

THE Y NSW POSITION STATEMENT

Prioritising Child Safety in Outside School Hours Care



PRIMARY RECOMMENDATION

In NSW, mandate a minimum of two educators rostered and physically present at all times in all Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services.

At the Y NSW, one of the largest not-for-profit providers of Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) in NSW, we prioritise child safety and put children before profit. For nearly 175 years, the care and empowerment of children and young people have been and will remain central to our work. Safeguarding is part of our DNA and defines how we operate and what families expect.

THE ISSUE

Current OSHC regulatory requirements are inadequate. Minimum ratios allow a single educator to supervise up to fifteen children, reducing visibility, weakening accountability, and leaving gaps in day-to-day supervision. Meeting minimum ratios is essential, but on its own is not enough to ensure child safety is truly prioritised.

That is why the Y NSW has implemented a two-educator model across all OSHC services, ensuring children are consistently supervised, reinforcing our commitment to their safety. Consistent supervision is fundamental to child safety and forms a central part of Y NSW's wider safeguarding approach. Complemented by comprehensive policies, robust risk management practices, and targeted staff training, the two-educator model highlights our ongoing efforts to enhance the safety and wellbeing of children in our care.

THE SOLUTION

The National Regulations (NSW) governing early childhood education and care (ECEC) services, which includes OSHC, should be amended to mandate that at least two educators are rostered and physically present whenever children are in care.

This two-educator approach must apply across all OSHC services during operational hours, regardless of attendance numbers, and in addition to the Responsible Person requirement. This promotes better visibility and accountability for child safety, and prioritises child safety.

HOW THIS MODEL PRIORITISES CHILD SAFETY:

- ✓ **REDUCES ISOLATION** - limits unobserved one-on-one situations.
- ✓ **STRENGTHENS ACCOUNTABILITY** - two educators present helps identify and address concerning behaviour.
- ✓ **IMPROVES SUPERVISION** - incidents can be managed without leaving other children unsupervised.
- ✓ **SUPPORTS STAFF SAFETY** - witnesses present reduces the risk of unsubstantiated allegations.
- ✓ **ALIGNS WITH CHILD SAFE STANDARDS** - supports Standard 8 by minimising opportunities for abuse through consistent observation and oversight.

IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT REQUIRED

The two-educator model strengthens child safety by promoting supervision and accountability.

To support successful implementation across all services, Y NSW recommends the following supporting actions:

1 SERVICE-SPECIFIC NOMINATED SUPERVISORS

Children's safety depends on strong, consistent leadership. We recommend that every OSHC service has a unique service -specific Nominated Supervisor who is present, accountable, and focused on the individualised needs of that service and its children.

2 PURPOSE-BUILT OSHC HUBS

Dedicated, purpose-built spaces eliminate the need to repeatedly convert rooms for OSHC, which can distract educators from active supervision. A consistent environment also enhances visibility, supports predictable routines, and fosters children's sense of belonging. These facilities reinforce the two-educator model by minimising operational distractions and environmental complexity, enabling educators to maintain safe, continuous supervision.

3 SHARED SPACES PLANNING

When allocating OSHC spaces, schools should prioritise proximity to toilets, gates, and play areas. Spaces should be designed to maximise visibility, maintain clear sightlines, and support easy, continuous supervision.

4 MINIMUM REGULATED EXPECTATIONS

At a minimum, two staff members should be consistently rostered for each session. Maintaining a stable and predictable staffing arrangement strengthens supervision, enhances safety, and supports effective risk management, while also providing operational resilience during daily routines and unexpected situations. Consistency of staff is particularly beneficial for children, as it fosters secure, trusting relationships, supports emotional wellbeing, and promotes a sense of belonging.

5 CLEAR REGULATORY GUIDANCES

Provide comprehensive guidance covering rostering, physical presence requirements, supervision during transitions, compliance monitoring, and transition timelines. This guidance should build on NSW's progressive implementation of the Child Safe Standards (2023-2026) and National Quality Framework alignment (October 2023).

Children deserve consistent, safe supervision. A minimum of two educators should always be present. We urge the NSW Government to prioritise child safety and take decisive action to ensure supervision standards are strengthened and consistently maintained across all OSHC services.

