

Physical Activity Policy

Quick reference: physical activity | exercise | energetic play | children's growth and development | fitness | wellbeing | health | preventing sedentary behaviour | staying active | sport | access and inclusion | safety

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

- (1) To set out how we promote physical activity for good physical and mental health and wellbeing, and ensure children achieve the right balance of physical activity, inactivity and sleep
- (2) This policy helps us to comply with the *National Regulations* (s 168(2) (a)), which requires us to have policies and procedures related to children's health and safety. It aligns with the National Quality Standard Area 2.1 (Health), and is based on the Australian Government's 24-hour movement guidelines for children and young people

SCOPE

- (3) This policy applies to:
 - 'Staff': the approved provider, paid workers, volunteers, work placement students, and third parties who carry out child-related work at our service (e.g., contractors, subcontractors, self-employed persons, employees of a labour hire company)
 - Children in our care, their parents, families and care providers

DEFINITIONS

- (4) The following definitions apply to this policy and related procedures:
 - 'Physical activity' means any bodily movement that engages muscles and expends energy. It includes play, structured exercises and everyday activities
 - 'Parents' includes guardians and persons who have parental responsibilities for the child under a decision or order of court
 - 'Staff' refers to paid employees, volunteers, students, and third parties who are covered in the scope of this policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The right balance of physical activity and inactivity for children

- (5) Our daily program must include a mix of physical activity and inactivity to meet the needs of children in our care
- (6) Educators must give children opportunities for structured and unstructured active play throughout their time with us, and an environment in which children can move freely and explore
- (7) Educators must respond to the individual needs of each child. As children grow and develop, educators must support them to spend more time in active play, less time sitting, and in getting the right amount of sleep
- (8) Educators must give children time to rest and relax; however, they also must limit the amount of time that children spend sitting or lying down (excluding rest times) or using screens
- (9) Educators must follow our Physical Activity Procedure (attached), which is based on the Australian Government's 24-hour movement guidelines for children and young people

Getting children involved

- (10) Educators must make physical activities a time for fun and exploration by offering creative, new and unfamiliar activities throughout the year, and participating enthusiastically in the activities with the children
- (11) We must encourage children to make decisions about what physical activities they would like to do and, where we can, incorporate their suggestions into our program
- (12) Children should be involved in setting up activities and equipment as much as possible
- (13) Our educational program covers the importance of physical activity to maintaining health and wellbeing

Supporting development and skills

- (14) Our program must include activities that target both gross and fine motor skills, develop balance skills and spatial awareness, and encourage problem-solving
- (15) Children must be given individualised support to help them move through their developmental stages, and to try new or unfamiliar activities to build their independence, confidence and skills

Inclusion

- (16) Our physical activity program must cater to different age groups, abilities and developmental stages
- (17) We must promote a culture of inclusion in which all children are equally valued and encouraged to participate, regardless of their gender, background, identity or physical abilities
- (18) All children must be offered the chance to initiate and lead physical play activities, and educators should challenge stereotypes that might discourage participation in certain activities (e.g., because of gender or disabilities)
- (19) We must provide culturally and developmentally appropriate physical activities that reflect the children's diverse abilities, interests, identities and backgrounds
- (20) Our activities, spaces and equipment must be tailored and modified where necessary and reasonable to ensure that every child can participate meaningfully

Safety

- (21) We must conduct regular risk assessments of indoor and outdoor physical play areas and equipment, and ensure that equipment is safe, maintained and appropriate for all abilities, ages and developmental stages
- (22) Educators must teach children the boundaries and guidelines for safe play so they can explore and take appropriate risks within the limits
- (23) Children and staff must wear appropriate footwear and clothing during physical activities, and must also wear sun protection if they are outside

Family partnerships

- (24) We must maintain open communication with families and share information with each other about children's physical development, including their strengths, abilities, and emerging skills
- (25) Any information we provide to families about the benefits of physical activity must be from reliable sources
- (26) Where children and families need extra support, we can give specific advice and referrals from our network of external support agencies and child health/development specialists
- (27) We must work collaboratively with families and professionals to implement any management or support plans for children that are needed

PRINCIPLES

- (28) Our physical activity program meets the individual needs of each child, taking into account their age and developmental stage
- (29) We implement the Australian Government’s 24-hour movement guidelines for children and young people
- (30) We see physical activity as a time for children to develop, have fun and explore
- (31) Our program reflects and celebrates the diverse abilities, interests, cultures, identities, and backgrounds of our families, ensuring all children can participate meaningfully
- (32) Our practices, spaces and equipment are safe for children

6. POLICY COMMUNICATION, TRAINING AND MONITORING

- (33) This policy and related documents can be found on our website and in our front office.
- (34) The approved provider and nominated supervisor provide information, training and other resources and support regarding the Physical Activity Policy and related documents
- (35) All staff (including volunteers and students) are formally inducted. They are given access to review, understand and formally acknowledge this Physical Activity Policy and related documents
- (36) The Nominated supervisor runs a professional development program for each staff member, which covers this policy
- (37) Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined in this policy and in individual position descriptions. They are communicated during staff inductions and in ongoing training
- (38) The approved provider and nominated supervisor monitor and audit staff practices through supervision and regular performance appraisal and address non-compliance. Breaches to this policy are taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action against a staff member
- (39) At enrolment, families are given access to our Physical Activity Policy and related documents
- (40) Families are notified in line with our obligations under the *National Regulations* when changes are made to our policies and procedures

LEGISLATION (OVERVIEW)

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations

Regulations	
s 73	Educational program
s 77	Health, safety and safe food practices

s 84A-D	Sleep and rest
s 103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
s 105	Furniture, materials and equipment
s 168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
s 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
s 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
s 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

National Quality Standard

Standard / Element	Concept	Description
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
2.1.3	Healthy lifestyle	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child
3.1.1	Fit for purpose	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child
3.1.2	Upkeep	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained
3.2	Use	The service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning
3.2.1	Inclusive environment	Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments
3.2.2	Resources support play-based learning	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.
6.2.2	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.

My Time, Our Place (MTO) V2.0

Outcome	Key component
3: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A STRONG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people become strong in their social, emotional and mental wellbeing • Children and young people become strong in their physical learning and wellbeing • Children and young people are aware of and develop strategies to support their own mental and physical health, and personal safety

SENSE OF WELLBEING

National Principles for Safe Organisations

Most relevant principles

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Key Policies	Child Safe Environment Policy Additional Needs Policy Physical Environment Policy Education Curriculum and Learning Policy
Procedures	Physical Activity Procedures (attached)
Resources	Physical activity guidelines – Department of Health Playactive.org.au

SOURCES

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations | National Quality Standard | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care’s 24-hour movement guidelines – birth to 5 years + Get up and Grow – Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood – resource | Play Active – Kids Research Institute Australia

POLICY INFORMATION

Approval	Dina Kahn
Review	Reviewed annually and when there are changes that may affect this policy or related procedures. The review will include checks to ensure the document reflects current legislation, continues to be effective, or whether any changes and additional training are required

Last reviewed: 25th March 2026 Date for next review: 25th March 2027

APPENDIX A

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES – Physical Activity**Approved provider responsibilities (not limited to)**

Ensure our service meets its obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*, including to take reasonable steps keep children safe from harm and hazards

Ensure that our service's governance, management, operations, policies, plans, (including risk management/action plans), systems, practices and procedures for physical activity are appropriate in practice, up-to-date, best practice, and comply with all relevant legislation, standards and guidelines

Ensure our policies and procedures related to children's health and safety are in place and available for inspection

Take reasonable steps to ensure our policies and procedures related to children's health and safety are followed (e.g. through clear and accessible communication, and systemised inductions, training and monitoring of all staff – including volunteers, students)

Ensure that risk assessments related to physical activity are carried out according to legislation and best practice guidelines

Make reasonable adjustments to our program and physical environment so that all children can participate meaningfully

Regularly review our policies and procedures related to children's health and safety in consultation with children, families, communities and staff

Notify families at least 14 days before changing policies and procedures related to children's health and safety (including this [Physical Activity Policy](#) and related procedures) if the changes will: affect the fees charged or the way they are collected; or significantly impact the service's education and care of children; or significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service

Nominated supervisor / persons in day-to-day charge responsibilities (not limited to)

Ensure our service meets its obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*, including to take reasonable steps keep children safe from harm and hazards

Support the approved provider to ensure that our service's governance, management, operations, policies, plans, (including risk management/action plans), systems, practices and procedures for

physical activity are appropriate in practice, up-to-date, best practice, and comply with all relevant legislation, standards and guidelines

Support the approved provider to ensure our policies and procedures related to children's health and safety are in place and available for inspection

Take reasonable steps to ensure our policies and procedures related to children's health and safety are followed (e.g. through clear and accessible communication, and systemised inductions, training and monitoring of all staff – including volunteers, students)

Ensure that risk assessments related to physical activity are carried out according to legislation and best practice guidelines

Support the approved provider to make reasonable adjustments to our program and physical environment so that all children can participate meaningfully

Contribute to policies and procedure reviews and risk assessments and plans in consultation with children, families, communities and staff. Support the approved provider to notify families of reviews and changes according to legislation and our policies and procedures

Educator / other staff responsibilities (not limited to)

Follow this [Physical Activity Policy](#) and related procedures. Ensure that children are given a mix of physical activity, rest, relaxation and sleep

Ensure that all children in our care can participate meaningfully and safely in physical activities

Communicate regularly and respectfully with families about children's physical development and share information about the benefits of physical activities for children

Contribute to policy and procedure reviews, and to identifying and managing risks

Physical Activity Procedure

Introduction

- These procedures apply to our Physical Activity Policy
 - 'Parents' includes guardians and persons who have parental responsibilities for the child under a decision or order of court
 - 'Staff' includes volunteers, students and third parties defined in the scope of the Physical Activity Policy
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Procedure

When to use this procedure

- During everyday interactions with children in our care
- When planning and running physical activities
- When setting up play environments to ensure they are suitable and safe
- When adapting physical activities for children of different ages, abilities and development stages
- When communicating to families and communities about our program of activities

1. Encourage children to be physically active at our service

- Plan and give children a mix of structured and unstructured active play each day
- Give children a range of activities that:
 - Target gross motor skills (e.g., running, hopping, climbing, dancing) and fine motor skills (e.g., catching, throwing)
 - Create opportunities for problem solving and critical thinking (e.g., obstacle courses that require children to navigate through or over objects, treasure hunts, hide and seek)
- Challenge spatial awareness, coordination and balance (e.g., target games, relay races, hokey pokey)

- Encourage children to be creative in their physical play (e.g., inventing games, choreographing dances, incorporating rhythm and storytelling)

2. Support children's physical development and skills

- Actively participate in the activities and demonstrate the proper movement techniques to children
- Break down complex motor skills into simple steps
- Give children individualised support to use increasingly complex skills and time to practise and master them
- Encourage children to reflect on what their body is doing and feeling during activities to develop body awareness and confidence

3. Limit sedentary behaviour, but give children time to rest and relax

- Give children time to be inactive (i.e., rest and relaxation) throughout their time with us, but limit the amount of time they spend sitting or lying down
- Follow our [Technology and Device Use Policy](#) for screen time rules
- Incorporate quiet time and mood-regulating activities into daily routines (e.g., reading, storytelling, painting, singing, craft, being in nature, listening to relaxing music, board games, colouring in, play dough, puzzles)

4. Implement the Australian Government's 24-hour movement requirements

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (5 TO 17 YEARS)

Encourage children and young people to be physically active as much as possible, including at least 60 minutes each day of moderate to vigorous physical activity that makes the heart beat faster and strengthens bones and muscles, and several hours of light physical activities

Moderate to vigorous activities may include, for example:

- Running
- Climbing
- Swinging on monkey bars
- Push-ups
- Lifting weights
- Yoga
- Dancing

- Sports such as soccer, netball, basketball etc

Light physical activities may include walking around the playground areas, helping to clean up at the service, playing handball, playing outside etc

Space out physical activity sessions, and make them a time for fun and exploration

5. Ensure that our program is inclusive and accessible

- Adapt activities to meet the needs of the children, catering to diverse abilities, interests and developmental stages
- The nominated supervisor and approved provider must make reasonable adjustments to our program and our environment if a child needs them
- Partner with families to provide culturally appropriate activities that reflect the diversity of children's abilities and backgrounds. Ensure that children can see themselves reflected in our program
- Encourage children to celebrate each other's unique abilities and strengths, and offer group activities that promote cooperation, inclusion and mutual respect
- Actively challenge any stereotypes about who should participate in what activities. For example, show the children examples of:
 - Girls and women playing traditionally 'male activities' (e.g, football, cricket)
 - Boys and men playing traditionally 'female activities' (e.g., netball, dancing)
 - Children and adults with disabilities engaged in various physical activities and sports
 - People from diverse backgrounds and locations participating
- Provide a variety of activities that appeal to diverse interests, including team games, creative movement and cooperative games

6. Manage risk

- The approved provider and nominated supervisor must ensure that regular risk assessments of spaces, equipment and physical activities are conducted
- Educators and other staff must also assess risks and raise concerns with the room leader, person in day to day in charge, nominated supervisor or approved provider
- Show children how to perform the physical activity safely

- Teach children about any boundaries to keep them safe, while encouraging them to take risks within those boundaries
- Ensure you and the children are wearing appropriate clothing, footwear and sun protection (if outdoors) during physical activities

7. Involve families and communities

- Communicate about each child's physical development with their parents according to our procedures for communication
- Consult with families about our program (e.g., informally in person, through surveys or suggestion boxes etc). Where possible, incorporate their views into our program
- Share information with families about the benefits of physical activities (e.g., put posters up, provide links and facts in our newsletters, emails or social media etc)
- In the case of a child who needs additional support to participate, work with the family and professionals to implement individual plans