

POLICY: 4.1 HYGIENE AND INFECTION CONTROL POLICY

Procedure: 4.7 Bathing

Bathing of children in family day care is not routinely conducted. Educators are responsible for the safe supervision of up to four pre-school children.

Bathing of children may be required if a child needs to be washed or if a child is in care for extended hours or overnight care.

Drowning can be very quick – 20 seconds is all it takes. And young children can drown silently, without coughing or splashing. Supervision is critical in protecting children.

4.7.1 Linking to Policy

This procedural guidance should be read in conjunction with the service **4.1 Hygiene and Infection Control Policy** and will assist the Approved Provider, Management, Staff (Nominated Supervisors, Coordinators and Administrative Staff members) Educators, Educator Assistants and parents to implement the policy. The procedure covers:

[4.7.2 Safety Considerations](#)

[4.7.3 Improving Bathroom Safety](#)

[4.7.4 Being Prepared](#)

4.7.2 Safety Considerations

Nominated Supervisor/Coordination Unit Staff will ensure:

- when assessing an Educator's residence, give regard to children's capacity to access hot water
- where hot water is accessible to children, it is regulated to a temperature under 40 degrees celsius
- where bathing is identified as likely to be a routine practice of an Educator a risk assessment will be completed and Risk Management Plan will be in place (see 6.11 Risk Assessment and Management Procedure for guidance on this process)
- consideration will be given to supervision of all children, safety around water, dignity and privacy, protective behaviour and slippery surfaces due to water spills or water hazards
- Educators seek permission from parents before their child is bathed as part of the regular routine
- Educators are aware that:
 - o drowning and scalds are the main risks for babies and children during bath time.

- close supervision of babies and children in the bath is the best way to prevent drowning. Let the water out as soon as bath time is over.
- to minimise scald risks, they will always check the water temperature before putting the child in. Reduce the temperature of the water coming out of taps.

4.7.3 Improving Bathroom Safety

- Use a non-slip bathmat in the bath if your bath doesn't have a non-slip surface.
- Watch the child/children all the time, even if you are using a bath seat or cradle. A bath seat isn't a safety device. Without your supervision, bath seats won't keep the child safe.
- Run only enough water for washing and play. Belly-button height is plenty for a child who can sit up on their own.
- Beware of distractions that could take you away from the bath and make you lose track of time. Turn your mobile to silent and leave it outside the room before you run the bath.
- Keep bathroom and laundry doors shut when you're not using them, preventing young children from getting to taps or water sources on their own.
- Never leave the child alone near water, even for a minute.
- When you and the child are in the bathroom, make sure they are within arms' reach.

4.7.4 Being Prepared - for Bathing

Educators will:

- where hot water is accessible to children, it is regulated to a temperature under 40 degrees celsius
- seek written permission from a parent/guardian if bathing of a child is required (text message with this permission if this is necessary during the day and prior written agreement has not been signed, once the parent arrives at the residence written authorisation will be signed verifying text message)
- consider the supervision issues around bathing:
 - never leave a preschool child or younger child unsupervised while bathing.
 - frequently check on a school age child bathing by talking to them etc.
- ensure no other adult will supervise a child being bathed
- ensure they can manage the supervision of all children while bathing a child
- ensure the water temperature is tepid, not too hot. When running the bath, put cold water in first then add hot water
- check the temperature of the water before the child is placed into the bath
- children must not have unsupervised access to hot water while they are being bathed

- organise all necessary items and bring into the bathroom before commencing the bath i.e. clean towels, clean washers, soap and child's clothing
- ensure their home has bathing facilities that are safe and appropriate to the ages of the children at the service and must have products and equipment for cleaning those facilities whenever necessary stored safely
- respect the dignity and need for privacy of each child during bathing by encouraging others not to touch, stare or point at other children
- share information about a child's bathing with the child's family
- consider and accommodate the specific health and hygiene needs of older children and give consideration to protecting their dignity and respecting their right to privacy
- use a non-slip bath mat, and ensure that the bath is rinsed with soapy water before and after each use by a family day care child
- the bath is emptied after use.

Families are encouraged to:

- work in partnership with Educators to ensure the bathing needs of their child are addressed with consistent, safe and respectful practices.

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

4.1 Hygiene and Infection Control Policy

Procedures

4.4 Handwashing and Personal Hygiene Procedure

Reference

Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council (2013). Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (5th Edition), retrieved from <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/ch55>

Raising Children Network, Bath and Safety, Babies and Children retrieved 17/11/19 from <https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/safety/bath-water-safety/bath-safety>