

# Water Safety and Swimming Activities

## 1. Overview

### 1.1. Purpose

The provision of a safe and healthy environment is vital for children and their wellbeing. This includes the consideration of the risk caused by water and water-based activities. Junior Adventure Group People (JAG People) will model and implement water-safe practices to protect children from harm.

### 1.2. Scope

All JAG People are required to comply with the provisions set out in this policy, their contract of employment, and all other relevant policies, procedures and legislation.

### 1.3. Legislative Requirements

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, JAG is required to have policies and procedures in place to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of the children in care.

## 2. Policy Statement

JAG is committed to providing healthy and safe practices that support water safety and reduce hazards and opportunities for harm. JAG recognises the importance of identifying water risks and role-modelling water safety to children attending the Service.

## 3. Principles

### 3.1. Duty of Care

Team Members have a duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children attending the Service. Outdoor play is a vital part of the education and learning setting. Our practices will minimise risk when children are around water or involved in water-based activities.

### 3.2. Promotion of Water Safety

We actively promote the importance of practising water safety. We provide information and share stories about water safety. Service Leaders will keep up to date with water safety best practice guidelines, share this knowledge with JAG People and apply contemporary knowledge to their practice. Information about water safety will be available for children and families.

Water safety messages will be embedded in the children's educational program where appropriate, including during water-based activities such as water play, sand play, play with natural elements (e.g., mud and creek beds) and watering the garden.

### 3.3. Supervision

Every reasonable step will be taken to ensure that children protect themselves from harm when near water or involved in water-based activities. Children will be reminded of the rules of outdoor play, which includes following policies and practices to protect and keep children free from harm or hazard.

All water-based activities are directly supervised. Children are not to be left unattended in or near an area that contains water. All team members are responsible for ensuring that water-based activities are actively supervised.

### 3.4. Service Planning

Program planning will consider measures to ensure team members and children follow water procedures.

This includes assessment of risk, the layout of critical equipment and supervision when near water to assure compliance with water safety practices. Understanding the dangers of our environment is a critical learning element. Team Members will reinforce with children the unique characteristics of their environment, including its dangers.

Appropriate educator-to-child ratios will be applied based on the completed risk assessment when planning an excursion where children are close to a community swimming pool or where there is an identified significant (water) hazard.

All children at the Service are educated on water safety before engaging in any water-based activity.

### 3.5. Water Activities On Site

Vessels (e.g., water trolleys, tubs or buckets) used for water-based activities will be emptied immediately after the activity and stored in a way that prevents the incidental collection of water.

In the interest of environmental sustainability, water will be drained onto a garden or grassed area after the water-based activity.

At the commencement of each session, after rainfall, team members will check the outside environment and empty water that has collected on equipment or in containers.

### 3.6. Water Restrictions

During periods of water restriction, water play will only be implemented if the water can be re-used to water the garden.

### 3.7. Swimming Activities

Some services may provide children with the opportunity to participate in a swimming activity. Where swimming facilities are accessed, children may have the opportunity to participate in water safety games and activities and engage in child-initiated play.

Each child participating in swimming activities must have a completed Swimming Authorisation form signed by a parent/guardian.

Children's swimming ability will be assessed and established before joining the activity.

### 3.8. Supervision during Swimming Activity

JAG is committed to effective supervision practices to ensure the wellbeing, health and safety of all children.

- All swimming activities will be overseen by the Service Leader in charge.
- Management will ensure that additional team members are available as designated swimming supervisors, as determined by the risk assessment.
- The swimming venue must ensure that their staff members hold current qualifications, including but not limited to:
  - AUSTSWIM Teacher of Swimming and Water Safety Certificate

- Royal Life Saving Australia Bronze Medallion
- Swimming Teacher Rescue Award
- Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) Patrol Bronze Medallion or SLSA Surf Rescue Certificate.

Swimming supervisors will be in place as well as team members (based on the required educator-to-child ratio).

Team Members will directly supervise all water activities and ensure that headcounts are conducted and recorded frequently, as determined by the risk assessment process.

Team Members or staff in the pool must maintain visual contact with children at all times and be in regular communication with the other team members outside the pool.

When a child is moving out of the pool, they must notify a team member in the water, who will then communicate with other team members supervising outside the water. On the child's return to the water, the team member must notify all other team members of the child's location and return.

### 3.9. Safety during the Swimming Activity

The safety of children, JAG People, students and volunteers is paramount during the swimming activity.

The Service Leaders will ensure that all team members and children are adequately briefed on water safety and swimming techniques applicable to the lesson or activity, the buddy safety system, appropriate communication signals, the cooperative nature of the activity and safe working practice.

Children are not permitted to run at any time or engage in activities that could endanger themselves or other children. Children are to enter and exit the water from the designated steps or ladders only and are not to jump or dive into the pool unless instructed by a person authorised to instruct children during the swimming activity.

A resuscitation chart(s) and a set(s) of pool rules must be supplied by the venue and posted in a highly visible location(s). The Service Leaders will liaise with the venue before attending to ensure these resources are available.

An attendance roll will be taken before children enter the water and before they leave the swimming venue.

A plan detailing the emergency response procedure needs to be available for each swimming venue. Where such a plan has been developed by the owners or managers of the venue, team members must be familiar with the plan and be satisfied it is appropriate. In most cases, this plan will be on display at the venue, and team members are expected to familiarise themselves with it upon arrival.

In the unlikely event that no pre-existing emergency response plan is available from the venue, A Senior Line Manager must ensure that a plan is developed by the Service Leaders (in consultation with them) and that all team members and children are familiar with it.

Plans detailing emergency response procedures should be available at the venue and include the location and telephone numbers of the nearest emergency services (i.e., police, ambulance

and hospital). The Service Leader will liaise with the venue before attending the venue to ensure these resources are available.

Emergency assistance equipment must be readily available at the venue, and Team Members that are trained in using such equipment must be immediately available during swimming program times.

Rules established by the venue regarding behaviour and hygiene must be adhered to and enforced. Team Members will abide by such rules at all times and support children in understanding and implementing these rules.

### 3.10. Equipment Utilised during Swimming Activities

The Service Leader present must ensure that appropriate rescue equipment, such as buoyancy and reaching aids, is readily available at the venue.

The Service Leader will liaise with the venue before attending the venue to ensure these resources are available.

Inspections must be made to ensure that all teaching aids and safety equipment are in good condition. Swimming aids must be stored separately from chemicals and plant rooms.

The Service Leader will liaise with the venue before attending the venue to ensure these resources are available and will document this in the risk assessment procedures.

A suitably equipped first aid kit, including a resuscitation mask with a one-way valve, will be readily available and supplied by JAG on each excursion.

### 3.11. Excursions

When planning excursions, water safety will be included in the risk assessments for Service participation.

If excursions or routine outings, other than the swimming activities, take effect in places where there is a body of water (e.g., a pool, beach, lake or pond), the following provisions are considered:

- the planning of such excursions is subject to the *Excursions Policy*, including the risk assessment
- the educator-to-child ratio for supervision is higher for water play and experiences near bodies of water
- excursion risk assessments will clearly state where bodies of water will be present and include added safety precautions to ensure families are informed about risk management
- a three-step approval process will be applied to all risk assessments for swimming excursions
- water safety messages are built into the children's educational program.

High supervision near bodies of water on excursions will be maintained by team members, including team members who hold a first aid certificate that includes cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

All team members are responsible for ensuring that all children are actively supervised at all times. Children will be made aware of any boundaries.

### 3.12. Parents and Guardians

We will work in partnership with parents and guardians to promote water safety. In the event of an incident, we will notify parents and guardians.

### 3.13. Record Keeping and Regulatory Compliance

On-site safety audits, incidents and complaints will be documented to allow us to track issues. This will enable changes in practice to be considered and implemented to maximise safety.

### 3.14. Child Safety

We safeguard children through our procedures and practices, with particular attention to their health and safety around water and water activities. Policies and practices reflect the relevant legislation, including the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. JAG provides policies and procedures to equip JAG people with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe. Service Practice are continuously reviewed and improved to ensure current legislation is in effect throughout the business.

## 4. Key Terms

| Term            | Definition   |
|-----------------|--|
| JAG People      | Any adult that governs, manages, conducts work for or provides activities to JAG in a paid or unpaid activity spanning all levels of the organisational structure  |
| Risk Management | Includes the identification, assessment, management, evaluation and review of risks in a setting   |
| Service Leader  | Anyone who oversees the Service in one of the following roles:<br>1. The Approved Provider; if the approved provider is an individual, in other cases, a person with management or control of the Service<br>2. The Nominated Supervisor of the Service<br>3. A Responsible Person who has been placed in day-to-day charge of the Service in the absence of the Nominated Supervisor. |
| Line Manager    | The persons in the direct supervisory role overseeing the work of the particular JAG person; the JAG persons escalate matters toward the person in this role, in the event of incidents and breaches   |
| Team Members    | JAG People who work directly with children   |

## 5. References

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| <b>Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations</b>                   |
| Guide to National Laws and Regulations  |
| Children Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010                        |
| Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010                                 |
| Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011                             |
| National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Care |
| Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority                        |
| <b>Other Relevant Legislation</b>   |
| Regulation 89 – First aid kits  |
| Regulation 100 – Risk assessment must be conducted before excursions              |
| Regulation 101 – Conduct of risk assessment for excursions                        |
| Regulation 102 – Authorisation for excursions                                     |

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| Regulation 113 – Outdoor space-natural environment   |
| Regulation 136 – First aid qualifications  |
| Regulation 146 – Nominated supervisor  |
| Regulation 147 – Staff members   |
| Regulation 168 – Education and care Service must have policies and procedures  |
| Regulation 170 – Policies and procedures to be followed  |
| Regulation 171 – Policies and procedures to be kept available  |
| Regulation 172 – Notification of change to policies or procedures  |
| Regulation 245 – Person taken to hold approved first aid qualification   |
| Kid Safe: <a href="http://www.kidsafe.nsw.org">www.kidsafe.nsw.org</a>   |
| <b>Related Policies</b>  |
| Safeguarding Children and Young People   |
| Risk Management  |
| Incident reporting   |
| <b>Related Procedures</b>  |
| Procedure Collections  |
| 02P010 Water Safety and Swimming Activities Procedures   |
| 01P001 Programming Guidelines  |
| 01P002 Holiday Program and Pupil Free Day Planning Procedures  |
| <b>Other</b>   |
| Quality Area 2, 3 & 5: Standards 2.2, 3.2, 5.1   |
| OCG Guide to Child Safe Standards - <a href="https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-scheme">https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-scheme</a>  |
| CCYP Child safe Standards - <a href="https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/">https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/</a>  |
| National Principles for Child Safe Organisations - <a href="https://childsafefhumanrights.gov.au/national-principles">https://childsafefhumanrights.gov.au/national-principles</a> |

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