

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

PURPOSE:

To provide a comprehensive policy that clearly outlines the responsibilities of management, staff and families of the centre regarding the issue of OHS.

IMPLEMENTATION:

As Occupational Health and Safety is an integral element of Elder Street Early Childhood Centre, the management has an ongoing commitment to providing, maintaining and promoting a safe working environment that protects the safety, health and welfare of our employees, families, children, students, contractors, visitors and all persons in or near the service.

This centre complies with the NSW Occupational Health & Safety Act 2000 & OH&S Regulation 2001, the Code of Practice 2001 and other specific regulations or Australian Standards. This will be achieved through the development, implementation and maintenance of occupational health and safety systems. The ongoing effectiveness of these systems will be regularly reviewed in consultation with employees and families to achieve continuous improvement.

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre will take all reasonable steps to eliminate or minimise the likely risk with work related injuries and illness and the following specific objectives will be implemented.

- ❖ Ensure compliance with OHS legislation
- ❖ Establish a documented OHS management system including defined procedures for risk management
- ❖ Adopt a hazard management approach to health and safety.
- ❖ Monitor and auditing of the OHS management system
- ❖ Provide and maintain safe plant and equipment.
- ❖ Develop and maintain safe systems of work
- ❖ Provide internal and external resources, induction training and regular ongoing training for all employees
- ❖ Provide adequate supervision to maintain a safe work environment.
- ❖ Investigate and review workplace incidents, accidents and near misses.
- ❖ Communicate relevant information to all employees.
- ❖ Collaborate and consult with employees and families regarding health and safety issues
- ❖ Maintain an up to date payment schedule of Worker's Compensation Insurance with an approved provider who will provide return to work and rehabilitation programs.

Occupational Health and Safety is both an individual and shared responsibility where everyone in the workplace should be aware of potential hazards and take

all 'reasonably practicable' steps to prevent accidents, injuries and illness that can be reasonably foreseen.

To manage occupational health and safety issues the following systematically planned risk management approach will occur.

1. The identification of hazards and their associated risks
2. Assessment of each risk
3. Decision on control strategies to prevent or minimise the level of risk
4. Implementation of control strategies
5. Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the hazard identification and risk control strategies

EMPLOYERS RESPONSIBILITIES in relation to the overall management system include:

- ❖ Ensure steps are taken to achieve compliance
- ❖ Consult with employees
- ❖ Include OH&S in meeting agendas
- ❖ Apply due diligence and facilitate the establishment, documentation, promotion and maintenance of management system including an adequate record keeping system
- ❖ Regularly assessing individual and service safety performance
- ❖ Having available all relevant information relating to hazards and undertaking risk assessment
- ❖ Resolving OH&S issues in a timely manner in line with the hierarchy of control procedures
- ❖ Providing Workers Compensation
- ❖ Display notices and signs as required by legislation
- ❖ Ensure appropriate emergency and evacuation procedures are formulated, practiced and displayed
- ❖ Implement an audit procedure to review and monitor workplace environment and overall compliance
- ❖ Ensure accidents, incidents, hazards and / or near misses are reported and investigated, and that the causes preventive or corrective action needed to minimise recurrences are identified and implemented
- ❖ Ensuring reportable incidents are notified to Work Cover and Workers Compensation claims are forwarded
- ❖ Liaising with and assisting health and safety inspectors as required

EMPLOYERS LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES to employees and all persons at or near the workplace

- ❖ Safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of all employees and others in or near Elder Street Early Childhood Centre environment by ensuring that the workplace including access to and exit from the premises, safe working procedures and any plant or substance provided for use by the employees are safe, without risk to health and appropriately maintained.
- ❖ Incorporating health and safety responsibilities in position description

- ❖ Ensuring each new employee to the service receives an information booklet and induction training in relation to the OH&S management system.
- ❖ Providing information, training and resources as required to support employees in the provision and maintenance of a healthy and safe workplace environment
- ❖ Providing an information package to workplace students and relief staff
- ❖ Consulting with employees on any issues with OH&S management and ensuring efficient system for communicating OH&S responsibilities, requirements and changes, as well as rehabilitation and workers Compensation information.
- ❖ Ensuring employees execute their obligations under duty of care to themselves, colleagues and all other persons at or near Elder Street Early Childhood Centre
- ❖ In the event of an employee becoming ill or injured at work, Elder Street Early Childhood Centre will ensure that rehabilitation programs are promoted and facilitated
- ❖ Providing adequate supervision to ensure the health and safety of all persons
- ❖ Ensuring adequate, current information on any test or research about substances and equipment used at the service
- ❖ Providing adequate facilities for the welfare of employees
- ❖ Providing appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (if used to control a risk)
- ❖ Ensuring contractors working at the centre are aware of and comply with OH&S policy and procedures as part of their contract

EMPLOYEES OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All employees are responsible and accountable for their own health and safety and that of others at or near the workplace environment

- ❖ Observe and promote safe work practices
- ❖ Consulting and cooperating to ensure compliance with OHS legislation
- ❖ Execute OHS obligations at all times, thereby reflecting upon duty of care and due diligence responsibilities
- ❖ Taking appropriate care of equipment and use in accordance with the instructions (including PPE)
- ❖ Report to management any incidents, accidents, near misses and potential hazards promptly.
- ❖ Adhere to management system procedures for the handling, use, storage and transport of equipment and materials
- ❖ Work in a way that minimises the risk of injury to themselves, other employees, families, children, contractors, students, visitors and all persons in or near the working environment
- ❖ Adhere to emergency procedures
- ❖ Complete accident, incident, hazard or near miss reports as required

Procedure for Visitors to the Service

All visitors to the service are to provide identification and receive approval to enter from a permanent employee; if they are without identification tags a visitor tag will be issued. The visitor is required to sign in and out of the centre on the Visitors Register. In the event of an emergency all visitors will be advised of the evacuation assembly area.

The management of Elder Street Early Childhood Centre has an ongoing commitment to work consultatively with the centre's OH&S representative, staff and families regarding the development and implementation processes of the Occupational Health and Safety systems, in order to ensure it continues to reflect legislative requirements and organisational needs to achieve continuous improvement.

SAFETY OF BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT

Toys and play materials used to assist educational programs will only be made available in rooms or designated areas to ensure safety and minimise risk for children of each age group. In the occurrence of mixed aged groups of children being accommodated in one room or designated area staff will take adequate precautions in selecting equipment to be used and constantly monitoring and supervising to ensure children's safety and well being.

Consistent and systematic audits of Outdoor Equipment Maintenance Checklist, Indoor and Furniture Equipment Maintenance Checklist and Building Maintenance Checklist will be conducted. All staff are to be mindful of any potentially dangerous situations which arise with toys, equipment, grounds and buildings between checks, and immediately report these to the Director who will take immediate action to remove or repair the problem.

In all areas accessible to children power- points will have secure protective caps, all electrical cords are either out of reach of children or secured. Circuit breakers are installed at the centre.

Staff will consult with families and discuss with children relevant safety issues. Throughout the program children will be involved in setting rules. Staff will seek information from relevant safety authorities, display and pass on information to families

(To be reviewed annually)

Reviewed:	21 March 2005
Reviewed:	11 August 2006 - K Pomfrett & M Duffy-Fagan
Source:	Kids Health - The children's Hospital Westmead NSW Department of Fair Trading Managing Occupational Health and Safety in Children's Services - S. Tarrant Lady Gowrie Centre Quality Improvement and Accreditation System - Quality Practices Guide

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OHS Representative

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Management