



Safe Sleep and Rest

Statement

Sleep, relaxation and rest are important for physical recuperation, physical growth, a healthy immune system and optimum brain development. Education and Care services are busy, active places and it is for this reason that children may require a sleep or rest even if they do not usually do so within their home environment. All children have individual sleep and rest requirements and the service ensures children have opportunity for sleep, rest and relaxation throughout the day. Children require a comfortable relaxing environment to enable their bodies to rest so the education and care environment will be safe and well supervised to ensure children are healthy and secure in their environment.

Goals

The education and care service will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs. The education and care service will provide beds and cots that comply with Australian Standards. The risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) will be minimised by following practices and guidelines set out by 'SIDS and Kids'.

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor

- 'Take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the service are met, having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of the children' (Regulation 81).
- Ensure that there are adequate numbers of cots and bedding available to children that meet Australian standards.
- Ensure that all cots meet **AS/NZS 2172**.
- Ensure that areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have access to natural lighting.
- Ensure that supervision windows are kept clear to ensure safe supervision of sleeping children.
- Maintain up to date knowledge regarding sleeping practice and communicate this information to educators and families.

Early Childhood Educators and Certified Supervisors



- Consult with families about children's sleep and rest requirements. Educators will be sensitive to each child's needs so that sleep and rest times are a positive experience.
- Ensure that beds/mattresses are clean and in good repair. Beds and mattresses will be wiped over with Germex between each use.
- Ensure that bed linen is clean and in good repair. Bed linen is for use by an individual child and will be washed before use by another child.
- Arrange children's beds and cots to allow ease of access for children and staff. Ensure positioning of beds and cots does not interrupt egress paths for evacuations.
- Create a relaxing atmosphere for resting children and ensure children are comfortably clothed and the temperature of the rest environment is comfortable (neither too hot nor too cold).
- Educators will sit with resting children and support them by encouraging them to relax. Music and soft lighting are utilised to support children to sleep or rest.
- Sleep, rest and relaxation periods are a positive experience, children will not be left to cry or be forced to rest for unreasonable lengths of time. By providing a tranquil environment, children will choose to sleep if their body needs it.
- Encourage children to rest their bodies and minds for 30-40 minutes, if children are awake after this time, they will be provided quiet or outdoor activities for the duration of rest time respecting the rights of those who are asleep.
- Maintain adequate supervision and maintain educator ratios throughout the rest period.
- Communicate with families about their child's sleeping or rest routines and the service policy regarding sleep, rest and relaxation.
- Conversations with families may be necessary to remind families that children will neither be forced to sleep nor prevented from sleeping. Sleep and rest patterns will be recorded for families daily.

Children in Cots – Educators will:

- Give bottle fed children their bottles **before** going to bed. Children will not be put in cots or beds with bottles.
- Observe children at 10 minute intervals while asleep in cot room. Educators must go into the room and physically see the children breathing. The educator will then officially record this check.
- Ensure that cot mattresses are clean, firm and the correct size for the cot frame.
- Make up cots to comply with SIDS safe sleeping guidelines:
 - Babies will be placed on their backs to sleep, but they will be able to find their own sleeping position.
 - No loose bedding is to be available to the child.
 - Bed linens will be firmly tucked under the mattress to reduce the risk of a child covering their face.
 - Put the baby's feet at the bottom of the cot so that the baby cannot slip down under the covers.
 - Tuck the baby in securely so bed linen is not loose.
 - No doonas, duvets, pillows or cot bumpers will be placed in cots.



- Securely lock cot sides in place to ensure children’s safety.
- Cot room will be air conditioned and maintained at an appropriate temperature.
- Be aware of manual handling practices when lifting babies in and out of cots.

Families

- Families are encouraged to work in consultation with educators to ensure positive outcomes for the holistic development of their child while at the Education and Care Service.
- Issues concerning children’s sleep needs such as depriving a child of sleep or waking the child early must be negotiated between educators and families and the outcome must reflect the best interest of the child.

Monitoring, Evaluating and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every 18 months. Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

Sources

Sources

Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) www.acecqa.gov.au
ACECQA Guide to the National Law and National Regulations
The National SIDS Council of Australia www.sidsandkids.org/safe-sleeping
Possum Place Preschool & ELC Procedure Document
Sleep Learning for Early Education Professionals <http://deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood>
Bangalow Community Children’s Centre Policy Document
Community Child Care Cooperative Example Policy
Alstonville Nestle In Education and Care Centre Policy Document
Staton, S., Irvine, S., Pattinson, C., Smith, S. & Thorpe, K. (2015). The Sleeping Elephant in the Room, *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, Volume (40)(4)

Related Legislation

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011