

The City of Greater Geelong offers a wide range of education and care services across Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula. All 6 stand alone long day care services (City Learning and Care) are implementing the Healthy Together Achievement Program. These centres service approximately 485 families, 575 children and 100 staff. Read on to find out how they created Safe Environments using the Achievement Program Framework.

Our focus within our early learning and care services is to enhance health, learning and development outcomes through a whole service commitment.



Implementation

City Learning and Care established a health and wellbeing team which consisted of staff and parent representatives from each of the 6 services..

The health and wellbeing team worked in partnership with community stakeholders to develop a generic Safe Environments action plan. All 6 centres then tailored the template to suit the individual needs of their individual centres. This process ensured health and wellbeing was embedded into all pedagogical programs. Regular surveying of educators and parents occurred to ensure they were involved and their voices heard. The most important thing during the process of creating Safe Environments is the celebration of all achievements across the service!

CHALLENGES

Receiving parent feedback and participation was often difficult due to time constraints. They combated this by using emails or surveys to communicate and share information more effectively and efficiently.

Actions

- Staff regularly attend professional development to consistently improve practices, policies and procedures
- Reviewed Occupational Health and Safety policies, procedures and check sheets
- Occupational Health and Safety representatives to meet regularly to discuss issues or ideas
- Membership to WorkSafe library
- Created a Safe Environment policy
- Education on animal and pet safety
- Excursions to the local community
- Road safety in the educational program
- Water safety lessons from local swimming instructor
- Work with SIDS and Kids, Kidsafe, Sunsmart and Vicroads
- Encouraged a sense of belonging and a safe social environment
- Promotional material was used to spark interest and keep families involved.

Outcomes

- Improved social spaces for children and families
- Greater awareness of road safety
- Increased knowledge of their local community
- Parents seeking more information and engaging in response to displays and promotional material
- Annual child protection training

HTG and Healthy Children Network events were great for collaborating and sharing information and ideas from other educational programs. The in depth guides to each benchmark were very helpful!