



## 2.06 WATER SAFETY

### Purpose Statement

Drowning is a major cause of avoidable death and injury for Australian children. Toddlers are naturally inquisitive and attracted to water, however they have little fear and no understanding of the dangers involved. Toddlers are at particular risk of drowning as they are often top heavy, meaning that they can easily overbalance and fall into bodies of water.

FDC acknowledges the importance of safe practices around water. The provision of safe environments for children is essential to prevent injury and enable them to grow and develop.

### Scope

This policy applies to all salaried full time and part time staff (including casuals), educators and contractors.

### Policy Statement

SAFE PRACTICES AROUND WATER WILL BE IMPLEMENTED AT ALL TIMES (DETAILED HEREIN) INCLUDING SUPERVISION AND COMPLIANCE WITH STATE AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS.

### Procedures

#### *Water Play*

Water play is both enjoyable and educational. It encourages the development of hand/eye coordination through pouring, stirring and scrubbing. It also provides children with an opportunity to widen their sensory experiences. The following must be applied when engaging in water play activities with children:

1. Water play activities must be supervised at all times. If a small wading pool is being used, the educator will stand immediately beside it within arm's length of the child.
2. Fill water troughs or containers to a safe level (less than 300mm of water) and empty immediately after use
3. Store water holding containers when not in use to avoid them being refilled with water
4. Supervise children using wading pools, sprinklers and soaker hoses at all times. When finished using wading pools they must be emptied and put away.

#### *Pools and Spas*

Family Day Care operators must comply with strict rules and regulations when providing education and care services, in a home based setting, that have pool or spa access. Compliance requirements follow:

1. No child while in the care of an Educator as part of the Education and Care service is to swim in a pool at the Educators home at any time while the service is being provided



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2. Educators are not to take children to a public swimming pool or other persons pool for any reason
3. Pools and spas must be fenced and gated. Any pool that is capable of being filled with water to a depth of 300mm (30cms) is required to be surrounded by a Safety Barrier. Pool Safety Barriers require a Building Permit and must be designed, constructed, installed, and maintained in accordance with building regulations and the Australian Standard (AS 1926.1-2012).<sup>1</sup>

NOTE: refer to checklist attached to see if your pool/spa meets the Australian Standards

4. Safety Barriers are required to be at least 1.2m high and without foot holds that would allow a young child to climb over
5. If a door allows access to a pool or spa, ensure that it has a self-closing, child resistant lock
6. Windows with direct access to a pool or spa must not open more than 100mm.
7. Remove objects that could help a child to climb over a fence or open a gate, door or window, including furniture and climbable plants/shrubs growing on the pool fence.
8. Remove the ladder from above-ground pools and store safely when not in use.
9. Display a permanent notice within the pool area detailing CPR procedures.
10. Make pool filters inaccessible to children
11. FDC educators own children (aged 13 yrs and over) can have access to a swimming pool/spa, whilst the education and care service is in operation if the children in care are both indoors and supervised. Whilst children accessing education and care services are engaged in outdoor activities, pools and spas are to remain 'off limits' to homeowners, their children and all visitors.

### **Bathtubs**

If a bathtub contains water, educators must:

1. Maintain constant supervision
2. Remain within arm's reach of children and the water
3. Empty water immediately after supervised use

### **Ponds and Fountains**

Ponds or fountains are considered a water hazard. Where ponds or fountains are not enclosed by a barrier, such as a fence, wall, gate or door they must be:

1. secured in position; and
2. covered by material; or
3. designed so as to prevent a child putting his/her face into the water e.g. installing large rocks/boulders that will significantly reduce the depth of water.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.kidsafevic.com.au](http://www.kidsafevic.com.au)



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### *Creeks, Rivers and Dams*

Where home-based education and care services are adjacent to, or provide access to creeks, rivers or dams, a safety barrier meeting the Australian Standard (AS 1926.1-2007) must be in place. This safety barrier must separate the body of water from the child's play area.

### **Relevant Standards/Legislation**

- National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care Services including:
  - Education and Care Services National Law 2011
  - Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

### **Related Policies & Links**

- Family Day Care Safety Guidelines 6<sup>th</sup> Edition August 2014

# Pool/Spa Self-Assessment Checklist

Does your pool/spa meet the safety standards? AUS STANDARD AS1926.1 - 2012	Yes	No
The pool fence must be at least 1200mm high all the way around measured from the outside of the pool		
If a boundary fence forms part of the pool fence, it must be at least 1800mm high measured from the inside of the pool area		
The gap between the bottom of the fence and the ground is no more than 100mm		
The gap between all vertical or near vertical rails on the fence is less than 100mm		
There are no potential hand holds or foot holds within 900mm of the top of the pool fence in any direction.		
There must be a 300mm clearance from the barrier inside the pool area		
If perforated or mesh fencing is used, the holes must be 13mm or less		
Your pool fence must be well maintained and in a good state of repair (eg no holes, broken rails or palings)		
The gate must be self closing and latch by itself from any position		
The gate latch must be working well so that the gate is secure and, once closed, can't be pulled open		
The gate must open outwards, away from the pool.		
The gap between vertical barriers of a gate must be no less than 100mm		
The gate latch must be 1500mm above ground level, or if located inside the gate, 1200mm above ground level and at least 150mm below the top of the gate		
Are you aware that it is dangerous and against the law to prop the gate open.		
If a wall forms part of the barrier, there are no openings greater than 100mm		
All windows can only open to a maximum of 100mm or the windows must be totally covered by bars or a mesh screen		
The height from the sill of the lowest opening panel of a window (to the pool area) has to be 1800mm from the floor		
There must be an appropriate warning sign, including details of resuscitation (CPR) techniques, in the immediate vicinity of the pool area and which can be easily read from a distance of 3 metres		
Your pool fence must be clear of any objects such as BBQs, trees, rocks, shrubs and deckchairs that could help a small child climb over the fence		