

Childcare Safety

Business Name:		ABN:
Business Address:		
Contact Person:	Phone:	Email:

THIS RISK ASSESSMENT IS APPROVED BY THE PCBU ON THIS PROJECT

Under the Work Health and Safety Regulation (WHS Regulation), a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) is required to ensure that a RISK ASSESSMENT is prepared before the proposed work starts.

Full Name:		
Signature:	Title:	Date:

CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS

Client:	SCOPE OF WORKS
Project Name:	
Project Address:	
Project Manager:	
Contact Phone:	
Date Risk Assessment supplied to Project Manager:	

SAMPLE

RISK MATRIX									
LIKELIHOOD	INSIGNIFICANT	MINOR	MODERATE	MAJOR	CATASTROPHIC	SCORE	ACTION	HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS	
ALMOST CERTAIN	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE			Elimination Remove the hazard.	
LIKELY	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4A ACUTE	DO NOT PROCEED	Substitution Replace the hazard.	
POSSIBLE	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	3H HIGH	Review before work starts.	Isolation Isolate People from the hazard	
UNLIKELY	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	2M MODERATE	Ensure control measures in place.	Engineering Isolate the hazard	
RARE	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	1L LOW	Monitor and keep records.	Administrative Change	
								PPE	

Risk Rating & Required Action:	
4A	Stop work. The risk is intolerable. Eliminate the hazard or redesign the activity before proceeding. A Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) or higher-level authorisation is required.
3H	Review and approve additional controls before task starts. Senior supervisor sign-off needed.
2M	Ensure all nominated controls are in place and effective. Proceed with caution; monitor conditions.
1L	Proceed, following standard operating procedures. Monitor and keep records.

Consequence Scale:			
Consequence	People (injury/illness)	Project / Assets	Compliance / Reputation
Catastrophic	Fatality or permanent total disability	project shutdown	Significant regulator intervention; criminal prosecution
Major	Serious injury/illness (hospital > 5 days)	critical delay	Improvement notice; major media coverage
Moderate	Medical-treatment injury; lost-time > 1 day	moderate delay	Minor breach; adverse client comment
Minor	First-aid only, no lost time	negligible delay	Isolated non-conformance
Insignificant	No injury	no schedule impact	Deviation caught and corrected on site

Notes on Hierarchy of Controls:
Remember to apply controls in the preferred order shown by the coloured pyramid:

1. **Eliminate**
2. **Substitute**
3. **Isolate**
4. **Engineering**
5. **Administrative**
6. **PPE**

Always document **why** a lower-order control is accepted if elimination or substitution is not reasonably practicable.

aligned with Safe Work Australia's Managing the risk of fatigue at work (2023) and ISO 45001:2018 clauses 6–8.

JOB STEP	POTENTIAL HAZARDS	IR	CONTROL MEASURES	RR
SPECIFIC WORK STEPS	HAZARDS THAT MAY ARISE	INITIAL RISK	SPECIFIC MEASURES TO BE PUT IN PLACE TO ELIMINATE OR CONTROL THE RISKS	RESIDUAL RISK
1. Governance, WHS Duties and Legal Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to understand and discharge WHS due diligence obligations under WHS Act 2011 for childcare operations Absence of a documented WHS management system specific to early childhood and out-of-school-hours care environments Inadequate integration of National Quality Framework (NQF), Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations with WHS requirements Lack of clear WHS roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for childcare managers, supervisors and educators Insufficient oversight of contractor and volunteer compliance with childcare WHS expectations Failure to consult, cooperate and coordinate with co-located services (e.g. schools, clubs, community centres) No systematic review of WHS performance, incidents and regulatory changes affecting childcare safety 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and maintain a documented WHS management system aligned to WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulation and relevant childcare standards (e.g. ACECQA guidance) Define and communicate WHS roles, responsibilities and delegations for officers, managers, room leaders, educators and support staff, including those supervising children in club areas and external venues Implement due diligence processes for officers, including scheduled WHS reports, risk summaries and compliance audits specific to childcare environments Develop a WHS legal and standards register capturing all applicable legislation, codes of practice and childcare-specific regulatory requirements (including infection control and child protection obligations) Embed WHS objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) into centre business plans and management performance reviews Establish consultation arrangements (e.g. WHS committees, Health and Safety Representatives, toolbox meetings) that include childcare-specific risks such as supervision systems and infection control in nursery rooms Create documented procedures for managing contractors, volunteers and visiting specialists, including WHS inductions and supervision responsibilities Schedule regular internal and external WHS audits focusing on childcare system risks, with action plans tracked to completion Implement a management review process at least annually to review WHS performance, incidents, risk assessments and regulatory changes relevant to childcare safety 	3H
2. Child Protection, Safeguarding and Access Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate systems to prevent unauthorised access to children in rooms, playgrounds or club areas Deficient Working With Children Check (WWCC) and pre-employment screening processes Lack of robust child sign-in/sign-out and custody verification systems Poorly controlled third-party access in shared club or community facilities used for supervised children's activities Inadequate policies for managing allegations of abuse, grooming or inappropriate conduct 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and enforce a child protection and safeguarding policy consistent with relevant state/territory legislation and national child safe standards Implement mandatory WWCC and reference checks for all staff, volunteers and regular contractors before they commence work with children Establish secure access control systems (e.g. locked doors, coded entry, reception control) separating childcare spaces from public or club areas Implement a robust electronic or paper-based sign-in/sign-out system with authorised pick-up lists, photo ID verification and custody documentation procedures Document and enforce supervision ratios and zoning plans for all areas, including shared club facilities and off-site supervised children's activities Develop a documented procedure for managing, reporting and investigating child protection concerns, including escalation pathways to statutory authorities Ensure formal agreements with clubs and host venues specify child-only zones, access controls, CCTV coverage and responsibilities for shared areas 	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to separate childcare areas from public zones in clubs or community venues Insufficient supervision system design for excursions and off-site activities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide mandatory child protection and professional boundaries training for all staff, refreshed at defined intervals Conduct periodic audits of access points, sign-in records and CCTV coverage to confirm effectiveness of safeguarding controls 	
3. Supervision Systems and Behaviour Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate supervision planning in rooms, playgrounds and club areas leading to unobserved children Over-reliance on headcounts without zoning or line-of-sight strategies Inconsistent enforcement of educator-to-child ratios across different age groups and activity types Poor communication between educators during shift changes, breaks and transitions between activities Absence of a documented behaviour support and escalation framework for challenging behaviours Inadequate systems for supervising children's activities in higher-risk areas (e.g. club play zones, multi-level indoor play, shared amenities) Fatigue or distraction in educators due to workload, noise and competing demands 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a supervision policy that defines required ratios, zoning, line-of-sight requirements and active supervision expectations for all areas including club-based programs Create supervision maps and maps for each room, outdoor area and any club or community space used, showing position blind spots and emergency access routes Implement structured handover procedure between educators that include roll counts, behaviour notes and specific supervision tasks Introduce scheduled headcounts and roll checks with documented frequencies (e.g. on arrival, transitions before and after activities, and at departure) Use behaviour support plans for children with known behaviours of concern, incorporating additional staffing or environmental controls as required Implement all physical and visual controls (e.g. low partitions, mirrors, door chimes, CCTV where appropriate and layout) to minimise blind spots in busy areas Set maximum group sizes and activity limits for high-energy supervised children's activities, especially in club environments, and reflect these in enrolment caps Provide regular training and refreshers on active supervision, situational awareness and positive behaviour guidance for all educators Monitor educator workload and staff rotation patterns to reduce fatigue during peak supervision periods 	2M
4. Physical Environment and Facility Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor layout of rooms, including narrow rooms, limiting visibility and increasing trip, crush or entrapment hazards Insufficient segregation between children and vehicle traffic, deliveries or car parks Unsafe stairs, ramps, balconies or changes in floor levels without appropriate barriers Inadequate fencing or gate systems for outdoor play spaces or club-based play areas Lack of child-safe design in furniture, fixtures and storage (e.g. tip hazards, pinch points, unsecured shelving) 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate design for safe nappy change, sleep rooms and bottle preparation areas in nurseries Insufficient ventilation or temperature control in nursery rooms and enclosed play spaces 		[REDACTED]	
5. Infection Prevention, Cleaning and Disinfection Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate cleaning and disinfection program for nursery rooms, including change areas, sleep spaces and high-touch surfaces Inconsistent hand hygiene practices among staff and children Incorrect dilution, storage or application of disinfectants and cleaning chemicals Failure to isolate infectious children or manage communicable disease outbreaks Poor laundry and nappy disposal systems increasing biological exposure risks Inadequate infection control measures for shared equipment in classrooms and during supervised children's activities Insufficient training and supervision of cleaning contractors or in-house cleaners 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
6. Hazardous Chemicals, Medication and Hazardous Substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncontrolled access by children to cleaning chemicals and disinfectants used in nursery and play areas Incorrect storage, labelling or decanting of chemicals leading to exposure or ingestion Inadequate systems for managing medication administration, storage and documentation 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of aerosols or strong disinfectants in poorly ventilated nursery rooms • Lack of up-to-date safety data sheets (SDS) and risk assessments for hazardous substances • Improper disposal of chemicals, sharps or contaminated materials • Insufficient training in safe chemical handling and spill response 		[REDACTED]	
7. Staff Competency, Induction and Training Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate induction of new or relief staff into childcare-specific WHS risks and procedures • Lapsed first aid, CPR and anaphylaxis/asthma management competencies • Insufficient training in supervision of children in non-standard environments such as clubs or community facilities • Lack of competency assessment for high-risk tasks (e.g. food preparation, administering medication, using cleaning chemicals) • Failure to provide regular refresher training on critical topics such as infection control in nursery rooms and emergency response • Over-reliance on informal, on-the-job learning without structured assessment • Inadequate recordkeeping of training, licences and clearances 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M
8. Incident Reporting, Investigation and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under-reporting of incidents, near misses and behavioural events involving children or staff • Lack of timely notification of notifiable incidents to the WHS regulator and other required authorities 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent incident investigation quality, leading to missed systemic causes Failure to analyse trends across rooms, club programs and supervised activities Weak feedback loops, resulting in repeated incidents and no learning from near misses Insufficient communication of corrective actions to affected staff and parents where appropriate 		[REDACTED]	
9. Emergency Preparedness and Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of tailored emergency plans for childcare settings, including nursery rooms and club-based programs Inadequate evacuation procedures for non-ambulant or sleeping infants Insufficient coordination with host venues (e.g. clubs, schools) on shared emergency arrangements Poorly marked or constructed emergency exits and assembly areas Infrequent or poorly run drills, lockdown and medical emergency drills with children and staff Inadequate emergency communication systems for excursions and off-site supervised children's activities 	4M	[REDACTED]	2M
10. Psychosocial Risks, Workload and Fatigue Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High workload, noise and emotional demands leading to educator fatigue and reduced supervision quality Exposure to challenging behaviours from children or difficult interactions with parents and carers Poorly managed shift patterns and breaks, especially during extended hours and club-based programs 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient support for staff dealing with child protection disclosures or critical incidents • Lack of consultation about work design, staffing levels and change processes • Inadequate systems to address bullying, harassment or occupational violence from adults 		[REDACTED]	
11. Maintenance, Equipment Safety and Play Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of preventative maintenance for playground equipment, cots, change tables and furnishings • Use of damaged or non-compliant toys and play equipment in rooms and club areas • Failure to remove or quarantine broken items promptly • Inadequate inspection of equipment in nursery rooms (e.g. loose parts, wrong mattress fit) • Absence of documented checks for high-risk equipment such as indoor climbing frames or mobile cots • Poor management of electrical equipment, cords and portable appliances in children's areas 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L
12. Food Safety, Nutrition and Allergy Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate food safety management system for onsite or externally supplied meals and snacks • Cross-contamination of allergens due to poor segregation and labelling practices • Incorrect management of bottle preparation, storage and reheating in nursery rooms 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent application of allergy and medical management plans during supervised activities and in club areas Insufficient monitoring of children with known dietary restrictions during busy meal or snack times Poor communication of menu and ingredient information to parents and staff 		[REDACTED]	
13. Transport, Excursions and Off-Site Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate planning and risk assessment for excursions and supervised children's activities conducted off-site or in club environments Poor systems for headcounts, roll checks and child location tracking during movement to and from venues Insufficient verification of third-party transport provider safety and compliance Lack of emergency response arrangements for off-site locations including within large club entertainment complexes Inadequate controls for water-adjacent or high-risk recreational activities Poor communication with parents about risks, consent and supervision arrangements for off-site activities 	4H	[REDACTED]	2M
14. Information Management, Records and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incomplete or inaccurate child records for medical conditions, allergies, custody and emergency contacts Poor communication of critical information between shifts, rooms and sites (including club-based programs) Failure to update and disseminate changes to policies, procedures and risk controls 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate protection of personal and sensitive information about children and families Lack of documented consent for photographs, excursions and specific activities Miscommunication with parents about incidents, illness, behavioural concerns or environmental risks 		<div style="background-color: black; height: 15px; width: 100%;"></div>	

SAMPLE

EMERGENCY RESPONSE – CALL 000 FOR EMERGENCIES

Ensure to have an Emergency Management Plan in place as well as adequate numbers of trained first aid staff with easy access to fully stocked first aid kits, rescue equipment, material safety data sheets, adequate access to emergency communication equipment and fire-fighting equipment suitable for all classes of fire and ignition sources.

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND CODES OF PRACTICE. DELETE THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES FOR ANY STATE THAT ARE NOT APPLICABLE

Queensland & Australian Capital Territory

Work Health and Safety Act 2011
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011
 Legislation QLD: <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/work-health-and-safety-laws>
 Codes of Practice QLD: <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>
 Legislation ACT: <https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/acts-and-regulations>
 Codes of Practice ACT: <https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

Victoria

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
 Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017
 Legislation VIC: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/occupational-health-and-safety-act-and-regulations>
 Codes of Practice VIC: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/compliance-codes-and-codes-practice>

New South Wales

Work Health and Safety Act 2011
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2025
 Legislation NSW: <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/legal-obligations/legislation>
 Codes of Practice NSW: <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/list-codes-of-practice>

Western Australia

Work Health and Safety Act 2020
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2022
 Legislation Western Australia: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/legislation>
 Codes of Practice WA: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/codes-practice>

Northern Territory

Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011
 Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulation 2011
 Legislation NT: <https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/workplace-safety-laws>
 Codes of Practice NT: <https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/factsheets-and-resources/codes-of-practice>

Safe Work Australia Links

Law and Regulation (All States): <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/law-and-regulation>
 Model Codes of Practice: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/resources-publications/model-codes-of-practice>

South Australia

Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 (SA)
 Legislation for SA: <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/resources/legislation>
 Codes of Practice for SA: <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/workplaces/codes-of-practice#COPs>

Model Codes of Practice

- Managing noise and preventing hearing loss at work
- Confined spaces
- Labelling of workplace hazardous chemicals
- Managing risks of hazardous chemicals in the workplace
- Welding processes
- First aid in the workplace
- Managing the risk of falls at workplaces
- Hazardous manual tasks
- Managing the risk of falls in housing construction
- Managing electrical risks in the workplace
- Demolition work
- Excavation work
- Work health and safety consultation, cooperation and coordination
- Managing the work environment and facilities
- How to manage work health and safety risks
- Managing risks of plant in the workplace
- Construction work

Tasmania

Work Health and Safety Act 2012
 Work Health and Safety (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Act 2012
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012
 Work Health and Safety (Transitional) Regulations 2012
 Legislation for TAS: <https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/laws-and-compliance/acts-and-regulations>
 Codes of Practice for TAS: <https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

Details of permits, licenses or access required by regulatory bodies (add or delete as required):

- Permits from local council
- Authorisation to commence work
- Any required documents.