

SAFE USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS POLICY

Related Quality Area	QA1: Educational Program and Practice
Related Policies	Educational Program, Staff Conduct and Safety, Privacy and Confidentiality, Child Safety and Wellbeing, Supervision

PURPOSE

The Nightcliff Family Centre (the Centre, NFC) is committed to responsible behaviour around digital technologies and online environments, including limiting screen time when using technology. Educators will exercise judgment and behave in a professional and ethical manner when using technology for documentation. At all times, educators will provide a child-safe environment and supervise children when using technology for documentation to reduce the opportunity for harm or abuse. This policy reflects NFCs commitment to a values based and child-safe culture.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, students, volunteers, management, and visitors to the Centre.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service follows the [National Model Code and Guidelines](#) for taking images or videos of children released by Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) on 1 July 2024.

MANAGEMENT/ NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/ RESPONSIBLE PERSON MUST

- Only use Centre-issued electronic devices when taking images or videos of children.
- Ensure personal electronic devices that can take images or videos (such as tablets, phones, digital cameras) and personal storage and file transfer media (such as SD cards, USB drives, hard drives, and cloud storage) are not used or in the possession of any person while providing education and care or working directly with children.
- Approve in writing any limited exceptions to this rule for essential purposes.
- Identify technology training needs of educators in professional development.
- Ensure compliance with the Centre's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.
- Ensure there is no unauthorised access to the Centre's technology facilities (programs, software programs, etc.).
- Ensure all educators have appropriate log-on details to provide secure usage.
- Ensure all staff, educators, volunteers and students are aware of current child protection law, National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and their obligation to protect children from harm.
- Ensure all staff, educators, volunteers, and students are aware of the National Model Code and Guidelines and adhere to these recommendations for taking images or video of children.
- Comply with current CCTV Australian laws, to ensure all staff, educators, students, volunteers, and families have been notified in writing about the surveillance devices at the Centre.
- Conduct regular audits of Centre-issued devices to check that images are securely stored and deleted as required.
- Conduct regular audits to review adherence to staff conduct expectations in online environments.

- Encourage staff, students, volunteers, parents and visitors to speak up if they see boundary violations or unsafe use of technology.

EDUCATORS MUST

- Comply with current legislation and Centre policies.
- Keep passwords confidential.
- Log out of computers and software programs after each use.
- Only access and modify files and data for which they have authorisation.
- Not harass, slander, intimidate, embarrass, defame or seek to offend others using technology.
- Do not make copies of, transmit, steal, or loan Centre documents.
- Do not use personal mobile devices to take photos or videos of children at the Centre, access social media (Facebook, Instagram, or other) or breach privacy (see: ACECQA Guidelines for the National Model Code).
- Not engage in direct online or social media communication with families outside approved service channels. All online engagement must occur via Centre-approved platforms.
- Ask permission before taking photos of children so children.
- Actively involve children in discussions about safe technology use, including when and how their images are taken, helping children understand their right to privacy and consent.
- Provide adequate supervision to children when using computers or other technology.
- Keep personal electronic devices out of classrooms at all times.
- Delete children's pictures from Centre-issued devices by the end of the week.
- Lock iPads and Centre devices securely at the end of each day.
- Speak up if they see boundary violations or unsafe use of technology.
- Have access to clear escalation pathways if they have concerns about boundary violations, technology use or privacy breaches.

IN RELATION TO CHILDREN, EDUCATORS WILL

- Support children's natural curiosity for technology.
- Use technology to document children's learning.
- Encourage non-technology experiences for rest and relaxation.
- Ensure that an appropriate balance between inactive and active time is maintained each day.
- Ensure that under no circumstances is the screen to be used as a reward or to manage challenging behaviours.
- Support children to learn about digital consent and online safety in age-appropriate ways.

NFC WILL

- Provide information regarding online safety to families [eSafetyparents](#).
- Provide families with information about the digital technology used within the Centre.
- Request written consent from parents/families to collect and share personal information, images or videos of their children online (Website, Facebook, Instagram or Story park).
- Ensure staff are empowered to speak up immediately if they observe unsafe or inappropriate technology use.
- Monitor and act on low-level boundary behaviours such as repeated attempts to access devices alone, favouritism, secrecy, overstepping personal space, inappropriate jokes and alone time with children.

FAMILIES AND VISITORS MUST

- Not use personal devices in the rooms, only in the Centre foyer
- During special activities in the Centre, parents are allowed to take pictures of their children using personal devices with previous writing authorisation
- Provide written consent before images or videos of their children are collected or shared.

- Receive information about the technology used in the Centre and resources about online safety.
- Have access to clear escalation pathways if they have concerns about boundary violations, technology use or privacy breaches.

GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY WITHIN OUR CENTRE

- The Centre has a Zero Screen Time Policy for regular programming.
- Exceptions may include short movies during holiday programs with the Director's approval.
- Wireless speakers are available in all rooms. These are linked to iPads and can be used as a resource where children can listen to appropriate music/stories/meditation such as ABC Kids Listen.
- Technology for coding (such as bee bots) can be used to support and promote children's interests and cognitive development.
- Technology is used to assist in expanding the content of the daily program for music and songs.
- iPads and devices used for documentation need to be safely locked by the end of the day and screens must not be visible to visitors during pick-up or orientation.

USE OF CLOSED-CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV) MONITORING

Our Service uses Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) to monitor the physical environment. It provides protection and security for staff and children in care, assisting in assuring families that their children are in a safe environment and may also assist with misunderstandings, damages to the Centre, theft and potentially false accusations by providing digital evidence. Child safety is embedded in our organisation, and we believe the use of CCTV assists in our risk management strategies to prevent, identify and mitigate risks to children. Our Service is committed to the adoption of the National Model Code and guidelines to implement child safe practices around the use of electronic devices for taking images or videos of children while providing education and care. The storage of images or video recordings taken by CCTV are stored securely and only accessed by identified management personnel.

CAMERA USE

Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) operates at the Service and comprises of:

- Eight fixed position cameras
- A monitor
- Digital Hard Drive Recorder

CAMERA LOCATIONS

Cameras are located in 8 locations across the Centre including:

- The entrance and exit points
- Foyer area
- Carpark
- Jumping Roo Room (Outdoor)
- Pre-School (Busy Bees) Room (Indoor and Outdoor area)
- Kitchen window
- Kitchen exit door.

The CCTV recording system operates in real mode, monitoring the site continuously 24 hours a day. Footage and information collected via the recording system will be governed by [Australian Privacy Principles](#) and all relevant staff will be kept up to date with requirements under Australia's privacy law. Access to the recordings will only be disclosed to:

1. The Ombudsman [NT] to assist with a child protection investigation (e.g., abuse, neglect, and ill treatment).
2. to a member or officer of a law enforcement agency e.g. Police for the purpose of an investigation.
3. The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor / Responsible Person on duty or the NFC Child Safety Sub-Committee to investigate situations that may have occurred.

STORAGE OF FOOTAGE

CCTV footage is kept on the hard drive in a secure location at the Service. It is a 30-day recording system, and it is stored in the hard drive located in the office. After 30 days, the old recording is automatically deleted and unrecoverable.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- All cameras are clearly visible.
- There is no external access to the footage (e.g. families or staff members cannot log in and view footage).
- Cameras are not installed in private areas such as change tables, bathrooms or shower areas (for employees and children).
- Maintenance and upgrades of cameras is undertaken as required.
- Cameras are positioned to ensure the most effective coverage.
- The Centre complies with the Privacy Act, including the handling of any personal information.
- Confidentiality is maintained at all times.
- The correct time and date is included on recorded footage.
- A request to view a recording is in accordance with Australian law.
- New employees, students and volunteers are provided with a copy of the CCTV policy as part of their induction.
- Families are provided with a copy of this policy/ or access to this policy during enrolment or orientation to the Centre.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually, with input from staff, families, and the Child Safety Subcommittee, and updated following safeguarding audits or incidents.

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Judy Rondon	Director	
POLICY REVIEWED	August 2020	NEXT REVIEW DATE	August 2021
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No inputs, suggestions or modifications were made 		

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Archana Servai Anu Thapa	Educators	
POLICY REVIEWED	August 2021	NEXT REVIEW DATE	August 2022
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No inputs, suggestions, or modifications were made 		

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Giulia Elliot Parents Committee Judy Rondon	Centre staff	
POLICY REVIEWED	August 2022	NEXT REVIEW DATE	August 2024
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Center adopts a <i>Zero screentime</i> Policy Wireless speakers are available in all rooms. These are linked to iPads and can be used as a resource where children can listen to appropriate music/stories/meditation such as ABC Kids Listen. Movies can be presented during special time as part of the educational program (School Holidays) with the approval of the Director Technology for coding (such as bee bots) can be used to support and promote children's interests and cognitive development Technology is used to assist in expanding the content of the daily program. 		

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Hannah West Anika Oling Judy Rondon	Chairperson Staff Liaison Director	Centre staff
POLICY REVIEWED	July 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	July 2026
MODIFICATIONS	<p>Updates include:</p> <p>IMPLEMENTATION Our Service follows the National Model Code and Guidelines for taking images or videos of children released by ACECQA 1 July 2024.</p> <p>Management/ Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person will make sure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only service-issued electronic devices will be used when taking images or videos of children while providing education and care. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal electronic devices that can take images or videos (such as tablets, phones, digital cameras) and personal storage and file transfer media (such as SD cards, USB drives, hard drives and cloud storage) would not be in the possession of any person while providing education and care and working directly with children • Exceptions to using devices other than the service-issued devices should be for limited, essential purposes that are authorised in writing • ensure all staff, educators, volunteers and students are aware of current child protection law, National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and their obligation to protect children from harm • ensure all staff, educators, volunteers and students are aware of the National Model Code and Guidelines and adhere to these recommendations for taking images or video of children. <p>Educators will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide adequate supervision to children when using computers or other technology for documentation purposes • Keep personal electronic devices out of the classroom at all times • Delete children's pictures from service-issued electronic devices at the end of the week. <p>Misc:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and visitors are not permitted to use personal devices whilst at the Centre, whether visiting the Centre for orientation, transitioning, or any other purposes. • iPads and devices used for documentation need to be safely locked at the end of the day. • Text flow and general updates have also been undertaken as part of this review.
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