

POLICY: 4.3 SERIOUS INCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

Procedure: 4.11 Death of a Child

The death of a child is a traumatic experience for all concerned and is regarded as a serious incident and reportable event. It is important that in the event of the death of a child, the Service is sensitive to all concerned and ensures all processes relating to the death are transparent.

4.11.1 Linking to Policy

This procedural guidance should be read in conjunction with the service **4.3 Serious Incident and Emergencies Policy** and will assist the Approved Provider, Management, Staff (Nominated Supervisors, Coordinators, and Administrative Staff members) Educators, Educator Assistants and parents/guardians to implement the policy. The procedure covers:

[4.11.2 Educator Response to the Death of a Child](#)

[4.11.3 The Service Roles and Responsibilities](#)

[4.11.4 Other Considerations](#)

[4.11.5 Completing the Incident, Injury, illness and Trauma Record](#)

4.11.2 Educator Response to the Death of a Child

The Educator (Educator Assistant) will:

In the event that a child is found not to be responsive and the educator has no other adult available to assist them (please use other adults if available):

1. Carry out immediate resuscitation on the child.
2. If possible, gain the support of the children in care to access a mobile phone or call out to neighbours or otherwise get the phone and call for an ambulance as soon as it is possible and return to the resuscitation process.
3. Call emergency services – 000 or mobile 112
 - a. Report on child's condition, what you have noticed; and
 - b. Provide the details of their address including number and street, nearest corner crossroad, and any other distinguishing feature of the home.
4. Ensure other children are safe and away from the situation, explain that the other child is unwell, and the educator needs to help them.

5. On the arrival of emergency services, take directions from emergency services personnel.
 - a. As soon as it is possible to do so, notify the parent/emergency contact.
 - b. As soon as it is possible to do so, the Nominated Supervisor/Service must be contacted.
6. Relocate the other children to a place away from the unresponsive child, keep talking to the other children to keep them calm and away from the emergency services.
7. The Nominated Supervisor will contact the other children's parents who are enrolled at the service to collect their child/children as soon as possible.
8. Along with the Nominated Supervisor or Coordinator present, assist the police as required. If the cause of death is unknown, the police will investigate.
9. DO NOT speak with media or disclose any aspect of the death of a child to anyone other than the police, Regulatory Authority personnel, or Nominated Supervisor.
10. At no time, speak to the media, whether involved in the situation or not.
11. Complete the Incident, Injury, Illness, and Trauma Record with the support of the Nominated Supervisor within 24 hours – [see 4.11.5 Completing the Incident, Injury, illness and Trauma Record for guidance on completing this record.](#)
12. As soon as possible, contact their insurance company to notify them of this incident.
13. Review the situation with the Nominated Supervisor or other coordinator and consider if any changes in practice are required
14. Given consideration to seeking external emotional and psychological support; and
15. Provide information to Educators, Staff, parents of the children present and other children who may know the child to ensure they have the emotional and psychological assistance required.
16. Be open to talking with children about how they are feeling.

4.11.3 The Service Roles and Responsibilities

The Nominated Supervisor (and other staff if appropriate) will:

1. Offer support and assistance to the Educator and ensure either themselves (Nominated Supervisor) or Coordinator joins the Educator as soon as possible after notification of the death of a child.
2. Be available to attend the Educator's residence to support an Educator in the event of the death of a child.
3. Check-in with the Educator to ensure they are feeling ok (given the situation) and where possible, consider if the Educator requires additional support.
4. Where appropriate ensure the other children at the Educator's residence are supported by another adult or a staff member which may include relocating these children, away from where the police and emergency services are located.

5. Provide an opportunity for the Educator to speak with the police without needing to supervise the other children.
6. Liaise with emergency services to determine the best way the parents should be informed (this is something the Police will handle) and collect personal information (the name) of emergency and police personnel who provided this advice.
7. Follow the advice of Police and ensure the parents are notified as soon as practicable.
8. Be available to meet the parents at the Educator's residence if required.
9. Consider what additional support the parents may require, including, what they need right now and ensuring they know the Service is available to assist and support them.
10. Support the Educator to complete the Incident, Injury, Illness, and Trauma Record outlining the circumstances of the child's death [refer to 4.11.5 Completing the Incident, Injury, illness and Trauma Record for guidance on completing this record.](#)
11. Make contact via telephone with the Regulatory Authority Regional Office to notify them of the circumstances of the child's death. Email a copy of the Incident, Injury, Illness, and Trauma Record to the regional office.
12. Report the incident through the online NQA IT system as soon as practicable but within 24 hours.
13. Notify the Chief Executive Officer and President of the Board of Directors of the circumstances and procedures taken in the event of the death of a child while in Family Day Care at the earliest possible convenience. This notification is to be followed by a copy of the written report.
14. Notify the Insurer of the circumstances and procedures taken in the event of the death of a child while in care. The Service will request the appointment of a legal representative. This notification is to be followed by a copy of the written report.
15. Debrief with staff, the Educator and their family, other Educators of the service, and the parents of the deceased child and parents of the other children and offer appropriate counselling.
16. Take the opportunity, should this be appropriate, to offer additional training, for example in the event it is a suspected SIDS death, contact Red Nose to discuss training for the service.
17. Organise to review policies, and procedures related to the incident (e.g., sleep policy) consideration is given to any new information gathered as part of the serious incident reporting.
18. Meet with the Educator involved and review their processes and ensure any actions identified are followed up.
19. Inform the Educator that they must not speak to the media. Only the Approved Provider will talk to any media.
20. Ensure the record is retained for the period prescribed in the National Regulations.
21. Treat all such information with regards to the death of a child as confidential and remind all staff and Educators of their obligations.

4.11.4 Other Considerations

The Educators, Educator Assistant, Nominated Supervisor Coordinators, and other staff must be aware that:

1. The removal of the deceased child is the emergency services' decision, and the timing of this will depend on the individual circumstances of the death and other important factors such as notification of the child's parents. Every effort should be made to assist the child's parents with transport to the Educator's residence or the hospital if needed.
2. On arrival at the residence, the parents of the deceased child may need time alone with their child, and the Educator and Nominated Supervisor and Coordinator/s should respect this need. The bereaved family may wish to travel with the child. It is expected that no Educator (whether directly involved or not) or Nominated Supervisor, Manager or Coordinator will have contact with the media. Confidentiality will be of prime importance in this situation. All inquiries by the media will be dealt with by the Managing Director/President of Inala Community House (*9.2 Communications and Media Policy*). Any media releases may need the approval of both the Police and the relevant Insurance Company.
3. Some or all of the Family Day Care children may be quite aware of what has happened and will need help in understanding it. Explanations given to the children should be the decision of the parents. The Service will provide information and support to Educators and parents on this matter by contacting the relevant authorities.
4. The Educator and Staff may need a period of time away from care responsibilities, and the Service will negotiate this.
5. Consideration should be given to each of the other children and their experience, and if there is a belief that they are traumatised, then a separate record should be included for each child.

4.11.5 Completing the Incident, Injury, illness and Trauma Record

The Record will include:

- The details about the death of a child, including:
 - o Name and age of the deceased child
 - o Details of what occurred (what happened and when) – initial response and decision to call emergency services
 - o The time and date
 - o Name of other children present and actions taken to protect them
 - o Name and contact details of any witnesses and their account of what they witnessed
 - o Name of the emergency and police personnel who attended and time they arrived

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- Provide a detailed account of the actions taken including what first aid was administered, was medication administered
- Who attended, and when (medical personnel and others: coordinators and parents) how were they informed, what involvement did they have?
- Think about the sequence of events in the process
- The name of the people who were notified and time and date the notification/s occurred
- Include any other relevant information about the event
- The name, date, and signature of the person completing the record
- The name, date, and signature of the parent.

Review

	Date	Details
Revision 00	07/2015	Original Policy Issued
Revision 01	12/2016	Reviewed
Revision 02	08/2017	Reviewed
Revision 03	10/2020	Reviewed and separated from Policy

Related Documents

Policies

4.2 Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma Policy

Forms

Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma Record.

Reference

Refer to 4.2 Incident, Injury, Illness and Trauma Policy