



Sleep and rest for children policy

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.

Purpose

This procedure outlines our responsibility in relation to safe sleep and rest procedures compliant with provisions related to children's sleep and rest under the *South Australian Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011*. This includes the *Education and Care Services National Law* and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* (including the National Quality Standard (NQS)). Regulation 81 prescribes that services must take reasonable steps to ensure that children's needs for sleep and rest are met, having regard to each child's age, development and needs.

This intention of this procedure is to ensure educators;

- > are aware of, and comply with, current evidence-based safe sleep practices and safe sleep environments,
- > are aware of where to access resources to build their knowledge about recommended safe sleep practices, and
- > promote and model safe sleeping practices and environments to families with young children.

This procedure applies to all staff at this site.

Detail

This procedure is to be read in conjunction with age-appropriate [Red Nose](#) and [Kidsafe SA](#) safe sleeping recommendations. We acknowledge the support of Kids SA and Red Nose Australia in the development of this procedure.



Providing a safe sleeping environment

Our Director ensures sleeping environments are regularly assessed to identify and remove all potential hazards. Providing a safe sleep place must consider a child's developmental stage. All educators are responsible for identifying hazards, removing potential hazards, and addressing immediate risks on a daily basis (refer to the [safety management procedure](#) and [risk management policy](#)).

Hazard considerations may include:

- > Mattress kept away from hanging cords, mobiles, electrical appliances, and curtains
- > Mattress have an unobstructed gap, end-to-end and side-to-side, to enable free movement by an educator
- > Mattress positioned away from heaters to reduce the risk of an infant overheating
- > Remove amber teething necklaces and bracelets, other necklaces/chains, string beads, hair bands, and clips (e.g., any object that may detach and become a choking hazard)

A collaborative partnership with families

The development of positive relationships and partnerships builds families confidence that their children are safe in care and enables educators to contribute to parents/caregivers understanding of how to create a safe sleeping environment.

Site leaders and educators will ensure:

- > Families and caregivers are consulted during the orientation period about their child's rest and sleep needs, and their beliefs and practices – this will assist in individual children's circumstances and risk factors being assessed
- > Families and caregivers are informed of the service's safe sleeping procedure and practices
- > Families are aware of the need to inform the service about any changes in their child's medical or health status that may indicate a higher level of supervision is required
- > The child's developmental needs in relation to sleep and rest are documented, considering the period of time the child is being educated and cared for (in accordance with regulation 74).
- > Families are provided with information about their child's sleep and rest patterns (in accordance with regulation 76) – any risks are identified, and referrals made are documented
- > Safe sleeping practices are promoted and modelled (including safe sleeping information being displayed) and current information is available for families, taking into account an appropriate format for each family
- > Referrals to appropriate health professionals and support services are facilitated for further information and support if required (e.g., Kidsafe SA, Child and Family Health Service or a medical practitioner).

Requests to vary sleep practices

Educators must ensure families are informed that our approach **cannot** deviate from current recommended safe sleeping practices. In circumstances where a family request a sleep practice that varies from the recommended practices due to medically indicated reasons, departmental health support planning policies and procedures are to be followed. A health care plan authorised by a medical practitioner that clearly outlines the safest sleep practices to be implemented for the child is required.

In all other situations where a parent requests a practice that differs from this procedure, educators are to discuss safe sleeping practices with the family and the requirement to comply with this procedure, acknowledging the family's values, beliefs and concerns (including the challenges associated with introducing a new sleep routine).

In circumstances where it is considered that a family may not understand the risks associated with sleeping environments, educators should discuss referring the family to other services for further advice and support to provide a safe sleep environment.

Procedure

- A quiet place will be designated for rest and sleep, away from interactive groups. The space will allow for a calm rest experience.
- A mattress and a sheet will be provided
- If children fall asleep during rest times their face is to be uncovered.
- If a child falls asleep make contact with parent in regards to how long they can sleep for.
- Staff to communicate with other staff to ensure everyone is aware of child asleep.
- The sleep and rest environment and equipment will be safe and regularly checked for hazards. This includes all equipment complying with the Australian Standards.
- Supervision planning and the placement of educators across our service will ensure educators are able to adequately supervise sleeping and resting children.
- Educators will closely monitor sleeping and resting children and our sleep rest environments. This involves checking/inspecting sleeping children at regular intervals, and ensuring that we are always within sight and hearing distance of sleeping and resting children so that we can assess a child's breathing and the colour of their skin. Service providers will consider the risk for each individual child, and tailor sleep and rest to reflect the levels of risk identified for children at our service. Factors considered include the age of the child, medical conditions, individual needs and history of health and/or sleep issues.

Reviewing sleep practices

Our Director is required to review their service's sleep practices and environments on a regular basis to ensure practices are consistent with recommended safe sleep practices. The resource [sleep, rest, relaxation and the National Quality Standard](#) outlines key questions for reflection under the NQS.

Safe sleeping resources

Further information about recommended safe sleeping practices can be obtained from:

- > [SIDS and Kids SA](#) phone 8332 1066 or Red Nose safe sleeping phone 1300 308 307, email education@rednose.com.au for safe sleeping enquiries and training opportunities
- > [Red Nose](#) for downloadable brochures (in a range of languages) and smart phone applications, sign up for regular newsletters covering safe sleeping and child safety education and Australian and Consumer Commission (ACCC) updates
- > [Kidsafe SA](#) phone 8161 6318
- > [Child and Family Health Service](#)

Supporting information

[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#)

[Education and Early Childhood Services \(Registration and Standards\) Act 2011](#)

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)

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