



Safe Sleeping, Rest Times and Relaxation

Policy Statement

NBCA acknowledges sleep and rest is an important aspect of children's development and wellbeing. Children's rights and dignity will be maintained and their voices heard.

Implementation

- Educators will endeavour to follow recommended safe sleeping practices from Red Nose to ensure a safe and comfortable sleeping environment is maintained, evaluated and reflected upon.
- Current information about safe sleeping practices will be researched and made available.
- Individual children's sleep routines and patterns will be discussed at enrolment and on a regular basis between families and educators.
- Educators will respect each child's needs to ensure sleep, rest and relaxation times are a positive experience. Educators understand children have the right to make decisions on their wellbeing.
- Traditionally early childhood services have a designated rest period after lunch. However, children will have the opportunity to choose when their rest time will be. Children have access to appropriate bedding and a conducive environment.
- Educators will remain within hearing and/or sight of children when they are sleeping.
- Educators will physically check children sleeping in a specified cot/sleep room regularly and no greater than 15-minute intervals and record on relevant checklist.
- Educators will ensure supervision points are kept clear for safe supervision of resting children.
- Educators are to record children's sleeping, waking and resting times on communication sheets.
- Beds, sheets and blankets will meet recommendations from Red Nose safe sleeping guidelines, and checked regularly for compliance, quality and cleanliness.
- Where practicable there will be adequate space between each cot, bed and mattress to minimise the spread of cross infection and allow adults to move between them safely. Where this is not possible, educators will ensure children's head and feet positions are alternated in a 'top to toe' fashion.
- A risk assessment and/or risk minimisation plans will be available for children, including infants whose sleeping arrangements differ from Red Nose recommendations.

Safe Sleeping Practices

- There are specific guidelines in relation to safe wrapping of young infants. Educators and families will work in partnership with Red Nose guidelines.
- Infants will be placed on their back to rest. If older infants turn over during their sleep, they will be allowed to find their own sleeping position.
- At no time will an infant's face be covered with bed linen.



- At no time should clothes, toys, sheet bags or bed linen be hung over a cot for storage, to eliminate light or obstruct the view of the child.
- To prevent a baby from wriggling under bed linen, they will be placed with their feet closest to the bottom end of the cot.
- Quilts and pillows will be discouraged in line with Red Nose guidelines. Sleeping bags with a fitted neck and arm holes are an alternate option to bed linen and encourage a baby to rest on their back. Sleeping bags should not have a hood. If a sleeping bag is used, clothing is to be minimal to avoid overheating.
- Hooded clothing on infants and young toddlers is discouraged during sleep time.
- For the safety of both staff and children, cot sides should be lowered so the child can be placed safely into the cot and the cot side raised and locked securely into position, before leaving the child alone.
- Rockers may be used under approval from the director based on individual circumstances.
- Children will be encouraged to drink bottles before they go to bed or rest. However, if a child needs a bottle to help settle for sleep, a staff member will supervise them having a bottle, and the bottle will be removed once they have finished or they have fallen asleep. This is not a desired practice, and will only occur through transparent relationships with families, to ensure the best interests of the child.
- Provide quiet, well-ventilated and comfortable sleeping spaces. Wherever viewing windows are used, all children should be visible to supervising educators.
- Look for and respond to children's cues for sleep (e.g. yawning, rubbing eyes, disengagement from activities, crying, decreased ability to regulate behavior and seeking comfort from adults).
- It is important that opportunities for rest and relaxation, as well as sleep, are provided.
- Ensure that children who **do not** wish to sleep are provided with alternative quiet activities and experiences, while those children who **do** wish to sleep are allowed to do so, without being disrupted. If a child requests a rest, or if they are showing clear signs of tiredness, regardless of the time of day, there should be a comfortable, safe area available for them to rest (if required).
- Any reference to risk assessment/minimisation plans for diverting from Red Nose recommendations needs confirmation from a medical practitioner.

Safe Equipment

- Cots will meet the Australian / New Zealand Standard 2172:2003.
- Cots will not have exposed wing nuts or bolts that could catch on infants clothing.
- Cots will be kept in a safe and tidy condition, and replaced as needed.
- Mattresses should be firm, flat and well fitting for the cot, with no gaps around the edges.
- Sliding mechanisms should be secure and well maintained to avoid the child getting caught up in it.

Policy Links

Policies:

- Child Protection
- Dental Health
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Health, Hygiene and Infection Control
- Sun Protection and Clothing
- Supervision

NQS: Quality Area 2, Quality Area 5 and Quality Area 6

Regulations: 81, 155, and 168



Sources:

- ACECQA Safe Sleeping and Rest Practices
- National Quality Framework
- Red Nose Safe Sleeping Guidelines www.rednose.org.au/section/safe-sleeping
- Education and Care Services National Law (2011) - Section 51(1)(a) Conditions on service approval (safety, health and wellbeing of children)

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