

## Equipment and Toys Policy

### Policy Statement

An environment that supports children's learning requires suitable and appropriate equipment in adequate supply that can be designed to meet the individual and group needs of children.

It is vital that all equipment (including nursery equipment) and toys used are safe and appropriate for the children in care taking into consideration the developmental needs of children.

The range of resources available should allow children to represent their thinking, express their creativity and imagination, engage in energetic activities, explore mathematical and scientific concepts, experiment with different technologies, and participate in everyday tasks. (National Quality Framework Resource Kit)

### Education and Care Services National Regulations

#### Part 4.1: Educational Program and Practice

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

#### Part 4.3: Physical environment

##### Division 1: Centre based services and family day care services

- Regulation 103: Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
- Regulation 105: Furniture, materials and equipment

### National Quality Standard

#### Quality Area 1: Education Program and Practice

Standard 1.1: An approved learning framework informs development of a curriculum that enhances each child's learning and development

#### Quality Area 3: Physical Environment

Standard 3.1: The design and location of the premises is appropriate for the operation of a service

- Element 3.1.1: Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources are suitable for their purpose
- Element 3.1.2: Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained

Standard 3.2: The environment is inclusive, promotes competence, independent exploration and learning through play

- Element: 3.2.2: Resources, materials and equipment are sufficient in number, organised in ways that ensure appropriate and effective implementation of the program and allow for multiple uses

## Strategies and Practices

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### Equipment

- All new equipment purchased and that which is currently in use must conform to Australian Standards
- All nursery equipment is to have a set of manufacturer's instructions for use
- Educators will regularly check equipment. Any unsafe equipment will be removed immediately and then disposed of, fixed or replaced
- All equipment must be maintained in a thoroughly safe, clean and hygienic condition and in good repair at all times
- All high chairs/seating aids must have a five point safety harness, which must be used each time a child is placed in the high chair
- The following equipment is not to be used in any service: (this includes family day care educators who are not to use this equipment for their own child during care hours)
  - Playpens, Baby walkers, walking reins, booster cushions (as car restraint)

### Toys

- Activities and toys available for children are to be of a non- violent nature. Where toys brought from home are of a violent nature, these are to be removed from the education and care setting and given to parents at pick up time and a request is to be made that the item not be brought to the service
- Educators will provide a range of equipment and toys that are:
  - Developmentally appropriate
  - Relevant to the child's interests and skills
  - Culturally appropriate and diverse
  - Include a variety of materials e.g. Wood, plastic, material, homemade and commercial etc.
  - Open ended materials that children can explore freely and creatively

- Activities and toys must be available in sufficient quantities for children to avoid excessive competition
- Activities and toys must be available that provide for a full variety of experiences; including indoor, outdoor, quiet, active, messy, cognitive and all other areas of play and activities that can be freely chosen by the children
- Item used for toy storage must not have lids that could crush or entrap any part of a child

## Family Day Care

- The family day care coordination team endeavours to supply educators with car seats for use with family day care children (depending on availability)
- The coordination team support new educators with the provision of nursery equipment (depending on availability) for the first twelve (12) months of their licence e.g. prams, high chairs, porta cots etc. After the initial twelve (12) months; educators are to purchase their own equipment and return the service equipment to the coordination team
- The coordination team may deem equipment owned by educators as inappropriate for use and this may need to be removed from the care environment
- Educators will regularly check their car seats, booster seats and harnesses for the date of manufacture. No car equipment older than ten (10) years will be used. Booster cushions are not to be used as a car restraint (Booster cushions are those without a back)
- The coordination team will regularly monitor and assess the availability and safety of toys and equipment via home visits to educator's homes
- Toys can be borrowed from the family day care toy library; all toys borrowed are to be kept in a clean and hygienic condition and any damages or loss to the toys must be repaired or replaced

## Sources and further reading

- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission; Keeping baby safe; a guide to nursery furniture (2006)
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission; Safe toys for kids (2006)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011)
- Vic Roads: Child restraints (2012)