

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Water Safety



Introduction

The safety and supervision of children in and around water is of the highest priority. This relates to water play, excursions near water, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the service environment. Children will be supervised at all times during water play experiences. Whilst water hazard will be kept to a minimum, we acknowledge that nappy buckets, water troughs, sinks and toilets can all be hazardous for children and that diligent supervision is required.

Goals – What are we going to do?

Our service has a responsibility to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of each child at all times. Drowning is the leading cause of death for children aged 1-4 years in Australia. While most drowning occurs in backyard swimming pools, it is important to be aware that children can drown in as little as 6cm of water.

Strategies – To achieve our goals

Water Safety

- Children will be supervised at all times in and around any body of water including water troughs, toilets and buckets.
- Educator to Child ratios will be increased where appropriate around water at all times.
- No child will be left unsupervised at any stage around any body of water.
- A risk assessment will be conducted prior to any excursion taking place. Particular attention will be focused upon water safety where the excursion taking place. Particular attention will be focused upon water safety where the excursion is near a body of water.
- The thermostat on the hot water system is set to a medium temperature to ensure children are not able to scald themselves when washing hands.
- Children requiring bathing will be washed using the handheld shower head, washcloth, and warm water rather than immersed in a bath.
- Educators are not permitted to consume hot drinks in any area accessible to children.
- Ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level. These activities will be supervised at all times and containers, or troughs will be emptied onto garden areas after use. Containers will be emptied after rain. Children will be discouraged from drinking from these water experiences.
- Teach children about staying safe in and around water.
- Empty buckets used for cleaning immediately after use. No buckets are left in play areas or accessible to children.

Water Hygiene

- Grey water systems or water tanks will be labelled with “do not drink” signage and the children will be supervised in this area to make sure they are not accessing this water for drinking.
- Educators will discuss with the children that this water is for the purpose of play and not for consumption.

- Water for pets at the service will be changed regularly at not accessible to children unless supervised by an adult.
- Water containers of any sort will be emptied or covered when not in use.
- Drinking water containers will be emptied and cleaned daily.
- Always provide clean drinking water. This water will be supervised to ensure that it is safe and hygienic for consuming. Water containers will be securely sealed. At the end of each day, the water container will be emptied and cleaned thoroughly.
- A risk assessment will be conducted prior to any excursion taking place. Particular attention will be focused upon water safety where the excursion is near a body of water.
- Considerations for regional, remote and rural services. Creeks, rivers, canals and dams, water troughs etc. must be considered and will require extra care in assessing and managing risk.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Authority/Responsibility For
Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011
Nominated Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure children are adequately supervised and are protected from harm and hazards. ➤ Provide supervision, guidance, and advice to ensure adherence to the policy at all times. ➤ Ensure risk assessments for excursions planned near water identify a higher staff to child ratio to ensure adequate supervision. ➤ Ensure First Aids and CPR qualifications and requirements are met at all times. ➤ Provide families with community messages regarding safe water practices.
Early Childhood Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Embed water safety messages into the children’s educational program. ➤ Ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level and emptied or covered securely after use. ➤ Ensure water troughs or containers are only filled while in attendance by an adult at all times. ➤ Ensure no child is left unattended at any time with any body of water. ➤ Empty buckets used for cleaning immediately after use. ➤ Ensuring no cleaning buckets are left in areas accessible to children. ➤ Discourage children from drinking tank water/grey water. ➤ Provide clean drinking water at all times.
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reinforce water safety practice with children.

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this policy annually.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunities and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with Regulation 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

Links to other policies:

Animals in the Environment

Excursion/Incursion

Providing a Child Safe Environment

Supervision

Transportation of Children

Related Legislation:

NQS

Quality Area 2	Children's health and safety	
Standard 2.1	2.1	Health
Standard 2.2	2.2	Safety

National Law

Section 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Section 167	Offence related to protection of children from harm and hazards

National Regulations

Reg 25 (1)(c)	Additional information about proposed education and care service premises
Reg 101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
Reg 102C	Conduct of risk assessment for transporting of children by the education and care service
Reg 115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
Reg 128 (2)(h)	Providing a child safe environment
Reg 168(2)(a)(iii)	Water safety, including safety during any water-based activities
Reg 170	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Reg 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
Reg 274	Swimming pools

Sources:

- Kidsafe NSW – www.kidsafensw.org/water-safety
- Kids Alive - www.kidsalive.com.au
- Kids Health – <http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/water-safety.html>

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