

Risk Matrix						
Consequences	Likelihood					
		Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain
	Major	Moderate	High	High	Critical	Critical
	Significant	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	Critical
	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High	High
	Minor	Very low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
	Insignificant	Very low	Very low	Low	Moderate	Moderate

## Likelihood

The risk matrix includes five levels of likelihood:

- Rare Very unlikely – the event may occur only in exceptional circumstances
- Unlikely Improbable – the event is not likely to occur in normal circumstances
- Possible Potential – the event could occur at some time
- Likely Probable – the event will probably occur in most circumstances
- Almost Certain Very Likely – the event is expected to occur in most circumstances

## Consequence

The risk matrix also includes five levels of consequences:

- Insignificant
- Minor
- Moderate
- Significant
- Major

This takes into account the potential impact of an event and how it might affect the safety and wellbeing of children, families, staff and the wider community.

Consider the vulnerability of those who may be affected, eg, very young children or children with a disability.

# Completing a Risk Assessment

## Step 1: Identify

The first step in completing a risk assessment is to identify the hazards and risks within your service. Be vigilant in monitoring your environment. If something that may be dangerous now or in the future is observed or identified, move to step 2 and document the possible hazard or risk.

Identifying hazards and risks can be done by:

- completing daily hazard minimisation checklists
- making hazard identification a regular topic at team meetings
- proactively monitoring learning environments and equipment.

There are potentially many types of hazards within children's education and care service. This table highlights some of the common examples.

Table 2: Examples of hazards

Type of hazard	Examples of hazards (this list may not include all hazards at your service)
Biological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bodily fluids<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Blood</li><li>- Faeces, vomit or urine</li><li>- Discharge from the nose, eyes or ears</li></ul></li><li>• Sewage</li><li>• Stinging insects</li><li>• Harmful plants</li><li>• Animal or bird droppings</li><li>• Mould or fungi</li><li>• Infectious diseases<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- See relevant factsheets from <a href="#">Staying healthy: Preventing infectious disease in early childhood education and care services (5th Edition)</a></li></ul></li><li>• Food<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Food handling</li><li>- Preparing food</li><li>- Preparing, storing and heating bottles</li><li>- Children's cooking experiences</li></ul></li><li>• Medical<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Allergies</li></ul></li></ul>



Type of hazard	Examples of hazards (this list may not include all hazards at your service)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Anaphylaxis</li> <li>- Medication dosage</li> </ul>
Chemical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-hazardous chemicals               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Any liquid, solid or gas that does not pose a risk to children</li> <li>- Eco-friendly dishwashing liquid</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Hazardous chemicals or products               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Any product that has 'keep out of reach of children' or first aid instructions on the label</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Critical incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lockdown/lockout</li> <li>• An evacuation – due to fire, flood, structural damage, or other reasons</li> <li>• An accident – involving anyone at the service</li> <li>• Any time an emergency service is required to attend the service</li> </ul>
Energy systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electricity</li> <li>• LP Gas (Liquefied petroleum)</li> <li>• Gas and pressurised containers</li> <li>• Water systems – water tanks, flooding indoors, lack of water etc.</li> </ul>
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sun exposure</li> <li>• Water</li> <li>• Sound and noise</li> <li>• Animals and insects</li> <li>• Plants</li> <li>• Weather conditions and events</li> <li>• Temperature</li> <li>• Extreme pollution – eg, from bushfire smoke</li> </ul>
Facilities, building environment and equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buildings and fixtures</li> <li>• Driveways, car parks or paths</li> <li>• Fixed equipment</li> <li>• Furniture</li> <li>• Non-fixed equipment</li> <li>• Play and learning resources</li> </ul>
Vehicles, machinery and equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cars</li> <li>• Buses, trains and trams</li> <li>• Excavator</li> <li>• Hand tools</li> <li>• Kitchen equipment</li> </ul>
Manual tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manual handling of equipment</li> </ul>

Type of hazard	Examples of hazards (this list may not include all hazards at your service)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lifting children</li> </ul>
Socio-emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transitions to and from the school or service, between rooms or play spaces</li> <li>Social interactions</li> <li>Conflict or bullying</li> <li>Changes in a child's family structure eg, the arrival of a new baby or the separation of parents</li> <li>Experience of death or other loss</li> </ul>
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate staffing</li> <li>Visitors</li> <li>Guests</li> <li>Inconsistent staffing arrangements</li> <li>Behaviours displayed by staff, children and families</li> </ul>

There may be times when people can pose a risk. Processes need to be in place to ensure visitors, contractors, staff and others are not a potential risk to the safety, health and welfare of children and others at the service. There may also be times when the behaviours of families or children put themselves or others at risk.

#### Questions to help identify hazards within your service

- What processes are in place to ensure you have undertaken comprehensive assessments to identify any of the hazards in Table 2?
- What hazards were identified within your service and where has this been documented?
- What policies, procedures, risk assessments and management plans are currently in place to manage any hazards?
- Do all employees know about these policies and procedures? How are they informed when policies are reviewed and updated?
- What policies, procedures or risk assessments might need to be updated to address the identified hazards?