

The Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program

Early childhood education and care services

Active play/physical activity benchmarks

Healthy policies



1. A whole service active play/physical activity policy is in place.
 - a) The policy incorporates the National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 Years.
 - b) The policy addresses active healthy fundraising and active travel.
 - c) Educators, staff and families are involved in guiding active play policy and practices.
 - 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. safe environments).
 - g) 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 supports physical activity and active travel.

Healthy physical environment



3. Children have access to a range of environments and equipment that encourages active play.
 - a) Outdoor play equipment is adaptable and moveable to encourage change and challenge.
 - b) The environment supports a range of active play experiences inclusive of the diversity and abilities of all children.
 - c) Children are encouraged to access suitable areas to participate in active play/physical activity in all types of weather.
4. Screen time is not used, or is limited in the service in line with Australian Guidelines^{1,2}.
 - a) Screen based activities are not provided for children under two years of age.
 - b) Screen time is limited for children over two years of age.
 - c) Educators engage with children about the content and respond to their reactions.
5. Educators, staff and families are encouraged to use active travel to and from the service.
 - a) The service aims to identify and address barriers for active travel within the local environment.
 - b) Space is provided at the service for children to leave active travel equipment.

Healthy social environment



6. Educators and families recognise they are role models and are encouraged to actively engage with children in active play/physical activity.

Learning and skills



7. Child initiated and adult guided active play/physical activity experiences, which challenge and encourage children to explore, extend and test limits, are planned and provided on a daily basis.
 - a) As active learners, children are involved in planning for active play/physical activity.
8. Opportunities to learn about the importance of active play/physical activity are embedded in the curriculum as recommended in the NQS³, the EYLF⁴, VEYLDF⁵ and Australian Government Guidelines².
9. Road safety education is incorporated into the curriculum.
 - a) Walking excursions within the local community which promote physical activity and safe active travel are encouraged as part of the curriculum.
10. Educators are supported to access resources, tools and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to engage in adult guided active play/physical activity with children.

1. National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5years, Department of Health and Ageing, 2010
2. Get Up and Grow. Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood. Australian Government, 2009
3. Guide to the National Quality Standards. The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, 2011
4. Belonging, Being, Becoming. The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. Commonwealth of Australia 2009
5. Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework for Children from Birth to Eight Years. State of Victoria, 2009

Engaging children, young people, staff and families

11. Families, children, educators and staff are key partners in developing and supporting active play and physical activity initiatives.

- a) Families, educators and staff are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies on a regular basis to support active play in the service and at home.
- b) The service engages children in active play initiatives.
- c) The service draws on families' experiences and expertise to support active play initiatives.
- d) Educators and staff are encouraged to develop competencies to facilitate engagement of families and children from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Community partnerships

12. Educators and staff are encouraged to work with local health professionals, services and other organisations to increase their capacity to deliver and promote active play and physical activity initiatives.

- a) Links are established with local health professionals, services and organisations to support active play initiatives.
- b) Information about community physical activity opportunities is made available to families.