



7.15 Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol-Free Environments Policy

Policy number: 7.15
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Reviewed by: Child Care Team

This policy relates to	
Family Day Care /Venue Care/In Home Child Care	
National Quality Standards Early Childhood Education & Care	<p>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.</p> <p>2.2.1 At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.</p> <p>3.1 The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service.</p> <p>3.1.2 Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.</p> <p>3.2 The service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning.</p> <p>7.1.2 Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.</p>

Purpose

Beaucare has a duty of care under workplace health and safety legislation to protect children from, and must ensure the environment is free from, the harm of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol.

Background

There is strong evidence that breathing passive smoke can increase the risk of heart disease, lung cancer and other chronic lung diseases in adults and lead to bronchitis, asthma and other chest conditions and middle-ear infections in children. It has also been linked to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and affecting the unborn child. Children are particularly prone to the harmful effects of tobacco smoke because their lungs and body weight are smaller.

Policy

Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol-free Environment

From the 1st September 2016 smoking will be banned at Early Childhood Education and Care facilities across Queensland. The smoking ban also extends to a 5 metre buffer zone around the land from which the service is provided. The new law applies to ECEC services approved under



national and state legislation, including long day care, kindergarten, family day care, outside school-hours care, occasional care and limited-hours care services.

Educators must ensure that children being educated by the educator as part of family day care service are provided with an environment (i.e. any area that children will access) that is free from the use of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol.

Educators must not consume alcohol or be affected by alcohol or drugs that may impair their capacity to provide education and care to children. Exposure to tobacco smoke poses major health risks for both children and adults. Educators need to develop strategies to ensure that the home is a safe place for children. Educators who smoke need to ensure that they are free of smoke residue prior to commencing care with children and develop strategies to ensure children do not come in contact with smoke residue. Educators who smoke need to document on their risk management plan how they ensure a smoke free environment and ensure that children, particularly children under 2 years of age, do not come into contact with smoke residue.

Educators, coordinators and volunteers must not consume alcohol or be affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription and non-prescription medications) that may impair their capacity to provide education and care to children. This does not mean that educators, coordinators or volunteers who require prescription medication must be excluded from the service, but rather that consideration be given as to whether the particular medication affects the person's capacity to provide education and care to children. Educators are required to advise the service of changes to their health including medication that might in any way affect their ability to care for children. In these circumstances, doctor's letters will be requested prior to recommencing care.

When care is taking place, smoking is not permitted in the presence of children. This applies to family members and all visitors to the home, including parents. Educators should ensure that children remain in a smoke-free environment when in vehicles and on outings and excursions.

Exposure to tobacco smoke poses major health risk for both children and adults. In family day care where the service is also a family home, strategies should be developed to ensure that the educator's home is a safe place for children. If tobacco is smoked in the family day care residence when the service is not operating, consideration should be given to issues such as ventilation, hygiene and safe storage of items including ashtrays and cigarette lighters.

To ensure that this policy is adhered to ashtrays, cigarette packets and smoke odours should not be evident when children are in care. Cigarette butts are extremely toxic to children and should be carefully disposed of out of reach of children. Educators who smoke need to ensure that their hands, clothing and any items that children may come into contact with are free of smoke residue.

Beaucare maintains a smoke free environment for staff in its buildings. Visitors to Beaucare premises are required to adhere to this.

Relevant Legislation

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 167
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, 82-83
Workplace Health and Safety Act

Key Resources

Department of Health
www.health.qld.gov.au/publicelath/topics/atod/tobacco-laws/education/default.asp.
www.workplaces.healthier.qld.gov.au/public-resources/workplace-quit-smoking-program/
Quit Line 137848
Qld Cancer Fund and Qld Health: *Smoke Free Policy Guide for Workplaces (2006)*
www.health.qld.gov.au/atod/documents/smokefreepolicy_work.pdf
Queensland Health: *Smoke Free Car with Kids*
www.health.qld.gov.au/tobaccolaws/default.asp
Oxygen: *Smoke-Free Education and Child Care*
www.oxygen.org.au/downloads/resources_for_schools/Smarter_than_Smoking_SA_S_moke-Free_Education_and_Childcare_G.pdf
The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne: *Childcare and Children's Health Vol 11 No 4 (December 2008): Young Children and Passive Smoking*
www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/econnections/CCH_Vol_11_No4_Dec_2008.pdf
Kidsafe
www.rednose.com.au

Related Policies

7.5 Duty of Care, Supervision and Risk Management Policy