

Family Day Care

Water Safety Policy



Merri-bek
City Council

Section: 2 Children's Health and Safety

Policy ID Number: 2.11

Link to National Quality Standard: 2.2.1; 2.2.2

Link to Education and Care Services National Regulation: r26, r98; r100; r101, r102C, r116, r136; r168.

1. Policy Statement

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for managing water safety, including safety during any water-based activities.

Educators and Coordination Unit staff will protect children's safety and wellbeing in and around water through supervision and education. This includes permanent water fixtures in the environment as well as water play, routine outings and excursions near water, hot water, drinking water and hygiene practices.

2. Rationale

Family Day Care is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation where protecting children and preventing and responding to child abuse is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of all staff, Educators, Educator household members, work experience/work placement students and volunteers irrespective of their involvement in child related duties.

Children can drown in as little as 5 centimetres of water. Any collection of water deeper than 5cms can represent a hazard to children.

To ensure children's safety and supervision in and around water.

To promote children's learning about water safety.

3. Procedures

3.1 General

- Educators will actively supervise children at all times there is water in the environment
- Educators will ensure children cannot access hot water such as taps, or any hot drinks of adults present in the environment
- Educators will ensure children can access drinking water at all times. This will be supervised to ensure children only access their own drinking vessels and that any spills are cleaned up quickly to remove any potential risks.

3.2 Water Safety in the Care Environment

- Prior to approving an Educator's home, the Coordination Unit will conduct a home safety check that will include assessment of any water hazards, water features, swimming pools and/or spas on the premises.
- Any home that has a pool or spa:

- is required to meet the Victorian Building Authority's pool and spa fencing requirements; and
- the Educator will need to provide evidence that the;
 - fencing has been deemed compliant by a person authorised to do so; and
 - pool or spa is registered with the local Council.
- The Educator will ensure that:
 - there are no objects available that could assist a child to climb over a fence, open a gate or window; and
 - Resuscitation instructions are permanently attached to a fixture within the pool area; and
 - Pool filters are inaccessible to children.
- Any other permanent water hazards or water features must be made either inaccessible to children or covered so that children can't access or fall into them.
- Any items in the home such as buckets or pet water bowls must be stored where children cannot access them.
- Any premises adjacent to the Educators home that could provide access to any water hazards (such as dams, swimming pools, spas or fishponds), shall be made inaccessible with an effective barrier or fence. Gates should be secured with a lock or latch that children cannot open.
- Detailed risk assessments that consider any water hazards and associated risks, including water-based activities and excursions near water must be in place.
- Inspection of swimming pools, water features and other potential water hazards at family day care residences and approved family day care venues will be conducted monthly and an inspection report completed by a member of the Coordination Unit.

3.3 Water activities in the Children's Program

- Water play is an essential sensory experience and an important learning activity that promotes children's development and assists them to understand safety and awareness. When undertaking water activities with children the Educator will assess any potential risk and put controls in place to manage these. During water activities the Educator will:
 - actively supervise children at all times; and
 - ensure any outdoor water activity is appropriately shaded; and
 - ensure appropriate hygiene practices are followed; such as children not drinking the water they are playing with; and
 - take the opportunity to teach children about safety around water and respect for others, for example, not to splash others if they don't like it, to avoid eyes when splashing and to walk carefully on wet, slippery surfaces; and
 - consider sustainability of water when planning and implementing the activities.
- Any vessels used in play, such as buckets, containers, paddling pools, which can store water must be completely emptied after used and stored where they cannot gather water
- When taking children on an excursion or routine outing that is near water the Educator must ensure the risk assessment contains details as to how this hazard will be managed.
 - If there is an excursion to a place where there is significant water hazard there must be:
 - One adult for each child under the age of three years.

- One adult for each two children over three years.
- The Educator will not take children on activities that include swimming.
- The Educator will not supervise swimming lessons for children in care or their own children during the hours they are providing Family Day Care.

3.4 Bathing Children

- If bathing young children, the Educator must supervise them at all times. The following must be considered:
 - Supervision of the child in the bath
 - Supervision of any children in care that are not in the bath
 - Privacy and dignity of the child in the bath
- There may be times when there are older (primary aged) children in overnight care. These children may require a bath or shower. The Educator will consider the management of this on a case by case basis to ensure the safety of the child while respecting their privacy and dignity in this process. This will be dependent on the age and development of the child and the Educator will work with the child and family to deem what is appropriate.

4. References

- [Education and Care Services National Law Act](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- [National Quality Standards](#)
- [ACECQA](#)
- Educator Service Agreement
- Victorian Building Authority

Revision History

Date	Revision No.	Revision Section	Revision Description
December 2016	1.0	All	Initial Policy Release (creation date)
May 2021	2.0	All	Updated from old Policy to new format and current information.
June 2024	3.0	3.2 and 3.3	Updated to incorporate latest legislation requirements.
June 2027	Next Review Date		