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**FREE PD FOR FDC**



NSW FAMILY DAY CARE  
ASSOCIATION INC.

**37**

# Child Safe Environments in Family Day Care

# Introduction

## All children have the right to feel safe and well

As professional Family Day Care (FDC) Educators, we have a responsibility to keep children safe and well in our services. This means we always have child safety and wellbeing in mind for every child. We can do this by:

- ▶ creating and maintaining risk aware environments with and for children
- ▶ knowing what child-rights environments look like in relation to respect, privacy, consultation and ongoing action
- ▶ implementing the Child Safe Standards and continuing to build capacity to create and maintain a child safe culture and
- ▶ be aware of National Quality Framework and Regulatory changes that are upcoming. For example, there are upcoming changes that will have an impact on the Child

Safe Environment through improvements within the NQF and Regulatory changes due to Education Ministers' endorsement of the 16 recommendations from the Child Safety Review.



The 10 Child Safe Standards were recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse to provide a framework for making organisations safer for children (this is called the Child Safe Scheme).

These 10 Child Safe Standards have been accepted by the NSW Government and enforced by The Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG). The OCG oversees organisations to uphold children and young people's right to be safe by regulating, monitoring and fostering capability in quality child safe practices.

## Building a Child Safe Culture

When you and your service apply the NSW Child Safe Standards, you build attitudes and environments where abuse of children is prevented, responded to and reported. (*Why we have Child Safe Standards*, Office of the Children's Guardian, 2023) – [ocg.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-scheme/why-we-have-child-safe-standards](https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-scheme/why-we-have-child-safe-standards)

- ▶ The Child Safety Review (CSR) emphasised ALL stakeholders to champion a child safe culture in physical and online environments

- ▶ Incorporated risk management to mitigate harm to children
- ▶ Expedited Recommendations to strengthen standards, for example, the amendment to the National Quality Standard;

*1.1 Enshrine 'Child Safe Culture' in Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership to authorise and promote the importance of the role played by, and responsibilities of, Approved Providers and their service leaders in fostering a child safe culture, responsive relationships, engaging experiences and a safe and healthy environment.*

**Do you know?  
Compliance and  
enforcement  
measures came into  
effect in February  
2023 in NSW.**

## What are the 10 Child Safe Standards?

1. Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
2. Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
3. Families and communities are informed and involved
4. Equity is upheld and diversity is taken into account
5. People working with children are suitable and supported
6. Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child focused
7. Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training
8. Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur
9. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe.

Office of the Children's Guardian – [ocg.nsw.gov.au](http://ocg.nsw.gov.au)



### Reflection:

- ▶ Are you aware of the Child Safe Standards?
- ▶ What Standard/s do you know and maintain?
- ▶ What Standard/s do you feel you could build your understanding about?

# What is the difference between Child Protection and being Child Safe?



**Child Protection** is the mechanics and the action of reporting. How to identify and understand indicators of Risk of Harm, and when and how to report.

**Being Child Safe** means creating a culture of child safety within your organisation so that harm and abuse are less likely to happen, and children are supported in communicating about their safety. Educators should implement the Child Safe Standards to assist you in creating a child safe culture.

## Do the NSW Child Safe Standards replace the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations?

The Office of the Children's Guardian considers that any service implementing the National Principles is taken to also be implementing the Child Safe Standards.

There is an expectation that you, as an FDC Educator, will:

- ▶ Apply the Child Safe Standards
- ▶ Document the Child Safe Standards
- ▶ Show indicators of successfully implementing the Child Safe Standards and
- ▶ Use a holistic approach to safeguard and promote children's health, safety and wellbeing in your service.



**Child Safety  
needs to be  
considered  
every day and  
in all aspects of  
your program  
and practice.**

To support you to keep children safe, use the 10 Child Safe Standards along with other guiding documents that mention child safety, such as:

- ▶ The Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics
- ▶ The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- ▶ The Education and Care [National Law](#) and [Regulations](#)
- ▶ The National Quality Standard and
- ▶ Your service policies and procedures.



Australian Children's  
Education & Care  
Quality Authority®





For example, in FDC, Policies and Procedures must consider;

- ▶ providing a child safe environment
- ▶ the promotion of a culture of child safety and wellbeing
- ▶ the safe use of online environments at the service
- ▶ supervision at all times
- ▶ visitors to FDC residences
- ▶ documenting and assessing the possible risks – before going on excursions
- ▶ sleep and rest practices
- ▶ potential emergencies
- ▶ excursions
- ▶ transporting children

- ▶ the safe arrival of children at the FDC residence and
- ▶ documenting incidents.



This image is an example of an experience that would require a risk assessment – consider areas that Educators' clear line of sight would be impacted.

We all have a responsibility to create and maintain Child Safe Environments, including children themselves. Child Safety

and wellbeing in our FDC environments requires Service Leaders, Educators, children and families to work together to create and maintain a strong culture of Child Safety.

Ways to achieve this in practice include:

- ▶ Being aware of, understanding and following your service child safe environments and other child safe policies and documents
- ▶ Being aware of, understanding and following your service Code of Conduct
- ▶ Understanding your responsibility, duty of care, to keep children safe and how to do this
- ▶ Creating an Organisational **Statement of Commitment** to child safety
- ▶ Creating risk assessments and risk management strategies
- ▶ Fostering a reporting culture including having a clear complaint handling, information sharing and reporting policy
- ▶ Asking Service Leaders if you are unsure of whether a practice is safe

- ▶ Regularly refreshing your child protection knowledge
- ▶ Reflecting on scenario-based child protection questions during meetings.

It is important to consider accessibility to information. Consider diverse needs of audiences, for example, Educators, children, families and visitors. It is helpful to have user-friendly versions, of your:

- ▶ **Child Safe environments and other child safe policies and documents**
- ▶ Organisational **Statement of Commitment** to child safety
- ▶ **Code of Conduct**
- ▶ **Risk management** strategies
- ▶ **Complaint handling, information sharing and reporting policy.**

### Reflection:

Who needs to access and understand your Policies and Procedures?



These documents help to provide:

- ▶ Guidance to support the service's community to recognise unacceptable or concerning behaviour
- ▶ Outline the action you and your service will take if there is a breach of the code
- ▶ Risks to children's safety that are unique to your service
- ▶ A shared understanding of how to raise concerns or provide feedback for meaningful consultation.

### Reflection:

Is everyone at your service actively contributing to embedding a culture of child safety?

The Office of the Children's Guardian offers a range of resources to help organisations better understand, meet and comply with the NSW Child Safe Standards, including a suite of resources developed in collaboration with the NSW Department of Education specifically tailored for an FDC context.



- ▶ eLearning specific for FDC services
- ▶ Register and access here: [ocg.nsw.gov.au/training-and-resources/elearning](http://ocg.nsw.gov.au/training-and-resources/elearning)
- ▶ Policy and practice in focus: An ECEC Child Safe Podcast Miniseries. Hop in here: [ocg.nsw.gov.au/resources/policy-and-practice-focus-ecec-child-safe-podcast-miniseries](http://ocg.nsw.gov.au/resources/policy-and-practice-focus-ecec-child-safe-podcast-miniseries)
- ▶ Further information/guidance on their website hop in here: [education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/ecec-resource-library/child-safety](http://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/ecec-resource-library/child-safety).

Another helpful resource developed by the Office of the Children's Guardian is the SAFE series. These free resources aim to support Educators to implement the SAFE series protective behaviours program.



Introducing our child SAFE book series

Meet our SAFE champions - Sam, Andy, Fiona & Eve



Office of the Children's Guardian

Go to: [ocg.nsw.gov.au/search?keys=safe+series](http://ocg.nsw.gov.au/search?keys=safe+series)

# Children have the right to speak

**Article 12:**  
You have the right to speak and for others to listen and value your ideas and opinions. For children this means:



I have the right to speak and be heard.



I have the right to have a say when adults are making decisions that affect me.



Adults should believe me when I tell them something important about my safety.



Children are important and childhood is a precious time of life. That's why the United Nations has developed a set of 54 Articles that outline the rights that apply to every child in the world to live a safe and happy life. See [www.unicef.org/crc/](http://www.unicef.org/crc/)



Adults, for ideas about how you can help to support the rights of children to have their say, see the other side of this poster or visit [www.napcan.org.au](http://www.napcan.org.au)



**NAPCAN** PREVENT CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT  
[www.napcan.org.au](http://www.napcan.org.au)

# Championing a child safe culture

Children need to know that you, as their FDC Educator, take your role to protect them very seriously. Including them in discussions about what safety looks like and ideas about how to include this in the program, lets children know they are active change makers too and that they have agency over their environment.

## Invite children to share:

- ▶ What makes them feel safe/unsafe
- ▶ Ideas about how to make their FDC service safer
- ▶ Ideas to include about learning about safety in the program.

It is important that everyone, including children, can easily access assistance in raising concerns and filing complaints, and have confidence that their voices will be heard.

Spoken language is not the only way you can invite children's feedback and ideas. Creative arts and dramatic play are useful ways to provide children with a voice and become aware of their views and feelings. Puppets, for example, invite children to express feelings. Consider how you might encourage children to share their concerns or preferences in non-verbal ways, such as through body language or other cues.



## Child Rights and Peer Support for Children

Body safety, rights to privacy, and seeking children's consent are essential in our everyday play, routines and transitions if we are going to safeguard and promote children's health, safety and wellbeing. Children learn to recognise safe/unsafe feelings and can advocate for their peers.



## A Culture of Speaking Up

We can do this by creating and maintaining environments where we support children:

- ▶ Helping others feel heard whether they are happy or feeling upset/worried
- ▶ By not expecting children to raise concerns on their own
- ▶ By promoting the presence of safe adults
- ▶ By providing access to internal and external support services and appropriate channels to raise their concerns.

Go to: [beyou.edu.au/resources/mental-health-services-and-support-helplines](https://beyou.edu.au/resources/mental-health-services-and-support-helplines)

### Reflection:

Do you promote a Culture of Speaking Up? What could this look like?

# Mental Health Services and Support

## Beyond Blue

24/7 mental health support service

**1300 22 4636**  
[beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au)

## headspace

Online support and counselling to young people aged 12 to 25

**1800 650 890**  
(9am to 1am daily)  
[headspace.org.au/eheadspace](http://headspace.org.au/eheadspace)

## Kids Helpline

24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services for children and young people aged 5 to 25

**1800 55 1800**  
[kidshelpline.com.au](http://kidshelpline.com.au)

## 1800 RESPECT

24/7 support for people impacted by sexual assault, domestic violence and abuse

**1800 737 732**  
[1800respect.org.au](http://1800respect.org.au)

## QLife

LGBTI peer support and referral

**1800 184 527**  
[qlife.org.au](http://qlife.org.au)

## Lifeline

24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services

**13 11 14**  
[lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)

## Suicide Call Back

24/7 crisis support and counselling service for people affected by suicide

**1300 659 467**  
[suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://suicidecallbackservice.org.au)



## Mensline

24/7 counselling service for men

**1300 78 99 78**  
[mensline.org.au](http://mensline.org.au)

## 13YARN

24/7 crisis support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

**13 92 76**  
[13yarn.org.au](http://13yarn.org.au)

If you are concerned about someone at risk of immediate harm, call 000 or go to your nearest hospital emergency department.



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# Sharing information between FDC and families

With an ongoing commitment to sharing and updating our key information with families –

- ▶ **Child Safe environments and other child safe policies and documents**
- ▶ Organisational **Statement of Commitment** to child safety
- ▶ **Code of Conduct**
- ▶ **Risk management** strategies
- ▶ **Complaint handling, information sharing and reporting policy.**

– we can continue to provide responsive environments to think ahead to protect children from harm.

- ▶ Know how to minimise risks in our physical and online environments
- ▶ The eSafety Commissioner has a section for Educators, and includes a series of online teaching posters.

Go to: [www.esafety.gov.au/educators/early-years-program/teaching-posters](http://www.esafety.gov.au/educators/early-years-program/teaching-posters)

**Make good choices**

We are Swish and Glide. Here are some tips to keep you safe online.

**Why do you like it?**

**Use devices near a grown-up**

**Time's up**

esafety Commissioner

esafety **Early Years**  
Online safety for under 5s

**YOUR ONLINE SAFETY. OUR PRIORITY.**

Helping Australians have safer and more positive experiences online

esafety Commissioner



The eSafety Commissioner has safety resources to support your whole community “to have safer and more positive experiences online”.

Go to: [www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au)

In order to create and maintain risk aware environments, it is important we consult with children about measures in place to keep them safe.

We can do this in many different ways. Including children in our planning, such as before going on excursions, is useful to build their understanding of how to keep as safe as possible. You can respect children’s right to privacy while still having a strong focus on safeguarding children from harm.

The following image gives you an example of how visuals can be used with children to explain Educator and child positioning in a public toilet facility.

The furthest cubicle (with a star) would allow children to use the toilet, without closing the door if preferred, and the Educator would stand outside facing the doorway, preventing anyone accessing that cubicle.



### Reflection:

Do you consider likelihood of child abuse? Do you consider likelihood of abuse when assessing risk and making decisions? (this means we expand our understanding of possible injury).

By regularly reviewing policies, procedures, practices and tools, we ensure we work responsively to the uniqueness of each child and family.



### इस नीति का उपयोग कैसे करें



सिलिकबुड स्टार्ट किडरगर्टन और ईएलसी ने यह नीति लिखी है। जब आप 'वी' शब्द देखते हैं, तो इसका मतलब सिलिकबुड स्टार्ट किडरगर्टन और ईएलसी है।



नीति एक योजना है कि हम काम कैसे करते हैं। हमें पालन करने के लिए आवश्यक सभी नियम हमारी नीतियों से आते हैं।



हमने इस नीति को इस तरह लिखा है कि पढ़ना आसान हो। इसे समझने में आसानी के लिए हमने चित्रों का भी उपयोग किया।



यह आसानी से तैयार होने वाली पॉलिसी एक विस्तृत पॉलिसी का सारांश है। इसका मतलब यह है कि हमारी आसानी से पढ़ी जाने वाली नीति में केवल सबसे महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य ही शामिल होंगे।

There are many things to consider in order to support others to be safe. Safety in our FDC environments requires us to consider ways to support physical, emotional, cultural, spiritual and social safety.



How do you ensure new families and their children feel welcome and supported when they join your service?

# Keep child safety on your agenda

Our environments and the people in them are forever changing, so we have to keep reviewing and checking our policies and procedures.

In response to the Child Safety Review, the upcoming regulatory amendment will require the service environment to be free from e-cigarettes in response to expedited Recommendation 4.

## Child Safety Review

4. Further amend the National Regulations to:

- ▶ 4.3 require the service environment to be free from e-cigarettes, for example, vaping (expanding regulation 82 which requires the environment to be free from the use of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol).

A collaborative approach to the sharing of information and creating change means we will take action together to mitigate harm and better support children's safety.



Thank you for your commitment to quality outcomes and keeping children safe.

# This booklet is part of the PD In Your Pocket professional development program.



This topic – **Child Safe Environments in Family Day Care** – has an accompanying webinar and video, both of which can be viewed as videos or listened to as podcasts.

There is also a Facebook Group where you can discuss the topic with other Family Day Care Educators in NSW.

For more information about PD In Your Pocket, go to:

[www.nswfdc.org.au/pdinyourpocket](http://www.nswfdc.org.au/pdinyourpocket)



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## NSW Family Day Care Association

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