



Safety Net



HERE TO SUPPORT YOU



Welcome

Dear Colleagues

Welcome to the second edition of SafetyNet for 2007. This issue follows the launch of our *Health, Safety and Wellbeing Action Plan 2007-2008* on the 18th of April by the A/Director-General, Jenny Cranston. The *Action Plan* provides a framework to assist all Education Queensland schools with the implementation of health, safety and wellbeing initiatives.

The launch also marked the release of the department's new *Health, Safety and Wellbeing Statement*. This document articulates the Director-General's and the department's commitment to maintaining safe, healthy and supportive working, learning and cultural environments for all people attending, working and participating in departmental activities.

The *Action Plan* and *Wellbeing Statement* are available on the recently enhanced *Creating Healthier Workplaces* website. The website's new format is aimed to improve access for regional, district and school staff and is available at: www.education.qld.gov.au/health

Resources including the *Action Plan* and *Wellbeing Statement* have been mailed out to all schools. These provide the priority actions for health, safety and wellbeing programs in the department and will assist in directing the activities of health and safety committees in schools, regions and central office. Your Regional/School Workplace Health and Safety Standing Committee can use these documents to develop a Health, Safety and Wellbeing plan to support proactive initiatives within departmental workplaces. For further information on the health and safety committees and consultative arrangements please refer to: [HLS-PR-016: Workplace Health & Safety Consultative Framework](#).

Thank you for helping us to continually improve our performance in this area. To be recognised as a leader in this field it is important to work effectively together and regard health, safety and wellbeing as a standard part of our management and working practice.

Gary Barnes

Assistant Director-General, Strategic Human Resources

Asthma - First Response

People with asthma have difficulty getting air in and out of their lungs when the small airways of the lung become narrow. This narrowing can occur for 2 reasons:

- Inflammation - of the lining of the airways
- Bronchoconstriction - where the muscles around the small airways tighten.

During an asthma attack, the symptoms may be: cough, wheeze, shortness of breath (difficulty breathing) or chest tightness. Remember that one, several or all of these symptoms may be experienced with asthma. It is important to note that symptoms will vary e.g. a person with asthma may only cough and not wheeze.

If a student presents with symptoms of asthma, or advises that they are experiencing asthma symptoms, first aid must be **rendered immediately**. Addressing symptoms early may prevent a much more serious attack. If a student experiences symptoms of asthma during sport, they should cease activity and rest and be monitored - general asthma first aid should then be commenced if necessary.

It is important that all schools implement departmental procedure [HLS-PR-003: First Aid](#) and assess their first aid requirements to ensure that all day-to-day and other activities such as sport, excursions, camps have adequate first aid coverage.

Emergency first aid response for asthma

1. Firstly, check that the student has not inhaled a foreign body that is obstructing the throat. If the likely cause is an asthma attack then proceed as follows.
2. Sit the person down and remain calm to help reassure the person.
3. Give 4 puffs of a blue reliever (e.g. Ventolin) immediately. If possible, use a spacer. Ask the person to take 4 breaths from the spacer. The medication is best given one puff at a time through the spacer.
4. Wait 4 minutes, if no improvement give another 4 puffs of the reliever.
5. If there is no improvement, call an ambulance immediately, repeat steps 2 & 3 while waiting.

rf: [HLS-PR-009: Administration of Routine and Emergency Medication and Management of Health Conditions](#)



Don't let these slip through the Net

First Aid Requirements

The department's procedure for First Aid has been updated and released in the Education Policy and Procedures Register (EPPR) as [HLS-PR-003: First Aid](#).

The procedure details the important responsibilities that we have, as a department, to provide adequate first aid facilities and personnel to ensure the effective emergency management of injured or ill employees, students and others at schools and departmental workplaces.

Our planning and provision of first aid must include regular, irregular and off campus activities including:

- Sport, inter-school sport and carnivals
- Camps and excursions
- Concerts, fetes and activities hosted by the school
- Practical subjects.

First aid is the initial management of an injury or illness. It is not treatment or ongoing medical care. The initial management provided by first aid personnel should be consistent with their level of training and competence. When the first aid required is beyond the level of training and competence of the first aid personnel available, they should recommend that the person seeks medical assistance. The level of first aid training and provision that is provided at the scene will need to be consistent with the likely injuries and the accessibility of other support – e.g. remote camping activities will need greater first aid support than an excursion to the local shopping precinct.

Schools are reminded to become familiar with the First Aid Procedure and consider:

- The number of trained personnel; allowing for absences, multiple events and location of need
- First aid facilities
- Appropriate maintenance of first aid kits
- Communication processes to get further assistance, contact parents, the school etc

Remember to record health and safety incidents into SMS—WHS Module!

Level 5 Water Restrictions - Impact on Playing Fields and Schools Grounds

Schools in areas with level 5 water restrictions will need to consider the state of their ovals and play areas affected by decreased watering.

In light of winter sports commencing this term, schools should be reviewing the condition (hardness/cracking/surface hazards) of playing fields and determining their safety with respect to the types of sporting activities being carried out. Please assess the condition of playing fields and implement controls to minimise injury such as the prevention of impact injuries on hard surfaces (e.g. some schools are reinforcing 'no tackle' rules in certain sports).

Consideration should be given to inter-school sport, class based sporting activities and general play during recess breaks.

Further, schools are also reminded to review the general condition of school grounds and be aware of emerging hazards (e.g. trees at risk of losing limbs).

Soap in Schools

Hand washing is one of the most important measures in preventing the transmission of infection. To enable effective hand washing to occur at your school the following must be provided:

- Mild liquid soap
- Running water
- Paper towels.

The responsibility for Principals to ensure these facilities are provided is clearly stated in the newly updated procedure: [HLS-PR-004 Infection Control and the Management of Prescribed Contagious Conditions](#).

Principal's responsibilities also include:

- Communication, promotion and modelling of good hygiene and infection control practices, and
- Appropriate allocation of funds to implement good hygiene and infection control practice.

Hand washing facilities must be easily accessible to staff students and others (e.g. volunteers) in a range of locations to ensure hands can be washed using soap and water, then dried:

- Before handling, preparing or eating food
- Before and after assisting students with eating meals
- Before and after assisting students with toileting
- Before and after providing first aid or medication
- Before and after contact with an ill or injured person
- After contact with blood or bodily fluids
- After removal of protective gloves
- After using the toilet and
- After contact with animals.

Burns Management

Fast and effective management of burns can help to reduce pain, scarring and further damage to the skin and underlying tissues. A burn can be caused by:

- Flames or hot objects
- Hot liquids or steam
- Chemicals
- Radiation
- Electricity or lighting

The Queensland Ambulance Service recommends the following for the treatment of burns:

1. Cool the area by flushing with clean water as soon as possible using any available resources.
2. Cover the area with a burns dressing. If a burns dressing is not available, cover the burn with a damp dressing such as a wet cloth or sheet.
3. If medical care is not available within 30 minutes remove the moist dressing and apply dry dressing to avoid over cooling.

DO NOT:

- Apply creams or lotions to deep burns
- Apply ice directly to burns
- Break blisters
- Apply pressure to a burn
- Attempt to clean deep burns.



Don't let these slip through the Net

Health and Safety Incident Reporting – NEW FORM!

To coincide with the latest release of SMS (2007.1) in February, a new Health and Safety Incident (SMS Data Entry) Form was developed for schools. This new form can be found on the internet/intranet at:

<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/health/hlspr005/smsdataentryform07-1.pdf>.

Please print out this new version of the form and circulate as soon as possible. The Health and Safety Incident (SMS Data Entry) form is designed to:

- Record information immediately about the incident
- Make data entry into the SMS Workplace Health & Safety Module easier.

The new forms should be available to staff around the school and taken on camps and excursions so details can be collected immediately.

An important addition to the form:

- Control strategies are to be identified in consultation with the WHSO and/or Principal.

Some important enhancements to the SMS 2007.1 version release are:

- Completion of the hazard field is mandatory
- The SMS Workplace Health and Safety Module will print a report that requires the Principal/Officer in Charge to authorise that the details in the record are a true and accurate account.

Please refer to [HLS-PR-005: Health and Safety Incident Recording and Notification](#) for the procedures for recording and notifying health and safety incidents.

New H&S Consultants!!

We are very pleased and fortunate to welcome three experienced health and safety professionals to our team:

- Regina Walker—Greater Brisbane Region
- Deidre Rutherford—Toowoomba Darling Down
- David Hoppner—Moreton Region

Regina Walker—Greater Brisbane Region

Regina brings with her a wealth of experience from Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ). Regina has a background in industrial and construction issues having worked with WHSQ for 14 years. Regina is fulfilling Leanne Sked's role as Regional Senior Health and Safety Consultant whilst Leanne is on leave.

Deidre Rutherford—Toowoomba Darling Downs

Deidre worked across a range of industries in her role as Principal Inspector (Ergonomics) in the South West Region and as a Project Officer in the Occupational Health Unit for WHSQ. Deidre's area of interest is musculoskeletal disorders, with a focus on prevention, health promotion and the implementation of effective safety management systems. Prior to working with WHSQ Deidre worked as a Sports Physiotherapist in NSW.

David Hoppner—Moreton Region

David has most recently worked for Boonah Shire Council as Manager of Human Resources and previously as Safety/Quality Officer. These roles encompassed health and safety issues with construction sites, public facilities including parks, public spaces and buildings, cultural and visitor centres. David has many contacts in both schools and local agencies which will be of great benefit in his new role with us.

Voice Strain

The voice is probably the most utilised, yet under-rated tool of the teacher. Every day it is used to enthuse, cajole, encourage and educate our students. Voice strain is a possible consequence of over-use or incorrect use of the vocal structures.

There are some simple strategies to prevent or minimise voice strain including changing the layout of the classroom, and/or organising a system of times when students are silent, times when they may talk one-on-one and times when they may talk in a group. Set the rules so that you can easily attract their attention without resorting to shouting.

To minimise the symptoms of voice strain;

- Drink water frequently throughout the day
- Be conscious of your posture & breathing when speaking
- Sip water, swallow or yawn whenever you feel the urge to cough or clear the throat.

For more information please refer to the [Minimising Voice Strain Fact Sheet](#) on our Creating Healthier Workplaces website.



Who's Who

Regional Health and Safety Consultants

We are very pleased to finally have a full complement of Senior Health and Safety Consultants. Your Regional Senior Health and Safety Consultant is a valuable resource to help you and your Principal improve health and safety management at your school. You might like to contact your consultant to check out local network meetings and how you can be involved.

Greater Brisbane Region Brisbane South and Brisbane South East districts	Neil Rogers Based at Mt Gravatt Phone: 3422 8614
Greater Brisbane Region Brisbane North and Brisbane Central and West districts	Regina Walker Based at Kedron Phone: 33507827
South Coast Region Brisbane Coast and Logan Albert Beaudesert district	Pauline Armstrong Based at Robina Phone: 5562 4838
Sunshine Coast Region Sunshine Coast and North districts	David Smith Based in Murrumba Phone: 3881 9625
Moreton Region Moreton East and West districts	David Hoppner Based in Ipswich Phone: 3280 1180
South West Region Toowoomba, The Downs, Warwick and Roma districts	Deidre Rutherford Based in Toowoomba Phone: 4616 9125
Wide Bay Region Wide Bay North, South and West districts	Liz Lindsay Based in Maryborough Phone: 4121 1684
Fitzroy-Central West Region Central Queensland, Central West and Central Coast districts	Anne Lawton Based in Gladstone Phone: 4971 3602
Northern Region Townsville and Mt Isa Districts	Stuart Barrett Based in Townsville Phone: 4726 3135
Mackay-Whitsunday Regions Mackay-Whitsunday district	Bonita Shore Based in Mackay Phone: 4951 6920
Far Northern Region Cairns Coastal, Tablelands-Johnstone, Torres Strait and Cape districts	Brett Moore Based in Cairns Phone: 4046 5253

Subscribe to SafetyNet

Would you like to receive SafetyNet directly to your email address? You can subscribe to SafetyNet simply by filling in a form and faxing it to the Organisational Health Unit.

Fax back form: <http://education.qld.gov.au/health/docs/healthsafety/hs-safetynet-subscribe.doc>

Alternatively, please fax the following details to 3237 1664

"Please email me a copy of SafetyNet"

Your Name

Your email address

Your school

Your Designation (e.g. teacher, teacher aide)

Also let us know if you are: Workplace Health & Safety Officer/Workplace Health & Safety Representative/
 Workplace Health & Safety Committee member /or Interested person.