

2.5 Sleep and Rest

Background

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. At Acorn Child Care Centres, sleep and rest are regarded as fundamental needs for children. Sleep and rest provision is catered for in each room and all children are expected to partake in this as part of the daily routine.

We understand that adequate sleep/rest is important for children's overall development and contributes to their wellbeing. Having adequate time to sleep or rest during the day, allows the children to rejuvenate their bodies and minds.

Policy Statement

This Policy sets out how 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 takes 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. QA 2.1.2
- 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. QA 2.1.2
- 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 and a cot waiver form is fill in by the parent / guardian and kept on file. QA 2.1.2
- The Service's sleep/rest strategies and practices are outlined in enrolment forms and newsletters. Information from SIDS and Kids on safe sleeping practices is displayed on the noticeboards, together with other useful information on sleeping (at the Service or at home). QA 2.3.2
- All children are placed on their back when being settled for a rest. Children who turn onto their side or stomach during sleep are left undisturbed. QA 2.1.2
- Staff ratios are maintained according to the Education and Care Services National Regulations during sleep/rest periods. A risk management plan has been developed and available to families. QA 4.1.1
- All children who are resting will be supervised by staff.
- Students or volunteers will not be left unsupervised when settling children for a rest.
- Adults will not rest or sleep in same environment as a child or group of children.
- The Service may use the rest period condition waiver. A rest period condition is a condition on a service approval providing for one or more periods during a day, totalling not more the

2 hours. Supervision ratios during resting periods for children 2 years and above will be higher due to the rest period condition waiver. Staff will be allowed to cover their own lunches while children are resting. There will be a float staff member available to assist staff in rooms if needed.

- Educators constantly monitor the children (e.g. breathing patterns) and sleep/rest environment (e.g. room temperature). QA 2.1.2, 2.3.1
- Sleep/rest areas are kept well-ventilated, uncluttered and appropriately lit and, as with all other areas of the Service, are smoke-free. QA 2.3.1
- 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 and amber necklaces). Educators are respectful and sensitive to cultural differences in attitudes to dressing, and encourage children to be independent in dressing at these times. QA 2.1.2, 2.3.2
- 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. QA 2.3.2
- Rest periods (excludes babies rooms) are between 12:30-2.30pm. All children are encouraged to have a rest on their beds. If a child does not fall asleep after a suitable time they will be provided with quiet activities. Between 2 and 2:30 pm curtains will be opened in the room and lights turned on. Children still asleep will be left to wake by themselves.
- Parents need to be aware that children are required to rest quietly for 30 minutes as rest is an essential need for growth and development at this age. If the child falls asleep in this time on their own they will not be woken. It is considered that they fell asleep because they are in need of this sleep.
- To help children relax for sleep/rest, educators dim the lights, play calming music, use quiet soothing voices and, sometimes, use guided relaxation techniques. QA 2.1.2
- Children where age appropriate help educators in setting up the sleep/rest area and the quiet activities for children who do not sleep.
- The Service supplies bed sets for cots and mattresses. Each bed set consists of a fitted bottom sheet and a loose top sheet. Bed linen is washed weekly and stored in an individual bag with the child's name on it. QA 2.1.3
- The children's beds are cleaned/sprayed daily with a non-rinse disinfectant daily before being stored. QA 2.1.3
- Beds are positioned so that educators may walk between them to gain easy access to every bed from all four sides. QA 2.3.1
- Every child's sleep pattern for the day (e.g. time the child went to sleep and woke up) is recorded on the Routine Communication Sheet. QA 2.1.2
- Educators receive regular first-aid training in resuscitation, and SIDS and Kids guidelines. QA 2.1.4, 4.1.1

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.

- 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. QA 2.1.2
- All children rest with faces uncovered. Hooded tops, bibs, dummy chains, amber bead necklaces and shoes are removed before children are put to rest.
- Families are asked to provide bracelets or ankle amber beads for teething. Acorn will not take responsibility for lost or misplaced amber necklaces, as we do not support items around children's necks, as we follow guidelines from SIDS. QA 2.1.2
- Children are placed with their feet at the bottom of their cot or mattress, and bedclothes are tucked in securely. QA 2.1.2
- 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. QA 2.1.2
- 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. QA 2.1.2, 2.3.2
- Snugly rugs/blankets and soft toys are not recommended for use for children under the age of 12 months. If a parent wishes their child to have a security item, they must fill in a sleep waiver form stating the reason this is required. Once the child is asleep the item will be removed from the cot, as per SIDS guidelines QA 2.1.2, 2.3.2
- Mobiles or toys with stretch elastic cords are not used within reach of cots. QA 2.1.2, 2.3.2
- Cots are positioned well away from dangling electrical and curtain /blind cords, heaters, fans and other electrical appliances, and power points. QA 2.1.2, 2.3.2
- 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. QA 2.1.2
- The viewing window to the cot room is kept clear of obstruction, and educators check sleeping infants every 10 minutes, and initial the Sleep and Rest Register. QA 2.3.1
- All cots in the Service meet the Australian Standard, are assembled according to manufacturer's instructions, and are maintained in good condition. QA 2.1.2
- 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. QA 2.1.2
- No child is placed in a cot if the child has the ability to climb out. QA 2.3.2

- Cot mattresses and cots are sprayed and wiped useall and paper towel/once only use chux at the end of a full time child's week, or after each instance a part-time child has used the cot. QA 2.1.3
- The sleep/rest area, as are all other areas of the Service, is smoke-free. QA 2.3.2
- The temperature of the room is monitored to ensure children's comfort. QA 3.2.1
- Each child is always put to bed in the same cot.
- No child is to wear teething or any other necklaces while sleeping
- If a child has a bottle for rest time, an Educator must be in view of this child at all times. When the child has finished their bottle, it is remove straight away.

Additional safe resting practices for a child who is unwell

- Consistent with the Service's Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness and Supervision Policies, children who are unwell are constantly monitored until collected by their parent(s). QA 2.1.4

Responsibilities of parents

- 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).
- To provide any comforters necessary.
- To read the Daily Feedback Sheet

Links to other policies

- Evacuation and Lock Down Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Interactions with Families
- Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Policy

Sources, further reading and useful websites

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011.
- NCAC. (2011). *Factsheet: Safe sleep and rest in child care*

http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/family-resources/factsheets/Safe_Sleeping.pdf accessed 24 November 2013

- 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 24 November 2013

- Sids and Kids – <http://www.sidsandkids.org/>

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