to engage in positive parenting practices. Parents can increase their understanding of parenting and child development by engaging with community organizations such as family resource centers, attending meetings at their child's school, or speaking with their child's doctor.

Concrete Support in Times of Need:

Concrete support can include access to healthy food, clean clothes, a safe environment, and healthcare. Assisting parents to identify, find, and receive concrete support in times of need helps ensure they and their families receive the necessities everyone deserves to grow.

Social and Emotional Competence of Children:

Parents support children's social and emotional competence when they nurture the child's ability to experience, express, and manage emotions, communicate needs, and establish positive and rewarding relationships. Caregivers and community members who model these skills can positively impact the child's ability to maintain healthy relationships with family members, peers, and other adults.



RESOURCES

- [CDE Child Abuse Prevention Training and Resources](#)
- [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Child Welfare Information Gateway](#)
 - [Prevention Resource Guide](#)
- [ChildWelfare.gov - National Child Abuse Prevention Month](#)
- [5-steps to recognize signs and unsafe behaviors](#)
- [Grooming and Red Flag Behaviors](#)
- [Child Physical Abuse and Children and Domestic Violence for Parents Fact Sheets.](#)
- [VetoViolence and Violence Prevention Websites.](#)
- [Safe Place and Teenage Dating Abuse Training for Specialized Instructional Support Personnel Toolkits.](#)

This California Schools JPA fact sheet is not intended to be exhaustive. The discussion and best practices suggested herein should not be regarded as legal advice. Readers should pursue legal counsel or contact their insurance providers to gain more exhaustive advice.

