

YMCA Geelong- Water Safety in Children's Services Policy



OFFICE USE ONLY

Policy Number	Date Approved	Date Last Amended	Status
YG 152-O	04/04/2014	20/03/2017	APPROVED

1. WATER SAFETY IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES POLICY

2. INTRODUCTION

As required under the National Quality Framework, the YMCA must have a Water Safety in Children's Services Policy that provides guidance where a service is in operation at the same facility as a pool, and for water based activities and/or excursions. This policy ensures all YMCA Geelong children's services water based excursions and activities are conducted in a manner that places safety as the highest priority and without undue risks to YMCA Educators and participants, while embracing the positive learning experience the aquatic environment can provide.

3. POLICY

3.1 Adherence

All requirements of the YMCA Geelong Excursion and Routine Outing policy will be adhered to. This includes;

- Ensure carers and staff are aware of water safety guidelines and that adequate measures are in place to prevent children from injuring themselves and/or being exposed to potential drowning hazards.
- Ensure carers and staff plan excursions considering the possible water hazards and have the knowledge to implement water safety procedures.
- Avoid injury and/or accidents to children in our services.
- Staff will ensure a 1:5 ratio takes place at all times around water or when participating in a water based activity.
- Staff are to understand the swimming capability and competency of each child.
- Staff are to explain to each child how to signal for help from a lifeguard if needed, before leaving for an excursion
- Staff are to be located so that they can supervise all children at all times in and around water.
- When walking around water, or on a water base excursion children are to be in pairs.
- Staff are to ensure that children walk at all times in and around water.
- Staff are to ensure their own safety as well as childrens
- Staff to monitor ocean tides and weather where applicable
- Staff to ensure that any beach swimming occurs between designated flags
- All water activities and excursions have a risk assessment completed prior to the day.

- Staff to child ratio will be as determined by a risk assessment. The final ratio must not however exceed 1:8 (staff: child), as well as consider any specific additional or special needs of children with a disability.
- Pre-excursion visit to be conducted to assist with risk assessment where applicable
- Activities and aquatic play will be planned to incorporate appropriate learning outcomes and goals, reflecting the relevant Learning Framework, children's interests and abilities.
- Water based activities will be conducted under the supervision of specialist staff with required qualifications for that activity and as identified by a risk assessment. (eg. pool activity requires the appropriate lifeguard supervision for that water space.)
- Additional specialist staff referred to in the point above may be counted within the staff: child ratio, but only if deemed appropriate throughout the service's relevant risk assessment.
- Educators will participate in the activity as much as reasonably possible and as required by the identified hazard management controls. For example, during a pool based activity Educators are recommended to be in the water with the children.

3.2 Other Policies

All Educators and the Nominated Supervisor will ensure effective implementation of the following YMCA Geelong policies and procedures;

- Sun Protection in Children's Services Policy
- Extreme Heat Procedure
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- Interactions with Children in Children's Services Policy
- Transport of Children in Children's Services Policy
- Hazard Management Procedure

3.3 Programming

In the case where a YMCA Children's Services program may be conducted at a facility that includes a pool, for example a Holiday Program located at a recreation facility, an additional risk assessment specific to water safety must be developed to assist in the protection of children from harm or hazard due to the aquatic environment and high risk involved.

3.4 Open Water Environments

Excursions whereby participants will be entering an open water environment (for example at the beach or in a river environment) are required to be approved in collaboration with the Nominated Supervisor and relevant regional HSE Coordinator/Manager, and as determined by a risk assessment.

3.5 Exclusions

The YMCA Geelong Water Safety in Children's Services policy does not apply to excursions which would not be classified as water based activity such as visits to the aquarium, zoo or park. While these locations do have bodies of water present the participants would not normally be at risk of entering the water. The YMCA Geelong Excursion and Routine Outing Policy would still apply to these excursions, including the conduction of a risk assessment.

4. DEFINITIONS

Water based activity:

A programmed activity conducted by an OSHC includes, but is not limited to;

- YMCA or otherwise managed Indoor Pool, Outdoor Pool programs, activities or play
- Aquatic adventure parks, water slides, splash parks and wave pools
- Any aquatic or sporting activities in open water or closed water space such as, sailing, boating, kayaking, snorkeling, surfing or similar
- Any aquatic or sporting activities conducted on or around water such as, fishing and rock pool rambles or similar

5. SCOPE

The scope of this policy applies to all approved Children's Services that operate under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, 2011. This includes Before and After School Care Services and Vacation Care conducted by YMCA Geelong.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Department/Area	Role/Responsibility
Operations	YMCA Nominated Supervisor and/or service Management will oversee the implementation and service adherence to this policy (ie policy compliance). Nominated Supervisor and/or Person with Management and Control will seek individual community feedback and facilitate an active consultation process with service users as appropriate. All Educators are responsible for the daily implementation of the policy when directly supervising children.
Community Programs Co-ordinator	Is responsible for ensuring suitable resources and support systems to enable compliance with this policy. Drive the consultation process and provide leadership and advice on the continuous improvement of the policy.
Community Programs Co-ordinator	Responsible for the development, monitoring and review of the Policy and related systems, ensuring all content meets all legislated requirements. Facilitate annual policy training to Children's Services Educators on the appropriate implementation and use of policy.
CEO	Approve the Policy Provide official sign off on the Policy

7. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The Water Safety in Children's Services Policy will be reviewed three years from the date of initial approval in accordance with the YMCA Geelong Policy Framework and National Quality Framework.

The ongoing monitoring and compliance to this policy will be overseen by Community Programs Co-ordinator. The National Quality Framework Ratings and Assessment process, and Service Approval conditions, will also assist in the external audit and monitoring of the policy, by delegates of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (LINKS TO PROCEDURES, LEGISLATION, FORMS, WORK PRACTICES)

1. [Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework \(VEYLDF\)](#)
2. [National Early Years Learning Framework \(EYLF\)](#)
3. [My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia](#)
4. [Education and Care Services National Law Act](#)
5. [Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011](#)
6. **YMCA Policy and Procedures**
 - a. [YMCA Occupational Health and Safety Policy](#)
 - b. **YMCA Extreme Heat Procedure**
 - c. [YNET Hazard Management Procedure](#)
 - d. [YMCA Incident Reporting and Investigation Procedure](#)
 - e. [YNET Policy Library](#) including;
 - i. Excursions and Routine Outing Policy
 - ii. Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy

7. YMCA Forms and Resources

- a. [YMCA Forms for Incident Reporting](#)
- b. [General Hazard Identification Report Form](#)

8. Aquatic Resources

- a. [Lifesaving Victoria](#)
- b. [2010/11 Drowning Report](#)
- c. [Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations \(Royal Lifesaving Australia Society\)](#)

Approved by: Chief Executive Officer

Effective date: 04/04/2014

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Review date: 20/03/2020

Policy Owner: Kimberley Maher, Community Programs Co-ordinator

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Amendment history:

Version	Date	Author	Change Description
V1	July 2011	Kimberley Maher	Document created
V2	July 2012	Kimberley Maher	Reviewed
V3	04/04/2014	Shona Eland	Uploaded to YMCA Geelong Policy Template included scope, monitoring and evaluation clauses.

V4	20/3/2017	Kimberley Maher	<p>Updated section 3.1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are to ensure their own safety as well as childrens • Staff to monitor ocean tides and weather where applicable • Staff to ensure that any beach swimming occurs between designated flags • All water activities and excursions have a risk assessment completed prior to the day.
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As Adopted and reviewed by the YMCA of Geelong Inc on 04/04/2014



Acting Chief Executive Officer YMCA Geelong Inc.