

Early Years Services – QA2.18 Use of Electronic Devices and Media

TRIM Reference: D16/36657 Due for Review: 30 March 2026
Responsible Officer: Coordinator Early Years

Purpose

This policy outlines Surf Coast Shire Council's commitment:

- To provide guidelines for educators to incorporate the use of electronic devices into the education and care program.
- To implementing responsible behaviour by limiting screen time when using electronic devices within the early Years Services, respecting the services, children and the privacy of families and staff.
- To ensure that educators are aware of their responsibilities in regard to maintaining appropriate use of electronic devices within Early Years services.
- To ensure that educators have guidelines in appropriate use of mobile phones and other electronic devices.
- To ensure that children and families are informed of the expectations and guidelines on use of electronic devices.

Policy Principles

National Quality Standards 1.1.1, 1.1.3, 2.1.2, 6.1.2, 6.2.1
Education & Care Services National Regulations: 76, 81,167
Child Safe Standards: 8

Scope

This policy applies to all Surf Coast Shire Council Early Years Services staff, students, volunteers, children and families accessing the Early Years service.

Policy

Digital technologies and computers have become an integral part of many children's daily lives. For this reason, it is important that our Educators are not only familiar with the use of computer technologies but are able to guide children's understanding of, and ability to use them. Electronic Devices and Media items will only be used as an extension to the daily program assisting in development of social, physical, emotional, cognitive, language and creative potential of each child. Quality TV programs can be helpful in the retelling of stories about our culture and help to celebrate diversity.

Surf Coast Shire Council is committed to ensure that Council maintains quality education and care programs that provides a safe environment when utilising electronic devices.

Adults within the kindergarten environment must not use any personal device to record or take photos of children. Staff may only use their personal device(s) during a rostered break, and only in an area that is not used for the education and care of children. Any adult that witnesses any incidence or suspicion of inappropriate behaviour or becomes aware of the transmission of any illegal material, must report it immediately.

Educators will:

- Comply with current legislation and Service policies.
- Only use service-issued devices to take photos or videos of children.
- Not carry or use any personal electronic devices that can take or record images of any person while providing education and care and working directly with children, unless for authorised essential purposes such as emergencies, health and family needs or needing to access 'Duo Security App' to log onto Surf Coast Shire Network.
- Personal Smart Watches should only be used for time purposes and not used to check personal messages/emails when working directly with children.
- Ensure any films, videos or any other digital programs being used as part of the educational program to be viewed prior to showing and be documented. Will know which children are not to be filmed or photographed.
- Support children's natural curiosity for technology within the service
- Provide children with access to technology to help develop their computer literacy skills.
- Build on children's learning and inspire the ongoing and enthusiastic acquisition of knowledge through technology.
- Use technology to build on current projects and document children's learning.
- Limit the amount of time spent on screens for children.
- Endeavour to limit experiences involving screen use to those which have an educational component – including movement.
- Discuss with children the role of screen time in their lives and support them in making healthy choices about their use of screen time for both education and recreation.
- Model appropriate screen behaviours to the children.
- Encourage the promotion of productive sedentary experiences for rest and relaxation.
- Ensure that an appropriate balance between inactive and active time is maintained each day.
- Not use a screen as a reward or to manage challenging behaviours.
- Not share any digital images of children and families without parent permission.

Guidelines for use of electronic devices within our services:

- Programs must be carefully selected and be suitable to the needs and development levels of each child using various types of technology or media.
- Technology is used to assist in expanding the content of the daily program and current affairs.
- Electronic devices accessible to children throughout the program must have a password login system managed by educators.
- Programs are chosen that are engaging and age appropriate to children.
- The use of TV will be kept to a minimum.
- Programs depicting violence eg. graphic news reports will not be shown.
- Children are to view 'G' rated programs only as per the Office of Film and Literature Classification or equivalent body.
- TV programs or videos will only be shown that have positive messages about relationships, family, and life.
- All media will be previewed prior to using any streaming media such as music or videos prior to using it in the classroom.
- Any streaming platform accessed by a personal account cannot be used within the program
- All content will be socially and culturally considerate and appropriate.
- Timeframes for screen time will be kept to a minimum.
- Children are not to bring their own personal cameras, phones, or electronic devices to the service, unless permission has been provided. Children who have permission to bring these items are responsible for the safety of them at all times.

Definitions

Electronic Device - Includes but not limited to iPod, iPad, computers, cameras, mp3 players, Gameboy, Wii, Xbox, PSP, mobile phones, video players and TV's.

References

Related Surf Coast Shire Council and Early Years Policies, Work Instructions and Forms
Nil.

Other References

National Early Years Learning Framework
 Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
 The Convention on the Rights of the Child
 Education and Care Services National Regulations
 National Quality Standards
 Australian Government Department of Health – Australia's Physical and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines
 The Australian Council on Children and the Media for the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth
 Office of Film and Literature

Document History

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