

Warradale Community Children's Centre acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land we live on today and we pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torrens Strait Islander People past, present and emerging.



## Death of a Child While in Care Policy

### National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety		
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.2	Leadership	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community

### 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

### Aim

Warradale Community Children's Centre will ensure that leadership 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 Centre. 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.

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## SERIOUS INCIDENTS

Regulation 12 defines a serious incident involving the death of a child as:

(a) The death of a child –

I. while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service, or

II. following an incident occurring while that child was being educated and cared for by an education and care service;

## NOTIFICATION OF A SERIOUS INCIDENT

Under the National Law and Regulations (Section 174(2) (a) and Regulation 176 (2) (a)), the approved provider must notify the regulatory authorities within 24 hours of any serious incidents. This must be done by logging into the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQA IT System).

## KEEPING CHILDREN'S RECORDS

In the event of the death of a child whilst being cared for at the Service, records must be kept for 7 years from the date of the child's death. [Regulation 183 (c)]

## INITIAL ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

1. 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 procedures: 1. Assess the situation as per service and First Aid procedures for any immediate danger to other children and/or staff.

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2. Provide immediate First Aid and/or CPR in accordance with current First Aid training.
3. Call emergency services immediately and request an ambulance
4. Management/Responsible person will call the parents/guardian of the child and arrange to meet at the hospital.
5. The Service must not advise parents of the death of their child: Medical staff will advise families of the situation.
6. Notify Regulatory Authorities including the Police Department.
7. Notify the Approved Provider (if not at the service).
8. The Responsible person will complete in detail the Service's Incident, injury, trauma and illness form (in addition to notifying ACECQA via the NQA IT System). The Approved provider will log the incident on the NQA IT System, attaching incident form and evidence
9. Management/Approved provider will contact the insurance company.

#### **MANAGEMENT WILL:**

- ensure parents, families, children and educators receive adequate and appropriate post-incident support
- demonstrate sensitivity, open mindedness and a balanced approach
- recognise and support cultural needs
- ensure all evidence is preserved
- maintain accurate and detailed record keeping
- contact their legal representative for support and direction
- establish protocols for staff and Educators to discuss the traumatic event

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- advise staff of social media protocol for the event
- provide professional and sensitive communication with families of the Service
- engage the services of health care professionals (counselling and support for staff)
- cooperate on an ongoing basis with inter-agencies involved in the investigation.

## **CARING FOR THE WELLBEING OF EDUCATORS, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

Our Service will engage health professionals who may include child and family counsellors and psychologists to support our Educators during this profoundly difficult time. Health professional will assist 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.

### **Educators will support children's understanding of grief and loss by:**

- answering questions simply and honestly.
- allowing children to express their emotions and feelings.
- provide appropriate comfort.
- implement a range of learning experiences to express their thoughts- drawing, movement, play.

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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

SUPPORT SERVICES		
beyou	1300 224 636	<a href="http://www.beyou.edu.au">www.beyou.edu.au</a>
Beyond Blue	1300 224 636	<a href="http://www.beyondblue.org.au">www.beyondblue.org.au</a>
Headspace	1800 650 890	<a href="http://www.headspace.org.au">www.headspace.org.au</a>
Lifeline	13 11 14	<a href="http://www.lifeline.org.au">www.lifeline.org.au</a>
Kid's Help Line	1800 551 800	<a href="https://kidshelpline.com.au">https://kidshelpline.com.au</a>

**Source:**

The Business of Childcare, Karen Kearns 2004  
Education and Care Services National Regulation 2015  
Education and Care Services National Amendment Regulations 2017  
National Quality Standards (**revised**)  
Family and Community Services  
Occupational Health and Safety Act  
Work Health and Safety Act  
Australian Child & Adolescent Trauma, Loss & Grief Network  
[http://earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au/files/ACATLGN\\_grief\\_and\\_loss.pdf](http://earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au/files/ACATLGN_grief_and_loss.pdf)  
**What Do We Tell The Children When Someone Dies?**  
[http://www.adac.org.au/siteF/resources/l\\_children\\_gt.pdf](http://www.adac.org.au/siteF/resources/l_children_gt.pdf)  
Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement <http://www.grief.org.au>  
Croydon Early Learning Centre  
Brompton Children's Centre

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SHR – How to support Employees through grief and loss (2017)

**Record of Policy Adoption and Amendment:**

Version	Date	Details	Author	Next Review Date
1.0	28/5/2020	Policy developed	Trish Cook	28/5/23
1.1	28/5/23	Policy updated support services added.	Stephanie Bilsborow	31/12/24
1.2	Sept 2024	No changes	Lori Hay	Sept 2025