

MANUAL HANDLING POLICY



OBJECTIVE

Reid Early Childhood Centre (RECC) uses a systematic approach to managing the risks associated with manual handling and the procedures aim to minimise the risk of injury to staff. This policy complies with the Work Health Safety Act 2011 and related Regulations and Codes of Practice.

DEFINITION

A hazardous manual task as defined by the WHS Regulations, means a task that requires a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person, animal or thing involving the following:

- Repetitive or sustained force
- High or sudden force
- Repetitive movement
- Sustained or awkward posture
- Exposure to vibration

These factors are known characteristics of hazardous manual tasks which directly stress the body and may lead to injury.

PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING AND MONITORING SAFE MANUAL HANDLING

- Staff are encouraged to use their common sense and not to take unnecessary risks when handling large or heavy objects
- When lifting a child or object weighing more than 15 kilos, staff are required to seek assistance.
- Manual handling and correct lifting/back care training will be provided every year depending upon staff turnover.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to follow the below procedures and assist by identifying manual handling hazards and risks.
- New staff are to be provided with information regarding the correct lifting techniques during their induction.
- The Health and Safety Representative (HSR) will conduct checks regularly to monitor the practice of manual handling across the centre. Any difficulties noted in these checks will be followed up immediately.

MANAGING RISKS FOR MANUAL HANDLING

- Identify risks - discuss issues with staff and check past records of incidents/accidents.
- Assess risks - how much strain, pressure, stress, weight, force, grip, skill and duration is required for each activity.

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- Control risks - when designing tasks in order to minimise injury, look at changing the way jobs are done, changing the layout of the workplace and changing the equipment.
- Storage of equipment. Every reasonable effort will be made to store all heavy equipment below shoulder height.

CORRECT LIFTING PRACTICES

Reduce the risk of injury by following these guidelines:

- Staff must never twist while lifting, instead pivot with the feet
- When a staff member lifts a child or object, they should not stretch over and lift, but lean close and raise as close as possible to their body.
- When lifting staff must:-
 - place their feet shoulder width apart for good balance
 - keep their breastbone elevated
 - bend their knees, not at the waist to maintain the centre of balance and to use the strong leg muscles to do the lifting
 - brace their stomach muscles
 - use smooth, gradual motions
 - hold child or object close to their body
 - move their feet not their spine to stand up
 - prepare to move in a forward direction.
- Staff should transfer heavy items to smaller containers to reduce weight, wherever possible.
- Management/Staff should:-
 - kneel where possible
 - avoid sitting on child sized chairs where possible
 - refrain from carrying children on their hip
 - lift children with one arm under their buttocks and the other arm under their backs, with the child facing them
 - Take micro-breaks, stretch, and use different muscles
 - Avoid performing the same lifting task repeatedly over a long period of time.
 - Before purchasing, consider the weight of new equipment, how it will be used
 - Ensure enough workers are rostered on per shift to allow adequate job rotation, rest breaks and variety of tasks to reduce repetition.
 - Ensure workers have comfortable seating for rest and meal breaks.
 - Provide fixed rubber flooring in areas where workers are required to stand for long periods.
 - If an item is too heavy, ask for help from others.

RELATED POLICIES:

Work Health and Safety Policy

SOURCES:

[ACT Worksafe Manual Handling Guidelines](#), reviewed 2015

[ACT Worksafe Manual Handling Checklist](#)

[Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 part 3.1 and 4.1](#)

[Work Health and Safety Codes of Practice 2011: Hazardous Manual Tasks](#)

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