



Water Safety Policy

Policy Statement

Water activities are a significant part of Australian life and provide children with opportunities to access a variety of activities for learning experiences and fun. However, all bodies of water present a significant hazard and require service educators to ensure increased vigilance around them to ensure the safety of children. It is acknowledged that children can drown in as little as 5cm of water.

Procedures

The regulations do not specify a specific educator to child ratio for activities where water is present. The number of educators present is to be determined by a risk assessment of the proposed activity. It must also be noted that the National Law has statements regarding adequate supervision. Supervision shall be determined by a range of factors that include:

- Numbers, ages and abilities of the children
- Number and positioning of educators
- The activity being engaged in
- The position of children, in terms of visibility and accessibility
- Risks in the environment and the activities available to the children
- Educators knowledge of each child and each group of children
- The experience, knowledge, qualifications and skill of each educator.

Definition of a body of water

The service recognises the following locations are bodies of water:

- Swimming pools
- Wading pools
- Lakes
- Ponds
- The ocean
- Creeks and rivers

- Dams
- Equipment used by the service that could contain 5cm or more of water and would allow a child to submerge both nose and mouth at the same time.

The service shall ensure the safety of children around bodies of water by:

- Undertaking risk assessments that will determine the required educator to child ratio for the proposed activity.
- Ensuring there are educators present that have a current approved first aid qualification including CPR.
- Demonstrating a preference for venues that provide additional supervision in the form of life guards.
- Ensuring educators are placed in positions that allow them to directly and actively supervise any child accessing a body of water.
- Avoiding a venue with a body of water where sufficient precautions cannot be taken to ensure the safety of children.

The Coordinator/Responsible Person is responsible for:

- Actively looking for venues that provide additional supervision in the form of life guards, when the venue contains or has access to a body of water.
- Conducting a risk assessment on any venue the service plans to visit. This is to ensure that the service is able to provide appropriate levels of supervision and that the risk does not exceed the service's ability to maintain the safety of children.
- Ensuring a risk assessment is carried out on any activity the service sets up that allows children to access a body of water.
- Ensuring educators position themselves in the environment so that every child is within sight of an adult at all times and that supervision is direct and vigilant; and that educators rotate their position in the environment on a regular basis to allow for movement and to maintain vigilance.
- On a swimming excursion, having some educators designated to supervise children from within the body of water, if it is of benefit.

Date Endorsed Date for review & Evaluation
