
Nappy Change and Toileting Policy and Procedure

Category:	Health, Hygiene and Safety	Version:	V2023.1
Effective From:	March 2023	Next Review:	March 2024

Policy Statement

Our service is committed to providing positive experiences for children during toileting and nappy changing and ensure they are performed in a hygienic and safe manner. This policy outlines the correct procedures and best practice as recommended by recognised health authorities.

Background and Guiding Principles

The risk of the spread of bodily fluids and other communicable diseases is increased when educators change a child’s nappy. For this reason, educators must act to protect themselves, the child and others from the spread of infection.

Quality Area 2 of the National Quality Standards address practices related to nappy change and toileting. All members of the services must ensure that:

- there are relaxed, warm and positive nappy-changing and toileting routines that are adapted to meet the individual child’s routines
- educators implement appropriate hygiene practices in relation to handwashing, toileting, nappy changing and cleaning of equipment that reflect the safety guidelines from recognised authorities
- there are clean toileting and nappy-changing facilities
- current nappy-changing and toileting procedures are displayed in toilet and nappy-changing areas
- information about correct hand-washing procedures displayed in relevant areas of the service, such as bathrooms, nappy change areas and food preparation areas
- families are provided with daily information about their child’s nappy change/toileting patterns
- educators are supervising and attending to children closely when they are in situations that present a higher risk of injury—for example, on a nappy change table or in a highchair
- a child is never left unattended on a change table
- practices ensure children experience positive toileting and nappy changing
- routines are conducted in ways that maintain hygiene standards, with interactions that are warm and responsive and support children's learning

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) provide a “*Nappy Changing Poster*” as part of the publication of the “*5th Edition Staying Healthy Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services*” document. This outlines the best practice which should be used at a minimum when changing a nappy.

Nappy changing

Preparing for a nappy change is essential to maintaining an adequate level of supervision. Educators should ensure the required equipment is available and within reach prior to beginning the nappy change. During a nappy change, a child should never be left alone on the change table and physical contact should always be maintained with the child.

Where older children with special needs require nappy changing the adequacy of supervision and the privacy needs of the child should be considered. The facilities that will be required to ensure hygienic practices of nappy changing areas should also be considered.”¹

“Parents and education and care services may have different preferences for nappies: some may choose to use cloth nappies, and some may choose disposable nappies. However, the use of disposable nappies is strongly encouraged in education and care services. This is because disposable nappies are less likely to spread germs into the environment because they are less prone to ‘leaking’ than cloth nappies and can be disposed of immediately.

Whether you choose cloth nappies or disposable nappies, it is important to minimise the risk of contact with urine and faeces when dealing with soiled nappies. This includes keeping soiled nappies in a contained space, and having a separate, dedicated nappy change area.”²

Meeting children’s needs

In addition to meeting children’s physical needs, nappy changing and toilet training is an important time to:

- *support children’s agency to develop an understanding and control of their own bodily functions*
- *give children your full attention and build respectful, trusting and caring relationships*
- *interact with children using verbal and nonverbal communication*
- *build children’s understanding of what is happening now and promote their ability to predict what will happen next in the routine*
- *help children to develop and extend their self-help skills.*

There are a range of practical strategies to support children’s positive nappy changing and toileting experiences. These include:

- *allowing children to take their time, avoiding pressuring them*
- *responding to children’s cues and allowing them to be active participants in the process*
- *where possible, using the correct terms for going to the toilet - ask families what words they use at home, as consistent language between home and care will help children to understand and learn more easily*
- *being sensitive to individual children’s needs and styles, and tailoring individual nappy change and toileting procedures to each child*
- *prompting children by asking or reminding them about using the toilet*
- *taking full advantage of every opportunity for a focused, positive interaction with children during toileting and nappy change times, however brief these might be*
- *always being positive about toilet training so that your encouragement is reinforced in your language and actions*
- *being respectful and sensitive to children’s dignity and rights to privacy (r 155 Education and Care Services National Regulations).”³*

¹ *“Guide to the National Quality Framework” Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority March 2023*

² *“5th Edition Staying Healthy Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services” Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council 2012 (updated June 2013)*

³ ACECQA *“Quality Area 2 Factsheet – Toileting and Nappy Changing Principles and Practices” ACECQA Feb 2018 (accessed on-line Feb 2023) https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-04/QA2_EffectiveToiletingand%20NappyChanging%20Procedure.pdf*

Procedures and Responsibilities

Leadership and Management Responsibilities, including Approved Providers, Nominated Supervisors and Responsible Persons will:

- Positively and clearly communicate all aspects of the policy and take a zero-tolerance approach to compliance.
- Understand and comply with all aspects of this policy and related legislation and support team members to do the same.
- Lead a culture of reflection and regular review of policies, seeking feedback from educators, families, children and other community agencies and professionals as appropriate.
- Provide educators with the ACECQA *“Quality Area 2 Factsheet – Toileting and Nappy Changing Principles and Practices”*.
- Display NHMRC Nappy Change posters to guide educator practices.
- Monitor supervision both into and out of bathrooms and nappy change areas and ensure these are always clear. Windows and viewing panels must remain clear and unobstructed.
- Maintain nappy change and bathroom areas in a hygienic manner including monitoring cleaning and that all items are in good repair. Immediately replace any nappy change mats which have holes, cracks or other defects which may allow germs to survive.
- Systematically monitor educator nappy change and toileting practices providing guidance to ensure recommended practices are adhered to across the service.
- Provide educators and families with information to support the transition from nappies to the use of a toilet.

Educators and Other Team Members will:

- Be proactive in fulfilling the requirements of this service policy and related legislative requirements.
- Seek further guidance where required to fulfil your requirements.
- Report any concerns or non-compliance immediately to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.
- Participate in the review of documents and provide constructive feedback to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.

Respectful practices

- Respect the rights and dignity of all children during toileting and nappy change times.
- Refrain from using negative comments about changing a nappy or odours which may be present. Each child has the right to positive, respectful communication.
- Ensure that toileting and nappy change is based on children’s age and development and having regard to children’s dignity and rights.
- Ensure children’s nappies are checked regularly throughout the day and in particular after routine times such as meals and sleeps. Educators must be sensitive to children’s individual needs in relation to nappy changing and toileting.
- Ensure nappy change times are positive, relaxed experiences and take the opportunity to interact one-on-one with children, using songs, rhymes etc. Educators should advise children that they are going to change their nappy prior to doing so to prepare them.
- Nappy-changing and toileting routines are to be adapted to meet the individual child’s routines and should take into account the needs of children and families.
- Children’s needs for privacy during toileting and/or dressing and undressing times should be respected.

Hygiene

- Wear two gloves when changing nappies and attending to toileting accidents.

- Use paper or a similar product on change mats for all changes – this is to be discarded with the old nappy and gloves, prior to the new nappy and clothes being put on.
- Clean the mat using detergent and water or a detergent-based cleaning product after every nappy change. Use disposable cloths such as paper towel.
- Conduct additional cleaning at the end of each day in nappy change areas including the mat, bench tops, bin, soap and paper towel dispensers and other surfaces touched throughout the day. These should be cleaned using a detergent-based product and a paper towel. Discard the paper towel.
- Maintain nappy change mats free from cracks, holes or other defects which allow germs to survive. Notify the Nominated Supervisor immediately of any damage.
- Follow the practices outlined on the NHMRC Staying Healthy in Early Childhood Education and Care Services Nappy Change Poster.

Preparation

- 1. Wash your hands**
2. Place paper on the change table
3. Put disposable gloves on both hands

Changing

4. Remove the child's nappy and put in a hands-free lidded bin. Place any soiled clothes in a plastic bag
5. Clean the child's bottom
6. Remove the paper and put it in a hands-free lidded bin
7. Remove your gloves and put them in the bin
8. Place a clean nappy on the child
9. Dress the child
10. Take the child away from the change table
- 11. Wash your hands and the child's hands**

Cleaning

12. Clean the change table with detergent and water, then rinse and dry*
- 13. Wash your hands**

*if desired a detergent wipe or other detergent-based product could be used to clean the mat.

- **The person changing the nappy should wash their hands three times during the entire procedure: before they start, after changing the nappy and after cleaning the change table.**
- **Educators must NEVER leave a child unattended on a change table. Educators must at all times have secure control of children on change tables to prevent a fall. Children are prone to wiggling and moving and educators must be able to react quickly and safely to any sudden movements.**

Creams, Lotions and Powders

Where a cream, lotion or powder is authorised in writing to be applied at nappy change time, permission must be sought in writing using the Non-Prescribed Cream, Lotions and Powders Form, or the Medication Form if the product is a prescription item.

Applying the product during a nappy change:

- After disposing of gloves (step 7 above)
- Place the new nappy under the child and before closing the nappy, apply the product using a clean glove
- Remove glove and dispose
- Finish securing nappy and dress child – continue to follow the steps from the NHMRC Staying Healthy in Childcare procedure, as listed above.

Supervision

- Ensure that supervision of children is maintained at all times, including during toileting and nappy change.
- Ensure placement allows for supervision of other children within the group while changing a nappy. Where needed call upon other staff to support. All children should be in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times.
- Ensure that routines and facilities allow for the supervision of children in outdoor and indoor areas, including supervision of nappy changing/toileting and should ensure that these routine activities promote positive interactions and learning experiences.
- Ensure supervision both into and out of bathrooms and nappy change areas are always clear. Windows and viewing panels must remain clear and unobstructed.
- Position yourself directly in front of the child and have all items needed in close proximity so that they reduce unnecessary bending, twisting or stretching.
- Support older children to use nappy change steps or similar devices to assist in reaching the mat. This will reduce back strain for adults lifting older children. Educators must supervise this closely and must be holding the child's hand at all times.
- Steps or other devices used in nappy change areas must not be available to children to use unsupervised.

Managing Cloth nappies

- While disposable nappies are preferred due to the reduced risk of leakage, educators will work with families to meet their individual preferences while still maintaining health and hygiene practices.
- Ensure the family provides cloth nappies which minimise leakage through waterproof fabrics or the use of 'plastic pants' to help prevent faeces, and therefore germs, from leaking.
- Respectfully inform families that cloth nappies with urine and/or faeces will not be washed at the centre. Educators should use a sluice where available to reduce excess faeces. Soiled/wet nappies are to be placed into a secure nappy bucket or waterproof bag and laundered at home.
- Ask families to supply a nappy bucket or waterproof bag for their individual child's cloth nappies to be sent home to be laundered. Ensure these are stored out of reach of children.

Toilet-training

- Encourage families to provide several changes of clothing for children especially when toilet training.
- Support children to use the toilet, taking into account their age and stage of toileting and maintain their rights and dignity while encouraging them to develop self-help skills.
- Help younger children to wash and dry their hands, explaining why this is important.
- Respectfully remind older children to wash and dry hands and explain why this is important.
- Be patient, supportive and respectful with children who are toilet training, there are bound to be accidents and educators should respond with respect
- Remind children, especially girls, to wipe front to back, to reduce the chance of introducing bowel bacteria to the urinary tract.
- Encourage children to take their time with toileting and not feel pressured to hurry.
- Be responsive to children's cues and prompt and remind children who are toilet-training.
- Place soiled clothes in a plastic bag, tying the top firmly and place in a secure soiled items container for families to take home at the end of the day. Soiled clothes will not be rinsed or washed at the centre.
- Explain to families that washing soiled clothes at the centre can spread germs.
- Use a sluice if available to remove excess faeces where possible prior to sealing in bag.

- Always keep the soiled-items container out of reach of children.
- Implement strategies to remind families of the need to collect any soiled items at the end of the day to prevent them remaining overnight.
- Discourage the use of a potty chair as this increases the risk of spreading disease. Discuss with the Nominated Supervisor any requests for the use of additional toileting devices.
- If the child uses a potty or other toileting device, empty the contents into the toilet and wash the chair, preferably allowing it to dry in the sun. Ensure it is not accessible to children when not in use. Do not wash it in a sink used for washing hands or food preparation.

Records and communication

- Record details of nappy changes and toileting for sharing with families upon collection where this is appropriate for the child's age and development and in instances where it is requested by families. Where a child is checked, but not changed, this should also be recorded.
- Keep records as per the Record Keeping Policy and Procedure until at least the end of the year which is 3yrs after the record was made.

Families are asked to:

- Fulfil responsibilities under this policy and related legislative requirements.
- Understand that the service must take steps as required under legislative requirements and follow advise from recognised authorities.
- Participate in the review of documents and provide constructive feedback to the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider.
- Discuss any questions with the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person in charge.
- Provide several changes of clothing for children especially when toilet training.
- Where choosing to provide cloth nappies ensure that they have a waterproof covering and provide ample for each day in care.
- Where cloth nappies are provided understand that these will not be washed at the service and that you will be required to supply either a lidded container or waterproof bag for storage during the day.
- Understand that the service provides child-sized toilets and that the use of potty chairs or inserts are not recommended in an early education and care environment due to increased hygiene risks.

Communication

- Educators and families will have access to this policy at all times.
- Information will be included in induction for new educator and be included in service handbooks
- Educators and families will be provided with opportunities to be involved in the review of this policy.
- Educators and families will be provided with information from this policy at the time of employment and orientation.
- Changes to this policy and procedure document will be shared with families and educators.

Enforcement

The failure of any person to comply with this policy in its entirety may lead to:

- Termination or modification of child enrolment
- Restriction of access to the service
- Performance management of an employee which may lead to termination

Related Policies and Forms

- Service Handbooks
- Nappy Change Charts
- NHMRC Nappy Change Poster
- NHMRC Handwashing Poster
- Handwashing Policy and Procedure
- Health and Hygiene Policy and Procedure
- Record Keeping Policy and Procedure
- Supervision Policy and Procedure
- Educator Induction Checklist

Legislation, Recognised Authorities and Sources

- *“5th Edition Staying Healthy Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services”* Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council 2012 (updated June 2013)
- *“Nappy Change” Poster* - National Health and Medical Research Council (updated June 2013 and last accessed Feb 2023) <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/staying-healthy-preventing-infectious-diseases-early-childhood-education-and-care-services#block-views-block-file-attachments-content-block-1>
- *“Quality Area 2 Factsheet – Toileting and Nappy Changing Principles and Practices”* ACECQA Feb 2018 (accessed on-line Feb 2023) https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-04/QA2_EffectiveToiletingand%20NappyChanging%20Procedure.pdf
- *“Positive Toileting and Nappy Changing”* Anne Stonehouse QIAS Factsheet 14 NCAC (2008) (accessed on-line Feb 2023) <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/11914525/factsheet-16-positive-toileting-and-nappy-changing-ncac>
- *“Guide to the National Quality Framework”* Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority March 2023
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (version March 2022)
- *“Education and Care Services National Amendment Regulations 2020 under the Education and Care Services National Law”* August 2020
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations* (version Dec 2021)
 - 109 Toilet and hygiene facilities
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Review Information

Dates of Revisions:

April 2020, May 2021, March 2022, March 2023

Changes in this revision:

- Updated sources and references
- Added signing section to end of policy

I _____ have been provided with this policy and the opportunity to ask questions. I have read and understand my responsibilities under this policy and procedure. I will ensure I ask questions if I am unsure. I also understand the importance of supporting other educators and families in fulfilling their responsibilities. I will seek support from my supervisor if needed to comply.

Signed: _____

Date: _____