

# SAFE SLEEP AND REST PRACTICES

## PRINCIPAL

Effective rest and sleep strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and safe in the education and care environment. Regular sleep or rest times are essential for a child's health, growth and development; therefore it is important there are appropriate opportunities provided to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.

All educators have a duty of care to ensure children are provided with a high level of safety when sleeping and resting and every reasonable precaution is taken to prevent them from harm and hazard.

## DEFINITION

**Adequate Supervision – means**

- that an educator can respond immediately including when a child is distressed or is in a hazardous situation
- knowing where children are all times, and monitoring their activities actively and carefully.

## GUIDELINES

**Children's Services will ensure:**

1. Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children being educated and cared for by the service, from harm and from any hazard likely to cause harm (*Education and Care Services National Law 167*).
2. The needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the service are met, having regard to the ages, capabilities, development stages and individual needs of the children (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 84A*).  
For example, babies and children with colds, chronic lung disorders or specific health care needs.
3. Services who include sleep or rest routines within their planned program are to complete (*Appendix 4.1 – Children's Services Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment*) at least once every 12 months, and as soon as practicable after the service becoming aware of any circumstances that may affect the safety, health and wellbeing of children during sleep and rest. (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 84C*).
4. Any necessary updates to this *Children's Services Safe Sleep and Rest Practices* Policy and procedures are considered as soon as practicable after conducting the sleep and rest risk assessment and a record of each sleep and rest risk assessment conducted is kept (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 84C(3),(4)*).
5. Once the *Children's Services Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment* is completed, the service will conduct regular reviews (once per term). (*Appendix 4.2 – Children's Services Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment Plan and Review*) is to be completed to ensure hazards in the

service are identified, risks are managed before they cause harm and identified risks are addressed within this policy (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 84B*).

6. Services who include sleep and rest routines within their planned program complete the *Children's Services Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment and Children's Services Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment Plan and Review* for each room and program within the service.
7. Bassinets are prohibited for use in all services for children during sleep and rest (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 84D*).  
If a child who is enrolled at the service arrives asleep in a pram, they are to be transferred into a service cot immediately.
8. Educators will consult with families about their child's routine for sleep and rest at home and will carry this out at the service where possible and safe to do so. This Safe Sleep and Rest Practices policy will be made available to families (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 84B (m)*).
9. Educators recognise children have different needs for relaxation, rest and sleep and are responsive to those needs. They will assist children in learning about their individual needs for rest and comfort and will encourage children to communicate their needs where possible.
10. Adequate supervision planning and the placement of educators across the service to ensure educators adequately supervise sleeping and resting children. Child-to-educator ratios are to be maintained at all times throughout the sleep and rest time period and, students and volunteers are not to be left unsupervised with sleeping or resting children (*Education and Care Services National Law 165*).
11. Children sleeping and resting will always be adequately supervised and monitored so that educators can supervise children's safety and wellbeing frequently. Educators will be able to visually check the child's sleeping position, breathing and the colour of the child's lips and skin, body temperature, head position, airway and the child's head and face, ensuring they remain uncovered frequently (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 84B(e)(i)*).
12. Educators document sleep and rest periods via accessing HubHello ESI (Activities – Add Sleep/Rest and Wake Up) *Education and Care Services National Regulation 84B(e)(ii)*.
13. Children have access to quiet and comfortable spaces away from the main activity areas for relaxation and sleep that are well ventilated, provide adequate natural lighting, are free from alcohol, vaping, cigarette or tobacco smoke and the temperature of the rest environment provides maximum comfort for the children (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 82, 110*).
14. All equipment and furniture used for sleep and rest times is safe, clean, in good repair and used in accordance with manufacture guidelines (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 103*).
15. Children who do not require sleep or rest are provided opportunities to engage in appropriate play experiences, both indoors and outdoors.
16. Educators and initial induction upon employment includes a comprehensive overview of the Sleep and Rest Practices outlined in the following ACECQA website and Red Nose recommendations  
<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/Safe-sleep-and-rest-practices>  
The Red Nose on-line Safe Sleep Training is recommended for educators to complete.  
<https://education.rednose.org.au/> (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 84B (g)*).

17. Educators are kept up to date with current information in relation to best practices for children's sleep and rest (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 84B (g)*).
18. Safe sleeping practices are implemented and reflective of current research and recommended evidence-based principles and guidelines of *Red Nose*, the recognised national authority on safe sleeping practices for infants and children.  
<https://rednose.org.au/> (*Education and Care Services National Regulation 84B (f)*).
19. Alternate sleeping practices that are in conflict with current recommended evidence-based guidelines *Red Nose safe sleeping practices for infants and children* will only be used when supported by written consent of a medical practitioner. If this is to be the case the service will undertake a risk assessment.

## Long Day Care

## Occasional Care

### **Children's Services will ensure:**

1. An adequate numbers of cots and bedding (one cot/bed/mattress per child) are to be made available to children where the linen provided is to be laundered at least weekly or when soiled and stored separately from other children's bedding (*Education and Care Services National Regulations 105, 106*).
2. All cots meet the current mandatory *Australian Standards for Cots (AS/NZS2172)* and *Australian Standard for children's portable folding/porta Cots (AS/NZS2195)* and should carry a label to indicate this. Refer to *Keeping Baby Safe – A guide to infant and nursery products* <https://www.productsafety.gov.au/publication/keeping-baby-safe-a-guide-to-infant-and-nursery-products>
3. All cot mattresses are safe and comply with the size and depth recommended by the manufacture of the cot. Refer to <https://rednose.com.au/article/what-is-a-safe-mattress>
4. Educators risk assess the sleep environment for any child under the age of eighteen months moving from a cot to a mat/bed.
5. Evacuation cots are clearly labelled, easily accessible and in good working condition.

## **Related policies:**

- Administration of First Aid
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Emergency Situations
- Interactions and Relationships with Children
- Providing a Child Safe Environment
- Student, Volunteers and Visitors

**National Quality Standards – 2.1.1; 2.2.1; 3.1.1; 3.1.2; 6.1.2; 7.1.3**

**Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 Regulations 82; Division 1A Sleep and Rest - 84A; 84B; 84C;84D;103; 105; 106; 110; 116 168(2)(a)(v)**

**Education and Care Services National Law Act – 165; 167**

## **Sources and Reference Tools**

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Further Amendment Regulations 2023*
- *National Quality Standards*
- *ACECQA – Safe Sleep and Rest Legislative Requirements*
- *ACECQA – Sleep and Rest for Children Policy Guidelines*
- *ACECQA – Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment*
- *Department of Education and Training – Sleep and Rest in Early Childhood Services*
- *Red Nose - <https://rednose.org.au/>*
- *Australian Safety Standards*
- *Department of Education and Training – Supervision in early childhood services*  
<https://www.vic.gov.au/supervision-early-childhood-services>
- *ACECQA - [https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-04/QA2-ActiveSupervisionEnsuringSafetyAndPromotingLearning\\_1.pdf](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-04/QA2-ActiveSupervisionEnsuringSafetyAndPromotingLearning_1.pdf)*

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Next review due: July 2024

Updated 09/2023 - removing reference to Family Day Care due to cease of Family Day Care operations

Updated 10/2023 - due to Legislative requirements

Updated 01/2024 – amended guidelines 3 and 6 – adding ‘Services who include sleep or rest routines within their planned program.