

Louisiana Advocacy Support Team  
888-655-9564

### Defensive Parenting Training

Defensive Parenting is offered through the LAST Program to foster parent associations or child welfare agencies. This three (3) hour OCS approved training prepares parents for the challenges of fostering and working with the system. Call the number above to schedule.

#### **Introduction:**

Defensive Parenting is based on the supposition that allegations of abuse and neglect against foster families simply come with the territory; research indicates that foster families are both more likely to be accused of abuse and are more likely to abuse than the general population.

While it is statistically more likely for foster families to be involved in allegation of abuse in their family, it is important to keep the probability in perspective. Defensive Parenting encourages the foster family to self-assess their “family practice” – to look at fostering as a professional experience- to be assertive as a family unit and demand formal standards of conduct in their family more akin to professionalism than to the laid-back, idealized Norman Rockwell family.

Fostering remains one of the most rewarding investments for the American family; sharing your family with children in need provides unlimited opportunities for life-lasting emotional and social rewards for the family. The ever-increasing pressures of highly specialized parenting, however, begin to defeat the traditional rewards of fostering. The historical difficulties of working with the placing agency, poor support, lack of resources, difficulties in communication and the like – while frustrating, were generally outweighed by the social and moral benefits of the fostering experience. The new difficulties: AIDS infected children and youth, drug-exposed infants and the increased exposure to allegations of abuse, demand both an honest and a direct approach to the issues.

#### **Goals:**

Defensive Parenting:

- offers an overview of the allegations issues;
- provides a model for more effective fostering;
- identifies specific areas of allegations exposure;
- provides skills development;
- provides training that is free-standing or supplemental to current pre/in-service training for foster families; and,
- promotes self-assessment, self-help for foster family care providers.

# DEFENSIVE PARENTING

## TRAINING OUTLINE

Introduction of trainer(s)

Learning Together: The Allegation Process

What Are My Rights?

Practical Steps to Protect Yourself and Your Family

- a. Documentation
- b. Assessing the Child for Your Family
- c. House Rules
- d. Common Mistakes made by a Foster Family
- e. Placement Checklist

Tips on Handling an Allegation

Tips on Handling a Child Care Deficiency

Preventing Allegations

Foster Parent Checklist