**Katherine Isolated Children's Service Inc**
**(K.I.C.S)**

# Occupational Health and Safety Policy

**Policy Number** 1

**Linked to Documents**
Sun Protection, Clothing and Comfort Policy
Hygiene and Infection Control Policy
Playgroup OHS and Risk Management Strategy
Melioidosis Strategy
Manual Lifting Strategy
Accident / Incident Strategy
Infectious Diseases Strategy
Bodily Fluids Strategy
Field Team Guidelines
Accident / Incident Report
Daily Playgroup Summary
Emergency Phone Contacts

## Policy statement

- K.I.C.S has a duty of care to provide all persons[1] with a safe and healthy environment.

- The service's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Policy adheres to the 'Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011

The service is committed to:
  - providing a duty of care that protects persons from harm, injury, illness or abuse;
  - developing and administering OHS risk management systems;
  - consulting with all stakeholders when reviewing OHS policies;
  - maintaining and storing OHS documentation and records;
  - providing staff with OHS professional development and training;
  - ensuring that all OHS policies are transparent and available for any person to access.

- The service's OHS Policy applies to all Playgroups, events, situations, tasks, buildings, equipment, travel and camping.
- It is understood that there is a shared legal responsibility and accountability between, and a commitment by, all persons to implement the service's OHS Policy, procedures and practices.
- The procedures relating to the OHS Policy are clearly labelled and displayed in the service for all stakeholders to read.

## Rationale

K.I.C.S is committed to the ongoing safety of and preventing injury and illness amongst employees, parents/carers, children and the wider community.

## Duty of care

K.I.C.S has duty of care to provide a safe working (and playing) environment for staff and clients of the service.

- Children must be in attendance with a parent/carer who remains responsible for the child/children at all times.
- Children must be supervised by a responsible adult person/carer at all times.
- Supervision of children should always be by a specific, responsible parent/carer.
- K.I.C.S Playgroups or events are never to be considered child minding or childcare.

[1] For the purpose of this policy, 'persons' include children, families, staff, volunteers.

- Parents/carers and members of the public have a duty of care to all members of the public, including children, whilst attending Playgroup events.
- All efforts should be made to avoid situations where your actions place the safety and security of others at risk.
- Parents/carers and members of the public are fully responsible for their conduct and the safety and conduct of children accompanying them to Playgroup events.
- K.I.C.S maintains Public Liability insurance to the maximum amount of $10 000 000

**Responsibilities of different stakeholders**

Stakeholders are legally bound to comply with OHS responsibilities. Stakeholders include staff, families, volunteers, visitors.

**Strategies and practices**

K.I.C.S has number of strategies and procedures in place to implement effective OHS. These strategies are documents in their own right, a summary of these documents is included in this policy.

Staff are to implement the following strategies at Playgroups, the general work environment and camping.

**Playgroup Strategies**

There are a broad range of issues to be aware to ensure the safety of everyone attending a K.I.C.S Playgroup. A detailed breakdown of this can be found in the *Playgroup OHS and Risk Management* document. These include:

- Fencing
- Animals
- Shade
- Amenities
- Litter
- Water
- Adult supervision
- School children
- Pools
- Cleaning

**Melioidosis**

During the Wet Season in the tropics after heavy down pours of rain a disease called Melioidosis is found in surface water, mud and at times may become airborne. This bacterium usually enters the body via cuts and sores in the skin, via inhalation of dust or droplets or ingestion of contaminated water.

*Procedure*

- K.I.C.S will refrain from conducting venues in wet, muddy conditions.

**Manual Lifting**

- The National Code of Practice for Manual Handling [NOHSC:2005(1990)] and the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1991 laid down general requirements and standards which must be met in all workplaces.
- It is the accepted that Katherine Isolated Children's Service (K.I.C.S) Inc will abide by the relevant legislation and guidelines within these acts.
- Australian Worker's Compensation statistics show that one third of all occupational injuries at work happen during manual handling. Research has shown that a systematic approach which aims to assess the whole range of possible causes of injury during manual handling is the most successful way of reducing hazards in the workplace.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to follow the procedure below, and to assist by identifying manual handling hazards and risks.

*Procedure*

- Manual Handling means lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying, holding, or restraining any object, animal or person.
- Staff are encouraged to use their common sense and not to take unnecessary risks when handling large/heavy objects.
- When lifting an object weighing more than 15 kilos, staff are required to seek assistance.
- Staff need to:
    1. *Identify Risks:*
       Discuss issues with other staff and check past accident/incident records.
    2. *Assess Risks:*
       How much strain, pressure, stress, weight, force, grip, skill and duration is required by each activity.
    3. *Control Risks*
       When redesigning tasks in order to minimise injury, look at changing the way jobs are done, change the layout of the workplace, and change the equipment.

*Correct Lifting Procedure*

- Never lift while twisting
- Size up the load
- When lifting an object, lean and raise the object as closely as possible to the body, do not stretch over and lift
- Place feet close to the load in a balanced position with arms bent
- Get a secure grip
- Keep back straight
- Keep the breastbone elevated
- Head up, chin tucked in, arms close to the body
- Brace stomach muscles
- Hold the object close to your centre of gravity
- Use legs, bending the knees
- Move feet not spine to stand up
- Prepare to move in forward facing position
- Make correct lifting an automatic procedure
- Work in pairs when moving large or awkward or heavy equipment.

**Infectious Diseases**

- Everyone should be protected from infectious diseases as much as possible. Many dangerous infectious diseases affect adults as readily as children.
- Strategies such as good hygiene practices and standard precautions when dealing with blood and body fluids can prevent disease spreading.
- Effective exclusion practices can also prevent infectious diseases spreading, thus minimizing harm to other adults and children attending K.I.C.S playgroups, open days, meetings etc.
- K.I.C.S recommend, out of consideration to other users of the service, that parents/carers do not attend Playgroups etc with a child who is obviously unwell.
- The basic rule-of-thumb in this situation is that if the child would be excluded from school, pre-school or childcare because of the illness, he/she should not be at the Playgroup etc.

*Procedure*

- Exclusion practices and conditions outlined in the Territory Health Service's *"TIME OUT: Recommended Minimum Periods of Exclusion"* (https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/731638/time_out_fact_sheet.pdf ) published by the N.T. Disease Control Centre should be followed by parents, carers and staff.
- Parents/Carers need to be diligent in disinfecting toys before returning them to base if they have been used by a child with an infectious disease (e.g. School sores).
- All toys and equipment used at a K.I.C.S Playgroup are to be disinfected daily after use.
- Playdough is to be made daily for each Playgroup.

**Bodily Fluids**

- It is the policy of K.I.C.S that ultimately, it is the primary responsibility of the parent/carer of a child at a Playgroup, venue, event or at the office to attend to the health needs of their own children.
- It is expected that parents/carers will follow the below procedures to clean up any bodily fluids.
- If, however, on the rare occasion that a staff member is involved, the following procedures should be implemented to minimise the spread of infection through contact with body fluids, secretions, excreta.

*Principles of Hygiene (Body Fluids, Secretions and Excreta)*
All body fluids, secretions, and excreta are considered infectious, even when the child appears perfectly well.

*Procedure*

- Wash blood, faeces and urine off the skin with warm soapy water.
- Disposable gloves shall be worn at all times when dealing with urine, blood or faeces.
- Clean up any spilt blood or faeces with a bleach solution of one (1) part household bleach to ten (10) parts of water (or a disinfectant diluted as per directions on bottle). Wipe up with a disposal cloth. Dispose of the used cloth in a sealed plastic bag.
- If a child or a staff member has blood splashed in the eyes or on the face, rinse with running water for several minutes.
- Soak any implements used in First Aid for 5-10 minutes in the recommended bleach/disinfectant solution.

**Field Team Playgroup Safety**

Given the nature of the service, and the regions travelled by Field Teams, K.I.C.S staff are responsible for always ensuring the safety of their environment.

- The safety of the Field Team is paramount at all times.
- If at any time the Field Team feels that their safety is any way at risk they are to leave immediately.
- If upon arriving at a Playgroup venue the Field Team feel their safety may be at risk or simply that there is a 'bad feeling' in the air, they have the authority to cancel Playgroup for that day.
- While common courtesy would have the Field Team notify the community of their decision not to conduct a Playgroup, if the Field Team feel it is unsafe to do so, it is not necessary to notify anyone at the venue. In this circumstance it is recommended the Field Team leave the area immediately.
- Under any such circumstances the Field Team must notify the K.I.C.S office of this decision at the first opportunity.

**First aid**

- Each staff member is expected to have a 'Senior First Aid Certificate';
- Field Teams are expected to complete a 'Remote First Aid Certificate;
- Up to date first aid kits are to be kept in each of the Field Team vehicles and the K.I.C.S office.
- All cases of applying First Aid must be followed by the completion of an 'Accident, Incident, or Injury Report'.

**Further strategies**

More information regarding maintaining safe environments can be found in the 'Field Team Guidelines'. Strategies covered include:

- Vehicle Guidelines
    - Licensing
    - Maintenance
    - Servicing/Repairs
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Safety Checks

- Tyres
- Safety Equipment
- Travelling Guidelines
- Offering Roadside Assistance
- Roadside Repairs
- Driving Guidelines
- Daily Check In
- Emergency Procedures
- Satellite Phone
- Secondary Means of Contact

**Sources**


- NT Work Safe http://www.worksafe.nt.gov.au/Legislation/Pages/Acts-and-Regulations.aspx
- Australian Safety and Compensation Council. (2007). *Index of national standards codes of practice and related guidance notes*. Retrieved June 25, 2007, from http://www.ascc.gov.au/ascc/AboutUs/Publications/NationalStandards/IndexofNationalStandardsCodesofPracticeandrelatedGuidanceNotes.htm
- NT Centre for Disease Control http://www.health.nt.gov.au/Centre_for_Disease_Control/index.aspx


**Useful websites**

- Safe Work Australia – http://safeworkaustralia.gov.au
- Comcare – www.comcare.gov.au
- NT WorkSafe – www.worksafe.nt.gov.au

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