



Educational Leader

Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.

Looking at the element in detail - A service reviewed what the NQF Guide said about element 5.2.1 and understood educators need to:

- model cooperative behaviour and nurture respectful and reciprocal relationships
- provide time and space for children to collaborate, and encourage their active involvement.

This week we're reviewing some research by Duke University USA which shows children as young as three often follow group norms rather than personal preferences.

Researchers invited 104 three and a half year olds to help set up for a pretend tea party, gave each child a blue sticker to wear, and told them people with that colour sticker were part of the same team.

Then the researchers watched as the children chose different kinds of teas, snacks, cups and plates, first on their own and then after listening to the choices of other adult or child (age 6) team members.

Sometimes other team members framed their choice as a personal preference eg "For my tea party today, I feel like using this snack." Other times they presented it as a norm shared by the whole group eg "For tea parties at Duke, we always use this kind of snack."

After listening to the choices of others, the children switched their choice to someone else's 28% of the time – and they were more likely to go along with the other person (adult or child) when an option was presented as a group norm rather than a personal preference.

Researchers said the findings support the idea that children begin to understand cues about group norms around their third birthday, and behave in ways that promote connection with the group and shared identity.

Source: "Young Children Conform More to Norms Than to Preferences," Li, Britvan, & Tomasello. PLOS ONE, May 26, 2021. [10.1371/journal.pone.0251228](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0251228).

What are the group norms in your educators' rooms/groups? Consider, for example, group rules, expected behaviours, room routines.

How might group norms be impacting the way children learn collaboratively at your Service eg are group norms helping children gain desirable/appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviour from each other?

Sand Pit Policy

Educators will ensure:

- the sandpit has adequate drainage
- the timber has not been treated with Copper Chromium Arsenate
- the sandpit is filled with washed beach or river sand, not builders’/brick sand which is unsuitable
- the sand is at least 500mm deep, and replenished when it drops 100mm below the top edge
- any natural elements (eg boulders) are stable and cannot be moved
- the sandpit is adequately shaded
- they clean the sand by regularly exposing it to sunshine and fresh air
- they rake sand pits before use and regularly during the day, carefully removing and disposing of any contaminated sand or dangerous matter
- they turn the sand over monthly to aerate it
- they change the sand at least annually and whenever it’s extensively contaminated
- they remove toys from the sandpit at the end of each day
- they cover sand pits closely when they’re not in use.

Do you have any feedback or comments about this policy? Please include below.

Educator’s Name	Educator’s Signature

Note we are now listing any Procedures which relate to the Policy reviewed. We have a comprehensive Procedure Pack (in addition to the procedures already included in the policies) which is currently part of our HR Toolkit. Please contact us on admin@centresupport.com.au if you would like a quote for the Kit.

Procedure – Sand Pit Cleaning