

## Safe Play Spaces Policy

### DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Policy area: [Enhance](#)

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Policy owner: Enhance Family Day Care

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### Purpose

Enhance Family Day Care will ensure the Family Day Care environment is safe, clean, and well maintained for children, families, educators, and visitors. Children's awareness of the environment and sustainable practice will be supported through daily routines, resources, and interactions. The physical environment will support children's participation and engagement, development, learning, and safety, and will provide supervised access to positive experiences and inclusive relationships.

### Policy

Enhance Family Day Care supports exceptional Education and Care environments where all children have their individual needs considered and their health, safety and wellbeing are paramount. We believe that the physical environment contributes to high quality educational opportunities for children and that well designed and controlled environments help ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. Consideration is given in each Enhance FDC service about resources, materials, spaces, layout, the physical elements within each as well as recommendations from Kidsafe Australia, the leading National Authority so that children are always safe and free from harm.

### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety: 2.1, 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.2., 2.2.1, 2.2.2

Quality Area 3: Physical Environment: 3.1.1, 3.1.2

### Legislative Requirements

- 73 Educational programs
- 74 Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program
- 75 Information about the educational program to be kept available.
- 76 Information about educational program to be given to parents.

- 80 Weekly menu
- 82 Tobacco, drug and alcohol -free environment
- 86 Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma, and illness 99

Children leaving the education and care service premises.

- 102 Authorisation for excursions
- 103 Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair.
- 104 Fencing and security
- 105 Furniture, materials and equipment
- 106 Laundry and hygiene facilities
- 107 Space requirements—indoor
- 108 Space requirements—outdoor space
- 109 Toilet and hygiene facilities
- 110 Ventilation and natural light
- 112 Nappy change facilities
- 113 Outdoor space—natural environment
- 114 Outdoor space—shade
- 115 Premises designed to facilitate supervision.
- 116 Assessments of family day care residences and approved family day care venues
- 117 Glass (additional requirement for family day care)
- 156 Relationships in groups
- 168 Education and care service must have policies and procedures.
- 171 Policies and procedures to be kept available.

## Scope

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Enhance Family Day Care team, Educators, children, families, and visitors of Enhance Family Day Care services.

## Implementation

Enhance Family Day Care and its Educators are committed to providing an environment that promotes safety and enhances children's learning and development by:

### Determining service delivery area

As part of the onboarding home assessment visit, Practice Mentors will evaluate the proposed service delivery area to ensure that:

- There is adequate indoor and outdoor space for children to play, learn and rest.
- The proposed service delivery spaces are appropriate for purpose.
- Areas of potential harm or hazard (such as sheds, garages, driveways) are inaccessible to children.
- There are adequate barriers and security measures in place to prevent children from leaving the property and unauthorised people from entering the property without supervision.
- The building is fit for purpose, deemed habitable and or meets building code requirements.
- Furniture is appropriate and safe for use in the service delivery area.
- The environment is respectful to the needs and sense of belonging of children. Children should have access to areas of the residence that makes them feel that they belong to the environment. For example, living areas should be used over garages/ bathrooms used over laundries or outside facilities where possible.

As part of the service delivery area, Practice Mentors will review areas that are used for the purpose of providing care, but may not be used by children directly, such as bathrooms, kitchens, and laundries.

## Designing Play Spaces and choosing appropriate resources and equipment

- Educators will be supplied with and will comply with the Enhance Family Day Care Safe Play Spaces guidelines for all aspects of designing and managing safe and exciting play areas, resources, and equipment for children.
- Appropriately sized furniture, equipment and resources will be provided in both the indoor and outdoor environment for the age ranges represented at the service.
- Resources will be adequate in number for the number of children attending the service and be developmentally appropriate.
- The Educator will be responsible for all purchases, including equipment and consumables for the daily running of the service.
- Educators will ensure equipment that is broken or unsafe is removed from the environment.
- Educators will actively seek the input of parents/guardians regarding current interests of their children to ensure appropriate resources and equipment are available.
- Resources and equipment will be chosen to reflect the cultural diversity of the local community and the cultural diversity of contemporary Australia, including the incorporation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- Children will be provided with resources and equipment that encourages appropriate challenges and risk taking in accordance with their individual developmental level.
- The environment will be organised to ensure safety and minimal disruption for children whilst playing.
- Enhance Family Day Care and Educators will work in partnership to ensure that specific equipment requirements of children with additional needs will be catered for to ensure an inclusive environment.
- Climbing equipment will be set up in a safe way and compliant with Australian Safety Standards. Please refer to Enhance's Safe Play Spaces guidelines for more information.
- Frequent risk assessments of the indoor and outdoor environment will be conducted to minimise risk of harm and hazards.
- An environment will be provided that allows different types of play to occur both in the indoor and outdoor areas (e.g., quiet play areas and loud play areas) as well as participate in activities independently or in small groups, and access resources autonomously.
- A natural environment for children to explore and experience will be provided which may include plants, trees, gardens, rock, mud and/or water.

- Educators will participate in on-going professional development to enhance children's learning and ensuring a safe and educational environment.
- Educators will comply with our Sun Safe Policy and procedures, providing adequate shade for children in accordance with the recommendations of Cancer Council Australia
- An environment that ensures children are appropriately supervised will be provided.
- All required fencing will be maintained in good condition, fit for purpose and compliant with current regulations. Please refer to Enhance Family Day Care's Safe Play Spaces guidelines for more information.
- A variety of indoor and outdoor experiences will be provided, catering for children's interests and abilities.
- The environment will incorporate commercial, natural, recycled, homemade and natural resources that can be used in a variety of ways to encourage children's learning and creativity.
- Sufficient and accessible handwashing, toileting, eating and sleeping facilities will be available.
- Adequate and appropriate hygienic facilities for nappy changing are provided, which are soundly constructed ensuring children's safety and Educator ergonomics.
- Natural and artificial lighting, appropriate ventilation, heating, cooling, and fresh air will be incorporated into the building.
- Appropriate areas for food preparation are available, with separate water source and sink for food washing away from hygiene or craft washing stations.
- Power points not in use have safety caps, all double adaptors and power-boards are out of reach of children, and all electrical cords are secured and not dangling.
- Educators discuss the safety characteristics of using toys and equipment with children.
- Families have access to the latest safety information on items such as cots, highchairs, car seats, etc.
- All equipment, including resources, equipment, car seats, booster seats, etc. meet relevant Australian Standards and educators are trained in correct maintenance and assembly. Information provided with all equipment is kept for future reference.

## **Cleaning of buildings, premises, furniture, and equipment**

### **General Cleaning**

- Educators will use structured cleaning schedules, for example the Enhance Daily Safety and Cleaning Checklist, to ensure that the space is safe from hazards and all cleaning is carried out regularly and thoroughly.
- Educators will clean the service at the end of each day and throughout the day as needed.
- Accidents and spills will be cleaned up as quickly as possible to ensure that the service always maintains a high level of cleanliness and hygiene.

### **Minimising potentially dangerous substances**

Educators minimise the use of potentially dangerous substances. Ordinary detergents will be used to help remove dirt from surfaces. Colour-coded sponges (e.g., pink for the kitchen, yellow for the bathroom) or paper towel will be used to eliminate cross contamination. Gloves will also be used in each room then hung out to air-dry and replaced regularly. Before returning to the children, educators will wash and dry hands.

When purchasing, storing and/or using any dangerous chemicals, substances, medicines or equipment, Educators will refer to and comply with Enhance Family Day Care's Safe Play Space Guidelines.

### **Disinfectants**

Disinfectants are usually unnecessary as very few germs can survive exposure to fresh air and natural light. In an outbreak situation, such as gastroenteritis or other infectious virus (COVID-19) the Public Health Unit or SafeWork Australia, may specify the use of a particular disinfectant and increased frequency of cleaning. In this situation, for the disinfectant to work effectively, there still needs to be thorough cleaning using a detergent beforehand.

Essentially, there is no ideal disinfectant. Disinfectants cannot kill germs if the surface is not clean. It is more important to ensure that surfaces have been cleaned regularly (daily) with detergent and warm water than to use a disinfectant.

In the event of an outbreak of gastroenteritis, a disinfectant such as bleach solution may be used following the manufacturer's directions- e.g.: White King Bleach (sodium hypochlorite 42g/L) diluted part bleach (25mL) in 40 parts waters (1L) to make 0.1% solution Gloves must be always worn when handling and preparing bleach.

To kill germs, any disinfectant needs:

- A clean surface to be able to penetrate the germ.
- be an agent that acts against those germs.

- To be of the right concentrate
- Enough time to kill the germs, which is generally at least 10 minutes.

Please note cleaning is to take place out of FDC hours

## **Detergents**

To work in accordance with staying healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services, proper cleaning with detergent and warm water, followed by rinsing and air-drying kills most germs from surfaces as they are unable to multiply in a clean environment. Cleaning equipment should be stored and taken care of so it can dry between uses and not allow germs to multiply.

## **Safety Checks:**

A daily inspection of the premises will be undertaken before children begin to arrive. This inspection will include checks of residence perimeters, fences/fence line, gates, pools and water hazards (where applicable), paths, out buildings such as sheds, all rooms accessible by children, fixed equipment, and sand pit (if applicable).

- Educators will be provided with a daily safety and cleaning checklist for use prior to the service opening each day so that risks can be identified and mitigated. A record of these will be kept by the Educator and must be available when requested by families or the Approved Provider. The Educator will make the appropriate arrangements to have repairs carried out as soon as possible where faulty equipment or areas within the residence pose a risk.
- Educators will also be given a copy of Enhance Family Day Care's Safe Play Spaces guidelines for requirements around setting up and maintaining play spaces that are safe and suitable for children.
- The Family Day Care Service will have regular pest inspections carried out by an accredited pest control company, at least annually. Documentation of these inspections will be kept and any further recommended treatments because of the findings from the pest control check will be carried out in a timely manner.

## **Security Cameras**

One critical component of a positive environment is the ability to feel secure within that space. Some Family Day Care Educator and or In Home Care family residences may choose to install and manage internal / external monitoring devices or security systems. The installation and application of such devices and or systems is at the discretion of the Residential owner and Educator. It is important that the Educator or family informs all parties of the presence of and end use or purpose of any device or security system being used during a Services operational hour.

Purposes of monitoring devices or security systems and considerations could include:

- Act as additional layer of supervision, allowing visibility to blind spots / difficult to monitor corners within the care space (at times these can be supported with the positioning of a vortex mirror system or camera to iPad / tablet)
- Used as a deterrent to unwelcome intruders and for monitoring purposes for personal safety at entrances and exits.
- Monitoring and capturing of hazards, incidents, and accidents (as a form of recount of events or incidents if required)
- Transparency of childcare activities within a Service
- Any device or security system are only to be placed within common areas, thoroughfares, or areas with restricted vision for supervision purposes (not wet areas, bathrooms, or bedrooms. The dignity of the child, Educator, family members and Enhance Team is to be upheld, considered, and always respected.
- Privacy of all parties, to be upheld, if security system or device records sessions of care (not shared on public platforms or other parties, without prior consent and permission received)

## **Ongoing Maintenance**

Educators and Practice Mentors will continuously reflect, and risk assess the service environment and put in place a plan to ensure that the environment reflects our ideology of providing an environment that is safe, clean, stimulating and engaging for all who interact with it. As part of running a small business, Educators are required to plan for and budget ongoing improvements to their educational environment.

## **Service closure**

- Educators must ensure that children are correctly signed out of care and leave the premises in a safe manner. A child must leave in the presence of an authorised person and the Educator must ensure that both the child and family member/s leave the environment safely.
- Individuals visiting our Family Day Care Service must also sign in when they arrive at the Service and sign out when they leave.
- Details of absences during the day must also be recorded.

## **Excursions**

Ensuring safe play spaces for children extends beyond the Family Day Care residence when Educators are planning excursions.

Educators should risk assess and reflect on the intention of the excursion, including risk benefits before seeking approval from the Enhance Family Day Care team.





Educators will need to visit to the destination to ensure that risks can be managed to keep children free from harm while out of the service.

Please read the Excursion policy and safe transportation policy for more information.

## Variations

FDCAQ reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this Policy.

<p><b>Links to associated documents.</b></p>	<p>Safe Play Spaces Guidelines</p>
<p><b>Acknowledgements and references</b></p>	<p>Acknowledgements and references Australian Children’s Education &amp; Care Quality Authority. (2014).</p> <p>Cancer Council NSW: <a href="https://www.cancercouncil.com.au">https://www.cancercouncil.com.au</a></p> <p>Cancer Council Australia: <a href="https://www.cancer.org.au">https://www.cancer.org.au</a></p> <p>Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).</p> <p>Guide to the National Quality Standard (2020)</p> <p>Kidsafe Australia: <a href="#">kidsafe Australia   Keeping Children Safe</a></p> <p>Play Australia: <a href="https://www.playaustralia.org.au/">https://www.playaustralia.org.au/</a></p> <p>National Health and Medical Research Council. (2013).</p> <p>Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services.</p> <p>Red Nose Safe Environment <a href="https://rednose.org.au/section/safeenvironment">https://rednose.org.au/section/safeenvironment</a></p> <p>Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).</p> <p>Swimming Pools Act 1992</p> <p>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.au/">https://www.legislation.gov.au/</a></p> <p><a href="#">Guide to the National Quality Framework: July 2023 (acecqa.gov.au)</a></p>

## Versions

Version	Approval date	Authorised by	Effective date	Last reviewed	Next review date
1	13.09.2021	Cathy Cahill, General Manager of Enhance Children's Services	25.10.2021	08.2021	October 2022
2	26.02.2023	General Manager, Enhance Family Day Care	27.03.2023	16.12.2022	27. 03.2024
3	30.09.2023	General Manager, Enhance Family Day Care	1.10.2023	23.08.2023	1.10.2024
4	12.09.2024	General Manager, Enhance	13.09.2024	12.09.2024	1.09.2027