



Creating learning spaces in Family Day Care



**Great spaces,
Safe spaces**



made simple
sturdier
for the
youngest readers!

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 Ho, Ho, Ho by Steve & Jan Berenstain
 Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You? by Dr. Seuss
 Old Hat, New Hat by Steve & Jan Berenstain
 The Shape of Me and Other Stuff by Dr. Seuss
 Ten Apples Up On Top! by Dr. Seuss
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**HOP
ON
POP**

By Dr. Seuss

The **SIMPLEST** SEUSS
for **TODDLERS** US

Creating Learning Spaces

Babies and children learn every day - including in Family Day Care. Family Day Care is an education and care service so while we are caring for children we are also educating them.

As a Family Day Care educator, you have to create learning spaces – spaces where babies and children can learn from. These spaces will be in your home and places outside your home which you may visit on excursions.

Your choice of equipment, materials and toys and where you choose to put them in your home will impact how children can learn. They will also impact how children behave and feel and how you as the educator behave and feel while you have children at your home.

The main things you need to do to create great learning spaces in FDC are:

- organise and set up indoor and outdoor spaces so that children are learning in both natural and built places

- have enough materials (toys and equipment) so that every child can play – through playing children learn
- show how you care for the environment – this helps children to learn how to care for it



Defining spaces

When providing education and care in your home it is important that you work out how to separate the space to make it clear which space or spaces you are using for FDC.

Obviously some spaces such as the kitchen will be both used by you to educate and care for the children and used by your family when the children are gone.

Are there some spaces that you can use just for your work with the children? A rumpus room or a lounge room? Can you use the back yard or porch, or sections of these?

Some of this may change over time. Some areas may be able to be set up from when you start as an educator. There are many ways you can separate out space for educational activities within bigger spaces. Think about:

- using a rug on a carpeted area
- putting up an umbrella outside
- facing a chair away from the centre of a room
- using child-size tables and chairs to create a room





Indoor spaces

It is really important in FDC to set up areas in your home so that children have access to resources. This will help to ensure you are working with them to meet the learning outcomes of the *Early Years Learning Framework* and or the *Framework for School Age Care*.

You need to have spaces:

- with tables and chairs for children
- where children can relax
- for creativity, art and music
- where children can explore, investigate and do science activities
- to display children's work
- for pretend play and drama
- to store toys and equipment

Consider:

- will the kitchen table be your main work area?
- can you use different areas of the lounge room for different activities?





Outdoor spaces

The *Early Years Learning Framework* and *Framework for School Age Care* both stress the importance of outdoor learning for children.

Remember that outdoor time is not just playtime – you can help children learn in the outdoors and can establish learning spaces in the same way you do indoors – sometimes even more.

The outdoors also allows specific sorts of learning to occur – learning about our environment, the weather and about how plants, trees and grass grow.

Think about:

- a musical space (drums/chimes/bells)
- a digging space (dirt patch/sandpit)
- stepping stones or trails made of tyres
- quiet spaces to read or lay back and look at clouds
- art areas
- cubby houses – permanent or temporary places for children to 'hide' in
- tables and chairs to eat at or display resources
- spaces to use balls
- using fences and the side of your house to put up artwork and posters
- growing plants and vegetables in pots or other containers
- having shade outside





Spaces to read

Children need spaces where they can read and look at books. You need spaces where you can read books to children.

Think about:

- making spaces cosy with cushions and blankets
- low book shelves
- baskets for book storage
- fairy lights
- indoor tents
- small chairs





Spaces to build things

Spaces where children can build things are very important in Family Day Care. Consider:

- Can children have a special place in your home to use blocks or other construction materials?
- Can they leave them to work on the next day or does the area need to be packed away each night?

Blocks help children learn about space and distance and help them learn about working together.



Spaces to imagine

Children in Family Day Care need places for imaginative (role) play.

The place could be a corner of a room or under the table (put a long tablecloth or a blanket over a table and you have an instant cubby house.)

It could be a 'home corner' or play kitchen area. It can be a dress up area where children can use clothes to imagine they are someone else.

You need resources for children to be able to pretend play. Boxes can become many other things in children's play. Dress up clothes like scarves and hats and wigs all help. Toy or real kitchen things like plates and cups all help children pretend play.



Spaces to move bodies

When children are young they need spaces to develop gross motor skills. These are the physical skills which require whole body movement and which involve the large muscles of the body. They are the skills that babies and children learn to stand, walk, run, jump and sit.

They are the skills that enable children to do things like throw, catch a ball or ride a bike or a scooter. All children need to learn move and use their bodies.

Have you got places where children can:

- run
- jump
- hop
- throw and catch
- climb up, down, over, under and through things
- pedal on ride-on toys or scooters or push toys
- push and pull
- pull up or roll over (for babies)





Don't Break The Law

As a Family Day Care educator you have to follow special laws about learning spaces in Family Day Care.

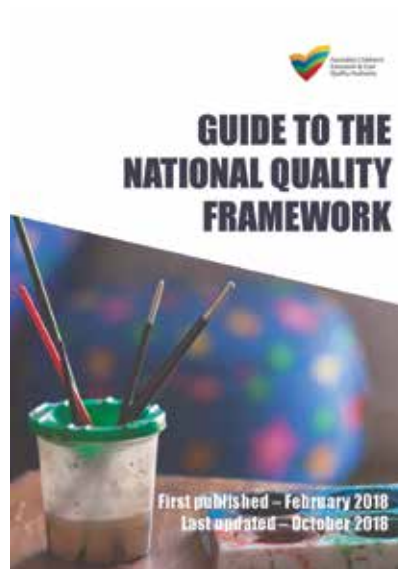
The main laws are the ***Education and Care Services Law***, and the ***Education and Care Services Regulations***.

The best way to get an understanding of the law and regulations is to talk to your FDC Provider. They will help you to understand the law.

The other way is to read the *Guide to the NQF*. You can find it at www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about/guide

In regards to physical environments, the law and regulations require your **FDC Provider** to:

- make sure that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm or hazards that could cause an injury while they are with you (*Section 167*)
- make sure there is enough furniture, materials and toys and equipment for the children you are caring for (*Regulation 105*)



- make sure that the premises and all equipment and furniture used in providing FDC is safe, clean and in good repair (*Regulation 103*)

The laws and regulations are designed to keep children safe while in your care.

Where to find out more

Want to know more about creating learning spaces in Family Day Care?



Ask

The NSW Department of Education Information and Enquiries Line. The Department is the Regulatory Authority for FDC services. Call 1800 619 113 or email ececd@det.nsw.edu.au



Read

Creating the Perfect Play Space

www.nswfdc.org.au/playspace

The other booklets in these series

www.nswfdc.org.au/greatspaces

Guide to the National Quality Framework

www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about/guide



Watch videos

Great Spaces Safe Spaces videos

www.nswfdc.org.au/greatspaces

Environments for Learning Videos

These 4 videos discuss how the physical environment can contribute to children's learning. Although produced for centre based environments there is lots to inspire FDC educators. www.ecrh.edu.au/resources/detail/index/talking-about-practice-environments-for-learning



Look

Pinterest is a great place to explore and get inspiration for everything from storage solutions to ways to designate your own space.

www.pinterest.com/FDCconcepts/family-day-care-enviroments



Look at websites

www.familydaycare.com.au

www.nswfdc.org.au



Read the curriculum

The *Early Years Learning Framework* (the curriculum for FDC and other early education and care services) has been translated into 11 different languages.

www.nswfdc.org.au/EYLF

The Framework for School Aged Care (the curriculum for FDC for school aged children) is available in English only.

www.nswfdc.org.au/MTOP







NSW FAMILY DAY CARE
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