

Out & About - safely



Early Learning Association Australia's (ELAA) new road safety and safe transport policies will assist family day care educators and providers to protect children while travelling and provide helpful tips on best practice when transporting children.

Car crashes are one of the leading causes of child death in Australia. Several thousand children aged from birth to six years are hospitalised each year in Australia from injuries sustained in car crashes.

And while studies by road safety researchers show that almost all young children in Australia (98 per cent) use child restraints when they travel in cars, about one quarter of children are using the wrong type of restraint for their age, and about 70 per cent of restraints are incorrectly installed or used.

Incorrect installation and misuse of child car seats have alarming consequences for children in a car crash. It is estimated that 42 per cent of child deaths in car crashes and 55 per cent of injuries could be eliminated if all children aged one to six were travelling in an appropriate child car seat that was correctly installed, according to a recent study by Australian road safety researchers, published in the medical journal *Pediatrics*.

ELAA has worked with VicRoads, Family Day Care Australia and leading early childhood experts to develop road safety education and safe transport policies. These policies are based on the National Quality Framework and the National Guidelines for the Safe Restraint of Children Travelling in Motor Vehicles.

The *Safe Transport Policy (Family day care)* is based on the *Best Practice Guidelines for the Safe Transportation of Children in Vehicles* published by Neuroscience Research Australia, an independent, not for profit research institute. This policy reflects best practice and goes beyond the minimum legal requirements outlined in Australian road laws.

The purpose of the policies is:

- To provide evidence-based, best practice guidelines to ensure children are kept safe while travelling as pedestrians, cyclists or passengers in vehicles. And,
- To ensure children are able to participate in road safety education to help them to become safe and responsible road users.

Zora Marko ELAA's Road Safety Education Project Manager and Family Day Care Australia are delivering professional development sessions about the safe transportation of children and best practice policies for family day care coordinators and educators throughout Victoria over the next 12 months.

For more information about these sessions, or to download the free policies, visit ELAA's website www.elaa.org.au/roadsafety. For more information on safety ratings and correct use of child car seats go to www.childcarseats.com.au

Family Day Care Educators' Associations

State family day care educators' associations represent educators and provide a range of member-based services, including advice, training, resources and assistance to educator members. Executive committee representatives work in a voluntary capacity to support fellow educators to provide quality home-based child care services.

Family Day Care Associations

State family day care associations provide a range of member-based services including advice, training, resources and assistance to members. This support strengthens services and assists staff in their vital role of providing effective support services to educators and families. The association works actively to promote family day care within their respective states.

Each association operates independently of Family Day Care Australia.

New South Wales

- Family Day Care Educators' Association NSW Inc 02 4388 9603 www.fdceducatorsnsw.com
- NSW Family Day Care Association 02 9779 9999 www.nswfdc.org.au

Victoria

- Victorian Family Day Care Educators' Association Inc. 03 9807 4424 / 03 9830 1749
- Family Day Care Victoria Inc. 0439 324 015 www.familydaycare.org.au

Tasmania

- Family Day Care Council of Tasmania Inc.
President: Janelle Brennan
03 6211 8290

South Australia

- Family Day Care Educators' Association of South Australia 08 8252 0021 www.fdcassocsa.com.au

Western Australia

- Family Day Care Educators' Association, Western Australia, Inc. 08 9259 0951
- Family Day Care WA 08 9251 5777 www.familydaycarewa.com.au

Northern Territory

- Alice Springs Carers' Support Group 08 8952 2906

Queensland

- Family Day Care Association Queensland Inc. 07 3399 3737 www.fdcqld.org