

WATER SAFETY POLICY

The safety and supervision of children is paramount when in or around water. This policy relates to water play, excursions near water, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water at the Family Day Care Service. Children will be supervised at all times during water play experiences to help keep children safe in and around water and support children's learning in a safe environment.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS/EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
Sec. 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Sec. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
26(1)(l)	Application for service approval- family day care-swimming pool
101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursions
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
116	Assessments of family day care residences and approved family day care venues
116 (2) (d)	The existence of any water hazards, water features or swimming pool at or near the residence or venue
136	First aid qualifications
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
169	Additional policies and procedures- family day care service

170	Policies and procedures to be followed
274	Swimming pools (NSW)
345	Swimming pools prohibition (Tasmania only)

Victorian Child Safe Standards	
Standard 1	Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued
Standard 2	Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
Standard 3	Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
Standard 4	Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
Standard 5	Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
Standard 6	People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
Standard 7	Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused
Standard 8	Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
Standard 9	Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
Standard 10	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved
Standard 11	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved

RELATED POLICIES

Educational Program Policy Health and Safety Policy Excursion Policy Administration of First Aid Policy Child safe Environment Policy	Physical Environment Policy Supervision Policy Incident, injury, trauma and illness Policy Sun, safe, Policy Healthy and safety policy
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PURPOSE

To ensure the safety and supervision of children in and around water. This includes water play, excursions near water hazards, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices with water in the Family Day Care Service environment.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Coordinator, Educators, Educator Assistants, children, families, and visitors of the Family Day Care Service.

WATER HAZARDS

The National Regulations make reference to ‘water hazards’ however the term is not expressly defined. In this policy, a water hazard is defined as anything that can hold 5cm of water and fit a child’s nose and mouth and a ‘water hazard’ may include:

- swimming pools, portable pools, spas
- fishponds
- sinks, basins
- water feature, such as a wishing well
- containers for feeding animals
- water troughs, containers for paddling- clam shells
- dams, creeks, river or pooling water
- beach

DROWNING

Drowning is one of the major causes of unintentional death for children 0-4 years. According to the Life Saving Society of Australia an annual average of 30 drowning deaths of children aged 0-4 years occur in swimming pools and 5 drowning deaths of children 0-4 years in bathtubs/spa baths.

(Kidsafe, 2020)

Although home swimming pools are the most common site for drowning, children can drown in just a few centimetres of water. Adult supervision of young children is therefore critical when any child is in or around water.

IMPLEMENTATION

Legal requirements for pools, spas, paddling pools and other water troughs vary across each state and territory. Family Day Care Service Providers must ensure they adhere to Regulations, Council requirements and national safety standards when approving an educator and assessing the residence before providing care approval.

In Victoria on 1 December 2019, new laws to improve swimming pool and spa safety came into effect. There are a new registration, inspection and certification requirements for property owners. It is now

mandatory for owners of land where a swimming pool or spa is located to register their pool or spa with the relevant council.

As a pool or spa owner you need to complete the following:

- Register your pool with your local council by 1 November 2020
- Organise an inspection of your pool barrier by a registered swimming pool inspector
- Rectify any issues identified by your pool inspection
- Submit a certificate of compliance to your council by the due date

For more information, including cut-off dates, see [Registration requirements](#), [Pool safety barriers](#) and [Pool and spa inspections and compliance](#).

Family Day Care Approved Provider/ Coordinator will:

- ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met
- keep a child safe environment
- ensure that there is adequate supervision provided given the ages and developmental needs of children undertaking water activities (including ratios)
- ensure risk assessments are undertaken and water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities are taken into consideration
- take reasonable steps to ensure that the policy and procedures are current, reviewed regularly, and communicated to educators, staff and stakeholders
- take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures
- ensure copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers, and available for inspection
- notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will:
 - affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or
 - significantly impact the service's education and care of children or
 - significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service.
- conduct annual assessments of the approved FDC residence
- ensure risk assessments are completed for any identified water hazard
- ensure boundary barriers around pools, spas comply with Australian Standards including
 - self-locking gates
 - making spas inaccessible with locked pool cover and isolation barriers at least 1.2m high
 - ensure pool barriers are at least 1.8m high

- ensuring any doors that form part of the pool barrier have a self-closing mechanism and child resistant lock
 - making pool filters inaccessible to children
- inform all families of FDC educator residences that have swimming pools or spas and the risk mitigation strategies that have been implemented to provide safety for their child whilst in the care of the educator
- check the certificates of compliance and confirm registration with relevant City Council
- ensure no person engages in swimming whilst education and care is provided by the FDC educator (including other children who live at the residence)
- provide direction and education to educators, educator assistants and families on the importance of children's safety and supervision in and around water
- ensure health and safety practices are incorporated to ensure safe storage of water and water play
- ensure premises adjacent to or providing access to any water hazards that are not able to be adequately supervised at all times (e.g. dams, swimming pool) are to be isolated from children by a child resistant barrier or fence
- ensure that each FDC educator and educator assistant hold current first aid certificates, including CPR at all times
- ensure all swimming pools at the family day care educator's residence and/or venue comply with the Australian Standards and State regulations for pool fencing and gates
- ensure any items around the perimeter of the pool (for example, tables, chairs, pot plants etc.) are not able to be used as a climbing aid for children
- ensure a Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) chart is displayed near any water
- ensure any containers that hold or collect water, such as nappy buckets, ponds, spas must be safely covered or made inaccessible to children

Nominated Supervisor will:

ensure that there is adequate supervision provided given the ages and developmental needs of children undertaking water activities (including ratios)

- inform families about water safety practices at the service

- ensure first aid and CPR qualifications and requirements are met at all times
- ensure that at least one educator, staff member or nominated supervisor who holds a current approved first aid qualification is in attendance at all times that children are being educated and cared for by the service
- undertake risk assessments for excursions near water and for water-based activities
- take reasonable steps to ensure that the policy and procedures are current, reviewed regularly, and communicated to educators, staff and stakeholders
- take reasonable steps to inform and support educators and staff of their responsibilities in implementing the policy and procedures at all times
- guide and mentor educators and staff to be able to follow the policy and procedures

Family Day Care Educators/ Educator Assistants will:

ensure risk assessments are undertaken and risks associated with water hazards (e.g., spa baths, water features, swimming pools), water-based activities and excursions are taken into consideration

- implement management strategies for water hazards and excursions
- ensure that there is adequate supervision provided given the ages and developmental needs of children undertaking water activities (including ratios)
- empty, safely cover or make inaccessible to children all water containers when they are not in use, e.g., mop buckets, nappy buckets, bathtubs, water troughs, pet water containers
- ensure water troughs or containers for water play will be supervised at all times and containers or troughs will be emptied after use
- inform families about water safety practices in the home
- hold a current approved first aid qualification
- inspecting indoor and outdoor environments for potential water hazards, particularly during and after wet weather.
- ensure all water hazards have Australian Standard barriers- fencing; self-closing mechanism and child-resistant locks
- ensure they hold a certified safety certification and final council approval for pool fencing
- provide the copy of compliance certificate and complete registration notice to the provider
- advise new families of the water hazards at their residence prior to care beginning- pool, spa, fish pond, dam, water tanks

- conduct a risk assessment in accordance with the regulatory requirements prior to taking children on an excursion, clearly identifying any water hazard and indicating how this is assessed and managed
 - seek approval by the Approved Provider before any outing/excursion is conducted
 - ensure all emergency procedures are adhered to whilst on any excursion as per *Excursion Policy*
- gain prior written authorisation from parents, indicating any water hazard and educator to child ratios that will be applied to ensure supervision requirements are met, prior to any excursion.
 - for children who are less than 3 years- 1 adult to each child
 - for children who are at least 3 years but not yet 6 years- 1 adult to 2 children
 - for children 6 years and over- 1 adult to 4 years
- ensure children in a bath (if required) are
 - directly supervised at all times
 - remain within arm's reach of children
- empty water immediately after use
- ensure fish / frog ponds and water features that are not able to be adequately supervised at all times and/or pose an unacceptable risk to children are guarded or effective barriers are in place
- complete a daily Safety Inspection of premises to ensure that all hazards are known and minimised (including items close to a pool fence that could provide climbing access). When a hazard or potential hazard is detected, the educator will complete a risk assessment to address any concerns and children will be excluded from the area until the hazard has been rectified.
- utilise water activities in appropriate weather as part of the planned program
- allow the children the opportunity to experiment with water, sand, and mixing materials
- monitor all taps on the premises that children have access to and ensure they are turned off securely when not in use
- safely cover or make inaccessible to children all water containers, e.g. nappy buckets.
- empty wading pools immediately after every use and store to prevent the collection of water, e.g. upright
- check for and empty any water that has collected in holes or containers after rainfall or watering gardens
- ensure water troughs are not used without a stand to keep it off the ground.
- ensure children remain standing on the ground whilst using the water trough
- ensure buckets of water for soaking toys or clothing are inaccessible to children

- ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level and emptied into the garden areas after **each** use
- children will be discouraged from drinking from these water activities
- ensure laundry, storerooms have signage to remind the educator/adults to close doors behind them
- teach children about staying safe in and around water
- ensure wading pools are hygienically cleaned, disinfected and chlorinated appropriately:
 - on a daily basis remove leaves and debris, hose away surface dirt and scrub inside with disinfectant
 - wash away disinfectant before filling pool
 - add Chlorine to pool before children used the pool
 - check chlorine levels frequently
 - children with diarrhoea, upset stomach, open sores or nasal infections should not use the pool
 - all children should wear appropriate swimwear / bathers, go to the toilet before entering the pool, and follow correct toilet hygiene practices while in the pool.
 - remove all children immediately, empty and disinfect the pool should a child pass a bowel motion whilst in the pool.

OPERATIONAL SAFETY

- 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.
- The educator will discuss with the children the use of water tank water and how it differs from drinking water.
- Hot water accessible to children will be maintained at the temperature of 45.C° which will be tested annually (AS/NZS 3500)
- Water for pets at the FDC residence must be changed daily and only be accessible to children when the educator or educator assistant is supervising.

IMPORTANT: Parents will be notified as soon as practicable but within 24 hours if their child is involved in an incident/accident at the FDC Service or while under Service care.

Details of the incident/accident will be recorded on an *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record*.

If the incident/accident, situation or event presents imminent or severe risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of the child or if an ambulance was called in response to the emergency (not as a precaution) the regulatory authority will be notified within 24 hours by the Approved Provider. Educators will follow emergency procedures and contact emergency services if a child appears to be missing or unaccounted for or is involved in a serious incident or accident.

RESOURCES

[KidSafe Family Day Care Safety Guidelines 2020 \(7th edition\)](#)

Royal Life Saving Society Australia Toddler drowning prevention

<https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/families/at-home/toddler-drowning-prevention>

The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne Safety: Swimming Pools

https://www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/fact_sheets/Safety_Swimming_pools/

SPASA Australia *Australian Pool Fencing Rules*

<https://www.spasa.com.au/consumer-info/fencing-laws/>

The Children's Hospital at Westmead *kids health* Burns and scalds

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011)

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).

Kidsafe Family Day Care Safety Guidelines 7th Edition (2020).

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC): www.nhmrc.gov.au

NSW Department of Health: www.health.nsw.gov.au

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018/2020).

Australian Building Authority <https://www.vba.vic.gov.au/consumers/swimming-pools>

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	02/08/2021	NEXT REVIEW DATE	30/03/2022
MODIFICATIONS	Reviewed in accordance with ACECQA requirements, 2021		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
Dec, 2020	Purchase new policy from childcare desktop		2021

30/03/2021	Add specifications for Victoria	2022
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