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|  | Management Area: Children's Services | Version No: 5.0 Pages: 6 |
| | Category of Procedure: Operational | Approval Date: 12/07/2023 Procedure Approver: Head of Children's Services |
| Procedure Title: Water Safety Procedure | | Author: Head of Children's Services |

YMCA SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Water Safety Procedure

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1. Purpose

The YMCA South Australia procedure for water-based activities provides a guide for children's services educators and staff. The procedure for water-based activities list the actions and key points for consideration when planning and participating in water-based activities. The procedure must be used in addition to the YMCA South Australia Excursions Policy and procedure when planning water-based excursions.

The procedure ensures all YMCA South Australia Children's Services water-based activities are conducted in a manner that is safe and without additional risk to staff and participants. Staff must ensure to follow recommendations from Kids Safe SA to prevent injury and drowning.

2. Scope


The scope of this procedure applies to all Board members, Sub Committee members, educators, and volunteers. This procedure applies to all YMCA Member Associations. For the purposes of this document, we refer to these as the YMCA. All Policies and Procedures must conform to this procedure.

3. Procedures

OSHC

All requirements of the YMCA South Australia Excursion and Routine outing policy and procedure will be adhered to.


- Staff to child ratio will be 1:5 for any water-based excursion.
- Any deviation from the ratio of 1:5 will only be accepted for an activity not involving children entering the water and approved by the service manager following a comprehensive risk assessment, and the final ratio may not exceed 1:8.
- Some pool facilities may have established their own venue-specific minimum ratio. This will be considered when determining the staff to child ratio, after the risk assessment has been completed. The final ratio will not exceed 1:5.
- A risk assessment will be conducted for all water-based excursions.
- Items to consider include, swimming ability, and experience of participants, suitable change facilities, toilet availability, suitable rest and lunch area, public use of the venue, public use of change spaces, required staff qualifications for activity, transport arrangements, venue layout, risks specific to that activity (e.g. kayaking – the risk of injury from paddle strike), water depth and characteristics (e.g. waves/currents), extreme heat or exposure risks, age level and developmental appropriateness of activity, exposure to allergies, level of supervision, water clarity and presentation of facility or location.

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- A risk assessment will be conducted for all water-based activities.
- Water activities require a higher level of supervision including activities with a small or low-level amount of water. Staff must position themselves to be able to respond immediately to any incident or injury to children which occurs while engaging in the water activity.
- Young children should always be within arm's length of an adult around water and never be left in the care of older children.
- All staff will be pre-briefed on emergency procedures specifically relating to a first aid response for drowning, as well as evacuation, significant injuries, or incident, specific to the venue or location.
- OSHC staff will participate in the activity as much as reasonably possible and as required by the identified hazard management controls. (E.g., for a pool-based activity some OSHC staff will be in the water with the children.)
- For outdoor water excursions, all sun safety requirements must be followed by staff and children, refer to the sun protection policy.
- OSHC Staff will wear appropriate sun smart attire for a water-based activity outdoors (E.g., rash vests, hats) and role model effective sun smart behaviour (seeking shade, wearing sunglasses).

ELC

- A risk assessment will be conducted for all areas that will include hazard minimisation for where children have direct access to water. This must include less obvious drowning hazards, such as:
 - buckets
 - washing machines
 - toilets
 - water tanks
 - water features
 - fishponds
 - aquariums and fishbowls
 - pets' water bowls
 - eskies.
 - puddles
 - drinking fountains / taps
- Water activities require a higher level of supervision including activities with a small or low-level amount of water. Staff must position themselves to be able to respond immediately to any incident or injury to children which occurs while engaging in the water activity.

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- When water is present, levels should be kept under 5cm in depth to reduce to risk of drowning.
- Daily safety checks of the different areas of the service will be conducted to ensure the health and safety of children including no access to kitchens and laundries and the depth of puddles in the outdoor environment.
- Educators are required to pack up water play activities at the conclusion of play to ensure the health and safety of children and to prevent water borne illness from occurring.

EXCLUSIONS

The YMCA South Australia water safety procedure does not apply to excursions that would not be classified as water-based activities such as visits to the aquarium or zoo. While these locations do have bodies of water present, the participants would not normally be at risk of entering the water. The YMCA South Australia Excursions Policy and Procedure would still apply to these excursions.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

| Department / Area | Role / Responsibility |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Children's Services Management | <p>Is responsible for the development, monitoring, and review of the procedure and related systems, ensuring content meets all legislated requirements.</p> <p>To facilitate procedure awareness to all educators on the appropriate implementation and use of the procedure.</p> |

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| Responsible Persons | <p>Nominated supervisor/service management will oversee the implementation and service adherence of the procedure.</p> <p>Nominated supervisor/person with management and control will seek individual community feedback and facilitate an active consultation process with service users as appropriate.</p> <p>Is responsible for addressing any instance of non-compliance with this procedure and implementing strategies to help prevent non-compliance with this procedure.</p> <p>Responsible for ensuring suitable resources and support systems to enable compliance with this procedure.</p> <p>Drive the consultation process and provide leadership and advice on the continuous improvement of the procedure.</p> |
| All employees, volunteers & students | <p>Responsible for meeting the requirements outlined in this procedure.</p> <p>Responsible for raising concerns or complaints in accordance with this procedure.</p> |

5. Definitions

Water-based activity

Any planned activity involving water such as water-based excursions e.g., pools, beach, or onsite activities such as water play, slip and slides etc.

6. Key Relevant Documents


- Water Safety Policy
- Sun Protection Policy
- Sun Protection Procedure
- Excursion Policy
- Excursion Procedure
- Kid Safe SA
- Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011
- Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)

7. Monitoring Evaluation and Review

This procedure will be reviewed every two years or earlier for reasonable cause or upon the request of the YMCA South Australia Board.

8. Version History

YMCA South Australia
Endorsed: Children's Services Management Team – 12/07/2023
Review Date: May 2027

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| Version | Date | Description of changes | Effective Date | Review Date |
|---------|------------|--|----------------|-------------|
| 2.0 | 05/07/2016 | Updated Legislation. | | |
| 3.0 | 05/08/2019 | Converted to Procedure. | | |
| 4.0 | 10/02/2022 | Review and update. | | |
| 5.0 | 12/07/2023 | Updated to include water activities. Refined information. Updated policy and procedure references. Removed duplicate information. Updated legislative and industry requirements. Updated document name. | 12/08/2023 | July 2025 |
| 6.0 | 26/05/2025 | Updated scope. Added ELC procedure. Added individual pool reference. | 26/05/2025 | May 2027 |