**Home Visiting Safety Guidelines**

**Prior to Home Visits:**

* Limit the amount of items you bring into the home
* Inform co-workers of your scheduled home visit/Start and End time:  Put the name, address and phone number of the family on your electronic Outlook Calendar
* If reason for concern, have co-worker call your cell phone a short time after your appointment time (10-15 min.)
* Ask about animals- if the family has pets ask that they be contained during your visit
* Ask the family about parking as well as door entry preference
	+ Ask about mud and ice/snow conditions –   Be sure to wear good footwear
* You may need to park the car and walk to the home (especially mud).
* Discuss conditions – make adjustments for possible temporary inconvenience such as a parking bans.

**During your Home Visit:**

* + - Remember to use common sense and follow your instincts.
		- Respect the family.
		- If feeling unsafe, consult your supervisor and/or a program manager before entering in the home.
		- If you’ve already entered the home and feel unsafe, remain calm, politely excuse yourself, return to your center and contact your supervisor immediately.
* Bring a cell phone with you however please do not use the phone unless it is an emergency or you are assisting the family in making contact with a provider.
* Make sure your car is in good working condition to complete home visits, back in to driveways and whenever possible park on the street to ensure it is easy for you to exit.

**Additional safety tips:**

* Keep your car keys in a handy pocket.
* Lock purse in trunk of car and keep your doors locked.
* Sit as close to the door as possible so you have a direct pathway to the door.
* Choose a hard chair, if possible as it is easier to get up from.
* Be observant of what is going on in the home.

**If person in home becomes verbally abusive or agitated:**

* Respond calmly
* Keep statements of matter of fact, simple and direct.
* Maintain a physical distance of at least three feet.
* Do not get between family members who are angrily confronting each other.
* Do not touch the person.
* Stand to one side or the other of the person.
* Face the person – never turn your back to the person.
* If the person is seated, remain seated. Standing can be perceived as a threat.
* Do not try to leave abruptly.