



**CHILD-SER-POL-04**

# **SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Northside Community Service Ltd (Northside) aims to ensure that all aspects of children's health and wellbeing are supported whilst attending a Northside Early Childhood Centre. Northside aims to promote positive attitudes towards sleep and rest, dental hygiene, eating nutritious foods, and making clothing and footwear choices that are comfortable and appropriate for each child's needs.
- 1.2. Northside understands that strong partnerships with families and building respectful and trusting relationships between children and their educators are critical for the health and wellbeing of children.

## **2. Purpose**

- 2.1. The purpose of the Supporting Children's Health and Wellbeing Policy is to detail the requirements to ensure that educators are supporting the health and wellbeing of all children attending Northside Early Childhood Centres.

### **3. Application**

- 3.1. This policy applies to all employees of Northside, contractors, sub-contractors, and consultants employed by Northside, apprentices or trainees, students gaining work experience, and volunteers whilst they are on Northside property or engaged in business that involves Northside Early Childhood Centre facilities.

### **4. Policy Owner and Review Requirements**

#### **4.1. Policy Owner**

- 4.1.1. The policy owner for the Supporting Children's Health and Wellbeing Policy is the Director of Children's Services.

#### **4.2. Review Requirements**

- 4.2.1. This policy is to be reviewed annually.

### **5. Policy Statements**

#### **5.1. Food, Nutrition, and Dietary Requirements**

- 5.1.1. Each Early Childhood Centre must hold a current Food Business Registration, in accordance with ACT legislation.
- 5.1.2. Each Centre must have at least one registered Food Safety Supervisor.

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- 5.1.3. Details of any food allergies, intolerances, or specific dietary requirements must be provided to the service by families at the time of the child's enrolment or as soon as the allergy, intolerance, or dietary requirement is identified.
- 5.1.4. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that a **Medical Management Plan** and **Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan** are completed for any child with a medical condition, whom doesn't have an approved **Medical Action Plan**. These are to be developed in consultation with the child's family. A copy of all Plans will be kept in the child's enrolment record.
- 5.1.5. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that a **Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan** is developed when a child has a dietary preference, and that this is developed in consultation with the child's family.
- 5.1.6. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that when a child has a diagnosed allergy, anaphylaxis, asthma, or chronic disease management plan (CDMP), that this is provided to the Centre prior to the family commencing, is in colour, filled in correctly and completely, dated within 1-year, and has an accompanying **Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan** completed in consultation with the child's family.
- 5.1.7. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that all educators read and sign the **Educator Acknowledgement Sheet** which accompanies each child's **Medical Conditions Plan, ASCIA Action Plan, asthma** or **CDMP** and their accompanying **Risk Minimisation and Communication Plans**.
- 5.1.8. Information about children's specific food allergies, intolerances, or dietary preferences will be clearly displayed in all locations where food is prepared and served.
- 5.1.9. Fresh drinking water will be available throughout the day to all children, both indoors and outdoors.

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- 5.1.10. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that a child's family is notified if they are not drinking any fluids and if necessary, due to the risk of dehydration, the family will be asked to collect the child.
- 5.1.11. Each Early Childhood Centre's menu will be carefully developed to consider how healthy eating can be promoted in the Centre, and to ensure that the food and drinks provided to children are nutritious and appropriate for each child.
- 5.1.12. The Early Childhood Centre's menu will consider the medical requirements and cultural preferences of children and families.
- 5.1.13. Relevant allergens that pose a risk to children will be communicated to families using signage in a prominent and accessible location within the Centre.
- 5.1.14. To minimise the risk of exposure of allergens, families will be discouraged from bringing food from external sources into the Centre.
- 5.1.15. The Early Childhood Centre's menu will be displayed in the Centre and made available to families to provide feedback.

## **5.2. Dental Health**

- 5.2.1. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that the Early Childhood Centre daily menu contains a nutritional balance of foods that promote dental health.
- 5.2.2. Children will always have access to safe drinking water, and the Centre will not serve sweet, sugary drinks.
- 5.2.3. Educators will include dental health practices and discussions in the daily program.
- 5.2.4. Children will be encouraged to drink water after mealtimes and before rest time.

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- 5.2.5. To reduce the chance of tooth decay, children will be supported to drink milk bottles *before* they go to bed, so milk is not left to settle on their teeth.

### 5.3. Bottle Safety and Preparation

- 5.3.1. Northside will support families to feed their babies in whichever way they choose whether that be breastmilk or formula.
- 5.3.2. All bottles must be clearly labelled with the child's name.
- 5.3.3. Any frozen breastmilk stored at the Centre must be labelled with the child's name and the date of expression, and can be stored for up to two weeks in the freezer but must be used within 24 hours if stored in the refrigerator.
- 5.3.4. Families will be encouraged to supply breastmilk in multiple small quantities to reduce wastage.
- 5.3.5. Families will be encouraged to provide formula that is pre-measured in a formula dispenser container with bottles that are premeasured with water.
- 5.3.6. If a family chooses to supply a tin of formula, this must be either unopened or have the date of open clearly labelled on the tin, along with the child's name.
- 5.3.7. All bottles are to be stored and prepared in line with the **Bottle Preparation and Storage Procedure**.

### 5.4. Nappy Changing

- 5.4.1. All children are to be fully supervised and physical contact is to be maintained throughout the nappy change process.
- 5.4.2. No child will be left alone on a nappy change mat **at any time**.
- 5.4.3. All soiled clothing and nappies are to be disposed of or stored in a location that children cannot access.

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- 5.4.4. Educators are responsible for keeping the nappy change area fully stocked with required materials throughout the day. Supplies are to be readily accessible to staff to ensure efficiency and the health and safety of each child.
- 5.4.5. Educators will change children's nappies in line with the **Nappy Changing and Toileting Procedure**.

### 5.5. Toileting

- 5.5.1. Educators are responsible for ensuring that toileting areas are cleaned regularly during the day. For more information on the cleaning of bathroom areas, please refer to the **Cleaning Procedure**.
- 5.5.2. Educators are to develop management systems to ensure adequate supervision of children in bathroom areas whilst accommodating children's individual needs for privacy.
- 5.5.3. No child is to be forced to sit on a toilet or to be left in soiled clothing. For more information on supporting children with toileting, please refer to the **Nappy Changing and Toileting Procedure**.
- 5.5.4. Educators are to wear gloves whilst assisting children with toileting.
- 5.5.5. All soiled clothing is to be stored in a location that children cannot access and labelled with the child's name.
- 5.5.6. Excursion organisers are to conduct a risk assessment prior to the excursion to check the availability and suitability of toileting facilities.

### 5.6. Clothing and Footwear

- 5.6.1. Children will be encouraged to wear clothing and footwear that is protective, comfortable, and appropriate for exploring their environments.

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- 5.6.2. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that families are provided with information about suitable clothing and footwear.
- 5.6.3. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that families and educators are aware of Northside's sun protection requirements that are outlined in **Section 5.6** of the **Early Childhood Safety Policy**.
- 5.6.4. Educators will dress to prevent injury and sun exposure and will be encouraged to dress in a professional and respectful manner.
- 5.6.5. Northside will respect cultural differences and individual family and educator needs when recommending suitable clothing.
- 5.6.6. Educators will offer children the option to wear protective clothing, such as aprons, during messy play.
- 5.6.7. Educators will encourage children to remove shoes and heavy/excess layers of clothing during rest times and to reflect the temperature within the classroom, as recommended by Red Nose Australia.
- 5.6.8. Educators will encourage children to utilise their self-help skills as appropriate to put on and remove clothing and shoes to meet their needs. For younger children, educators will use observation and monitoring skills to ensure children's clothing and footwear is appropriate for the environment and weather conditions.
- 5.6.9. Educators will consider clothing and footwear needs associated with excursions or planned learning experiences and will communicate clearly with families about the need for extraordinary protective clothing requirements.
- 5.6.10. Educators will encourage families to provide spare clothing in children's bags to allow for dirty and soiled clothing and changing weather conditions.
- 5.6.11. Spare clothing will be available at the Early Childhood Centre for emergency clothing needs.

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- 5.6.12. Consideration will be given to the safe and hygienic storage of children's clothing, for example, storing children's hats within their individual lockers or bags when not in use, or using individual hooks to hang a single hat.

## **5.7. Children's Sleep and Rest**

- 5.7.1. Educators will allow children to choose to be active or restful according to their needs and to have downtime or sleep as required.
- 5.7.2. Educators will provide opportunities for rest and relaxation, as well as sleep.
- 5.7.3. Educators will provide children who do not wish to sleep with alternative quiet resources and experiences, while those children who do wish to sleep are able to do so, without being disrupted.
- 5.7.4. If a child requests a rest or when they show clear signs of tiredness, regardless of the time of day, there will be a comfortable, safe area available for them to rest.
- 5.7.5. Educators will be aware of issues that influence a child's individual requirements to sleep or rest, including the child's age, experiences undertaken during the day, disrupting factors from home e.g., unstable housing, family conflict, return from travel, child's general health and wellbeing, etc.
- 5.7.6. Educators will consider a range of strategies that can be used to meet children's individual sleep and rest needs and will provide a range of active and restful experiences in daily rituals, in program and excursion planning, and in environment set-up.
- 5.7.7. Educators will look for and respond to children's cues for sleep (e.g., yawning, rubbing eyes, disengagement from experiences, crying, decreased ability to regulate behaviour, and seeking comfort from adults, etc.).

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- 5.7.8. Educators will not use settling and rest practices as a behaviour guidance strategy so children do not relate the sleep and rest environment, which should be calm and secure, as a disciplinary setting.
- 5.7.9. Educators will seek to minimise any distress or discomfort around sleeping and acknowledge children's emotions, feelings, and fears.
- 5.7.10. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that the physical environment is safe and conducive to sleep by providing quiet, well ventilated, and comfortable sleeping spaces. Wherever viewing windows are used, all children will be visible to supervising educators.
- 5.7.11. All floor beds will be spaced at least 30cm apart.
- 5.7.12. All cots will be spaced at least 30cm apart, with adequate space for educators to move safely between cots.
- 5.7.13. All cots will meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for Cots (AS/NZS 2172).
- 5.7.14. Infants will not be left in a bassinet, hammock, or pram/stroller to sleep, as these are not safe substitutes for a cot or floor bed.
- 5.7.15. Mattresses will be in good condition; they will be clean, firm, and flat, not elevated or tilted, and will fit the cot base with no more than a 20mm gap between the mattress sides and ends. All mattresses will be compliant with the new AS/NZS Voluntary Standard (AS/NZS 8811.1:2013).
- 5.7.16. Any waterproof mattress protectors that are used will be strong, not torn, and a tight fit.

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- 5.7.17. In any portable cots that are used, a firm, clean, and well-fitting mattress that is supplied with the portable cot will be used, and no additional padding under or over the mattress or an additional mattress will be added.
- 5.7.18. Educators will ensure that hanging cords or strings from blinds, curtains, mobiles, or electrical devices are away from cots and mattresses. Heaters and electrical appliances will be kept away from cots.
- 5.7.19. Educators will ensure that children are placed on their backs to sleep with their face uncovered.
- 5.7.20. All children will be adequately supervised while they sleep or rest, with educators ensuring that children are always within sight or hearing distance.
- 5.7.21. Educators will remove anything from around the neck or arms of children prior to sleep (e.g., amber teething necklaces or bracelets, bibs, etc.).
- 5.7.22. Sleeping and resting children will be closely monitored through checks that take place every 15 minutes, where educators will assess a child's breathing and the colour of their skin. These checks will be recorded on the **Cot Room Checklist**.
- 5.7.23. Educators will not 'pat' children to sleep.
- 5.7.24. Safe sleep practices must be in line with Red Nose recommendations. For more information please visit: [Safe Sleeping Training for Early Childhood Educators and Health Professionals | Red Nose Australia](#)

### 5.8. Relationships with Children

- 5.8.1. Educators will always maintain the dignity and rights of all children.

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- 5.8.2. Educators will offer opportunities for children to learn how to interact with others, supporting children to collaborate, learn from, and help each other.
- 5.8.3. Educators will show care, empathy, and respect for all children and guide interactions between children that are respectful of the rights of others.
- 5.8.4. Educators will be responsive, respectful, and confident to support each child to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others, and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.
- 5.8.5. Children will be encouraged to express themselves and their opinions.
- 5.8.6. Educators will enable children to undertake experiences that develop independence and self-esteem.
- 5.8.7. Educators will give children positive guidance and encouragement towards acceptable behaviour.
- 5.8.8. Educators will respect family and cultural values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child.
- 5.8.9. Under the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*, **educators will not use unreasonable discipline to manage a child's behaviour such as dragging, pushing, or restraining a child.**

### 5.9. Family Participation and Communication

- 5.9.1. Families may enter their Northside Early Childhood Centre at any time during operational hours unless such entry would pose a risk to the safety of children and educators or breach court orders regarding access to children. For more information, please refer to the **Early Childhood Authorisations Policy**.

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- 5.9.2. Educators will be available to families at arrival and departure times to communicate important messages and information about children's participation in the program.
- 5.6.3 The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that families are notified of any incident, injury, trauma, or illness that occurs to their child while they are attending a Northside Early Childhood Centre.
- 5.6.4 Families will have access to documents regarding their child's development, interests, experiences, and participation in the educational program and assessments of their child's progress against the learning outcomes of the *EYLF*.
- 5.6.5 Educators will provide information to families regarding the content and operation of the educational program and a copy of the educational program will be available for viewing at the Centre.
- 5.6.6 The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that information about how to access the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* is available to families in the Centre.
- 5.6.7 Families are to be notified of changes to policies or fees and given adequate notice as per the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*.
- 5.6.8 Northside will ensure the development of systems for families to provide feedback regarding the enrolment and orientation process, the review of policies and procedures, and their child's learning and assessments, to improve processes and practices within the Early Childhood Centre.
- 5.6.9 Northside will ensure that families are informed about the processes for providing feedback and making complaints.
- 5.6.10 The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that administrative spaces are adequate for the purpose of consulting with and meeting families and for conducting private conversations.

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## 6. Breaches and Penalties

### 6.1. Breaches

- 6.1.1 Breaches of this policy must be reported immediately to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or nominee. Confidentiality will be maintained where appropriate.

### 6.2. Penalties

- 6.2.1. If Northside believes that unethical or illegal activities inconsistent with Northside's purpose or mission have occurred, these processes will be followed:

6.2.1.1. An investigation will take place to determine potential breaches.

6.2.1.2. Where an employee has breached this Policy, and the offence is judged to be serious, the procedures outlined in the Northside **Grievance Policy** will be followed.

6.2.1.3. Where a breach involves illegal activities, Northside has an obligation to report these to relevant external law enforcement agencies, and individuals may be subject to prosecution.

## 7. Audits

- 7.1. All records will be subject to ongoing assurance and audits. All records belong to Northside. In most cases, these will be admissible as evidence and are subject to the relevant Territory and Federal Laws.
- 7.2. The Director of Compliance and Quality is responsible for the development and audit plan overseeing Early Childhood Centre compliance and facilities maintenance.

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- 7.3. The Director of Compliance and Quality is to provide a report to the CEO in relation to the results of audits undertaken during the period.

## **8. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 8.1. Roles and responsibilities for the Health and Wellbeing Policy are detailed below:

**8.1.1. The Approved Provider (Northside) is responsible for:**

- 8.1.1.1. Ensuring that all Northside Early Childhood Centres hold current Food Business Registrations, in accordance with ACT Legislation.
- 8.1.1.2. Developing systems for families to provide feedback regarding the enrolment and orientation process, the review of policies and procedures, and their child's learning and assessments, to improve processes and practices within Early Childhood Centres;
- 8.1.1.3. Ensuring that families are informed about the processes for providing feedback and making complaints; and
- 8.1.1.4. Ensuring that all cots and mattresses in Northside Early Childhood Centres meet the current safety standards for cots (AS/NZS 2172) and mattresses (AS/NZS 8811.1:2013).
- 8.1.1.5. Ensuring all policies and procedures are subject to regular review.

**8.1.2. Nominated Supervisors are responsible for:**

- 8.1.2.1. Ensuring that the appropriate documentation is provided for all children with dietary requirements, food allergies, intolerances, or preferences, and that all educators have read and signed this documentation;
- 8.1.2.2. Ensuring that the daily menu contains a nutritional balance of foods and that all children have access to safe drinking water;

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- 8.1.2.3. Ensuring that families and educators are provided with information about suitable clothing and footwear;
- 8.1.2.4. Ensuring that families are notified of any incident, injury, trauma, or illness that occurs to their child while they are attending the Early Childhood Centre; and
- 8.1.2.5. Ensuring that families are provided with information about how to access the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*.
- 8.1.2.6. Ensuring employees, educators and families are advised of any changes to policies and procedures.
- 8.1.2.7. Ensuring policies and procedures are available and accessible.
- 8.1.2.8. Ensuring employees and educators follow policies and procedures.
- 8.1.3. **Educators are responsible for:**
  - 8.1.3.1. Ensuring that the dignity and rights of all children are always maintained;
  - 8.1.3.2. Ensuring that they have read and signed the appropriate documentation for all children with dietary requirements, food allergies, intolerances, or preferences;
  - 8.1.3.3. Ensuring that safe drinking water is always available to children and encouraging children to drink water, particularly after mealtimes;
  - 8.1.3.4. Observing and monitoring children's clothing and footwear to ensure that they are appropriate for the weather, classroom temperature, or type of play they are engaging in;
  - 8.1.3.5. Providing all children with opportunities to sleep or rest to meet their needs;

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- 8.1.3.6. Ensuring that sleep spaces are monitored to ensure that they are clean, clear, and safe from any hazards;
- 8.1.3.7. Ensuring that sleeping and resting children are closely monitored through checks that take place every 15 minutes;
- 8.1.3.8. Being available to families at arrival and departure times to communicate important messages and information; and
- 8.1.3.9. Providing families with documents regarding their child's development, interests, experiences and participation in the educational program, and assessments of their child's progress against the learning outcomes of the educational program.
- 8.1.3.10. Following policies and procedures.

## **9. Associated Documents**

### **9.1 Associated Northside Documents**

- 9.1.1. **Grievance Policy**
- 9.1.2. **Early Childhood Safety Policy**
- 9.1.3. **Cot Room Checklist**
- 9.1.4. **Early Childhood Centre Authorisations Policy**
- 9.1.5. **Medical Management Plan**
- 9.1.6. **Risk Minimisation & Communication Plan**
- 9.1.7. **Bottle Preparation & Storage Procedure**
- 9.1.8. **Nappy Changing & Toileting Procedure**

### **9.2 Additional Associated Documents**

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**9.2.1** [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)**9.2.2** [ACECQA Information Sheet: Nominated Supervisor](#)

## 10. Definitions

- 10.1. **Northside** - Northside Community Service, including all programs operated by the organisation.
- 10.2. **Employee** - The employees of Northside, and contractors, sub-contractors and consultants employed by Northside, apprentices or trainees, students gaining work experience, and volunteers whilst they are on Northside property or engaged on Northside business.
- 10.3. **Nominated Supervisor** - The qualified staff member (usually the Centre Director) who has been legally appointed with relevant documentation as the Nominated Supervisor of a particular Centre.
- 10.4. **Responsible Person on Duty** - The person in charge of the service when the Nominated Supervisor is absent and marked as such on the Responsible Person Record.
- 10.5. **Educator** - Early Childhood Practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood settings.
- 10.6. **ACECQA: Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority**- The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources, and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.
- 10.7. **CECA: Children's Education and Care Assurance**- The regulatory authority in the ACT that undertakes investigation, compliance, enforcement, and assessment and rating functions against the National Quality Standard.

## 11. Document Control and Version History

### 11.1. Document Control

<b>Document Reference:</b>	Supporting Children's Health and Wellbeing Policy	
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## SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY



<b>Approval Authority:</b>	Anna Whitty – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Signature of Approval Authority:</b>	
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<b>Functional Unit:</b>	Children's Services
<b>Enquiries Contact:</b>	Name: Anna Whitty Position: Chief Executive Officer Phone: 02 6171 8000 Email: <a href="mailto:anna.whitty@northside.asn.au">anna.whitty@northside.asn.au</a>

### 11.2. Version History

Revision Date	Version No.	Brief reason for change	Reference Sections

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