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period of two consecutive days. These children do not need to be included in calculating the educator to child ratio.

- An approved provider can only permit additional children to be educated and cared for in an emergency if satisfied on reasonable grounds that it will not affect the health, safety and wellbeing of all the children attending the service.

An approved provider must also ensure the maximum number of children is not exceeded during events held within the service's usual operating hours and excursions. Children are considered as being educated and cared for by a service if they are enrolled at the service and have been signed in. For events held outside the usual operating hours, the approved provider should make sure that families are invited on the condition that children remain in their care, and are not being educated and cared for as part of a service.

In Western Australia, the maximum number of children may be exceeded because a child or children are being educated and cared for in an emergency. There is no requirement that, where two or more children are being educated and cared for, they need to be from the same family.

### Mixed age ratios in centre-based services

Educator to child ratios are calculated across the service (not by individual rooms) and are based on the youngest child in care. This approach provides flexibility to more effectively respond to the needs of children.

Maintaining the ratio for each age range of children in the mixed age group does not mean the educator to child ratio for the youngest age range must be applied to all children in an older age range. In a mixed age group of children, an educator who is caring for one age range of children can also be counted against another age range of children, as long as the ratio for each age range is maintained and adequate supervision is maintained at all times.

Refer to the example in the table below.

Example 1: In this example, no jurisdictional specific ratios apply.

#### Mixed age ratios in centre-based services

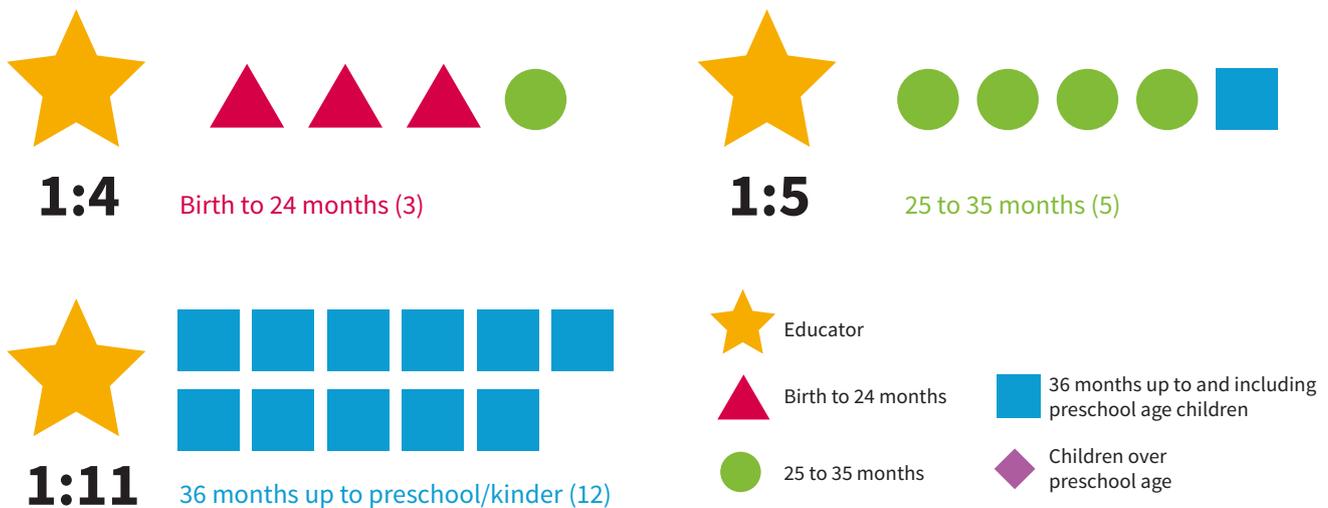
Age	Ratio	Number of children	Minimum educators required
Birth to 24 months	1:4	3	3
25 to 35 months	1:5	5	
36 months to preschool age	1:11	12	
TOTAL	–	20	

The number of educators required for this group is three. This is because the educator who is caring for the three children aged 0 to 24 months can also care for one child aged over 24 months and less than 36 months without exceeding the ratio of 1:4.

This then requires a second educator for the remaining four children aged over 24 months and less than 36 months, who can also care for one child aged 36 months to preschool age.

A third educator is required for the remaining 11 children aged 36 months to preschool age (1:11).

The diagram below demonstrates this same principle.



The first step is to determine the number of educators needed for the youngest age range of children in the group. Once that ratio is met, an educator can also supervise children in another age range, provided the youngest age range is still maintained.

The above example also shows how an educator may be deployed across more than one age range, while maintaining the required ratio for each age range.

Example 2: In this example, no jurisdictional specific ratios apply.

#### Mixed age ratios in centre-based services

Age	Ratio	Number of children	Minimum educators required
36 months to preschool age	1:11	5	2
Over preschool age	1:15	19	
TOTAL	–	24	

The number of educators required for this group is two (2). This is because the educator who is caring for the five children aged 36 months to preschool age can also care for four children aged over preschool age without exceeding the ratio of 1:11.

This then requires a second educator for the remaining fifteen children aged over preschool age.

The diagram above demonstrates this same principle.



### Breaks

The National Regulations require the educator-to-child ratio to be maintained at all times no matter what activity the children or the educators at the service are undertaking. Some jurisdictions have specific provisions which modify these ratio requirements when educators are taking short breaks and are not working directly with children (Queensland, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia). Services should check if specific provisions apply and contact the regulatory authority for advice about jurisdiction specific regulations or guidance.

## 4.4.2 RATIOS FOR FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES



### National Regulations

Regulation 124

A family day care educator must not educate and care for more than seven (7) children at a family day care residence or approved family day care venue at any one time. A maximum of four of these children can be preschool age or under.

If the educator's own children or any other children are at the family day care residence while the service is operating, they must be counted in the overall total of children if they are under 13 years of age and there is no other adult present and caring for those children.

The number of educators at a residence cannot be increased in order to increase the number of children that can be educated and cared for.

This requirement does not apply if children are visiting another family day care residence or an approved family day care venue, with their educator, as part of an excursion. A visiting family day care educator must do a risk assessment for the excursion under regulation 100.

### Educator to child ratios for family day care services

Age	Educator to child ratio
All children	1:7, with no more than four children preschool age or under

### Maximum number of children

In exceptional circumstances, the approved provider of the family day care service may approve, in writing, a family day care educator to care for more than seven children, or more than four children who are preschool age or under, when: