**Tips for building a safe school age classroom environment**

Providing emotional and educational support to families in crisis is one way to prevent child abuse. School-Age professionals can also help support families. Here are some tips.

* Develop positive, non-judgmental relationships with parents.
* Be alert to signs of stress in parents and struggles in the parent-child interaction.
* Communicate regularly with parents concerning a child’s progress.
* Provide parental education including offering tips for specific challenges the parent reports.
* Provide opportunities for parents to become involved in their child’s care.
* Provide information about community resources.
* Model developmentally appropriate practices by allowing the parent observational opportunities to see their child interact with child care staff.
* Provide an atmosphere for parents to share their experiences and develop support systems.
* Reach out to fathers, grandparents and other extended family members that are involved in the child’s development.

Child care workers should fully understand their legal obligation to report suspicions of child abuse. It may seem easier not to get involved and believe that someone else will eventually make the report. This “wait and see” approach can be very dangerous, even deadly, for a child who is being mistreated.

<http://www.scchildren.org/prevention_learning_center/preventing_child_abuse_and_neglect/tips_for_child_care_providers/>