

	Policy
	Policy Category: Health and Safety
	Date Created: February 2021
	Reviewed: 18 February 2025
	Policy Name: Earthquake Response Procedure (Earthquake)

Introduction

This document outlines the procedures staff at Rotorua Childcare Centre will follow in the event of an earthquake.

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 and complete a checklist.
- An earthquake drill will be undertaken with children at least three-monthly and it is recorded on the emergency drill register.
- 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.

Emergency equipment

Emergency equipment is located in staffroom and extra water in the staff wharepuku in main building.

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 children.
- Staff are responsible for keeping their own emergency supplies/medication onsite.
- 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)

During the earthquake

- Remain Calm
- Take action as soon as shaking starts
- Teachers yell “Earthquake, stop, drop, cover (like a turtle)” and/or blow whistle to alert earthquake if possible.
- 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: Stop, drop, cover and hold (like a turtle)

Indoors

- Stay indoors and stay calm.
- Get under cover (e.g. a table) 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

- Cots – leave sleeping babies in cots as they give babies some level of protection.
- Babies not in 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.

When the shaking stops

- Assemble all uninjured people together in one space, away from windows and fallen debris.
 - All staff and children will walk calmly to assemble at evacuation point.
 - Centre Manager/person responsible to take daily sign in sheets/timesheets/visitor book and call roll and check everyone is accounted for.
 - If evacuation assembly point is unsuitable, gather children and staff in classrooms.
 - If we need to evacuate building and grounds we will go out the gate onto the field behind Pukeko Corner.
- Calm and reassure frightened children. Discuss the likeliness 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.

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.

Policy Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually.

Authorised:	
Date:	
Review Date:	
Consultation Undertaken:	Board, Staff, Community Policy will be placed on storypark, foyer, staffroom and emailed to board.