STAFF 'WELLNESS PROGRAM' POLICY

According to the World Health Organisation, adults spend approximately one third of their lives at work. Our work in Early Childhood Education requires sustained high physical, mental and emotional effort to complete our job. A range of workplace determinants can have a negative or positive impact on the health and wellbeing of an employee. Within our Service, we are committed to promoting a positive work environment where the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees is acknowledged and supported. Wellness is more than just an active process of becoming aware of and learning to make healthy choices for our mental, physical and social needs to ensure our body is maintained and works efficiently.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 4: STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS		
4.2	Professionalism	Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical.
4.2.1	Professional collaboration	Management, educators and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills.
4.2.2	Professional Standards	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.

RELATED POLICIES

Dealing with Complaints Policy (Staff) Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy	Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Professional Development Policy Work, Health and Safety Policy

PURPOSE

We believe in providing a healthy workplace that values and enhances the health and wellbeing of our employees. Promoting wellbeing can help prevent stress and create a positive working environment where individuals and organisations thrive.

SCOPE

This policy applies to educators, staff, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, and students of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

As our employees care for and educate children, it is essential to support them with the right tools and resources to make healthier choices to improve their own health and wellbeing. Employees who remain healthy increase productivity, enhance the workplace culture, and embody the healthy behaviours we convey to children on a daily basis. We believe in using the workplace for improving and maintaining good health.

Our Service is committed to developing a shared vision to improve the health and wellbeing of our employees. We believe the development of a *Wellness Program* may build an awareness of a healthy culture within our organisation and motivate and engage all employees to be involved in improving their own health and wellbeing.

Our Service promotes healthy wellbeing of all employees and strives to foster a supportive workplace environment aimed at reducing burnout and compassion fatigue. Our Service encourages management to refrain from contacting employees outside of work hours, unless the contact is deemed reasonable and necessary for business purposes. Additionally, disciplinary action will not be taken against employees who refuse to respond to non-urgent communication outside of their normal working hours, in accordance with Right to Disconnect legislation. (August 2024)

WELLNESS PROGRAM

Our work in Early Childhood Education requires sustained high physical, mental and emotional effort to complete our job. Such sustained work demands can have an impact on the wellbeing of employees. A Wellness Program may help individual employees overcome specific health-related issues. Our Service will encourage employees to create a shared vision to develop a *Wellness Program* that reflects and addresses the needs of our current staff and creates a wellness culture. Management and staff will co-develop a policy and procedures that support the health and wellbeing of employees.

Components of a Wellness Program *may* include:

Environmental wellness:

- Finding satisfaction within the work environment
- Ensuring the work environment and relationships are comfortable and supportive
- Recognising opportunities that lead to new skills and acting on those opportunities
- Working to ensure the stability and longevity of the natural environment

Emotional wellness:

- Keeping a positive attitude
- Being sensitive to your feelings and the feelings of others
- Learning to cope with stress
- Being realistic about your expectations and time
- Taking responsibility for your own behaviour
- Dealing with your personal and financial issues realistically
- Viewing challenges as an opportunity
- Being able to work independently
- Being able to work within a team, and knowing you can ask for help

Spiritual wellness:

- Being open to different cultures and religions
- Participating in community projects
- Defining personal values and ethics
- Participating in spiritual activities
- Caring about the welfare of others

Social wellness:

- Being comfortable with and liking yourself as a person
- Interacting with and accepting people of varying ages, backgrounds, genders, race, lifestyle, etc.
- Foster healthy and positive relationships with co-workers
- Communicating your feelings
- Developing friendships
- Engaging in social activities
- Balancing your time to include both work and life

Intellectual wellness:

- Learning because you want to, not because you have been told to
- Completing required tasks
- Learning through professional development, including, readings, discussions, workshops, training, etc.
- Observing what is around you

- Listening
- Staying current with early childhood knowledge
- Questioning
- Exposing yourself to new experiences

Physical wellness:

- Exercising regularly
- Healthy eating
- Getting regular check-ups
- Avoiding the use of tobacco and illicit drugs

THE APPROVED PROVIDER, NOMINATED SUPERVISOR AND MANAGEMENT WILL:

- demonstrate commitment to ongoing collaboration and engagement to create a workplace Wellness Program
- adhere to *Right to Disconnect* legislation
- consult with employees to ensure workplace strategies meet the needs of the workplace
- support employee's participation in the Wellness Program
- foster mentoring and development pathways for employees. This may include providing programming time, mentoring sessions, professional development opportunities, capacity building, and supporting wellbeing initiatives.
- provide a workplace environment and systems that are supportive of employee wellness
- provide opportunities for employees to participate in wellness activities
- acknowledge stressful situations for employees, both at work and at home
- recognise that an employee's health is determined by several factors, both work and non-work related
- limit contacting employees outside of normal work hours, unless contact is deemed reasonable and necessary for business purposes
- ensure disciplinary action is not taken against employees who refuse to respond to non-urgent communication
- regularly provide employees with information about the importance of health and wellness (newsletters, brochures, readings, etc.)
- display ACECQA posters to support and promote staff and educator wellbeing
- 5 Staff wellbeing days for full time employees, pro rata for part time employees under the LCCC Employment Business Agreement

- ensure employees take their required breaks (e.g., morning tea, lunch)
- provide access to support agencies, including counselling services
- encourage employees to support colleagues during difficult situations

EDUCATORS WILL:

- work within the Service's procedure and policies implemented to address workplace wellness
- be respectful, caring and inclusive of all colleagues
- utilise each other's strengths regardless of qualification and experience
- commit to further contributions to ongoing collaborative engagement to evaluate and enhance the Wellness Program
- participate in the Wellness Program
- communicate their wellness with management

Resources

ACECQA- Educator Wellbeing Posters https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/supporting-materials/posters#EWP

Alcohol and Other Drugs Information Service (ADIS) 1800 422599

Beyond Blue- online and phone mental health support. 1300 22 4636 https://www.beyondblue.org.au/

Beyou- provides educators with knowledge, resources and strategies for helping children and young people achieve their best possible mental health https://beyou.edu.au/

Black Dog Institute- provides information and resources for mood disorders, depression and bipolar disorder. https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/education-services/workplaces/

Blue Knot Helpline- access to trained, experienced and trauma-informed counsellors, male and female, support adult survivors of childhood trauma and abuse. 1300 657 380

Healthier. Happier. Workplaces Queensland Government Resources, information, initiatives to help everyone think about small changes to improve their health and fitness https://www.healthier.qld.gov.au/fitness/

Head to Health- Australian Government Department of Health Digital mental health resources for all your needs. https://headtohealth.gov.au/

Headspace- A meditation app to assist with stress management, sleep and self-care https://www.headspace.com/

Q Life provides nation-wide peer support and referral service for LGBTI people, their families and health professionals. https://qlife.org.au/ 1800 184 527

Smiling Mind- Free mindfulness meditation app to help you look after your mental health and manage stress and daily challenges https://www.smilingmind.com.au/

Ted Talks- explore the latest thinking on how to build a better learning community for educators, families and children. https://www.ted.com/talks

Work Health and Wellbeing- Strengthen your business Workplace Health and Safety Queensland. Toolkit designed to help businesses to improve systems that influence work health and wellbeing.

https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/mental-health/mentally-healthy-workplaces-toolkit

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

The *Staff Wellness Program Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in conjunction with children, families, educators, staff and management.

SOURCE

ACT Government. Healthier Work Initiative.
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2020). Supporting Educator Wellbeing Through these Challenging Times.
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
Be You (2018): https://beyou.edu.au
Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth).
Fair Work Australia- (2024). Right to disconnect legislation
Ombudsman Act 2001 (Cth).
Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (Cth).
Queensland Government. Queensland Health. Healthier. Happier. Workplaces
Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth).
Workplace Relations Act 1996 (Cth).
World Health Organization

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Krystle Hills	Centre Manager	22/04/2024
POLICY REVIEWED	May 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	May 2026
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy review • updated Right to disconnect legislation links • sources checked and updated as required		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
APRIL 2024	• annual policy review- no major changes to policy • additional statements related to variation of modern awards to include right to disconnect (effective August 2024) • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required		APRIL 2025