

WCS Children's Services

PROGRAM DELIVERY - Sleep and Rest Policy

Policy Statement

Children are active little people – constantly learning, playing, watching and interacting with others. It is crucial for their sense of well-being, healthy growth and development to have time away from busy surroundings to rest, to reflect and to imagine.

The Service provides regular sleep and rest periods which follow the safe sleeping recommendations of the recognised authority, the National SIDS Council of Australia (SIDS and Kids), and take into consideration the ages, development and needs of individual children and their families.

Strategies and practices

- Educators speak with parents about their child's particular needs (e.g. sleep patterns and habits, need for a comforter) and family values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise, associated with sleep/rest, and consider these when determining sleep/rest needs.
- Infants sleep on demand. Toddlers and older children have a scheduled sleep/rest period shortly after lunch. In addition, educators are alert to any indication that a child might need sleep/rest outside of routine. Quiet areas for children to rest or be alone are always available.
- If a family's beliefs and practices are in conflict with SIDS and Kids, then the Service will only endorse an alternative practice after written advice has been received from a medical practitioner.
- Information from SIDS and Kids on safe sleeping practices, together with other useful information on sleeping is available on request.
- All children rest with faces uncovered.
- Staff ratios are maintained according to the Education and Care Services National Regulations during sleep/rest periods.
- Educators constantly monitor the children (e.g. breathing patterns) and sleep/rest environment (e.g. room temperature).
- Students or volunteers involved are supervised at all times.
- Sleep/rest areas are kept well-ventilated, uncluttered and appropriately lit and, as with all other areas of the Service, are smoke-free.
- Educators ensure children are dressed suitably for the room temperature. Some items of clothing may need to be removed for safety reasons (e.g. tops with hoods and cords that may cause choking). Educators are respectful and sensitive to cultural differences in attitudes to dressing, and encourage children to be independent in dressing at these times.
- Comforters from home will be given to children who need them to settle. However, toys with ribbons, removable parts or parts that can be looped over a child's head cannot be used because of the Service adherence to the SIDS and Kids guidelines.
- To help children relax for sleep/rest, educators dim the lights, play calming music, use quiet soothing voices and, sometimes, use guided relaxation techniques.

- While all children need time to relax at the Service, some do not need to sleep during the day. Rather, they only require a quiet comfortable place to relax, where possible.
- Children may help educators in setting up the sleep/rest area and the quiet activities for children who do not sleep.
- No child is made to sleep against their wishes or needs, although it is expected that all children will otherwise speak and play quietly at this time.
- Children are left to wake of their own accord, and educators attend to and soothe them when they do wake. In instances where families request that their child remain awake, that child will not be encouraged to sleep (e.g. patted). However, if the child should subsequently fall asleep, educators will not wake the child.
- On those occasions when parents do not supply a bed set, the Service will provide a sheet from its stock of "spare sheets". These sheets are laundered after each child's use. When linen is supplied by parents, it is sent home each week to be washed.
- Where the Service supplies a sheet set consisting of a fitted bottom sheet and a flat top sheet for each child, the sheet set is individually stored when not in use. All bed linen is laundered at least weekly.
- The children's beds are cleaned/sprayed daily with a non-rinse disinfectant daily before being stored. Cushion covers used for rest and relaxation are washed regularly.
- Beds are positioned so that educators may walk between them to gain easy access to every bed.
- Every child's sleep pattern for the day (e.g. time the child went to sleep and woke up) is recorded on the Daily Feedback Sheet (for children over 2 years) displayed in the child's room or the child's individual Daily Communication Book (for children under 2 years), if required by the Service.
- Educators receive regular first-aid training in resuscitation, and in the SIDS and Kids guidelines.

Additional safe resting practices for babies

SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) is the sudden, unexpected death of a baby during sleep. Babies under twelve months are considered to be at greater risk of SIDS than children over twelve months. The Service closely follows the recommendations for safe sleeping practices from SIDS and Kids.

- All children are placed on their back when first being settled for sleep/rest. If a child younger than 6 months turns onto their side or stomach during sleep, educators return the child onto their back.
- Should a child need to sleep on their stomach or side for sound medical reasons, the Service will only endorse this alternative practice upon receiving a letter from the child's Doctor stating the need for this alternative sleeping practice.
- Children are placed with their feet at the bottom of their cot or mattress, and bedclothes are tucked in securely.
- If parents ask for their infant to be 'wrapped' as a means of settling for sleep, educators ensure that a lightweight wrap is used, the baby is not wrapped too tightly, and that the wrap is kept away from the face.

- Quilts, doonas, duvets, pillows, cot bumpers or lambskins are not used in cots. Other materials such blankets spare sheets are not draped over the sides or ends of cots to block light or children's view of each other.
- Snugly rugs/blankets and soft toys are not left with children under the age of 12 months, once they are asleep.
- Mobiles or toys with stretch elastic cords are not used within reach of cots.
- Cots are positioned well away from dangling electrical and curtain/blind cords, heaters, fans and other electrical appliances, and power points.
- Cots are set up at least 30cm apart as well as 30cm from any other furniture.
- After a child is placed in a cot, the cot side is pulled up and securely locked, and the educator makes a final check before leaving the cot.
- Where there is a viewing window to the cot room, it is kept clear of obstruction, and educators check sleeping infants every 15 minutes, and initial the Sleep and Rest Register.
- All cots in the Service meet the Australian Standards, are assembled according to manufacturer's instructions, and are maintained in good condition.
- Cot mattresses meet the manufacturer's size recommendations and fit the cot base with no more than a 25mm gap between the mattress and the sides of the cot.
- When possible, a child is not placed in a cot if the child has the ability to climb out.
- Electric blankets, hot water bottles or wheat bags are not used in the Service.
- Cots are wiped over with soapy water for each new child. Cot mattresses are sprayed and wiped with a sanitiser and paper towel at the end of a full time child's week, or after each instance a part-time child has used the cot, or if there is an outbreak of an infectious disease.
- The sleep/rest area, as are all other areas of the Service, is smoke-free.
- The temperature of the room is monitored to ensure children's comfort.
- Each child is always put to bed in the same cot, where possible.
- The Service has a designated fire cot which is only used for evacuations, and the Service's *Evacuation and Lockdown Policy* specifically addresses sleep and rest times.

Additional safe resting practices for a child who is unwell

- Consistent with the Service's Incident, Injury-trauma, Near Miss and Illness and Supervision Policies, children who are unwell are constantly monitored until collected by their parent/guardian.

Responsibilities of parents/guardians

- Upon enrolment, to discuss with educators their child's particular needs (e.g. sleep patterns and habits, need for a comforter) and family values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise, associated with sleep/rest. Update this information in the event of change (e.g. a child becoming anxious about sleep/rest at the Service).

- Where required, to supply a bed set consisting of a fitted bottom sheet and a loose top sheet for summer, and a light blanket for winter, and to bring the set to the Service labelled with the child's name.
- Where required, to take the bed set home at least once a week, launder it, and return it on the day the child next attends the Service.
- To provide any comforters necessary.
- To read the Daily Feedback Sheet.

Links to other policies

- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2018

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| Regs | 81 | Sleep and rest |
| | 97 | Emergency and evacuation procedures |
| | 109 | Ventilation and natural light |

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| QA | 2.1.1 | Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation. |
| | 2.1.2 | Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented. |
| | 2.2.1 | At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard. |
| | 3.1.1 | Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting access of every child. |
| | 3.1.2 | Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained. |
| | 4.1.1 | The organisation of educators across the service supports children's learning and development. |
| | 4.2.2 | Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships. |
| | 5.1.1 | Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included. |

Sources, further reading and useful websites

Sources

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, 2017
- National Quality Standard 2011, 2018
- NCAC. (2011). *Factsheet: Safe sleep and rest in child care* accessed 5 March 2012 http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/family-resources/factsheets/Safe_Sleeping.pdf
- UNICEF. (n.d.). *Fact sheet: A summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child*. http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf accessed 5 March 2012
- Dr. B. Abbey and P. Maclean, NQS - the complete system of policies, procedures and forms, www.childcarebydesign.com.

Useful websites

- www.sidsandkids.org/

Policy Review

This policy is a living document and will be monitored and reviewed as issues are identified or within 24 months. Proposed changes will be circulated and discussed by all programs and any external stakeholders for approval.

Person Responsible for Review:

Manager, Children's Services

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| Implementation Date: | 4 May 2014 | Review Date: | June 2018 |
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Modification History

| Date | Sections and/or Paragraphs | Source | Details |
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| 2016/06 | Whole document | | Reformat |
| 2016/06 | Whole document | | Reviewed with educator feedback |
| 2018/02 | Quality Areas | Revised National Quality Standard 2018 | |

Related Documents

Refer to HR Manual –cross reference to WCS documents such as: WCS Services Guide, WCS Values and Strategic Plan.

Approved by Susan Henderson, Service Director Children's Services.



Date: 16 January 2017