



3.19 Providing a Smoke Free Environment

Purpose

Children are prone to the harmful effects of environmental tobacco smoke because their lungs and body weight are small so the dangerous substances in smoke are more harmful. Children are not always able to move away from a smoker as adults are able to.

John Street has a duty of care under the occupational health and safety legislation to provide a safe and healthy environment for educators, including student and volunteers, and the children and their families who utilise the service.

A smoke free environment policy is vital at John Street because children model adult behaviour.

Objective

To ensure that:

- Children are educated and cared for in a smoke free environment
- Children are prevented from witnessing and possible modelling the behaviours of people that smoke
- Information is provided to the community about the dangers of smoking, and strategies for protecting children from the risks associated with passive smoking

Definitions

The 'environment' refers to the education and care premises and outdoor areas, public areas (footpath) located in John Street, Fitzroy, and the short term car parking spaces in the street out the front of the building.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to staff, educators, students, volunteers, children and families using John Street, visitors and contractors.

Policy Statement

John Street is a smoke-free environment. John Street does not permit smoking of any substance in any areas utilised by children and educators, or closely surrounding areas.

John Street understands that it cannot prevent community members who choose to smoke as they walk past the premises, however if community members choose to stop and smoke out the front of the premises they will be asked by educators to move away from the children's environment.

It is not the intention of this policy to infringe upon an employee's personal wish to smoke by proposing that he/she becomes a non-smoker. However, it recognised that non-smokers should be able to work in a smoke free environment, and where these requirements clash, then the provision of a smoke-free environment shall prevail.

Procedures

- Educators, parents and children will be protected from the health hazards and discomforts associated with exposure to tobacco smoke.
- Smoking by employee's will only be permitted in the employee's own time away from children's view and away from the immediate vicinity of John Street.
- Parents, family members or relatives of children enrolled at the service will not be permitted to smoke within the grounds of, and at and within four metres of an entrance of John Street and will adhere to the Smoke Free Environment Policy.
- Anyone smoking in the John Street environment will be immediately escorted from the premises and informed of this policy.
- Employees smoking in the John Street environment will be subject to disciplinary action.
- The Board will actively support and provide assistance for smokers to quit smoking, through advice provided by the Director.
- No smoking signs are displayed adjacent to the front gate and at the main entrance in the foyer.
- Literature from the Cancer Council.

Responsibility

Educators, staff and the Centre Director are responsible to ensure that this policy is actively implemented and that children and families are aware of and fulfil their responsibility toward maintaining a smoke free environment.

Families are required to share this information with other family members, and any other persons authorised to collect their children.

General Information

In Victoria, it is illegal to smoke:

- in all enclosed workplaces, whether the people working there are paid employees or volunteers
- within the grounds of, and at and within four metres of an entrance to, all Victorian childcare centres, kindergartens (or preschools) and primary and secondary schools

- in cars carrying people who are under 18 years of age

In addition, the use of electronic cigarettes is prohibited in all of the above legislated smoke-free areas.

The smoking ban applies to childcare, kindergartens and preschools only while they are being used to provide a children's service or an education and care service.

Environmental Tobacco smoke consists of two different types of smoke:

- Exhaled mainstream smoke, which is the smoke breathed out by a person smoking a cigarette
- Side-stream smoke which is the smoke that is released from a burning cigarette

In children, passive smoke can contribute to the following conditions:

- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS or cot death)
- Lower birth weight, resulting from exposure to tobacco smoke in-utero
- Bronchitis, pneumonia and other airway infections
- Asthma
- Middle ear disease and infections
- Respiratory symptoms including coughing and wheezing

Exposure to environmental tobacco smoke for children can lead to:

- Adverse effects on cognition and behaviour
- Decreased lung function
- Worsening of cystic fibrosis
- Meningococcal disease

Quit Victoria is a joint initiative of:

- The Cancer Council Victoria www.cancervic.org.au
- The Department of Health and Human Services www.health.vic.gov.au
- The National Heart Foundation www.heartfoundation.com.au
- VicHealth www.vichealth.vic.gov.au

There is a wealth of assistance and support for people who wish to stop smoking. See your doctor for further information and advice, or ring the Quitline on 13 78 48. Quitline is a telephone service available to smokers who want to quit.

The trained advisors can also help you work out how you can be of **support to someone you care about** who smokes.

If you are **thinking about quitting** or not ready to have a go yet but want some more information, call the Quitline on 13 78 48.

Legislative Provisions

Education and Care services National Regulations 2011:

r.82	<i>Tobacco, drug and alcohol free environment</i>
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National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care & School Age Care

Standard 2.2	<i>Each child is protected</i>
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DEEWR Child Care Service Handbook 2011-2012

Section 6.7	<i>What are my services responsibilities to educators?</i>
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Background Legislation

Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004	<i>OH&S Regulations 2007</i>
Victorian Workcover Authority	<i>Risk Management</i>

Sources

QUIT Victoria, *Children and Passive Smoking*. Retrieved June 2012 from <http://www.quit.org.au/browse.asp?ContainerID=1616>

Secondhand smoke and your health Retrieved July 2018 from <https://www.quit.org.au/articles/secondhand-smoke-and-your-health/>

Safe Work Australia. *Environmental tobacco smoke*. <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/environmental-tobacco-smoke-watching-brief-2001-archived>

Safe Work Australia. *Guidance Note for the Elimination of Environmental Tobacco Smoke in the Workplace [NOHSC: 3019 (2003)]*

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/guidance-note-elimination-environmental-tobacco-smoke-workplace-nohsc-3019-2003>

Related John Street Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

<i>Policies</i>	<i>Dealing with Complaints; Dealing with Medical Conditions & Medication; Health of Staff; Orientation of Educators, Students & Volunteers; Payment of Wages & Employment Conditions; Dealing with Poor Work Performance & Gross Misconduct</i>
<i>Appendices</i>	<i>Hazard Report</i>

Authorisation

This policy was approved by the John Street Board in December 2018.