

## Sleep, Rest, & Relaxation

### Policy introduction & Purpose

Our programs aim to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation in a safe and caring manner, taking into consideration the preferences and practices of each child's family. Weldon defines 'rest' as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness or tranquillity, and may include a child being in a state of sleep.

We 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 protect them from harm and hazard. In meeting Weldon's duty of care, it is a requirement that all Educators implement and adhere to this policy to ensure we respect and cater to each child's specific needs.

### Our policy in action

Weldon 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.

### Weldon's Responsibilities:

- Reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by Weldon are met, having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of each child.
- There are adequate numbers of cots and bedding available to children that meet Australian Standards.
- All cots used in our Early Years Programs will meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for Cots (AS/NZS 2172) and will carry a label to indicate this.
- Sleep and rest environments will be safe and free from hazards.
- Areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have natural lighting.
- The supervision window (or similar) will be kept clear to ensure safe supervision of sleeping infants.
- Safe sleep practices are documented and shared with families.
- Nominated Supervisors and Educators are not expected to endorse practices requested by a family, if they differ from Red Nose safe (formerly SIDS and Kids) sleeping recommendations.

### The Nominated Supervisor responsibilities:

- Take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children are met, having regard to the ages, development stages and individual needs of the children.
- Maintain up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practice and communicate this information to Educators and families.
- Ensure that sleeping infants are closely monitored. This involves checking/inspecting sleeping children at regular intervals [e.g. 10 minutes]. The check-in involves checking room temperature, and ensuring that the children are breathing. Each check is to be documented on the sleep chart.
- Collaborate with families regarding a sleep and rest routine to follow the child's home routine as much as is practical in the program.

- Ensure educators receive information and training to fulfil their role effectively, including being made aware of the sleep and rest policies, their responsibilities in implementing these, and any changes that are made over time.
- Ensure children who are sleeping or resting have their face uncovered at all times.
- Provide information to parents and families about Safe Sleep practices. (see Red Nose)
- Ensure that beds/mattresses are clean and in good repair.
- Ensure that bed linen is clean and in good repair.
- Ensure mattresses are kept in good condition; they should be clean, firm and flat, and fit the cot base with not more than a 20mm gap between the mattress sides and ends. A firm sleep surface that is compliant with the new AS/NZS Voluntary Standard (AS/NZS 8811.1:2013 Methods of testing infant products – Sleep surfaces – Test for firmness) should be used.

#### Educators responsibilities:

- Collaborate with families about children's sleep and rest needs.
- Be sensitive to each child's needs so that sleep and rest times are a positive experience.
- Ensure bed linen is used by an individual child and is washed before use by another child.
- Ensure each bed is sanitised in between each child and/or each week.
- Arrange children's beds and cots to allow easy access for children and staff, and minimising cross infection
- Create a relaxing environment for sleeping children by playing relaxation music, reading stories, turning off lights, and ensuring children are comfortably clothed.
- Maintain adequate supervision and maintain Educator ratios throughout the sleep period.
- Respect family preferences regarding sleep and rest and consider these daily while ensuring children feel safe and secure in the environment.
- Sleep and rest patterns will be recorded daily for families.
- Encourage children to dress appropriately for the room temperature when resting or sleeping.
- Ensure children rest/sleep with their beds/mattresses head to toe to minimise the risk of cross-infection.
- Ensure that children who do not wish to sleep are provided with alternative quiet activities and experiences, whilst those children who do wish to sleep are allowed to do so, without being disrupted.
- Respond to children's cues for sleep (yawning, rubbing eyes, disengagement from activities, crying etc). 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 a school-age child requests a rest, a designated area for the child to be inactive and calm, away from the main group of children is provided. The designated rest area may include a cushion, bean bag or comfortable seat in a quiet section of the care environment.
- Soft furnishings ( see above) will be sanitised regularly

## Standard Procedures:

### Educators will:

- Give bottle-fed children their bottles before going to bed. Ensure children are not be put in cots or beds with bottles.
- Observe children at 10-minute intervals while they sleep in these rooms. Educators must go into the rooms and physically see observe babies breathing, check the colour of their skin, and the temperature of the room. The Educator will then record this on a Cot Room Check Form.
- Encourage the use of sleeping bags with armholes for babies as there is no risk of the infant's face being covered.
- Securely lock cots sides into place to ensure children's safety.
- Turn off wall-mounted heaters before children use the room for sleeping. Cot rooms may be air-conditioned and maintained at an appropriate temperature.
- Be aware of manual handling practices when lifting babies in and out of cots.
- Participate in staff development of safe sleeping practices.
- Understand that prams/strollers do not carry safety codes for sleep. Infants should be closely supervised at all times if they are asleep in a pram/stroller.
- Not elevate or tilt mattresses.
- There are to be no pillows, doonas, loose bedding or fabric, lamb's wool, bumpers and soft toys in cots.
- Babies should be placed on their back to sleep when first being settled. Once a baby has been observed to repeatedly roll from back to front and back again on their own, they can be left to find their preferred sleep or rest position.
- If a medical condition exists that prevents a baby from being placed on their back, the alternative practises should be confirmed in writing with the Program by the child's medical practitioner.
- To prevent a baby from wriggling down under bed linen, they should be positioned with their feet near the bottom of the cot.
- Ensure any bed linen is securely tucked underneath the mattress so it cannot ride up and cover the baby's chest or cover his/her head.
- If a baby is wrapped when sleeping, the family will need to show the educators how to wrap their child. Use only lightweight wraps such as cotton or muslin.
- Families may choose to use a dummy as a comforter at sleep time and or when settling into the program. Due to the risk of cross contamination the use of dummies is discouraged throughout the rest of the day.

### Links to other policies

The following policies may be linked to this policy:

- Interaction with Children
- Medical Conditions
- Family Participation and Communication

## Sources

- ACECQA. (n.d.). Safe sleep and rest practices:  
<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/information-sheets/safe-sleep-and-rest-practices>
- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC). (2013). Find out more: Keeping baby safe: [https://www.accc.gov.au/system/files/639\\_Keeping%20Baby%20Safe\\_text\\_FA4-WEB%20ONLY.pdf](https://www.accc.gov.au/system/files/639_Keeping%20Baby%20Safe_text_FA4-WEB%20ONLY.pdf)
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).
- Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017). (2020)
- Red Nose: <https://rednose.com.au/section/safe-practices>
- Red Nose: <https://rednose.com.au/section/safe-sleeping>
- Revised National Quality Standard. (2020).
- The NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- The NSW Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017
- Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services replaces the 5th edition