

BALLARAT YMCA CHILDREN'S SERVICES EXCURSIONS AND SERVICE EVENTS POLICY

Mandatory – Quality Area 2

May 2015

PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines Ballarat YMCA Children's Services (YMCA) to plan and conduct safe and appropriate excursions and service events.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

YMCA is committed to:

- providing opportunities through the educational program for children to explore and experience the wider environment and broader society
- ensuring that all excursions and service events are accessible, affordable and contribute to children's learning and development
- ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of children at all times, including during excursions and service events

2. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

Excursions and service events are planned to extend the educational program and further develop the current interests of children. "Participating in their communities strengthens children's sense of identity and wellbeing" (Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world, *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* – refer to *Sources*). The purpose and educational value of each excursion or service event should be clearly communicated to parents/guardians.

When planning excursions and service events, it is important to ensure that they are inclusive of all members of the service community. Consideration must be given to any extra costs involved and the ability of families to pay these costs. Consideration must also be given to ensuring that all children can attend regardless of their abilities, additional needs or medical conditions. Clear procedures must be developed and followed, and these should be communicated to parents/guardians.

A risk assessment must be carried out for each excursion to determine any risks to children's health, safety or wellbeing before permission is sought from parents/guardians (Regulations 100, 101).

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 123, 355, 357, 360
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice
 - Standard 1.1: An approved learning framework informs the development of a curriculum that enhances each child's learning and development
 - Element 1.1.3: The program, including routines, is organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning
 - Element 1.1.5: Every child is supported to participate in the program
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
 - Standard 2.3: Each child is protected
 - Element 2.3.1: Children are adequately supervised at all times
 - Element 2.3.2: Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury



3. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

Adequate supervision: (In relation to this policy) **supervision** entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs and immediately intervene if necessary.

Attendance Record: Kept by the service to record details of each child attending the service including name, time of arrival and departure, signature of person delivering and collecting the child or of the Nominated Supervisor or educator (Regulation 158(1)).

Excursion: An outing organised by the education and care service. The written permission of parents/guardians or a person named on the child's enrolment record as having lawful authority must be obtained before educators/staff take children outside the service premises.

Under the National Regulations, the definition of 'excursion' does not include an outing organised by services operating from a school site, where the child/ren leave the service premises with an educator/staff member, but do not leave the school site.

Service event or incursion: A special activity, event, visitor or entertainment organised by the education and care service that may be conducted as part of a regular session at the service premises or as an excursion.

Risk assessment: (In the context of this policy) a risk assessment must identify and assess any hazard that poses a risk to a child's health, safety and/or wellbeing while on an excursion, and specify how these risks will be managed and/or minimised (Regulation 101).

Regular outing: (In relation to education and care services) means a walk, drive or trip to/from a location that the service visits regularly as part of its educational program, and where the circumstances covered by the risk assessment are the same on each trip. If the excursion is a regular outing, an authorisation from parents/guardians is only required to be obtained once every 12 months. A new authorisation is required if there is any change to the circumstances of the regular outing.

Supervision: refer to **adequate supervision** in *Definitions* above.

4. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- *Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*
- *Guide to the National Quality Standard*, ACECQA: www.acecqa.gov.au
- *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework*: www.education.vic.gov.au/earlylearning/eyldf/default.htm

PROCEDURES

YMCA is responsible for:

- developing an *Excursions and Service Events Policy* in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff and parents/guardians at the service
- ensuring educators, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, students and others at the service have access to a copy of the *Excursions and Service Events Policy* and comply with its requirements
- ensuring that a risk assessment (refer to *Definitions*) is carried out for an excursion (in accordance with Regulation 101) before authorisation is sought from parents/guardians (Regulation 100)
- ensuring the risk assessment identifies and assesses the risks, specifies how these will be managed and/or minimised, and includes all details required by Regulation 101



- Ensuring that a new Graduate is made aware that he or she cannot be responsible for an excursion within their first year of teaching without an experienced teacher also attending. This is applicable in our kindergarten and Long Day Care Programs only.

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- ensuring educators, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, students and others at the service have access to a copy of the *Excursions and Service Events Policy* and comply with its requirements
- ensuring that a child does not leave the service premises on an excursion unless prior written authorisation has been provided by the parent/guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record, and that the authorisation includes all details required under Regulation 102(4) (refer to Attachment 1 – Developing an excursion/service event authorisation form)
- ensuring that all parents/guardians have completed, signed and dated their child's enrolment form including details of persons able to authorise an educator to take their child outside the service premises (Regulation 160) and ensuring that parents/guardians or persons named in the enrolment record have provided written authorisation within the past 12 months where the service is to take the child on regular outings (refer to *Definitions*), and that this authorisation is kept in the child's enrolment record (Regulation 161)
- ensuring that the number of children attending an excursion does not exceed the number for which service approval has been granted on that day
- ensuring that children are adequately supervised at all times
- ensuring that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times, including during excursions and service events (Regulations 123, 355, 357, 360)
- ensuring only educators who are working directly with children are included in educator-to-child ratios
- ensuring that parents/guardians, volunteers, students and all adults participating in an excursion are adequately supervised at all times and are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children
- ensuring that excursions and service events are based on the educational program and meet the needs and interests of children and families at the service and that this is communicated to parents/guardians
- considering the financial ability of families before deciding on an excursion/service event that would require an additional charge. Events that can be planned ahead of time should be included as an expenditure item in the service's budget and, as a result, will not incur additional charges (refer to *Fees Policy*)
- ensuring that proposed excursions/service events are inclusive of all children regardless of their abilities, additional needs or medical conditions
- ensuring that there is an accurate list of all adults participating in an excursion, including parents/guardians, volunteers and students, with contact details for each individual
- ensuring that each child's personal medication and current medical management plan is taken on excursions and other offsite
- providing and maintaining a portable first aid kit that can be taken on excursions and other offsite activities that contain required medication for dealing with medical conditions
- providing a mobile phone to enable contact with parents/guardians and emergency services in the event of an incident, injury, trauma or illness (Regulation 98)
- ensuring emergency contact details for each child and the contact details of their medical practitioner are taken on excursions for notification in the event of an incident, injury, trauma or illness.
- ensuring that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times, including during excursions and service events (Regulations 123, 355, 357, 360)
- ensuring only educators who are working directly with children are included in educator-to-child ratios
- ensuring that parents/guardians, volunteers, students and all adults participating in an excursion are adequately supervised at all times and are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children
- ensuring that a risk assessment is carried out for an excursion (in accordance with Regulation 101) before authorisation is sought from parents/guardians and is emailed to the YMCA Early Childhood Advisor (Regulation 100) or to the HR Manager for OSHC
- ensuring that excursions and service events are based on an approved learning framework, the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, and take into account the individual differences of each child



- ensuring sunscreen (if required) is taken on excursions/service events
- displaying a notice at the service indicating that children are on an excursion, and including the location of the excursion and expected time of return to the service.

Certified Supervisors and other educators are responsible for:

- reading and complying with the requirements of the *Excursions and Service Events Policy*
- providing parents/guardians or a person named in the child's enrolment record with an excursion/service event authorisation form
- checking that a parent/guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record has completed, signed and dated the excursion/service event authorisation form prior to the excursion
- allowing a child to participate in an excursion or service event only with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or person named in the child's enrolment record
- maintaining the required educator-to-child ratios at all times, and adequately supervising children during excursions and service events
- adequately supervising parents/guardians, volunteers, students and all adults participating in an excursion, and ensuring that they are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children
- communicating the purpose and educational value of each excursion or service event to parents/guardians
- including all children in excursions and service events regardless of their abilities, additional needs or medical conditions
- taking each child's personal medication and current medical management plan on excursions and other offsite activities as well as taking a portable first aid kit (including required medication for dealing with medical conditions) on excursions and other offsite activities
- keeping an accurate attendance record (refer to *Definitions*) of children attending excursions, and for children remaining at the service while an excursion is happening
- keeping an accurate list of all adults participating in an excursion, including parents/guardians, volunteers and students, with contact details for each individual
- taking a mobile phone, a copy of the attendance record, emergency contact details for each child and the contact details of the child's medical practitioner on excursions for notification in the event of an incident, injury, trauma or illness
- taking sunscreen (if required) on excursions/service events
- discussing the aims and objectives of the excursion or service event, and items of special interest, with children prior to undertaking the activity
- informing parents/guardians of items required by children for the excursion or service event e.g. snack/lunch, sunscreen, coat etc.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- reading and complying with the requirements of this *Excursions and Service Events Policy*
- completing and signing the authorised nominee section of their child's enrolment form)before their child commences at the service
- completing, signing and dating excursion/service event authorisation forms
- providing written authorisation for their child to leave the service premises on routine outings
- reading the details of the excursion or service event provided by the service and asking for additional information if required
- providing items required by their child for the excursion or service event e.g. snack/lunch, sunscreen, coat etc.
- understanding that, if they participate in an excursion or service event as a volunteer, they will be under the immediate supervision of an educator at all times
- if participating in an excursion or service event, informing an educator immediately if a child appears to be missing from the group
- supervising and caring for siblings and other children in their care who are not enrolled in the program
- complying with all service policies while participating in an excursion or service event including the *Code of Conduct Policy*, *Sun Protection Policy* and *Hygiene Policy*.



Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Developing an excursion/service event authorisation form
- Attachment 2: Excursion permission form example
- Attachment 3: Excursion risk management plan

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the YMCA on 25/5/2015



Developing an excursion/service event authorisation form

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* (Regulation 102) specify that written authorisations for excursions, given by a parent/guardian or person authorised on the child's enrolment record, must include the following details:

- the child's name
- the reason the child is to be taken outside the service premises
- the date the child is to be taken on the excursion (unless the authorisation is for a regular outing)
- a description of the proposed location of the excursion
- the method of transport to be used
- proposed activities to be undertaken as part of the excursion
- the period of time that the child will be away from the service premises
- the anticipated number of children attending the excursion
- the anticipated ratio of educators to children attending the excursion
- the anticipated number of staff members, and any other adults who will accompany and supervise children on the excursion
- confirmation that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service.

The authorisation form should require parents/guardians to include contact details for two people and for the child's medical practitioner in the event that the child experiences an incident, injury, trauma or illness while on the excursion.

The form must be signed and dated by the parent/guardian or a person authorised on the child's enrolment form.

Services should also include information about:

- additional costs involved, if any, and
- whether parents/guardians/siblings are able to participate in the excursion and, if so, details of the supervision requirements for additional family members.

Excursion permission form example

YMCA Children's Services
Y Kindergarten Cluster Management



Name of Kindergarten

EXCURSION PERMISSION

I give permission for (child's name) _____ to attend an excursion
to _____.

The purpose of this excursion is to _____

Date of excursion: _____ Time (departure) _____ (return) _____

The method of transport will be: _____

The anticipated number of children attending this excursion is _____.

There will be _____ staff members attending ensuring a child / staff ratio of _____.

_____ parents will also attend ensuring an overall adult/child ratio of _____

Activities and learning at this excursion include _____

A risk assessment for this excursion has been prepared by staff and is available for viewing beside the sign in book at the centre.

I understand that any medical attention will be arranged as necessary. I understand that the kindergarten staff will carry a mobile phone, first aid kit, sunscreen, and emergency contact numbers.

1st contact number for the day, in case of emergency:

Ph Number: _____ Relationship to child: _____

2nd contact number for the day, in case of emergency:

Ph Number: _____ Relationship to child: _____

My child requires the following medication to be taken on excursion:

_____ to treat the condition/illness:

Parent Name: _____ Parent's signature: _____

Date: _____

Ballarat YMCA Children's Services
PO Box 321 Ballarat 3353
Ph 03 5329 2800 Fax 03 5331 8275

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ATTACHMENT 3

Excursion risk management plan

Excursion details			
Date(s) of excursion		Excursion destination	
Departure and arrival times			
Proposed activities		Water hazards? Yes/No If yes, detail in risk assessment below.	
Method of transport, including proposed route			
Name of excursion co-ordinator			
Contact number of excursion co-ordinator	(BH)	(M)	
Number of children attending excursion		Number of educators/parents/volunteers	
Educator to child ratio, including whether this excursion warrants a higher ratio? Please provide details.			
Excursion checklist			
<input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit	<input type="checkbox"/> List of adults participating in the excursion		
<input type="checkbox"/> List of children attending the excursion	<input type="checkbox"/> Contact information for each adult		
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact information for each child	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile phone / other means of communicating with the service & emergency services		
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical information for each child	<input type="checkbox"/> Other items, please list		



Risk assessment					
Activity	Hazard identified	Risk assessment (use matrix)	Elimination/control measures	Who	When

Plan prepared by			
Prepared in consultation with:			
Communicated to:			
Venue and safety information reviewed and attached	Yes / No Comment if needed:		

Reminder: Monitor the effectiveness of controls and change if necessary. Review the risk assessment if an incident or significant change occurs.



Risk Matrix

		Consequence				
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Almost certain	Moderate	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Likely	Moderate	Moderate	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Possible	Low	Moderate	High	High	Extreme
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate	High	High
	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	High

