

POLICY: 6.2 Child Safe Equipment

Procedure: 6.9 Toys and Learning Resources

The primary sources of learning and development are the learning and play resources available to children. Ensuring the resources are appropriate for the age, development stage, and reflect the interests of each child is a key responsibility of each Educator.

6.9.1 Linking to Policy

This procedural guidance should be read in conjunction with the Service **6.2 Child Safe Equipment 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:

[6.9.2 Purchasing Toys and Resources](#)

[6.9.3 Diversity of Toys and Resources](#)

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6.9.2 Purchasing of Toys and Resources

The Nominated Supervisor and Coordinators will encourage Educators to plan for the purchase of toys and learning resources, which will enhance children's participation and development.

Educators will:

- Each year make provision for the purchase of toys and resources, which are reflective of the development and interests of children in their care.
- Ensure when purchasing toys and resources, they meet the Australian Standards and at no time pose a risk to any child.

6.9.3 Diversity of Toys and Resources

In keeping with the learning and play objectives of the Service, equipment used by Educators will:

- be appropriate to the interest and developmental level of children present; and
- consider the safety and cultural needs of the children, including the number of children using the equipment at any given time.

Educators are encouraged to purchase toys and equipment that reflects cultural diversity and acceptance of difference that follows the guidelines of the Early Years Learning Framework, for example:

- Dolls with different skin tones and reflective of people with disabilities
- Indigenous resources
- Resources which are reflective of the local community
- A balance between natural material and human-made resources
- Loose parts, flexible and transferable resources which support children's executive functions

Educators will strive to use 'open-ended' resources. These are the toys and resources children can use in lots of different ways. They encourage children to use their imagination, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Open-ended toys include:

- blocks – one day the child uses them to build a tower, and the next day they might bring the block up to their ear and pretend it's a phone
- balls – they're great to bounce, look at, roll, hold and throw
- cardboard boxes – children can use them for pretend play. They can be shop counters, ovens, cars, boats, dollhouses and more
- dress-ups – with some hand-me-down clothes and bits of fabric, children can become anything or anyone they like
- crafty bits and pieces – coloured paper, stickers, crayons, and washable markers can get children off to a great start on a masterpiece

6.9.4 Selection of toys and resources

In considering the selection of toys and resources, Educators will:

- **Choose carefully.** Look for good design and source high-quality construction in these learning resources and toys.
- **Watch out for toys that have sharp edges, small parts, or sharp points.** Avoid toys that produce extremely loud noises, which can damage hearing, and propelled objects, which can injure eyes.
- **Include toys and resources that suit the children's age, interests, and abilities.** Avoid toys that are too complex for young children or have small parts. Many toys have a suggested age range to help you choose toys that are both appealing and safe.
- **Read the labels.** Look for safety information such as "Not recommended for children under 3 years of age", or "non-toxic" on toys likely to end up in little mouths, or "washable/hygienic materials" on stuffed toys and dolls.
- **Ensure no batteries are accessible to children –** check the toy to ensure battery cells are secure and cannot be accessed by a child.

6.9.5 Safe use of Toys and Resources

Educators will consider the safety of children, including:

- **Always supervise children while they play.** Learn to spot and respond to potential incidences.
- **Check toys periodically for broken parts and potential hazards.** A dangerous toy should be repaired immediately or thrown away. Sharp or splintered edges on wooden toys should be sanded smooth. Use only non-toxic paint on toys or containers that children come in contact with. Check outdoor toys for rust and weak or sharp parts that could become hazardous.
- **Teach children to put their toys away,** so they do not get broken or create a tripping hazard.
- **Use secure toy shelves for storage.** Open shelves allow the children to see favorite toys and return them to the shelf after play. Be sure the shelving is sturdy and won't tip over if a child climbs on it.
- **Small parts:** Tiny toys and toys with small, removable parts can be swallowed or become lodged in a child's windpipe, ears, or nostrils. The squeakers in some squeeze toys can be removed and possibly consumed by a child. The seams of poorly constructed stuffed dolls or animals can break open and release small pellets that also can be swallowed or inhaled.

6.9.6 Infants and Toddlers Considerations

When choosing a toy for a toddler or infant, Educators will make sure:

- Toy parts are too large to swallow or cause a choking risk.
- It does not have detachable pieces that can lodge in the windpipe, ears, or nostrils.
- It will not break easily, leaving jagged edges.
- It has no sharp edges or points.
- It has not been put together with easily exposed pins, wires, staples, or nails.
- Is labeled "non-toxic".
- It can't pinch fingers or catch hands

6.9.7 Choose Appropriate Toys and Materials

There's no one right toy for all ages. To decide on the best resources, ask yourself the following questions:

- **How old are the children?** Infants just learning to crawl need very different toys and resources than active preschoolers or curious school-age children.
- **What are the children most interested in right now?** Young toddlers who are developing motor skills may need climbing equipment. Preschool dinosaur experts may enjoy dinosaur puzzles, books, and toys. Remember that children's interests and abilities change as they get older, so toys may need to be rotated regularly.

- **What are the learning goals?** When you observe the children in your care, you begin to know them well and to learn how to support their development. A child just starting to draw probably needs large, chunky crayons. Children who are mastering writing may prefer smaller crayons or fine-tipped markers to draw. Choose materials that encourage children to take the next step in their development.
- **How can you support children’s development in different areas?** Be sure to choose toys that encourage large-motor, small-motor, and thinking skills, as well as social skills and self-awareness.
- When choosing toys and materials for children, remember, **simpler is often better**. Toys don’t have to be expensive or have a lot of bells and whistles to be good learning tools for young children.

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

6.2 Child Safe Equipment Policy

Reference

Refer to 6.2 Child Safe Equipment Policy

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, Baby Toys – retrieved 14/12/19

<https://www.productsafety.gov.au/products/babies-kids/toys>

Raising Children Net – retrieved 14/12/19 <https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/play-learning/getting-play-started/choosing-toys#the-best-toys-for-kids-nav-title>