



7.21 Toxic and Dangerous Products Policy

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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	Quality Area 2 Childrens Health and Safety 2.1 Health 2.2 Safety 2.2.1 Supervision 2.2.2 Incident and Emergency Management 3.1.1 Fit for purpose
Child Protection Principles	

Purpose

The service endeavours to protect children, families and visitors from the risks associated with exposure to toxic and dangerous products. Educators and coordinators are to maintain a safe environment that limits risks associated with poisoning or exposure to toxic products. It is part of risk management to ensure that medications and toxic products are always stored safely out of reach of young children (preferably out of sight in a secure locked cabinet), and that use of pesticides and toxic products is minimized to limit impact on the safety of the home. Precautions are needed to limit exposure to lead and asbestos.

Policy

The service endeavours to:

- Provide a smoke free environment;
- Promote sustainable practices and eco-friendly environments as much as possible through the use of natural and chemical free products and materials;
- Ensure that toxic products are inaccessible to children and out of sight where possible in a locked secure cabinet;
- Promote environments that are safe for children and free of toxic products where possible, Prevent or minimise any use of chemicals on the property including during renovations or poisoning in the yard or home, particularly should not occur when children are in care if the products are toxic ;
- Review safety information regarding toxic products and update information for educators.

Toxic products or products that would cause poisoning if ingested should be clearly labelled and kept out of reach of children. **In the event that poisoning or potentially hazardous ingestion, inhalation, skin or eye exposure has occurred contact 131126 and an ambulance on 000.**

Material Safety Data sheet is a document that contains information on potential hazards of a product and should be considered for any chemicals that are stored or used in a child care approved environment. These can be internet searched on most products.

To prevent poisoning, educators are encouraged to:

- Minimize the use of chemicals and choose the least hazardous chemical or product for the job;
- Use medications and chemicals safely and limit the use of poisonous products. Read directions for use carefully and never leave chemicals or medications unattended;
- Ensure that all dangerous cleaning materials, poisons and other dangerous substances are stored in their original labelled container and not transferred to any other container;
- Ensure that poisonous products, medications and chemicals are stored out of reach and out of sight of children (preferably 1500mm high), in a locked or child resistant cupboard;
- Ensure that, if the original container for hazardous substance does not have a child resistant lid, the container is kept in a locked place which is secure and inaccessible to children;
- To prevent imitation by children, it is recommended that adults avoid taking medications in their presence and refer to medications by their proper names;
- Store educator and visitor's bags out of reach of children as they may contain medications;
- Ensure no medications (including paracetamol) are left in children's bags.

Pesticides and Herbicides

Pesticides and herbicides are chemicals used to control weeds, insects, rodents and other pests. Exposure to pesticides and herbicides can occur through skin contact, inhalation or by swallowing and can leave residues on furniture, rugs and books. Chemicals used against pests often pose hazards for humans. It is recommended that pest control methods be used such as sealing cracks in walls, floors and cupboards, minimising clutter to improve the ability to clean and reduce nesting places. It is recommended that only licensed and registered pest control operators be used. It is recommended that the lowest toxicity pesticide (no stronger than pyrethroids) be used. Pesticides and herbicides should not be used when children or pets are present and care should be taken to ensure that there are no pesticide residues left after treatment.

Lead

Lead is highly toxic and can be found in old paint, dust from industrial fumes and vehicle exhaust, soil and some consumer products (i.e. toys). Children under 7 are particularly at risk of lead poisoning because they may ingest lead dust and soil by putting their hands in their mouths.

To prevent exposure to lead, old peeling and/or weathered paint on indoor and outdoor walls and ceilings should be repaired promptly. If lead paint or dust has been identified, remove the item immediately or have the paint removed in accordance with the Building Code of Australia.

Nursery furniture is required to meet Australian Standards to ensure that it does not contain lead.

Asbestos

Asbestos is a fibrous insulation material that can be found in Australian buildings built before 1987. If products are in good condition, they present no significant health risks. However, if asbestos is cracked, torn or crumbling it can release asbestos fibres and dust. Premises that were built before 1983 may contain building materials with asbestos such as fibro sheeting and tiling cement, lagging on water and drainage pipes, roofing shingles and guttering or flexible boards and under eaves.

Asbestos in homes should be identified by a certified contractor with the condition checked regularly. Repairs or renovation on any asbestos areas should only be carried out according to the Building Code of Australia using certified contractors. After hail or any other damage to the roof inspect for possible damage to asbestos. If there are pieces on the ground, keep in a wet condition until a contractor can remove the pieces.

Renovations to care premises will require a builders report to ensure that children are not being exposed to asbestos.

Key Resources

National Law section 167

Workplace Health and Safety Act

www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/index.htm

www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/documents/showDoc.html?WHS%20Fast%20Facts/healthcommunity%20-%20childcare%20worker

www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/subjects/rural/chemicals/pesticides/index.htm

www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/subjects/hazardousmaterials/lead/index.htm

www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/subjects/asbestos/definition/index.htm

www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/subjects/hazardousmaterials/definition/msds/index.htm

Kid safe

www.kidsafeqld.com.au

www.kidsafeqld.com.au/images/stories/pdfs/inews.4049.1.pdf

Educational Resource Centre The Royal Children's Hospital

www.rch.org.au/poisons

Poisons Information Centre 13 11 26

www.health.qld.gov.au/poisonsinformationcentre/

www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/Documents/hpu/15448.pdf

University of New South Wales Medicine: *Health & Safety in Family Day Care Model Policies, 2003*

www.med.unsw.edu.au/

[www.med.unsw.edu.au/SPHCMWeb.nsf/resources/FDCModelPolicies.pdf/\\$file/FDCModelPolicies.pdf](http://www.med.unsw.edu.au/SPHCMWeb.nsf/resources/FDCModelPolicies.pdf/$file/FDCModelPolicies.pdf)

Tansey, S. (2006) Quality Improvement and Accreditation System Factsheet # 2 Safety In Children's Services. NSW National Childcare Accreditation Council Inc.