

Case Study 1:

Sally Jones lives in a cottage and has applied to become a home-based child carer with her local Family Day Care Scheme.

As part of the safety assessment of her home, Sally and a staff member use the GSAT to undertake an assessment of the level of risk posed by glazing. Sally's kitchen window is above the sink, and looks out onto an outdoor grassed play area. Due to her proposed use of the space (children playing ball games on the grass outside) the window is assessed as HIGH risk.

Sally contacts a glazier who confirms the window already meets the requirements of the Building Code for domestic dwellings. However, given the situation, Sally requests that the glazing be replaced with certified safety glazing.

Case Study 2:

Anna Hall has just moved into a brand new home, and while she has certification that the glazing meets the Building Code, she uses the GSAT to assess the level of risk.

As would be expected, the glass doors are rated as a HIGH level of risk.

Anna's glazier confirms that one of the doors, with very small glazed panels, is not safety glazed, and not required to be under the Code.

Anna will have babies in care, and decides she will have safety film fitted to the door panels to further reduce the level of risk.

She has made her decision based on her practice and the risk assessment provided by the GSAT.

The GSAT is not only a tool to assist carers in meeting the HBC Standards, it also provides you with a practical framework to assist in your decision making.

The well-being and protection of children in care is always the highest priority.

I'm ready to assess the risks posed by glazing in my home - what do I need?

The following checklist provides a guide to help you prepare for the assessment process:

Make an appointment with your ARB (Scheme) staff to undertake the assessment together

Prepare a floor plan or sketch of your home with all glazing marked and numbered

Staff will ensure you have access to:

A copy of the GSAT

The GSAT Guide

Safety Plan forms for High, Medium and Low risk assessments

A metric measuring tape

A staff member will work through the risk assessment with you. Collaborative discussion is a vital part of process.

Where can I find out more ?

- Contact your ARB (Family Day Care Scheme)
- Contact the Child Care Unit Ph 1300 135 513
- For general information about Risk Management :

>> Your insurance company

>> <http://wwwfp.education.tas.gov.au/admin/ff/risk/default.htm>

CONTACT DETAILS

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Glass Safety in Home Based Child Care Settings

The Tasmanian Glass Safety Assessment Tool

(GSAT) -

a risk assessment tool for home based child care situations

Information for Home Based Carers

HBC and Glass Safety Assessment Tool (GSAT)

Background

Family day care is a professional home based child care service first established in Tasmania in 1973. Family day care is the preferred care option for many families. In Tasmania, carers generally register with an Approved Registration Body (the term for a Family Day Care Scheme, which holds a licence under the *Child Care Act 2001* to register carers); however, a carer may opt to be licensed directly by the Department of Education, through the Child Care Unit (the CCU).

In either case, the carer must meet the *Tas Standards for Home Based Care Class 1 (0—12 years)*, which relate both to the suitability of the carer, and the premises, usually a family home, in which care will be provided. A family home, once approved as a family day care premise, will continue to be classified as a domestic dwelling under the Building Code of Australia (BCA).

Safety is a primary consideration in the provision of care for children, and the Home Based Care (HBC) standards reflect this.

Which HBC Standard applies to glazing?

Standard 11: Safe Environment

11.16 *Glazing in areas accessible to children (including glazed doors and side panels, and other panels such as windows identified as hazards to children)*

- a) All glazed internal and external doors and side panels must comply with Australian Standard (AS) 1288 *Glass in Buildings – Selection & Installation*.
- b) Any glazing that is accessible to children and identified through the use of the GSAT as a hazard to children, must **either**: be professionally treated
or: be effectively guarded by barriers to prevent a child striking or falling against the glass.**
- c) A certificate stating that the quality and installation of the safety glazing materials comply with the relevant Australian Standards must be provided by the installer.
- d) When replacing glass in an area identified as a hazard to children, glazing materials which comply with the relevant Australian Standards must be used.

e) Windows, when opened, must not create a hazard to children.

*NOTE :** This wording will cover situations where glazing meets the relevant Australian Standards, but may still be identified as a hazard in terms of children's safety.*

11.17 *Other Glass*

The carer must ensure that items of furniture or equipment with a glass component, such as mirrors, glass-top tables, and glass cabinets do not present a danger to children.

Is the HBC standard the same as the Building Code of Australia (BCA) standard for glazing in a domestic dwelling?

No. The building standards for glazing in domestic dwellings have changed considerably over recent years, and current requirements are much more stringent. Many people living in older housing may not be aware that these changes apply to their homes, as well as to new buildings.

The HBC standards recognize the high level of duty of care required, including the need for sound procedures to assess and manage risks, particularly glazing.

Therefore, even though a domestic dwelling may meet the glazing requirements under the BCA, where it is used for the registered/licensed care of children, additional risk management measures may be required.

The Tasmanian family day care sector recognized the need for an effective mechanism to conduct thorough risk assessment of all glazing, and Approved Registration Bodies (ARBs) agreed to adopt the Glazing Safety Assessment Tool (GSAT) as from 01 March 2005.

What is the GSAT?

The GSAT provides an objective framework for assessing the level of risk posed by glazing in home based child care settings. The tool provides a guide to treatment of any risk identified, and the opportunity to document the assessment process and the actions required.

The GSAT enables carers, with the support of their ARB, to meet the requirements of the HBC Class 1 Standards.

How is the GSAT used?

The GSAT is designed to be used collaboratively enabling family day carers and ARB staff to work together to achieve the best outcomes for the care and protection of children.

The first step is to identify and number each piece of glazing in the home on a floor plan or sketch. These are then rated and noted in a table. The GSAT includes a detailed guide to assist with this process. In summary, each piece of glazing is rated as either LOW, MEDIUM or HIGH risk.

It is important to discuss and complete the ratings together with a staff member.

The GSAT Guide is then used to provide information about treatment of the risk, in other words, what actions you may need to take. Agreed actions are recorded and must be followed through. This may involve the need for urgent action in the case of glazing posing a HIGH level of risk; or it may mean ensuring a Safety Plan is developed and adhered to.

While the tool is designed as an objective measure, there may be occasions where agreement cannot be reached in deciding on, for example, the *Use of Space* or *Play* categories. In such cases it is vital that you carefully think through your decisions using a risk management approach:

- Make a list of the things the room/space is used for, or could be used for
- Ask “What would happen if...?”
Think about possible consequences
- Think about the level of supervision that will be required to ensure the safety of children. Can this this level of supervision be achieved at ALL times?
- Ask “Is the level of risk posed by this glazing in this room acceptable ?”
- Accept professional advice given by ARB staff
- Seek further advice or information if required