

## WCS Children's Services Water Safety Policy

### Purpose

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Children's access to clean water for drinking and for washing their hands is important for their health and wellbeing. In addition, access to water play affords children the opportunity for open-ended, exploratory and sensory play which contributes to their development and learning. It also develops environmental awareness.

However, children can drown in as little as 5cms of water. Accordingly, their access to water requires effective management and the highest level of supervision.

### Policy Statement

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This policy outlines the service's approach to water safety so that children remain unharmed and healthy. This applies at the service and during excursions. Safety and supervision of children are the highest priorities when children have access to water. The policy covers hot water, drinking water, hygiene practices with water, and water play. It also includes safe storage of equipment used for water play.

### Strategies and Practices

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- At enrolment, the service's *Water Safety Policy* is made available to parents.
- Families may be provided with water safety information including water safety in the home and the availability of learn-to-swim programs in the local community when requested.
- Children are closely supervised at all times they are involved in water play or are near water.
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) posters are displayed where possible throughout the service.
- Educators intentionally teach children about staying safe in and around water.
- Educators discuss water safety in team meetings.
- Children have ready access to clean drinking water at all times, and are regularly offered water throughout the day.
- The water in troughs and containers used for water play is kept at safe levels for children, and at weights that educators can move or secure, according to WHS guidelines for safe lifting.
- Children are discouraged from drinking any water used in the play activities.
- All water troughs and containers are emptied and cleaned at the end of each water play activity, allowed to dry thoroughly to prevent the build-up of potentially harmful bacteria, such as mould.
- Buckets used for cleaning are kept out of children's reach, emptied immediately after each use and stored in an area inaccessible to children.

- Where applicable, the service's fences and gates meet regulatory requirements, and educators ensure that items that could be used to scale the fence are kept away from the fence.
- The supervisor/educator completes an Excursion Risk Management Plan prior to every excursion. As part of the risk assessment, particular attention is focused upon water safety whenever the excursion is near a body of water, and educator: child ratios are observed.
- Water for pets is changed regularly, and is inaccessible to children unless accompanied by an educator.
- Water conservation is embedded in the service's practices:
  - only the amount of water required to undertake programmed water play is used
  - water used in water play is emptied onto gardens, where possible
  - water play is limited during water restrictions, and the reasons explained to the children
  - educators encourage children to turn taps off to avoid wastage
  - water conservation posters are displayed in bathrooms, if possible.
- Educators model and intentionally teach children water conservation, and provide parents with information to continue the service's conservation message at home. Refer to the service's *Environmental Sustainability Policy*.
- Adults are to consume hot drinks at a safe distance from children.
- The temperature of hot water is set at a maximum of 50 degrees Celsius, in accordance with the Australian Standard 3500.4. Where applicable, thermostatic valves are tested and serviced annually by a plumber, and this action recorded.

### **Responsibilities of parents/guardians**

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- To provide a spare set of clothing for their child in the event that the child engages in water play and becomes uncomfortably wet.
- To continue the service's water conservation message at home.

### **Links to other policies**

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- Educational Program Policy
- Environmental Sustainability Policy
- Excursion Policy
- Injury, Incident, Illness and Near Miss Policy
- Supervision Policy

## Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2018

Regs	25	Additional information about proposed education and care service premises
	100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
	101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion
	168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures

QA	2.1.1	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
	2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
	2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
	2.2.2	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.
	3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
	3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained
	3.2.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
	3.2.1	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.
	3.2.3	The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.
	4.1.1	The organisation of educators across the service supports children's learning and development.
	4.2.2	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.
	7.1.2	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.

## Sources, further reading and useful websites

### Sources

- Community Childcare Cooperative. (2010). *Water safety: Sample policy* [www.cscentral.org.au/Resources/water-safety.pdf](http://www.cscentral.org.au/Resources/water-safety.pdf) accessed 3 March 2012
- Early Years Learning Framework 2009
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, 2017
- National Quality Standard 2011, 2018
- Dr. B. Abbey and P. Maclean, NQS - the complete system of policies, procedures and forms, [www.childcarebydesign.com](http://www.childcarebydesign.com).

### Further reading

- Childcare Queensland. (2011). *Kids alive do the five* and Childcare Lesson Plans <http://childcareqld.org.au/wp-content/uploads/KIDS-ALIVE-PROGRAM-CQ.pdf> accessed 3 March 2012
- Gosford and Wyong Council. (2007). *Climbing the little green steps: How to promote sustainability in early childhood services in your local area*. Gosford, Australia. <http://www.livingthing.net.au/rc/PP/ClimbLittleGreenSteps.pdf> accessed 3 March 2012

- Tansey, S. (2007). *Safety in Children's Services*. [http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/educator-resources/factsheets/qias\\_factsheet\\_%202.pdf](http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/educator-resources/factsheets/qias_factsheet_%202.pdf) accessed 3 March 2012

### Useful websites

- Kids Safe – [www.kidsafe.com.au](http://www.kidsafe.com.au)
- National Health and Medical Research Council – [www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)

### Policy Review

This policy is a living document and will be monitored and reviewed as issues are identified or within 24 months. Proposed changes will be circulated and discussed by all programs and any external stakeholders for approval.

#### Person Responsible for Review:

Manager, Children's Services

<b>Implementation Date:</b>	3 November 2014	<b>Review Date:</b>	September 2018
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#### Modification History

Date	Sections and/or Paragraphs	Source	Details
2016/11/30	Strategies and practice	Input from educators	Review of content
2016/09	Whole document		Review and reformat
2018/02	Quality Areas	Revised National Quality Standard 2018	

#### Related Documents

Refer to HR Manual –cross reference to WCS documents such as: WCS Services Guide, WCS Values and Strategic Plan.

Approved by Susan Henderson, Manager, Children's Services.



Date: 16 January 2017