

Seriously Kids™

Supporting, educating, empowering.... Seriously useful

We encourage you to use this checklist as a source of information rather than as a prescriptive checklist. Checklists are great guides to help you determine what you may need, provide a starting point to help making a decision or establishing a clear view of the situation on paper.

SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CHILDCARE SETTING

There has been a focus on sustainability and educating children to be responsible environmental people within our early childhood education settings. This growing trend has taken on a priority to educate our children to embrace and become more aware of sustainable practices.

The National Quality Standards (more specifically Standard 3 & 6: for example 'The service takes an active role in caring for its environment and contributes to a sustainable future' Standard 3.3), and the EYLF (Outcome 2 which refers to children becoming socially responsible and showing respect for the environment) begins this process and can act as the foundation for a sustainable service and be credited with the additional questioning and extending the learning through embedding sustainable practices.

Children can be supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment. Environmentally sustainable practices should be embedded into the operations of the service and involve educators, children and families in order to be effective.

Children's awareness of the environment should be promoted through daily practices, resources and interactions rather than as a 'token' incorporation. With so much focus on sustainability we must ask ourselves what message we as the adults are imparting and/or sending our children? Sustainability is not need to be seen as a hurdle or burden. Sustainable practices can easily be a part of the daily routine.



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MAIN AREAS SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES ARE EMBEDDED

- Recycling
- Gardening
- Energy conservation
- Water conservation
- Sustainable equipment purchases

How you go about this can vary and there is no prescriptive formula.

QUESTIONS TO CHALLENGE INDIVIDUAL SERVICE SUSTAINABILITY

Does the environment (school, service, and home) have a nominated person who champions sustainable practices?

Do we role model positive sustainable practices?

Is there a recycling program? Does it include glass, cardboard, paper, printer cartridges and so on? Do you actively recycle containers, etc within the service?

Are sustainable practices regularly discussed? In what way? Through what forum?

Are children and families involved in the environmental sustainable practices within the service?

Do you provide information to families on sustainable practices that are implemented at the service and encourage the application of these practices in the home environment?

Do you have a composting program which is promoted and inclusive of adults and children?

QUESTIONS TO CHALLENGE INDIVIDUAL SERVICE SUSTAINABILITY CONT.

Has there been a survey or audit on sustainability that includes all educators, families and children in goals and practices?

Have you looked at your purchases and the packaging? For example, do you buy in bulk to reduce the packaging? Do you use refillable containers? Do you purchase recycled products such as stationary?

Do you have and/or make use of solar power?

Is sustainability discussed with children on a regular basis and are they engaged in activities that teach them about sustainability and environmental responsibilities?

Do you use energy efficient practices such as turning off lights and fans when not in use or needed? Do you use energy efficient light bulbs? Do you only use heating or cooling when required to minimise energy consumption?

Do you get involved in events such as World Environment Day, Clean Energy Week, National Tree Day, Keep Australia Beautiful Week or National Recycling Week to name a few initiatives?

Have you had tap aerators installed to reduce water use? They can reduce the usage from 18 litres per minute to 2 litres per minute.

Do you have dual flush toilets? They can save up to 9 litres per flush compared to a single flush toilet.

Do you have initiatives and processes in place to reduce the amount of individual wrapping in a child's lunch box? Such as 'Nude food'?

Do you pour unused water onto plants or the grass?

QUESTIONS TO CHALLENGE INDIVIDUAL SERVICE SUSTAINABILITY CONT.

Does the outdoor environment have lots of natural products, trees and plants?

Do you have rain water tanks?

Do you use environmentally friendly cleaning products and practices?

Do you have edible gardens with herbs, fruit, and vegetables?

Do you embed sustainable practice in the service? The concepts of “reduce, re-use and recycle” will become part of everyday practice for both children and educators to build lifelong attitudes towards sustainable practices. Using a washing line not a dryer, etc?

Do you include sustainability discussions in your newsletters?

Are you environmentally sensitive in your communication with parents, for example using less paper and more electronically?

COMMENTS AND/OR REFLECTIONS

GOALS/AREAS TO IMPROVE ON
