

CHILD SAFETY

Head Start staff will not use corporal punishment (use of physical force) as a disciplinary measure. This includes, but is not limited to spanking, slapping, pulling of hair, pinching, etc. or use isolation as a means of discipline. Isolation refers to separating the child from normal association with classroom activities, confining the child in a small area, retaining the child in the classroom when other children go to play, restricting food as a form of punishment or reward, or denying a child basic needs.

Head Start staff will respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability. Staff will not leave a child alone or unsupervised for any reason. Staff will remain seated at the table when children are eating (even one child). Staff will use positive methods of child guidance and will not engage in emotional abuse or humiliation.

Upon knowledge or witnessing any abuse, staff shall report the suspected abuse to the Dept. of Children's Services (DCS), reporting employee shall notify their immediate supervisor if the report is on a staff person. **See Procedure – Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting in Early Childhood Development and Health Services.** The Center Supervisory Staff will relay the information to the Program Specialist that will authorize the CSS to place reported employee on Administrative Leave without pay pending the results of the investigation by DCS and DHS and the receipt of a report.

In case DCS cannot validate abuse (due to no marks on the child) and there is a witness that puts their observation in writing, the staff will be terminated pending Policy Council approval.