

Purpose

At our service we believe that effective rest and, where necessary, sleep strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels safe, secure and comfortable in the service environment. The service defines 'rest' as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness or tranquillity and is considered different to a child being in a state of sleep regarding the school age care of children. Whilst most children who access our service may never need to sleep or rest during their time at the service, it is important that educators can accommodate the rest needs of all children regardless of their age if it is needed. Examples of when this may be necessary are when children are feeling unwell if they are tired from an excursion or if they have additional needs and their rest requirements are greater than their peers.

Scope

This policy meets the following Quality Areas and Regulations:

- Quality Area 2: Childrens Health and Safety
- National Quality Standard Elements: 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1.
- Education and Care Services National Regulations: 84A, 84B, 84C, 84D.

Policy

Safe Sleep Practices for all Children

In accordance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, the service will ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children in the service are met, having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of the children.

The service's Sleep and Rest Policy is based on recommendations from the evidence-based practice detailed on the ACECQA website.

The service consults with families about their child's individual needs and to be aware of the different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise that are associated with rest.

If a family's beliefs and practices conflict with the evidence-based practice recommendations, then the service will not endorse an alternative practice, unless the service is provided with written advice from a medical practitioner.

The service has a duty of care to ensure that all children are provided with a high level of safety when resting or sleeping while in care.

In meeting the service's duty of care, it is a requirement that management and educators implement and adhere to the service's Sleep and Rest Policy.

All children will be encouraged to lay on their back to rest when first being settled for a rest. If a child turns onto their side or stomach during sleep, then allow them to find their own sleeping position.

All children will rest with their face uncovered.

Children's rest environments are free from cigarette or tobacco smoke.

The rest environment, equipment and materials will be safe and free from hazards.

Educators monitor resting children at regular intervals and supervise the rest environment.

Rest for School-Age Children

If a school age child requests a rest, then there is a designated area for the child to be inactive and calm, away from the main group of children.

The designated rest area may be a cushion, mat or seat in a quiet section of the care environment.

Quiet, solitary play experiences are available for those school age children who request the need for a rest or time away from their peers.

Safe resting practices are relevant to school age children because, if they are resting or sleeping, they should be monitored at regular intervals and a school aged child's face should be uncovered when they are sleeping as described above.

Light bedding is the preferred option if requested by the child.

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Sleep and Rest Policy

Version 1.0

Educators will show awareness of children's comfort and avoiding overcrowding when children need rest or sleep.

Our service will provide a range of both active and restful experiences throughout the program and support children's preferences for participation.

Safe Rest Practices for a Child who is Unwell

Child will be encouraged to rest in a quiet, comfortable and safe place.

Child will be encouraged to lie down & make themselves comfortable when displaying signs of being unwell.

Children will be allowed to find their own sleeping position.

All children will rest with their face uncovered.

Children who are unwell (and waiting collection from a parent /guardian) will be given the highest supervision priority and monitored constantly especially if the child has a high temperature, vomited or received minor trauma to their head. For example, a child who has received a blow to the head while playing sport.

Parents will be contacted immediately to make suitable arrangements to collect the child as soon as possible.

Refer to the service's Incident, Illness, Injury and Trauma policy for additional information.

Rest/sleep Environment and Equipment

The service will ensure a rest or sleep space is available or can be always made available to children. This could include a quiet area with cushions, a book corner with floor cushions, a lounge or armchair etc.

The area and equipment will be checked regularly as part of the services safety check and hazard identification practices.

Hygiene standards will be maintained when children use the rest/sleep area and equipment such as regularly washing pillowcases and blankets, particularly when a child is unwell.

The service will ensure the room temperature, airflow, noise and lighting is conducive to sleep and rest when necessary.

Children's clothing items should be checked prior to them sleeping to ensure it doesn't present any hazards to them whilst asleep.

Assessment of Sleep and Rest Practices

A risk assessment of the sites sleep rest space and practices will be carried out annually OR as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstances that may impact the safety, health, or wellbeing of children during sleep and rest. This assessment will identify and assess any risks the designated space and the associated activities may pose to the safety, health and wellbeing of children and outline steps to manage and minimise them.

Approval

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