



2.10 Death of a Child Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The unexpected death of a child at a service is a traumatic event and the impact on educators, children and families can cause emotional turmoil, which can overwhelm usual coping skills. A policy providing comprehensive procedures and principles is therefore crucial to ensure a coordinated response and notification to the regulatory authorities.

Due to the suddenness of such an event, well-trained and experienced staff can experience strong emotions and traumatic stress responses as a result of the event. The role of our service is to help restore a sense of safety for children, educators and families as soon as possible following a traumatic event.

AIM

Our service will ensure that management and educators follow the procedures and principles within this policy and that immediate and appropriate action is taken to notify relevant authorities in the event of the death of a child whilst at the service. There are a number of legal requirements to adhere to in the tragic event of the death of a child at a service as outlined below.

STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

Management and educators will ensure that immediate and appropriate action is taken in the event of the death of a child whilst at the service by following and implementing the following procedure:

1. Assess the situation as per service procedures for any immediate danger to other children or staff
2. Attempt CPR in accordance with current First Aid requirements
3. Call an Ambulance immediately
4. Management will call the parents/guardian of the child and arrange to meet at the hospital
5. Medical Staff will advise families
6. Notify Regulatory Authorities including Policy Department and Family and Community Services
7. Complete Illness, Incident, Accident, Trauma Form
8. Contact Insurance Company
9. Log incident onto NQA TI System, attaching incident form and evidence

Management will also ensure that parents, families, children and educators will receive the following post incident support:

- Demonstrate sensitivity, open mindedness and a balanced approach
- Recognition of cultural needs
- Preservation of evidence
- Accurate and detailed record keeping
- Professional communication with families of the service
- Engage the services of health care professionals (counseling & support for staff)
- Ongoing cooperation with inter-agencies involved in investigation

Caring for the wellbeing of educators, children and families

Our service will engage health professionals who may include child and family counselors and psychologists to support our educators to be sensitive and mindful of the impact such an event has had on all stakeholders. With professional guidance and support, we will encourage children to express their emotions and feelings and implement strategies to assist and guide children's process of grieving and re-engage children in learning.

Our service will seek advice and support from health professionals to provide appropriate materials to send home to families to assist in understanding the effects of trauma on children and possible changes in behaviour following the unexpected death of a child in our service.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law NSW

- 12 - Meaning of serious incident
- 85 - Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
- 176 - Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

SOURCE LIST

This section contains websites, industry bodies, or Legislation that have been used to assist in sourcing the information for this policy. It also acts as a guide to sourcing further reading on each relevant policy.

- [Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority](#)
- [Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Amendment Regulations 2017](#)
- [Revised National Quality Standard](#)
- Work Safe Australia - [Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations](#)
- [Australian Child & Adolescent Trauma, Loss & Grief Network](#)
- [What do we tell children when someone dies?](#)

RELATED POLICIES

- 2.01 Administration of First Aid Policy
- 2.04 Incident, illness, Accident & Trauma Policy
- 2.19 Work health Safety Policy
- 7.06 Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

POLICY REVIEW

The review schedule has been developed using a risk assessment methodology with consideration given to sector, industry, and legislative changes.

Date reviewed	Policy changed	Modifications	Next Review Date
May 2018	Yes	No	March 2019