



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES ARMY GARRISON VICENZA
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IMEU-VIC-MWC

1 March 2008

STANDING OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

SUBJECT: Touch Policy in Child Development Services Programs

1. REFERENCE: AR 608-10, Child Development Services, 15 July 1997.
2. PURPOSE: To establish procedures to be used by staff when interacting with children.
3. APPLICABILITY: This SOP is applicable to SAS, CDS employees and caregivers, Family Child Care (FCC) providers, summer hires and volunteers.
4. GENERAL: Touching in an appropriate manner is an important part of communicating between adults and children and is essential in fostering a nurturing environment. Touching in a positive manner is essential in the emotional and social growth of a child. It can teach affection, care, and a sense of security and safety within a child. However, a child will never be forced to give or receive touching actions, positive or negative, against her/his will. The following statement of policy addresses appropriate touches versus inappropriate touches and provides guidelines as to what is suitable physical contact with children in CYS settings.
 - a. Appropriate touching involves:
 - (1) The recognition of the importance of physical contact in the nurturing and guidance of children.
 - (2) Adult respect for personal privacy, personal space and the body of the child.
 - (3) Adult responses to children affecting the safety and well being of a child/children, i.e. holding the hand of child when crossing the street, holding a child in a gentle but firm manner during a child's temper tantrum.
 - (4) CYS staff modeling proper touching behaviors.
 - b. Inappropriate touching is contact which:
 - (1) Involves satisfaction of adult needs at the expense of the child.


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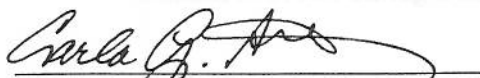
- (2) Violates laws against sexual contact between adults and children.
- (3) Might violate laws against physical contact between adults and children.
- (4) Attempts to change a child's behavior with adult physical force.
- (5) Reinforces the concept of "striking out" to resolve or respond to problems.
- (6) Include: forced good-bye kisses, corporal punishment, tickling for prolonged periods, fondling or molestation, slapping, striking, or pinching, etc.


5. PROCEDURES:

- a. All CYS employees and FCC providers will receive training on appropriate and inappropriate touching within CYS settings to ensure a correct understanding.
- b. Use of corporal punishment is prohibited in all CYS settings, to include the use of corporal punishment by FCC providers on their own children when other CYS children are in their care.
- c. Physical restraint may be used only when necessary for the safety of the child or other children, i.e., a child is about to run into the street, children are fighting each other, or a child may harm him/herself.


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