

4.21 Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing

Policy Statement

The service recognises the increasing complexity of mental health issues among our children, families and educators. The Coordinator and educators will work collaboratively with children and families to develop skills, attitudes and behaviours that promote long term mental health and wellbeing outcomes for the children who attend our OSHC program.

Procedures

Management, Coordinators and educators shall be committed to providing a service which acknowledges the importance of good mental health and wellbeing.

An inclusive physical and social environment will be provided that promotes fun, enjoyment and learning through play.

Educators will:

- actively develop and form healthy and secure relationships with individual children and families by engaging in meaningful conversations with them and displaying genuine interest in their welfare.
- Gain understanding of the child's interests, ideas, abilities, background and culture and draw on these when designing, planning and implementing the program.
- Monitor and evaluate the mental health and wellbeing of children and colleagues providing sensitive and ethical support as needed.
- At team meetings share information about the needs of children and families and reflect on appropriate practice for support.
- Encourage children to express and manage their emotions, thoughts and behaviour, and to interact appropriately with peers and others.
- Provide opportunities for children to express their opinions on matters that affect them, to make choices and to work collaboratively with others.
- Promote for each child a sense of self-worth, confidence, dignity and belonging to the group.
- Actively acknowledge children's strengths, efforts and achievements
- Respond to and assist children when they are experiencing difficulties or challenges, to solve problems and to experience success.
- Provide children with downtime, restful experiences.
- Consult with families and access professional support, training and advice in instances where children are observed to be struggling, and additional support is needed.
- Raise awareness of mental health issues with children, families and staff through conversation and thoughtful and sensitively presented displays and promotions.

Reference

Hunter Institute of Mental Health (2014) Connections – A resource for early childhood educators about children’s wellbeing. Canberra ACT: Australian Government Department of Education

- Education and Care Services National Law Act, 2010 and Regulations 2011
- NQS Area: 1.1, 1.2; 2.2, 2.3; 3.2; 4.1; 5.1, 5.2; 6.1, 6.2, 6.3; 7.2.
- Policies: 2.1 – Respect for Children, 2.6 – Behaviour Support and Management, 2.22 – Children’s Participation and Decisions Making, 3.1 – Educational Program Planning, 4.1 – General Health and Safety, 4.4 – Preventative Health and Wellbeing, 4.20 Sleep and Rest Policy. 9.2 – Enrolment

Date of Development	Reason for Modification	Date Ratified	Date of Review