NSW Early Learning Commission

Practice guide

Protecting children from harm and abuse

By implementing child safe practices and understanding your reporting obligations, you can help prevent abuse and risk of harm to children and young people.

Champion a child safe culture

A child safe culture is a set of values and practices that guide staff attitudes, behaviour and decision-making, and prioritises children's rights and best interests above everything else.

Contribute by mentoring, collaborating and maintaining current knowledge through professional learning, including:

- completing the Office of the Children's Guardian's free e-learning on the Child Safe Standards
- reading the Guide to the Child Safe Standards.

Apply the 10 Child Safe Standards in your daily practice to protect children's safety, welfare and wellbeing. Identify risks and speak up if concerns are not addressed.

Participate in child safe induction and training

Your induction should have thoroughly covered your service's Code of Conduct, expected standards of behaviour, your obligations under child protection law and best practice guidance for child safety.

Complete all mandatory child safety and child protection training.

Working with Children Check obligations

You must hold and maintain a verified Working with Children Check (WWCC) and immediately inform your manager of any change in status.

You must notify your approved provider in writing if you receive a negative notice, including:

- if you become a disqualified person or are issued with an interim bar
- if your WWCC is refused or cancelled.

Notice must be given within 72 hours after the event or 24 hours of becoming aware, whichever comes first.

Actively supervise children

Children must be adequately supervised at all times. Adjust supervision during high-risk times, such as risky play, staff breaks, arrivals and departures.

Set up environments that support effective supervision. Maintain lines of sight clear from obstructions like posters or furniture. Consider children's movement between spaces and during routine activities.

Effectively manage risks

Proactively identify and address risks, creating child safe environments for everyone.

- Regularly identify and address any hazards, including areas out of sight or adults left alone with children.
- Consider risks in online environments including supervision of children using devices.
- Follow policies, procedures and practices that support child safety.
- Personal devices that can take, store or transfer images or videos must not be in your possession or control while working directly with children, unless a written exemption is in place.

Build positive, respectful relationships with children

When engaging with children, you must respect children's dignity and rights, and provide positive behavior guidance. If you witness any incidents of inappropriate conduct or abuse, speak to your leadership team immediately. Understand your role as a mandatory reporter.

Comply with mandatory reporting

You are legally required to report any concerns you have that a child is at risk of significant harm, including suspicions, allegations or incidents of child sexual or physical abuse, or grooming. You may need to report to multiple agencies.

Scan the QR code below or visit **linktr.ee/ECECEducatorResources** to access reporting guidance.

Discover more guidance and resources to support quality practice.

linktr.ee/ECECEducatorResources

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