
	Management Area: Children's Services	Version No: 1.0 Pages: 6
	Category of Procedure: Operational	Approval Date: 29/08/2025 Policy Approver: Head of Children's Services
Procedure Title: Safe Use of Digital Technologies		Author: YMCA of SA

YMCA SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Safe Use of Technologies

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1. Purpose

Taking photographs of children is a wonderful way to capture special moments to share with families while children are in our care. This procedure provides staff with guidance on how to safely and ethically capture and share these images while ensuring the dignity and rights of the child are upheld.

For the purpose of this procedure, personal electronic devices include any device that has the ability to take images or video, record audio, search for content on the internet or connect with people (text message/phone call).

2. Scope

The scope of this procedure applies to all Board members, Sub Committee members, educators, and volunteers. This procedure applies to all YMCA Member Associations. For the purposes of this document, we refer to these as the YMCA. All Policies and Procedures must conform to this procedure.

3. Procedures


Capturing and Using Photographs and Videos of Children on Service-Issued Devices

Each service will be issued with a mobile phone and tablet which is documented on a device register. For larger services, multiple devices may be issued. Mobile phones will be provided with a Y branded case to ensure families and staff can easily identify this as a service-issued device. Only YMCA staff are permitted to use service-issued devices. Children are only to use service-issued devices under direct supervision of a staff member.

Staff will ensure that photographs and videos are only being taken for the purpose of sharing with families or using to inform planning and programming. Depending on the intent of the photograph or video, it may be important to capture the child. For example, when a child is engaging in an intentionally planned experience which supports the development of a particular skill. At times where the image or video can be taken without capturing the child's image, and this doesn't impact on the intent, this should be the preferable approach. For example, a child has used various resources to create a game. A photograph or video could be taken without the child's image being captured.

During excursions, staff will be extra vigilant when capturing images of children to ensure that no other children at the venue are captured within the photograph or video.

Once a child's image has been captured, the photograph or video should be uploaded onto our Playground program to be shared with families as soon as practicable. The photograph or video should then be deleted from the device once the upload has occurred. The Director is responsible to ensure that all staff are complying with this requirement. As an additional measure, when members of the Children's Services Management Team visit a service, they will check service devices to ensure this is occurring.

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Any visitor to the service (non-YMCA staff member) is not permitted to capture images of children. On days when families and friends are invited to the service, for example an end of year celebration, the Director will issue communication to the invitees prior to the event that no photographs or videos are to be taken during the event. The service will consider whether a specific area for photographs could be set up where staff could use a service-issued devices and upload the photograph or video to Playground as per our usual procedure.

For members of the Children's Services Management Team who have been issued with a dual SIM phone, photographs and videos are not to be taken on this device. If a photograph or video is needed, this is to be taken on the service-issued device, emailed to the staff member's work email address and deleted once sent. This includes confidential information such as medical plans.

Creating a Child Safe Culture

Through our Y Safeguarding program, staff members are encouraged to be diligent and speak up if they notice any concerning behaviour from another staff member. This includes the inappropriate use of a digital device which contravenes this procedure.


Photograph and video consent from families is obtained through the enrolment process. At any time, families can contact our support team to change their preferences. This information will be updated on Playground and provided to the service Director.

If a child or staff member requires the use of a personal electronic device for health, e.g diabetes monitoring, or disability, e.g communication purposes, an individual usage agreement will be developed to ensure the device will be used appropriately. For children, this will be developed in consultation with the family as well as a health care professional (if necessary).

Use of Personal Electronic Devices

Staff Members

Each service is provided with a secure location, such as a lock box, for staff members to keep their personal electronic devices while they are at work. This includes any YMCA staff member who is onsite while children are present. Staff members should provide the service number to anyone who may need to contact them in an emergency situation. For staff in the Children's Services Management Team who have been issued with a dual SIM phone, this device is permitted to remain within their possession, however use of this device is only permitted away from children.

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Use of personal devices by staff members is permitted while they are on their break, in an area away from children. Staff members should consider optics, making sure that their actions are not being perceived in a way that contradicts this procedure. For example, if the staff area has windows, ensure your positioning is not in a way that could look like photographs were being taken through the window.

In some circumstances it is acceptable for a staff member to have possession of, and use, their personal electronic device for communication. These circumstances are;

- In an emergency situation, such as a lost or injured child
- During a local emergency event, such as when the fire danger rating is extreme or catastrophic
- Family necessity, such as a seriously ill family member (to be approved by the service's Regional Manager)
- On specific excursions where all other communication options have been exhausted, for example the zoo, as this area is of considerable size and distance, making walkie talkies or direct contact not suitable.

At no time should a personal electronic device be used to record a photograph, audio or video of a child in our care.

Children

For children, personal electronic devices are not permitted at the service. Families are encouraged to keep these devices at home. If a child arrives with a personal electronic device, staff will put the device in a designated area inaccessible to children, and the device will be given back to the child at the end of the session.


School provided devices, such as laptops, may be used for homework purposes (at the discretion of the Director) when staffing allows for direct supervision of use.

On occasion, the service may program a day during Vacation Care where handheld electronic game devices can be brought into the service. This will be communicated through the Vacation Care program and handheld electronic game devices will be permitted on this day.

YMCA takes no responsibility for belongings which are lost or stolen during our programs. This includes if a child does not surrender the personal electronic device to staff and leaves the device in their pocket, school bag etc. YMCA are not responsible for the payment of any repairs and will continue to encourage these devices to be kept at home.

CCTV

Some locations may have Department for Education CCTV in public areas outside of the buildings. We will endeavour to identify the outside areas which are being captured to ensure this information is shared with families upon their request. YMCA recognises the responsibility of storage and destruction of these videos sits with the Department for Education.


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4. Roles and Responsibilities

Department / Area	Role / Responsibility
Children's Services Management	<p>Is responsible for the development, monitoring, and review of the procedure and related systems, ensuring content meets all legislated requirements.</p> <p>To facilitate procedure awareness to all educators on the appropriate implementation and use of the procedure.</p>
Responsible Persons	<p>YMCA nominated supervisor and/or service management will oversee the implementation and service adherence of the procedure.</p> <p>Nominated supervisor and/or person with management and control will seek individual community feedback and facilitate an active consultation process with service users as appropriate.</p> <p>Is responsible for addressing any instance of non-compliance with this procedure and implementing strategies to help prevent non-compliance with this procedure.</p> <p>Responsible for ensuring suitable resources and support systems to enable compliance with this procedure.</p> <p>Drive the consultation process and provide leadership and advice on the continuous improvement of the procedure.</p>
All employees, volunteers & students	<p>Responsible for meeting the requirements outlined in this procedure.</p> <p>Responsible for raising concerns or complaints in accordance with this procedure.</p>

5. Key Relevant Documents

- National Model Code for Early Childhood Education and Care
- Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011
- Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 SI 653)
- National Quality Standard
- Safe Use of Digital Technologies Policy

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- Safeguarding Children and Young People – Safety Code of Conduct

6. Monitoring Evaluation and Review

This procedure will be reviewed every two years or earlier for reasonable cause or upon the request of the YMCA South Australia Board.

7. Version History

Version	Date	Description of changes	Effective Date	Review Date
1.0	29/08/2025	Development of new procedure	01/09/2025	August 2027