



Office of Children and Family Services

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

SUZANNE MILES-GUSTAVE, ESQ.
Acting Commissioner

April 20, 2023

Dear Provider,

As you know, April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. To bring awareness to this important topic, the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) supports the Pinwheels for Prevention® campaign. Pinwheels for Prevention® is a nationwide campaign, created by Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA America) and its state chapters. The goal of Pinwheels of Prevention® is to engage people in taking “extraordinary ordinary” actions that can reduce stress for families and increase resilience for children- anything from writing a letter to the editor in support of family support programs to offering to babysit for a neighbor.



This year’s theme is “Working Together to Strengthen Families.” As a child care provider, you play a key role in supporting families and creating safe and healthy environments for children. To encourage this effort, OCFS has created a Protective Factors calendar highlighting prevention activities to help keep children safe. Many of the activities involve the national symbol for child abuse prevention--the pinwheel, and the official color--blue. Some of the ways you can support children and families include:

- developing relationships with children’s families;
- providing resources and referrals to parents;
- modeling warm and responsive interactions with children;
- offering guidance to families regarding child development

The calendar can be posted in your program and shared with parents/guardians. The calendar is a great way to encourage parents/guardians to participate in activities that promote strong families. The calendar has been attached to this email and can be found on our website at <https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/letters.php>.

As a reminder, in 2021, New York State Social Services Law (SSL) was revised to include two important changes that became effective April 1, 2022. The first is a requirement about information on availability of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) services. The law requires OCFS to implement a statewide campaign to educate parents about ACEs, and requires that OCFS provide all licensed, registered and enrolled legally-exempt child care providers with educational materials on adverse childhood experiences. **Child care providers are now required to offer these materials to parents and caregivers at the time of enrollment.** The materials that have been developed include the attached brochure and this website, that contains additional resources for families on where a wide range of services may be available: <https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/cwcs/aces.php>. Programs are also encouraged to post this information and share it with families as needed. Brochures may be available free of charge depending on availability. If you are interested in ordering hard copies of these brochures for distribution, please contact: OCFS.sm.ACEsBrochureOrders@ocfs.ny.gov

The second revision to the SSL required OCFS to update our mandated reporter training to include information on implicit bias, ACEs, and how to recognize signs of child abuse or maltreatment virtually and for all mandated reporters to take the revised training, even if they have been previously trained, prior to April 1, 2025. This two-hour online course can be found at: <http://nysmandatedreporter.org/trainingcourses.aspx>. As you know, all licensed/registered child care providers are mandated reporters of child abuse and maltreatment. **As such, all licensed/registered child care professionals are required to complete OCFS's updated mandated reporter training on or before April 1, 2025.** To receive training credit and provide proof that this statutory requirement has been met, all participants must print or screenshot information that shows they have completed this training and to have proof of completion on file for OCFS review.

Please note: many training organizations offer mandated reporter training. To fulfill this new requirement, all child care professionals must show that they have taken OCFS's revised mandated reporter training on or before April 1, 2025.

Child care providers play such a critical role in the development of children. A caregiver provides safety, security, and consistency. Your recognition and response to child abuse and maltreatment and to adverse childhood experiences is life changing, and in some instances lifesaving for a child. Thank you for embracing this opportunity to re-commit yourself to the protection of children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nora Yates". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Nora K. Yates
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Child Care Services