

Purpose

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require approved providers and nominated supervisors to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for children's sleep and rest having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of the children. Our *Sleep and Rest Policy* will assist management, educators and other staff to ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs whilst attending the Service.

Scope

This policy applies to children, families, staff, volunteers and visitors at the service.

Background

Children have different sleep, rest and relaxation needs. Children of the same age can have different sleep patterns that nominated supervisors and educators need to consider within the Service. As per Standard 2.1 (Element 2.1.1) of the National Quality Standard, each child's comfort must be provided for and there must be appropriate opportunities to meet each child's sleep, rest and relaxation needs.' (ACECQA).

Our Service defines 'rest' as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness, or tranquillity, and can include a child being in a state of sleep. Considering the busy and energetic nature of children's day, we feel that it is important for children to participate in a quiet/rest period during the day in order to rest, relax, and recharge their body. Effective rest strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and safe in an early childhood environment.

Our Service will consult with families about their child's individual needs, ensuring all parties are aware of the different values, cultural, and parenting beliefs and practices, or opinions associated with sleep requirements.

Principles

The Service is committed to:

- providing a safe, positive and nurturing environment for all children
- recognising that children have different requirements for relaxation and sleep, and being responsive to those needs to ensure that children feel safe and secure
- consulting with parents/guardians about their child's individual rest, relaxation and sleep requirements, and ensuring practices are responsible to the values and cultural beliefs of each family
- its duty of care to all children at the service, and ensuring that adequate supervision is maintained while children are sleeping, resting or relaxing

Roles and responsibilities

The Service is committed to:

- complying with all legislative requirements, standards and current best practice and guidelines, including recommendations by Red Nose Australia
- its duty of care to all children at the Service, and ensuring that adequate supervision is maintained while children are sleeping, resting or relaxing
- consulting with parents/guardians about their child's individual relaxation and sleep requirements/practices, and ensuring practices at the service are responsive to the values and cultural beliefs of each family
- providing a positive and nurturing environment for all children attending the service

- allowing children to be actively involved in decision making, to provide an environment that encourages them to reach their potential
- providing a safe environment where children feel comfortable and safe to play, talk, or relax
- children's safety and wellbeing will be fostered through responsive relationships, engaging experiences and a safe and healthy environment.

The Approved Provider and/or the Nominated Supervisor will:

- ensure that, in conjunction with educators of the Service, a comprehensive risk assessment is conducted to ensure all potential hazards are identified and specify how any risks identified are managed and minimised in sleep and rest areas in line with Red Nose and ACECQA guidelines
- ensure every reasonable precaution has been taken to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury.
- remove all hazards posing a risk of suffocation, choking, crushing or strangulation risk from the sleep and rest environment
- maintain and communicate to parents/guardians and educators up to date knowledge regarding safe sleep practices through newsletters and education sessions.
- provide annual training or as new information or policy changes occur, on safe sleep practices to all educators and keep a record of all such training
- provide opportunities for educators to participate in Red Nose professional training
- ensure all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that each child's need for rest, relaxation and sleep are provided
- give consideration to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of children's sleep needs and routines.
- provide a safe environment for rest, relaxation and sleep that is well-ventilated, has adequate natural light that can be maintained at a temperature that ensures children's safety and wellbeing, and is free from all hazards.
- keep the supervision window clear of any material or obstruction to ensure safe supervision of sleeping children.
- ensure children who are resting, relaxing or sleeping have their faces uncovered at all times.
- remove any soft items from the cot
- provide information to parents/guardians on safe sleeping practices at enrolment and accessible within the service.
- ensure all equipment and furniture used by children for rest, relaxation and sleep is safe, clean and in good repair.
- ensure adequate numbers of cots and bedding (including mattresses) that meet Australian Standards are available to children
- only use cots that meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for Cots (AS/NZS 2172), and ensure these cots carry a label to indicate this
- check sleep surfaces for firmness in accordance with Australian Standard AS/NZS 8811:1:2013
- for portable cots, only use portable cots that meet the current mandatory Australian Standard (AS/NZS 2195), and ensure these cots carry a label to indicate this
- use firm, clean and well-fitting mattresses on portable cots
- ensure all beds, cots and mattresses are used for the correct purpose of rest and sleep only
- do not use or store bassinets in the service
- not accept any children into care in a bassinet
- ensure hammocks, swings, prams and strollers are not used to settle children to sleep
- consult with staff in relation to OHS issues when purchasing new equipment and furniture and complete a risk assessment on new equipment.
- stay up to date with banned/recalled products and remove these immediately from the service if required
- negotiate rest, relaxation and sleep routines and practices with families to reach an agreement on how these occur for each child at the service
- not endorse practices requested by a family if they differ from Red Nose safe sleeping recommendations
- procure written authorisation from a medical practitioner for any sleeping recommendations or requirements that differ from Red Nose safe sleeping recommendations
- Display red nose posters and sleep procedures in the cot room.
- ensure cleaning of beds and mattresses after each use (using warm water and a neutral detergent or vinegar solution)
- arrange beds and cots to allow for easy access for children and staff
- store cots and stretchers safely
- store items such as bedding in a hygienic manner to prevent cross-contamination
- ensure bed linen is used by an individual child and washed before use by another child

- ensure compliance with WorkSafe Victoria's Children's Services Occupational Health and Safety Compliance Kit in relation to staff lifting children into and out of cots.
- ensure records of children's sleep times are checked by the nominated supervisor.

Educators will:

- closely monitor sleeping infants and children and ensure that all sleeping children are always within hearing and sight distance and observed, so that educators can easily monitor a child's breathing and the colour of their skin
- not perform administrative or other duties while supervising sleeping children
- ensure sleeping spaces are not dark to enable supervision and to physically check on the breathing and skin colour of sleeping children
- physically check sleeping children every 10 minutes and keep a record of these checks.
- consider circumstances that may require more frequent physical checks of some sleeping children
- follow the Administration of First Aid Policy if the child's face and/or body appears blue and the child is not breathing, initiate first aid immediately including calling an ambulance and beginning resuscitation
- complete an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness record after a serious incident
- ensure that the parent/guardian of the child and the regulatory authority are notified as soon as possible within 24 hours of a serious incident
- communicate with families about their child's sleeping and rest times each day the child is in care.
- ensure rest, relaxation and sleep practices are responsive to the individual needs of children at the service, parenting beliefs, values, practices and requirements, the length of time each child spends at the service, circumstances or events occurring at the child's home, consistency of practice between home and the service, the physical environment, and the child's general health and wellbeing
- respect family preferences regarding rest, relaxation and sleep and consider these daily while ensuring children feel safe and secure in the environment
- record sleep and rest patterns daily and provide information to parents/guardians
- consider a range of strategies to meet children's individual sleep and rest needs
- ensure there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for rest, relaxation and sleep
- respond to children's individual cues for sleep and rest.
- Respect children's self-soothing and sleep rituals and allow time for these.
- acknowledge and support children's agency, emotions, feelings and fears in regard to rest/sleep time
- develop positive relationships with children to assist in settling children confidently when resting and sleeping
- provide children who do not wish to sleep with alternative quiet activities and experiences
- ensure children and adults who are not sleeping, do not disrupt those who are.
- ensure there is a comfortable, safe area available for any child who requests a rest.
- Ensure children's beds are placed on clean floors and away from obstacles and furniture.
- encourage children to dress appropriately for the room temperature when resting, relaxing or sleeping
- encourage the use of sleeping bags with fitted neck and armholes for babies so there is no risk of the infant's face being covered
- ensure there are no loose aspects of clothing or jewellery including Amber teething necklaces that could entangle the child during rest and/or sleep
- securely lock cots sides into place to ensure children's safety
- follow OHS manual handling and risk assessments for the safe transfer of children into and out of cots.
- create a relaxing environment for sleeping children through music, reading stories, cultural reflection, lowering or turning off lighting, and comfortable clothing for children without inhibiting line of site or sound
- monitor room temperature to ensure maximum comfort for children
- turn off wall-mounted heaters before children use a room for sleeping (cot rooms may be air-conditioned and maintained at an appropriate temperature)
- ensure heat bags or hot-water bottles are not used to provide warmth
- encourage children over 3 years of age children to rest their minds and bodies for 20-30 minutes
- introduce relaxation techniques into rest routines for children over 3 years of age
- communicate rest and sleep times and information to co-workers during shift changes
- develop and implement communication strategies to inform parents/guardians about their child's rest and sleep patterns
- educators will refrain from patting or hands-on rocking of children to sleep and shaking of cots or beds.

Parents/families will:

- be informed during orientation of our *Sleep and Rest Policy* and procedure
- inform the service if any requirements for sleep for their child differs from Red Nose sleeping recommendations, written authorisation from a medical practitioner will be required
- provide educators with regular updates on their child’s sleeping routines and patterns, especially for infants
- provide specific bedding for their child each day (as detailed in enrolment information)

Induction and ongoing training

This policy will be accessible by service staff via the intranet and by families via the website. A hard copy of the policy will be available through the Service. Nominated supervisors are responsible for ensuring staff access to the policy and any supporting documents and undertake induction training prior to the policy being implemented. All service staff are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy and ongoing training will be provided using a range of learning platforms.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

Monitoring of compliance with this policy and the related procedure will be overseen by the policy owner. The review process for this policy will begin eight (8) weeks prior to the scheduled review date and include a consultation period with families, educators, compliance team and any other relevant stakeholders and will be facilitated by the Policy Officer.

Communication about any changes in or review of the policy, procedure or related supporting documents will be provided to all service staff. Where required, training will be provided to ensure an understanding of the changes. Families will be notified of any changes 14 days prior to the implementation. Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in line with the MACSEYE Code of Conduct.

Related documents

- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Emergency and Evacuation Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Supervision Policy

Legislative requirements

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS (NQS)	
Quality Area 2	Children’s Health and Safety
Quality Area 3	Physical Environment

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW ACT	
Section 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Section 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazard

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW REGULATIONS	
Regulation 82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
Regulation 84A	Sleep and Rest
Regulation 84B	Sleep and rest policies and procedures

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW REGULATIONS

Regulation 84C	Risk assessment for purposes of sleep and rest policies and procedures
Regulation 84D	Prohibition of bassinets
Regulation 87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
Regulation 103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
Regulation 105	Furniture, materials and equipment
Regulation 106	Laundry and hygiene facilities
Regulation 107	Space requirements-indoor space
Regulation 110	Ventilation and natural light
Regulation 115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
Regulation 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be available
Regulation 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
Regulation 176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

RELATED LEGISLATIONS

Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012 (Cth)
Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Regulations 2012 (Cth)
Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

Definitions

Term	Meaning
ACEQCA - Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.
Adequate supervision	Means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an educator can respond immediately, particularly when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation knowing where children are at all times and monitoring their activities actively and diligently.
Approved provider	A person who holds a provider approval (National Law). A provider approval authorises a person to apply for one or more service approvals and is valid in all jurisdictions.
Continuous supervision	Ensure an educator is in sight and hearing of a sleeping child at all times- representing best practice (Red Nose Australia)
Education and care service premises	In relation to a centre-based service, means each place at which an education and care service operates or is to operate.
MACSEYE	Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Early Years Education Ltd, a subsidiary of Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd established to conduct early childhood education and care services.
National Law	Unless otherwise specified, the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 or, in Western Australia, the Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012. This applied law system sets a national standard for children's education and care across

Term	Meaning
	Australia. See the ACECQA website for the Application Act or legislation that applies in each jurisdiction.
National Regulations	The National Regulations support the National Law by providing detail on a range of operational requirements for an education and care service.
Nominated supervisor	In relation to an education and care service, means a person who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is nominated by the approved provider of the service under Part 3 to be a nominated supervisor of that service; and unless the individual is the approved provider, has provided written consent to that nomination (National Law).
Person in day-to-day charge	A person is in day-to-day charge of an education and care service if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the person is placed in day-to-day charge by the approved provider or a nominated supervisor of the service; and the person consents to the placement in writing (National Regulations). There are minimum requirements for the person in day-to-day charge.
Person with management or control	In relation to an education and care service, means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if the provider or intended provider of the service is a body corporate, an officer of the body corporate within the meaning of the Corporations Act 2001 of the Commonwealth who is responsible for managing the delivery of the education and care service; or if the provider of the service is an eligible association, each member of the executive committee of the association who has the responsibility, alone or with others, for managing the delivery of the education and care service; or if the provider of the service is a partnership, each partner who has the responsibility, alone or with others, for managing the delivery of the education and care service; or in any other case, a person who has the responsibility, alone or with others, for managing the delivery of the education and care service (National Law).
Red Nose	Red Nose is Australia's leading authority on safe sleep and safe pregnancy advice.
Relaxation	Relaxation or other activity for bringing about a feeling of calm in your body and mind.
Rest	A period of inactivity solitude, calmness or tranquility and can include a child being in a state of sleep.
Risk assessment	A systematic process of evaluating the potential likelihood and consequences of risks that may be involved in a projected activity or undertaking.

Policy information

Policy information			
Policy title:	QA2 Sleep and Rest Policy	Version:	1.0
Authorised Executive:	Director Services	Responsible Manager:	Director Services
Approving authority:	Managing Director	Approval date:	6/9/2024
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Version control		
Version	Date	Changes
1.0	6/9/2024	Policy developed