

ACTIVE PLAY AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY

Mandatory – Quality Area 2

PURPOSE

The educators, and management at Bethany Kindergarten Services (BKS) acknowledge the importance of active play and physical activity behaviours that contribute to good health and overall wellbeing.

This policy confirms our commitment to:

- encourage children to engage in a range of child-initiated and adult-guided physical activities within the educational program.
- promote the importance of a healthy lifestyle, which includes being physically active every day.
- provide opportunities for challenging and stimulating active play every day.

As a health promoting service we will promote active play and physical activity for children, educators, and families through learning, policies, creating a safe and healthy physical and social environment and developing community links and partnerships.

POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

It is recognised that every member of the service impacts on the children's health and can contribute to creating an environment that promotes active play and physical activity. All members of our service, including educators, children, families and volunteers will be supported to meet this policy.

SCOPE

BKS is committed to:

Encouraging physical activity by providing a range of active play experiences for all children at the BKS service

BACKGROUND

Active play (play that involves using the large muscles in the body) develops a strong and healthy body, builds motor and co-ordination skills, creates a sense of wellbeing and helps protect from disease. It provides children with a range of physical, emotional and social benefits. Active play is about moving, being and doing.

A strong sense of health and wellbeing, supported by good nutrition and an active lifestyle, can provide children with confidence, energy and optimism that will contribute to their ability to concentrate, co-operate and learn (*Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning*

Framework for Australia, p30). Learning about healthy lifestyles, including nutrition and active play, links directly to Outcome 3 in both the *Early Years Learning Framework* and the *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework*.

DEFINITIONS

Active play: Large muscle-based activities that are essential for a child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical growth and development. It covers a range of activities including climbing, throwing, jumping, and running, lifting, pushing and pulling appropriately-sized objects, sweeping, raking, digging, and being active to music, movement and games.

Child-initiated active play: is developed by the child through exploration of the environment, equipment and games.

Adult-guided active play: encourages children's physical development through promoting movement skills in a non-competitive environment.

Physical activity: includes sport, incidental exercise and many forms of recreation.

Adequate Supervision: entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by equipment used.

Adequate supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- Number, age and abilities of children
- Number and positioning of educators
- Current activity of each child
- Areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)
- Development profile of each child and of the group of children
- Experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
- Need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies)
- Environments that engage and challenge children in a safe manner

SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011 – Quality Area 2- Children's Health and Safety
 - Standard 2.2: Healthy eating and physical activity are embedded in the program for children
 - Element 2.2.1: Healthy eating is promoted and food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child
 - Element 2.2.2: Physical activity is promoted through planned and spontaneous experiences and is appropriate for each child
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act (2004)

Service policies:

- Curriculum Development Policy
- Sun Protection Policy
- Excursions and Service Events Policy
- Information and Communication Technology Policy
- Safe Environment Policy
- Inclusion and Equity policy
- Injury, Incident, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Healthy Eating and Oral Health Policy
- Water Safety Policy
- Environmental Sustainability Policy
- Interactions with Children Policy
- Asthma Policy

PROCEDURES

Healthy policies

- Educators, families and children are active participants in the development and implementation of the whole service active play policy and are encouraged to promote and support active play initiatives in the service.
- Educators and families are provided with information about policy requirements.

HEALTHY PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Active Play

- Planning and providing outdoor, active play that is stimulating, promotes skill development, considers safety issues and provides adequate supervision.
- Daily opportunities for children to be physically active indoors, particularly in adverse weather conditions, where suitable areas have been set up.
- Providing daily opportunities for all children, inclusive of the diversity and abilities of all children, to participate in age-appropriate active play.
- Promoting safe behaviour through daily practice as part of the program.
- The service seeks to ensure that fundraising focuses on healthy and active options.
- Outdoor play equipment is adaptable and moveable, to encourage change and to challenge children.

ScreenTime

- Minimising and closely supervising screen-based activities, in line with the physical activity guidelines.
- Active play is promoted instead of offering screen time.
- Educators engage with children about the content of what they are viewing and respond to their reactions.

Active Travel

- Active travel, such as walking, riding a bike or scooting to and from the service is encouraged for educators, children and families.
- The service aims to identify and address barriers for active travel within the local environment.
- Space is provided where possible at the service for children to leave active travel equipment.

Healthy Social environment

- As role models, educators, and families are encouraged to actively engage with children in active play and physical activity.
- Educators discuss with children appropriate road traffic safety and car safety practices, and role-modelling safe behaviours.

Learning and Skills

- Ensuring that the service environment and educational program supports children and families to make healthy choices for active play.
- Providing age appropriate traffic safety education, including pedestrian and passenger safety to both children and parents/guardians at the service.
- Child-initiated and adult-guided active play and physical activity experiences, which challenge and encourage children to explore, extend and test limits, are planned and provided on a daily basis as part of the educational plan.
- Opportunities to learn about the importance of active play and physical activity are embedded in the educational program through discussion, group games, stories, music and movement.
- Road safety education is incorporated into the educational program.
- Educators involve children in planning for active play and physical activity experiences both indoors and outdoors.
- Educators routinely identify opportunities to engage children, educate and promote appropriate physical activity skills and active play.
- The service engages in walking excursions within the local community that promote physical activity and safe active travel.
- Educators are supported to access resources, tools and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to engage in adult-guided active play and physical activity with children.

Engaging Children, Educators and Families

- Educators, children and families are key partners in developing a healthy and active physical environment.
- Educators engage children in developing active play initiatives through discussions and idea sharing.
- Educators, and families are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies on a regular basis to support active play in the service and at home.
- Families' experiences, expertise and interests are drawn upon to support active play initiatives.
- Families and children from culturally diverse backgrounds are engaged to ensure cultural values and expectations about physical activity are respected.

Community Partnerships

- Developing links with local and regional health service professionals, community organisations and businesses that provide up skilling opportunities for educators and educators, expertise, resources and support for children's physical development and active play initiatives.

- Information about community physical activity opportunities is made available to families through discussions, newsletters and visual displays, for example a service could promote information about local community clubs and walking groups

EVALUATION

This Active Play and Physical Activity Policy will be monitored by BKS educators, families, management and the health and wellbeing team. It will be reviewed, and if necessary, revised as part of a policy review schedule.

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, BKS as the approved provider will:

- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy or its procedures.

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by BKS as the Approved Provider on 3 December 2012 and was last updated 1 July 2017.

REVIEW DATE: 1 JULY 2019

Appendix 1 – Additional information

Appendix 1

The National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0 to 5 years¹

- For healthy development in infants (birth to one year), physical activity – particularly floor-based play in safe environments – should be encouraged from birth.
- Toddlers (one to three years) and pre-schoolers (three to five years) should be physically active every day for at least three hours, spread throughout the day.
- For children two to five years of age, sitting and watching television and the use of other electronic media (DVDs, computer and electronic games) should be limited to less than one hour per day.
- Children younger than two years of age should not spend any time watching television or using other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games).
- Infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers should not be sedentary, restrained or kept inactive, for more than one hour at a time – with the exception of sleeping.

Appendix 2

Sources

- Belonging, Being & Becoming. The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. Commonwealth of Australia 2009
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework for All Children from Birth to Eight Years. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2009
- Get Up and Grow. Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood. Commonwealth of Australia, 2009
- Healthy Together Achievement Program, <http://achievementprogram.healthytogether.vic.gov.au>

References

1 Get Up and Grow – Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood. Commonwealth of Australia, 2009