

	Procedure
	Policy Category: Health and Safety
	Date Created: June 2021
	Policy Name: Emergency Response Procedure – Earthquake

The purpose of this operational procedure is to detail the procedures staff at our centre will follow in the event of an earthquake.

Position Statement

We have an obligation to keep people safe. In the event of a natural disaster, such as an earthquake, we will keep the children and adults attending our service as safe as possible and follow all emergency services instructions as these become available.

Procedure Detail

1. Preparedness

- Parents must ensure contact phone numbers for themselves and approved emergency contacts are kept up-to-date by informing centre staff of any changes.
- Centre needs to ensure that the Ministry has their most up to date contact details at all times
- Staff will review this emergency response procedure annually.
- Staff will check the emergency response equipment annually. They will replace batteries and advise staff if prescription medication for their child will expire in the coming year.
- An earthquake drill will be undertaken with children at least three-monthly.
- Management and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in an emergency, especially if there are children left at the centre after normal opening hours.

2. Emergency equipment

Emergency equipment is located in the storeroom

Emergency equipment includes:

- A battery powered radio
- Torches
- Spare batteries
- Emergency food for three days
- Water for drinking and washing for three days
- An up-to-date list of parents and emergency contact phone numbers [as well as parents and other emergency contact people for the children, include phone numbers for fire, police, ambulance, Healthline, local council, regional council, civil defence, etc.]

- First aid equipment
- Prescription medicines for both staff and children
- A supply of nappies to last at least three days
- Equipment needed to maintain a hygienic environment (e.g. plastic bin, plastic bags, shovel, etc)

3. During the earthquake

- Remain Calm
- Take action as soon as shaking starts
- Procedures should be properly followed regardless of the severity of the earthquake. This ensures children know what you expect of them in more serious circumstances.
- Remember: drop, cover and hold
- Keep away from glass doors, windows, or equipment that could fall over.
- All children will stay in position until the teachers tell them. Teachers will assess danger such as broken glass and then tell the children where they need to move to. If outside, move inside to the designated meeting point as quickly as possible, bringing all children with you. If the building is unsafe, relocate everyone to your secondary meeting point, or some other safe place

Indoors

- Stay indoors and stay calm.
- Get under cover (e.g. a desk) and hold on.
- Instruct children to do the same. Assist them as much as possible, without endangering yourself.
- If no cover is available kneel next to an inside wall, facing away from the windows. Bend your head close to your knees, cover the sides of your head with your elbows and clasp your hands behind your neck. If a coat or blanket is available, hold it over your head for protection from flying glass and debris.
- Keep away from glass doors, windows, or equipment that could fall over.
- Reassure the children.

Baby areas

- Wall Cots – leave sleeping babies in wall cots as they give babies some level of protection.
- Babies not in wall cots need to be moved as quickly as possible to an inner wall away from windows. Adults then kneel, facing away from windows, to form a barrier over babies. Adults then bend their heads down low and cover themselves with a blanket (or similar) to protect themselves and the babies from falling debris.

Outside

- Stay outside and stay calm.
- If no safe cover is available, crouch or lie down, tuck your head down and cover it with your hands and/or a jacket (or similar) is available.
- Instruct children to do the same. Assist them as much as possible, without endangering yourself.
- Keep away from glass doors, windows, or equipment that could fall over.

- Reassure the children.

4. When the shaking stops

- Assemble all uninjured people together in one space, away from windows and fallen debris.
 - The designated meeting point is in the middle of the rooms (Nest, Iti, Nui).
 - If this is not possible due to damage the secondary meeting point is the sandpits outside (Nest and Matua)
- Stay inside. If you are outside move inside to the designated meeting point as quickly as possible, bringing all children with you.
 - If the building is unsafe relocate everyone to your secondary meeting point, or some other safe place.
- Calm and reassure frightened children. Discuss the likelihood of aftershocks with them.
- Organise uninjured adults to carry out essential duties, such as collecting emergency supplies, administering first aid, checking the attendance register and contacting parents.
- As much as possible, assemble injured people in one place so they can be treated by first aiders as efficiently as possible.
- Turn off heaters.
- Turn off electricity, water and gas supplies.
- If you smell gas after turning off the main supply, evacuate the area.
- If a fire has started attempt to put it out if this can be done safely. If this isn't possible evacuate the area.
- Check for electrical and chemical hazards.
- Conserve any water and stop any leaks.
- Keep refrigerators and freezers closed if the electricity supply is cut.

5. Following an earthquake

- It is possible that you will be isolated for several hours.
- Endeavour to make the building self-sufficient with regards to food, water and sanitation.
- Treat the injured.
- Assess the damage to the building. Check for leaks in pipes, cracks in walls, dislodged furniture, and any spillages and broken glass. Photograph for insurance purposes if possible.
- Listen to the radio for any information or advice from Civil Defence.
- Staff will remain with and care for the children at all times during an event until they are returned to the care of a parent or guardian. Attendance will be checked whenever children are moved and staff will bring any necessary medications, supplies, and emergency records.
- Do not leave the centre unless it is unsafe or directed by Civil Defence
- In the event of needing to evacuate the site, leave a clear message to parents so they know where to find their children

- Before clean up begins, take photos for insurance purposes.

Alignment with Other Policies and Procedures

This procedure aligns with our centre's:

- Evacuation Drill Report (HS8)
- Fire and Emergency Evacuation Policy (HS4)
- Emergency Evacuation Procedures (HS7)

Implications and/or Risks for our centre

The aim of this procedure is to keep people safe in the event of an emergency. Not following this procedure risks injury to the children or adults at our centre. Poor communication between the adults in our centre and with others who are not at our centre also places people at risk.

Consultation Undertaken

We have consulted with parents, staff and local emergency services in the design of this procedure.

Implementation

This procedure forms part of the centre's policy and procedure manual. All staff are expected to be aware of the procedure and to follow it in the event of an earthquake. Knowledge of this procedure forms part of the centre's induction programme for all new staff.

Review

The procedure is reviewed annually or when there is a significant change in the area of the policy topic.

Authorised:	Vikki Cooper
Date:	Term 2, 2023
Review Date:	Term 2, 2024
Consultation Undertaken:	