



Active supervision

Active supervision promotes a safe education and care learning environment and reduces the risk of injury to young children. In practice, it is the continuous monitoring of children's activities, interactions, routines, and the environment.

Inadequate supervision has led to an increase in serious incidents involving young children in Western Australia. Many incidents have occurred due to inadequate supervision of young children including leaving a service, being lost or left on transportation, or being fed known allergens.

Ineffective supervision practices during indoor and outdoor activities can lead to the serious injury or death of a child.

Below is a list of what you need to consider when developing supervision policies and practices to minimise the risk to children and keep them safe from hazards or harm.

Maintain a safe environment

- ✓ Conduct regular safety checks on locks, fencing, exits and equipment.
- ✓ Ensure safe spaces and activities to enable optimal supervision.

Stay alert and aware

- ✓ Regularly scan the environment, and conduct headcounts.
- ✓ Listen to the tone and volume of interactions to help anticipate behaviour and respond to issues promptly.
- ✓ Pay attention to children's cues, such as being upset and saying they want to go home.
- ✓ Pay attention to the changing dynamics of the group.
- ✓ Be actively involved in children's play and learning activities and stay attuned to the individual needs of each child.

Continuously assess risks

- ✓ Conduct thorough risk assessments for all activities and environments.
- ✓ Make certain staff are given the opportunity to read, understand and discuss the risk assessments.
- ✓ Review and adjust policy and practice after an incident.

Ensure adequate staffing

- ✓ Confirm your staffing model promotes continuity of care and facilitates strong educator and child relationships.
- ✓ Consider whether staffing ratios are adjusted to suit the risks, the environment and the needs of the children, as minimum ratio requirements do not always meet effective supervision requirements.
- ✓ Ensure staff counted within the ratio are actively working with the children and not engaged in other tasks, such as cleaning or curriculum planning.

Stay vigilant on the move

- ✓ Before a journey, review and share additional supervision requirements, including behavioural plans and medical and/or developmental needs with the team.
- ✓ Discuss the risk assessment with the team prior to excursions and adjust as necessary.
- ✓ Ensure excursions are age and developmentally appropriate, and that increased staffing ratios are determined based on the cohort of children and the risk the venue may pose.
- ✓ Prompt staff to conduct physical checks of vehicles before disembarking.
- ✓ Regularly review transportation regulations with staff.
- ✓ Conduct frequent headcounts particularly at transitions and cross check as necessary.

Communicate policies and processes effectively

- ✓ Ensure induction processes support new educators to understand active and effective supervision.
- ✓ Make active supervision a standing agenda item at staff meetings.
- ✓ Conduct regular supervision training and onsite reviews of the service environment.
- ✓ Undertake regular practice audits and make changes as required.

Active supervision requires focused attention and intentional observation by educators. While some services have a supervision plan or map, these cannot be used in isolation when it comes to effective supervision.

Active supervision is your responsibility.

Effective supervision is required under section 165 of the [Education and Care Services National Law \(WA\) Act 2012](#), and aligns with Quality Area 2 of the National Quality Standards (NQS).

More resources on active supervision are available:

[Education and Care Regulatory Unit - other resources](#)

[Active Supervision: Ensuring Safety and Promoting Learning](#)

[Active Supervision in 6 steps](#)

For more information, please contact the team via email ECRU@communities.wa.gov.au or phone (08) 6277 3889 (Free call: 1800 199 383).

