**Workplace Health & Safety**

Linked to National Quality Framework and Standards – ACECQA 2017

Model Work Health ande Safety regulations 2016

***Quality area 2– Children’s health and safety***

**2.1 Health- Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted.**

2.1.1 Wellbeing and comfort

Each child’s wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child’s need for sleep, rest and relaxation.

2.1.2 Health practices and procedures

Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.

**2.2 Safety- Each child is protected**

2.2.1 Supervision

At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

2.2.2 Incident and emergency management

Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practices and implemented.

2.2.3 Child protection

Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk or abuse or neglect.

***Quality Area 3- Physical environment***

**3.1 Design- The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service**

3.1.2 Upkeep

Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained

**3.2 Use—The service environment is inclusive, promotes competences and supports exploration and play-based learning**

3.2.3 Environmentally responsible

The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.

***Quality area 4– Staffing arrangements***

**4.1 Staffing arrangements- Staffing arrangements enhance children’s learning and development.**

 4.1.2 Continuity of staff

Every effort is made for children to experience continuity of educators at the service.

**4.2 Professionalism- Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical.**

4.2.2 Professional standards

Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.

***Quality Area 7- Governance and Leadership***

**7.1 Governance- Governance supports the operation of a quality service**

7.1.2 Management systems

Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operations of a quality service

7.1.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision making and operation of the service

**7.2 Leadership- Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community**

7.2.1 Continuous improvement

There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place

 7.2.3 Development of professionals

Educators, co-ordinators and staff members’ performance is regularly evaluated and individual plans are in place to support learning and development

The Toybox Community Child Care Centre aims to provide a healthy and safe environment for Educators, children and visitors, and to educate the children in healthy and safe behaviour. This policy outlines the responsibilities of Educators and management in maintaining a healthy and safe workplace.

**The Governance Committee in collaboration with the Director will:**

1. Ensure the centre complies with the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2016 and
2. Ensure that WHS policies and procedures are in place.
3. Keep itself informed and trained in WHS issues and responsibilities.
4. Discuss WHS issues by keeping WHS a standing agenda item at Governance Committee meetings.
5. Support Educators efforts to improve WHS
6. Allocate resources to ensure a healthy and safe environment, including resources for training, protective clothing, safe equipment and suitable accommodation.
7. Ensure that any changes to accommodation, equipment, staffing or work practices are designed to include improvements to WHS

**The Director will:**

1. Ensure the centre complies with WHS regaultions
2. In consultation with Educator develop, implement and review WHS policies and procedures.
3. Assign and WHS representative to oversee WHS on a daily basis and report back to Director
4. Regularly inspect the centre with the health and safety representative, to identify areas where WHS might be improved.
5. Report to the Governance Committee on WHS issues.
6. Maintain WHS records.
7. Induct new Educators in WHS policies and procedures.
8. Consult Educators on WHS issues.
9. Keep up to date information on WHS issues and provide it to Educators.
10. Provide Educators with Manual handling infomration
11. Provide Educators with SAFEWORK SA information
12. Provide Educators with Hazaradous Manual tasks information (Manual handling)
13. Provide Educators with code of practise in relation to Health and safety risks
14. Provide Educators with code of practise in relation to labeling hazardous chemicals
15. Provide Educators with managing work environment and facilities information
16. Provide Educators with Safety Data sheets and Hazardous information
17. Promote Educator discussion of OH & S issues by keeping OH & S a standing item on the centre meeting agenda.

**Educational Team Leaders will:**

1. Ensure healthy and safe work practices in their work area.
2. Identify hazards in their work area.
3. Evaluate hazards in their work area.
4. Act to control hazards in their work area.
5. Record, investigate and report injuries and near miss incidents.
6. Undertake WHS training if and when necessary

**Educators will:**

1. Participate in the development, implementation and review of WHS policies and procedures.
2. Follow WHS procedures and act in a healthy and safe manner at all times.
3. Participate in WHS training.
4. Identify hazards in their work area.
5. Complete risk assessments
6. Complete necessary documentation relating to WHS
7. Assist in evaluating and controlling hazards in their work area.
8. Report all injuries (no matter how minor they appear at the time) and all near miss incidents to the Educational Team Leader or the Director.
9. Promote healthy and safe behaviour in the children through activities and example.

**The Health and Safety Representative will:**

1. Represent the whs S interests of the Educators.
2. Carry out her / his duties as authorised by the Work Health and Safety Regulations
3. Inspect the workplace to identify hazards.
4. Assist with evaluating and controlling hazards.
5. Investigate complaints about health and safety matters.
6. Discuss WHS issues with Educators.
7. Attend interviews between the Director and any Educator where the Educator requests her / him to attend.
8. Make representations to the Director and/or Governance Committee on WHS matters.
9. Stop unsafe work.

**Consultation**

The centre aims to involve all Educators in developing changes to improve WHS and in assessing likely WHS impact of other changes, to ensure the centre maintains high standards of WHS.

The Director will specifically consult with the health and safety representative on any proposed changes to the workplace that may affect the health, safety or welfare of all Educators.

The centre will maintain and follow written procedures in at least the follow areas:

* Accident prevention (e.g. burns, cuts, falls etc);
* Contagious Disease Management;
* Evacuation and Emergency;
* Excursions;
* Fire Safety;
* First Aid;
* Hazardous Chemicals;
* Hygiene;
* Manual Handling;
* Medication storage and use;
* Stress Management;
* Sun Care.

Training in WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY will be included in the centre training plan, with at least the following training provided:

* Governance Committee - annual training session on WHS role and responsibilities, to be held soon after the new committee takes office;
* Director and Educational Team Leaders - initial training on supervisory/management WHS responsibilities, plus annual follow-up training on specific areas of need, interest, or concern;
* Educators - the equivalent of at least one day's training each year on general WHS or on specific issues, e.g. manual handling, accident prevention, etc.

The Director will ensure that records are kept of the following:

* All incidents which result in illness or injury or had the potential to cause illness or injury, their investigation and the action taken to reduce the risk in the future;
* Risk assessments will be filled in for incidences of a serious nature to evaluate our role and responsibilities;
* Site Inspections;
* Hazard Identification, investigation and action;
* The WHS impact of any proposed changes to accommodation, equipment or work practices.

The Director will report to each Governance Committee meeting on WHS issues.

All WHS policy and procedures will be reviewed at least every two years, by a process jointly involving Educators and the Governance Committee

**Managing Workplace Stress**

Toybox Community Child Care Centre recognises that workplace stress is a growing employment and health and safety issue. As an employer we have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to prevent stress by identifying its causes and introducing measures to reduce its effects.

Such action is based on the proposition that stress management is a significant and legitimate health and employment issue. Excessive stress should not be seen as inevitable in modern society or as a sign of individual weakness. Employees experiencing stress or related conditions should be encouraged to seek appropriate support and assistance.

Stress can be a significant contributing factor to a range of short term physical or mental health conditions and changed behaviour patterns including:

* Physical symptoms such as headaches, skin or respiratory infections, raised heart rate and sleep disorders;
* Psychological issues including irritability, depression and anxiety;
* Behavioural characteristics including increased use of alcohol, tobacco, coffee or drugs, increased accident rates, eating disorders, concentration or memory lapses, inability to ‘switch off’ and increased error count.

When stress is experienced over long periods other signs may emerge including high blood pressure, heart disease, ulcers, and long term anxiety and depression.

Causes of work related stress may include:

* Poor physical working conditions;
* Poor job design or content;
* Excessive or uncontrolled workloads and/or conflicting demands;
* Inconsistent or poorly communicating management;
* Tasks inappropriate to the employee’s ability;
* Bullying, harassment or intimidation.

Stress can also arise from pressures people experience in their personal lives such as bereavement, family/relationship difficulties or financial problems. Such factors and conflicting home/work demands can also increase stress rates at work. We believe that stress management initiatives are central to our organisational culture and way of working. Primary responsibility for addressing stress lies with management although all employees have a duty to themselves and others to reduce stress in the workplace. **Where necessary this may well include modifying personal behaviour.**

**Role of Governance Committee, Nominated Manager and Certified Supervisors**

Management recognises that workplace stress is a serious issue and:

* positive action is required to prevent or combat it when it arises;
* that an integral part of any stress management initiative is the need to foster a supportive culture and ‘blame free’ way of working.

To this end we will publicise and implement coherent objectives and strategies, promote clear two way communication and encourage participation in decision making by all employees. Managers and supervisors must be alert to signs of stress in employees and take appropriate action to deal with any problems highlighted.

Measures taken will vary according to circumstances but may include:

* Identifying those jobs where stress has been or could be an issue;
* Assessing what can be done to reduce the risk of stress to employees;
* Meeting all employees (who report to them) on a planned and regular basis and providing space to listen to and discuss employee concerns;
* Ensuring that work allocation is appropriate, reasonable and realistic;
* When employees are absent from work finding out why, maintaining regular contact with employees on longer term absences and offering support;
* Ensuring that all new employees receive a planned induction programme that prepares them for employment with Toybox Community Child Care Centre;
* In conjunction with employees identifying their training and development needs and monitoring progress in meeting these needs;
* Providing advice and support to employees who are, transferred, promoted or called in for relief purposes to help them adjust to their new situation.

**Role of Employees**

All employees have a responsibility to address their own stress levels as follows:

* Eat sensibly, get enough rest, avoid excessive intakes of alcohol or tobacco;
* Exercise regularly by walking, jogging, cycling, swimming etc;
* Make time for yourself through hobbies, interests or leisure pursuits;
* Give yourself thinking time each day;
* Relax - take short breaks during the day in order to unwind at day’s end;
* Talk things through with colleagues, family, friends or management.

***Employees should also be prepared to modify their own behaviour if it is causing stress to others.***

Placing undue stress on a colleague or subordinate is unfair and will not be tolerated. Legislation requires employees to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions. Employees must co-operate fully with Toybox Community Child Care Centre in the exercise of its statutory duties in this area. Allegations of bullying, harassment or intimidation will be dealt with under agreed internal policy and procedures and according to current legislation.

**Seeking Help**

Most people get help informally from family, friends and colleagues but may need to talk to someone outside this immediate circle. Work matters or home issues affecting work should be discussed initially with the employee’s supervisor either as part of a regular meeting or by special arrangement.

Supervisors must and will always guarantee total confidentiality except where they recommend the involvement of the Director and/or other appropriate person. This may include a human resource professional or qualified counsellor who will also be bound by the same code of confidentiality

**Developing a “Stress Management Plan”**

* Identify the major causes of stress in your life;
* Make a list of the common stress symptoms you experience;
* Set goals and put strategies into place to overcome these;
* Note anything that might inhibit you when trying to implement these strategies;
* Suggest ways of overcoming these barriers;
* Have a stress management “buddy”. Make an agreement with a friend or colleague to work together on strategies to manage your stress;
* Monitor your progress regularly (and change your goals if necessary);
* Reward yourself when you’ve achieved a goal.

**Tips for Crises and the Unexpected in the Early Childhood Day**

When attempting to calm a child, diffuse disputes between children, redirect violent or “out of control” behaviour, extinguish unacceptable responses such as spitting / biting / kicking, or deal with upset and angry adults, remember the following:

* Calm yourself first by taking some deep breaths and visualise your way into a relaxed calm and confident posture;
* Affirm to yourself that the tension and upset will soon pass – you can and will work through this situation positively;
* Use a calm and confident voice (achieve this through the breath and focus on remaining physically and emotionally balanced, rather than taking on the negative energies of others). Use assertiveness skills such as “I – messages” and active listening to clarify the use and state your response;
* Reward yourself after challenging incidents by taking some time out so that you return to a balanced and relaxed state of mind;
* Prepare yourself for future challenges by learning to use different strategies.

***Source***: Network SA Resource, Advisory & Management Services Inc

<http://www.networksa.org.au>

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998

<http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au>

Stress in Early Childhood: Helping Children and their Carers (2006)

(Early Childhood Australia Inc)

Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority - ACECQA 2012

<http://acecqa.gov.au/>

National Quality Framework and Standards - 2012

<http://acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/national-quality-standard/>

Kidsbiz Model Staffing Policies Manual 1995

Modern Childrens Services Award 2010

<http://www.fwa.gov.au>

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

<http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au>

Model Work Health and Safety Regulations

<http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au>

Safework SA

[www.safeworksa.gov.au](http://www.safeworksa.gov.au)

**Review**

The policy will be reviewed annually

The review will be conducted by:

* Management
* Employees
* Families
* Interested Parties

**Last reviewed: May 2014**

Updated Nov 2017