

SAFETY FACILITIES IN THE HOME

Providing a Child Safe Environment

AIM:

Clarence Family Day Care aims to provide and maintain safe and healthy environments in which children may play and explore their world free from harm.

Educators registered with the service will protect the health and safety of children and every person who enters their care premises or uses their equipment by keeping informed about and complying with the applicable work health & safety legislation, Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations and scheme policies, and ensuring appropriate codes of practice, standards and recommendations from recognised authorities are followed to protect persons from harm, injury, illness or abuse.

RATIONALE:

All children have the right to experience quality care in an environment which provides for their health and safety. The Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 requires that the service takes reasonable care to protect children from foreseeable risk of harm, injury and infection.

POLICY:

With the help and the co-operation of educators, the scheme will endeavour, through regular home visits, safety audits, risk assessments and educator training, to have every educator's home maintained in a fit and proper state of repair and containing all the requisite safety facilities specified in the applicable regulations.

Habitual safety practices by all stakeholders both inside and outside the educator's home, should be a matter of routine in family day care, with dangers and problems anticipated and circumvented or forestalled, whenever possible.

PROCEDURES:

1. Initial registration of an educator and renewal of annual registration is partially dependent upon meeting and maintaining required safety standards in the approved care area of the family day care home. These are set out in the 'Home Safety Audit' document and/or the applicable regulations, standards and scheme policies.
2. Educators will use a documented daily safety check prior to the commencement of each session of care, to ensure the care environment is safe for children.
3. The educator will have in place, an effective emergency evacuation plan which includes:-
 - * a risk assessment that identifies the potential emergencies relevant to the service,
 - * instructions for what must be done in the event of these emergencies,
 - * an emergency evacuation floor plan.

This plan will be displayed in a prominent position **at each exit** from the designated care area.

Emergency evacuation drills must be **practised every three (3) months** with all children who attend the educator's service on the day of the practice. Details of each practice will be recorded in the **Emergency Evacuation Booklet** and noted in the educator's program. **Fire protection equipment** in the educators home is to be professionally **tested and tagged every six (6) months** as required by law for all businesses in NSW.

4. If a coordinator observes an unsafe practice or facility/item of equipment that disregards home safety requirements, the applicable regulation/standard, or the scheme's policy, this will be raised verbally with the educator. The educator may then be given a written 'Coordinator Report' that outlines the problem and the time frame in which it is to be rectified.
5. The part of the family day care home that is designated as the outdoor play area must be fenced on all sides. The design and height of the fence must prevent children from scaling or crawling under it or through it. External gates on the premises must be fitted with a child-resistant latch. *(As a general guide, the minimum height requirement will be 1200mm (+ or – 5cm) and the design and construction of the fence will meet the requirements of the Swimming Pools Act 1992)*
6. Any glazed area of the educators premises that is accessible to children in care and is **one (1) metre** or less above the level of the floor (or any surface a child can stand on under the window) will be:
 - a) glazed with safety glass, or
 - b) treated with a product that prevents glass from shattering if broken, or
 - c) guarded by an effective barrier that will prevent a child from striking or falling against the glass.
7. Play equipment should meet the fall-height, fall-zone and undersurfacing (*softfall*) recommendations of Kidsafe NSW. *(refer Family day care Safety Guidelines (Kidsafe NSW) cl.2.4.1; 2.4.2; 2.4.3)* In situations where equipment specifications do not meet Kidsafe NSW recommendations, the educator is to complete a documented risk assessment to demonstrate how the safety of the children will be ensured.

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other Clarence Family Day Care safety policies

Relevant Legislation: *Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011;*
Swimming Pools Act 1992(NSW).

Key Resources: *Staying Healthy In Child Care*, the National Health and Medical Research Council, Commonwealth of Australia, 5th edition, 2013;
Health & Safety In Family day care – Model Policies & Practices, University of New South Wales, 2nd edition, November 2003;