



Rationale

At Elsie Ey Children's Centre we encourage children to engage with and to explore their natural environment; including water. Water play is often incorporated into the children's learning programs, alongside the Early Learning Years Framework (ELYF). The safety and supervision of children in and around water is paramount and includes water play, excursions near water, drinking water and hygiene practices using water within the preschool environment.

According to Kidsafe, drowning continues to be one of the main causes of fatalities of Australian children. Every year a number of children die by drowning and hundreds more are rescued from near drowning situations. Non-fatal drowning incidents can have potential long-term effects, including brain damage and permanent disability.

The most common factor in childhood drowning is lack of supervision. A child can drown in as little as five centimetres of water. Items such as nappy buckets, water courses, ponds, sandpits, clam shells, water troughs and sinks are potential drowning hazards.

Objectives

To ensure that the centre will prevent child accidents and illnesses relating to water hazards, children's safety and wellbeing will be:

- Protected in and around water through supervision and preventative measures, and
- Promoted through the availability of clean, hygienic water for play, drinking and hygiene-related practices.

Definition:

According to Kidsafe, a water hazard is anything that can hold 5cm of water and fit a child's nose and mouth. There are a number of water hazards in children's learning environments, including – but not limited to:

- Sinks, basins, fish tanks/bowls
- Water courses, ponds, sandpits, clam shells
- Water troughs, containers and buckets used for play, animal drinking containers
- Pooling water including puddles and drains.

Implementation:

Educators at Elsie Ey Children's Centre will:

- Ensure all water-based activities are adequately supervised at all times
- Ensure water troughs or containers for water play are filled to a safe level – no more than 5cm in depth. These will be emptied immediately after use.
- If a container or water trough is filled higher than 5cm, an educator will remain within 1.5 metres of the container and closely supervise the children at all times. Containers will be emptied immediately after use, or if/ when the educator needs to move away from the area.
- Store equipment to prevent collection of water. Check garden after watering or rain and empty water that has collected in holes or containers.
- Buckets of water used during learning experiences throughout the day are to be filled immediately before use, supervised by an educator while in use, and emptied immediately after use.
- Ensure that all children have safe independent access to clean and cool drinking water at all times.
- Ensure fish tanks that are not able to be adequately supervised at all times and/or pose an unacceptable risk to children are guarded or effective barriers are in place.
 - The tank is to remain in an area with high visibility such as the main preschool room, within sight from inside educators, director's office and outside windows.
- A risk assessment will be conducted prior to any excursion taking place. Particular attention will be focused upon water safety where the excursion is near a body of water.
- At all times, when children are present, there must be at least one staff member with a current approved first aid qualification, on the premises. It is best practice for all staff to hold current approved First Aid Certificates. All staff are required to keep first aid qualifications up to date.

Resources

[Kidsafe Water Safety in Education and Care Settings](#)

[Preschool Water Safety Procedure](#)

[National Quality Standard](#)

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)

- Regulation 168 (2) (a) (iii): Education and care service must have policies and procedures – Water safety, including safety during any water-based activities
- Regulation 101 (2) (b): Conduct of risk assessment for excursion