

# FAMILY DAY CARE AUSTRALIA

## CHECKPOINT SERIES

# COMPLAINTS

The approved provider of an education and care service is required to have policies and procedures to ensure that grievances and complaints are dealt with appropriately.<sup>1</sup>

The National Quality Standard outlines the importance of providing effective management systems to investigate complaints and grievances promptly and thoroughly.<sup>2</sup>

### Key Points

- It is important to establish open communication channels to support the sharing of feedback for educators, staff, families, children and the community.
  - Reflective practice is often part of the process of handling a complaint or grievance and supports the process of quality improvement.
  - Complaints may arise from children, families, educators, community members or staff and may range from trivial in nature to very serious allegations.
  - Complaints must be handled sensitively; information must be dealt with in confidence and final outcomes and actions communicated in a timely manner.
  - Documentation of the complaint and the management process must be maintained.
  - Where there is a complaint with the potential to influence the service or provider approval, the coordination unit must make a report to the Regulatory Authority. Complaints alleging a breach of regulation or the compromised health and safety of a child must be reported within 24 hours of the complaint being made.
- Representatives from the regulatory authority may visit a service to investigate complaints that have been received.

### Checkpoint Questions

- Are you familiar with your service's policies and procedures in relation to handling complaints and grievances?
- If you wanted to voice a grievance or complaint are you aware of what steps to take?
- Are you aware of what to do if a family has a grievance or complaint?
- Do you have a system for handling issues raised by children?
- Do you consider complaints as opportunities for reflective practice and quality improvement?
- Do you maintain a record of complaints and the steps taken to resolve them?

### Useful Resources

[Fact Sheet - ACECOA - Using complaints to support continuous improvement](#)

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PO Box 571 Gosford NSW

Telephone: 1800 658 699

Email: [enquiries@fdca.com.au](mailto:enquiries@fdca.com.au)

Website: [www.fdca.com.au](http://www.fdca.com.au)



Please note that the information in this Fact Sheet represents general guidance only to encourage critical reflection on your practice. If the content raises any concerns for you, please check with your Coordinator or Service.

<sup>1</sup> Regulation 168(2)(o) <sup>2</sup> Standard 7.1