
Child Safe Policy

STATEMENT:

Easter Seals New Jersey is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and youth accessing our services. We have taken steps to educate our staff about the risks related to child sexual abuse, instituted policies and practices to protect children from the risk of child sexual abuse and trained our staff and volunteers about proper reporting requirements.

This document applies to programs serving children.

“Abuse” is defined as any act or omission that (1) deprives an individual of his or her rights or (2) potentially or actually causes physical injury, emotional harm, or distress. Examples of abuse include, but are not limited to: acts that cause pain, cuts, bruises, loss of a bodily function, temporary or permanent disfigurement, or death; sexual abuse; striking with a closed or open hand, pushing to the ground, or shoving aggressively; twisting a limb or pulling hair; withholding food; forcing an individual to eat obnoxious substances; use of verbal or other communication to curse, vilify, degrade, or threaten with bodily harm.

For programs in which children (minors under the age of 18 years) are served, **“sexual abuse”** is further defined as involving any sexual activity with a child where consent is not or cannot be given. This includes sexual contact that is accomplished by force or threat of force, regardless of the age of the participants, and all sexual contact between an adult and a child, regardless of whether there is deception or the child understands the sexual nature of the activity. Sexual contact between an older and a younger child also can be abusive if there is a significant disparity in age, development, or size, rendering the younger or more vulnerable child incapable of giving informed consent. The sexually abusive acts include, but are not limited to: sexual penetration, sexual touching, or non-contact sexual acts such as exposure or voyeurism.

“Neglect” is defined as the failure of a paid or unpaid care giver to provide for the care and safety of individuals under his or her supervision, or a failure to provide and maintain proper and sufficient food, clothing, health care, shelter and/or supervision.

“Exploitation” is defined as any unjust or improper use of an individual and/or his or her resources (physical, financial, or other) for the profit, advantage, or gratification of the exploiter.

Each staff member has a duty to report any witnessed act or omission as defined above to his/her supervisor immediately. Organization personnel covered under this obligation are:

- paid or unpaid staff members currently occupying or acting in identified positions;
- all persons seeking employment or voluntary work with the organization in identified positions;
- independent contractors, temporary staff, consultants, trainees, and/or students on placement who will undertake certain prescribed functions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT: I have read the *Easter Seals New Jersey Child Safe Policy Statement*

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Employee Name: _____
