



## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES – PREVENTION OF ABUSE & MOLESTATION**

### **Policy**

It is the policy of First 5 Ventura County (“Commission” or “F5VC”) to provide safe environments and to have safeguards in place to prevent abuse and molestation from occurring in services delivered by Commission staff. Accordingly, the Commission shall follow the following procedures to mitigate the risk of incidents occurring. The Commission will report any suspected incidents to the proper authorities for investigation.

### **Procedures**

1. Direct services will be delivered in the following manner:
  - a) Parent and Child Together (PACT) classes: Parents/caregivers and children attend the class together (called a dyad). The parent/caregiver of the child will be in attendance for the entirety of the class. Staff member(s) are not permitted to be left alone with a child(ren). Only the parent or the caregiver of the child may accompany their child to the restroom. Parents/caregivers may not leave their child while using the restroom. Parents/caregivers will be responsible for the discipline of their children.
  - b) Family Support Services: At least two (2) staff members will be present when there is only one (1) client receiving in-person services. Parents/caregivers are responsible for their children while receiving any family support services.
  - c) The program environment (both indoor and outdoor areas) will be designed to reduce the possibility of private, hidden locations in which abuse may occur.
2. Staff involved in providing in-person direct services must pass a Live Scan background and criminal history check, in addition to standard reference checks.
3. Staff will possess qualifications that meet or exceed industry standards for their position. Multi-level oversight will be employed to provide adequate supervision of program staff.
4. Staff will receive training at the start of employment, and additional training at least annually, that includes, but is not limited to:
  - a) Understanding of what constitutes abuse and sexual molestation;
  - b) Implementing prevention strategies and safeguards in the workplace;
  - c) Providing information to parents and families regarding child development and effective strategies for responding to children’s behavior;
  - d) Identifying signs of family stress and providing support/referrals to families; and
  - e) Reporting suspected cases of abuse and sexual molestation.
5. Staff involved in providing in-person direct services will acknowledge in writing that: 1) they have been given a copy of this policy and these procedures, 2) they have read and understand its contents, and 3) they have been given the opportunity to ask any questions.