Safe environments benchmarks

Healthy policies

1. A whole service safe environments policy is in place.
   a) The policy addresses prevention of injury and promotion of personal safety.
   b) The policy clearly identifies referral pathways and procedures where child safety issues are identified.
   c) Educators, staff and families are involved in guiding safety policy and practice.
   d) Educators, staff and families are provided with information about policy requirements.
   e) The diversity of the service and the community is considered when developing and implementing this policy.
   f) The policy aligns with the service’s statement of philosophy and is cross referenced with other relevant policies (e.g. mental health and wellbeing, active play/physical activity, sun protection).
   g) The policy complements and reinforces the service’s occupational health and safety policy.
   h) The policy can be stand alone or incorporated into a whole service health and wellbeing policy.

2. The service has a staff health and wellbeing policy which promotes safety.

Healthy physical environment

3. The service provides a physical environment which is inclusive and safe.
   a) A welcoming and inclusive physical environment is created which reflects the diversity and interests of the children, families and staff.
   b) Outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, play equipment and resources are safe and enable access and active participation for every child.
   c) The physical environment enables the appropriate supervision of children and visitors to the service.
   d) The service takes action to minimise hazards from road traffic, particularly during pick up and drop off periods and other high risk times.
Healthy social environment

4. The service provides a safe, inclusive and empowering social environment.
   a) The service, educators and staff promote a culture of respect, fairness and equality.
   b) A sense of belonging and connectedness is created through inclusive and participatory practices.
   c) The service encourages and values the contribution of children, families, educators and staff to a positive service environment.
   d) Respectful and supportive relationships are fostered between children, educators, staff and families.
   e) The service implements strategies to promote positive and responsible behaviour, and to prevent and respond to bullying, discrimination and harassment.

5. Educators, staff and families recognise they are role models and are encouraged to demonstrate behaviours that promote safety.

Learning and skills

6. Social and emotional learning and safety education are embedded in the service program and practice.
   a) Spontaneous and planned learning opportunities support the development of self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision making, self-management and relationship skills.
   b) The service provides learning activities which actively engage, challenge, and support children to recognise and appropriately respond to hazardous situations.
   c) Active play activities are designed to ensure the safe participation of all children.
   d) Excursions within the local community that promote safe active travel are encouraged as part of the educational program.

7. Educators and staff are supported to access resources, tools and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote safe environments and behaviours.

Engaging children, young people, staff and families

8. Families, children, educators and staff are key partners in developing and supporting safety initiatives.
   a) Families, educators and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies on a regular basis to promote and support safety in the service and at home.
   b) Children are engaged in developing and implementing safety initiatives.
   c) Families are encouraged to be involved in safety initiatives at the service.
   d) Educators and staff are encouraged to develop competencies to facilitate engagement of families and children from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Community partnerships

9. Educators and staff are encouraged to work with local health professionals, services and other organisations to increase their capacity to deliver safety initiatives and promote safe environments.
   a) The service works with local government and other agencies to minimise safety hazards in the surrounding area.
   b) Links are established with local health professionals, services and other organisations’ including emergency services and child safety agencies, to support safety initiatives.
   c) Information about child safety, safe active travel and emergency services is easily accessible to families, educators and staff.