

HEALTH & SAFETY - MANUAL HANDLING OH&S

POLICY

The Commonwealth Code of Practice for Manual Handling 1990 and the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1983 laid down general requirements and standards which must be met in all workplaces. The Scheme is committed to complying with the relevant legislation and guidelines within these acts.

Australian Worker's Compensation statistics show that one third of all occupational injuries at work happen during manual handling. Research has shown that a systematic approach which aims to assess the whole range of possible causes of injury during manual handling is the most successful way of reducing hazards in the workplace.

WHAT IS MANUAL HANDLING?

Manual lifting means more than just lifting or carrying of an object. Manual handling means lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying, moving, holding or restraining any object, animal or person.

- Educators are encouraged to use their common sense and not to take unnecessary risks when handling large/heavy objects.
- Educators should not lift a child or object weighing more than 15 kilos, unless assistance is available.
- It is the responsibility of all Educators to follow the following procedure and assist by identifying manual handling hazards and risks.

PROCEDURE

1. Identify Risks - discuss issues with the Co-ordination Unit and check past incident/accident records.
2. Assess Risks - how much strain, pressure, stress, weight, force, grip, skill and duration is required by each activity.
3. Control Risks - when redesigning tasks in order to minimise injury, look at changing the way jobs are done, change the layout of the workplace, and change the equipment.

CORRECT LIFTING PRACTICES

- Never twist while lifting.
- Don't stretch over and lift, but lean close and raise as close as possible to the body.
- If possible transfer items to smaller containers to reduce weight.
- Kneel where possible rather than bend down.
- Avoid sitting on child sized chairs.
- Refrain from carrying children on your hip.
- Lift children using one arm under their buttocks and the other arm to support their back, with the child facing you.
- To lift
 - place feet apart in a striding position
 - keep breastbone elevated.
 - Bend knees.
 - Brace stomach muscles.
 - Hold child or object close to body.
 - Move feet, not spine, to stand up.
 - Prepare to move in a forward direction.

Source: A Safe Working Guide for the Childcare Industry Ausafe 2003:
Work cover Manuals

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