

## Policy Statement

This policy acts to ensure that:

- The health, safety and wellbeing of children attending our service is considered and appropriate opportunities are provided to meet each child's need for sleep, relaxation and rest
- The environment where children sleep and rest is safe and well supervised to ensure children are safe, healthy and secure

## Explanation

All children have individual sleep and rest requirements. Children need a comfortable relaxing environment to enable their bodies to rest. This environment must be safe and well supervised to ensure children are safe, healthy and secure in their environment.

Sleep and rest facilities appropriate for the age of the children attending our service will be available at all times.

The risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI), including Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) will be minimised by following practices and guidelines set out by relevant health authorities.

## Goals

- Our service will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs
- To ensure that beds and cots provided by the service comply with Australian Standards
- To ensure that 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
- Our approach to support and promote children's health and physical activity, including safe sleep and nutrition is informed by current and up-to-date information
- The risk of Sudden Unexpected Death Infancy (SUDI), including Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) will be minimised by following practices and guidelines set out by relevant health authorities

## Strategies

Approved Providers, Nominated Supervisors and Educators have a duty of care to ensure children are provided with a high level of safety when sleeping and resting. This includes ensuring adequate lighting to support effective supervision by Educators, ventilation for children, and that every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and hazard.

**Policy Created**  
February 2016

**Policy Last Updated**  
April 2024

**Policy Review Date**  
March 2026

## Safe Equipment

- The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) sets out standards and requirements for sleep and bedding equipment such as portacots. Portacots should only be used for temporary, short-term arrangements
- All equipment used is to carry safety codes that meet the Australian Standards for sleep. Bassinets, hammocks and prams/strollers are not considered safe equipment to sleep in and cannot be considered a substitute for a cot
- Bassinets are not to be on the Education and Care Services premises at any time that children are being educated and cared for
- Equipment will not be used in any way that it was not originally intended to be used for
- Equipment will not be used if it has been recalled. All bedding equipment must meet the relevant safety standards (including AS/NZS 2195 and AS/NZS 8811 1:2013)
- Red Nose recommends only using rockers and bouncers for supervised play time. Children are on an incline position whilst on this equipment, so there needs to be active supervision at all times. Rockers and bouncers should never be used unsupervised, and they should never be used for sleeping, or as a substitute for a safe sleep space

## Safe Cot Mattress

- Mattresses should always be in good condition, they should be clean, firm and flat. Cot mattresses should fit the cot with no more than a 20mm gap between the mattress sides and ends
- A firm sleep surface that is compliant with the AS/NZS Voluntary Standard (AS/NZS 8811 1:2013 Methods of testing infant products – Sleep Surfaces – Test for firmness) should be used
- Mattresses should never be elevated or tilted

## Porta Cots

- Porta Cots must meet current Australian Standards
- Educators must be aware of the product safety guidelines for the use of Porta Cots in the Family Day Care home or venue, follow these and retain a copy of this information as a reference
- Educators must be aware of the weight limit of the Porta Cots being used in the Family Day Care home or venue and the current weight of the children resting or sleeping in the cot
- Porta Cots must be checked regularly to mitigate risk

## **Safe Bedding**

- Light bedding that meets Australian Standards is recommended
- Remove pillows, doonas, loose bedding or fabric from cots

## **Supervision during Sleep and Rest**

- The space used for sleep and rest will have adequate light and ventilation so that Educators can supervise each child
- Children sleeping and resting will always be within sight and hearing distance so that Educators can monitor children's safety and wellbeing, and respond immediately when a child is distressed or in a hazardous situation
- Children will be physically checked/inspected at least every 10 minutes by inspection of the child's:
  - Sleeping position
  - Skin and lip colour
  - Breathing
  - Body Temperature
  - Head position, airway head and face, ensuring they remain uncovered
- The sleep check will be documented and signed by the observer (date, time, signature recorded)
- The service will not use CCTV, audio monitors or heart monitors to replace physical checks
- The service will take into consideration the risk for each individual child, such as considering the age of the child, medical conditions, individual needs and history of health and /or sleep issues
- Educators will maintain active supervision and will not perform programming or administrative duties that would take their attention away from sleeping and resting children

## **Assessing Risk for Sleep and Rest Times**

- The service will conduct a risk assessment to identify and mitigate risks associated with sleep and rest. These will include:
  - Individual needs of children
  - Location of the sleep and rest space
  - Environment
  - Equipment used for sleep and rest
  - Supervision practices
  - Ventilation
  - Lighting
  - Beds and linen

- Educator's understanding of the services sleep and rest policy and procedures
- The service will conduct a sleep and rest risk assessment at least once every 12 months, and as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstance that may affect the safety, health and wellbeing of children during sleep and rest
- The service will make any necessary updates to the sleep and rest policies and procedures as soon as practicable after conducting the sleep and rest risk assessments and keep a record of each sleep and rest risk assessment conducted

### **Children in Cots**

- Children will not be put in cots or to bed with bottles, children will be given their bottles before going to bed
- Children will be physically checked/inspected at least every 10 minutes by inspection of the child's:
  - Sleeping position
  - Skin and lip colour
  - Breathing
  - Body Temperature
  - Head position, airway head and face, ensuring they remain uncovered
- Record the exact time that the check was done, not retrospectively
- Ensure that cot mattresses are clean, firm and the correct size for the cot frame
- Make up cots to comply with Red Nose safe sleeping messages
  - Babies will be placed on their backs to sleep but they will be able to find their own sleeping position
  - No loose bedding is to be available to the child
  - Bed linen will be firmly tucked under the mattress to reduce the risk of the child covering their face
  - Put the baby's feet at the bottom of the cot so the baby cannot slip down under the covers
  - Tuck the baby in securely so bed linen is not loose
  - Remove doonas, duvets, pillows and cot bumpers from the cot
- Encourage the use of sleeping suits for babies
- Securely lock cot sides into place to ensure children's safety
- Be aware of manual handling practices when lifting babies in and out of cots
- Participate in professional development about safe sleep practices
- If dummies are being used Educators will adhere to Red Nose recommendations for dummy use, including not reinserting a dummy if it falls out when a child is sleeping, not coating a dummy in anything sweet and cleaning dummies often

- Red Nose recommends that once a child has the capacity to climb out of a cot, they should be transitioned from the cot to minimise risk of falling

## **Communication with Families about Safe Sleep Practices**

- Communication about safe sleep practices will occur upon enrolment
- Ongoing regular and open communication about children's sleep practices so that accurate risk assessments can be made about a child's vulnerability to SUDI, this is particularly important in very young babies between birth and 12 months
- The service will consult with families about their child's routine for sleep and rest at home and carry this out at the service where possible and safe to do so, in line with the prevailing safe sleep practices recommended by Red Nose Australia
- The service will consult with families about their child's individual needs and be sensitive to different values, cultural or parenting beliefs associated with sleep and rest. If there is conflict with current recommendations the Approved Provider will determine if there are exceptional circumstances that allow for alternate practices, and if these are supported by the recommendations of the child's medical practitioner

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Approved Provider**

- "Take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the service are met, having regard to the ages, development stages and individual needs of the children" (Regulation 84)
- Undertake a risk assessment to ensure adequate supervision and monitoring of children during periods of sleep and rest is conducted and documented, including the method and frequency of checking children's safety, health and wellbeing
- Ensure all equipment meets Australian Standards
- Ensure that areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated, have adequate natural lighting and are maintained at a temperature that ensures the safety and wellbeing of children
- Ensure Educators receive information and induction training to fulfill their roles effectively around sleep and rest for children
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that all Educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures
- Ensure the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the service are met, having regard to the age, developmental stage and individual needs of the children

- Ensure the premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and in good repair
- Ensure the cots, bed, bedding and bedding equipment being used for sleep and rest are safe and appropriate for the ages and developmental stages of children who will use them
- Ensure that each child has access to sufficient furniture, materials and developmentally appropriate equipment suitable for the education and care of that child
- Ensure the space being used for sleep and /or rest is designed to facilitate supervision
- Ensure sleep and rest environments are kept free from cigarette or tobacco smoke
- Ensure children are supervised during periods of sleep and rest, this should include ensuring clear procedures and processes are in place for regular physical bed-side checks of children and recording all checks at the time they occur
- For FDC services consider best practice guidelines for safe sleeping environments and equipment when undertaking assessments and reassessments of FDC residences and approved FDC venues

### **Nominated Supervisor/Coordinator**

- Ensure that children's health, safety and wellbeing are upheld at all times
- Maintain up to date knowledge regarding safe sleep practices and communicate this with Educators and families
- Support all Educators to have knowledge, training and practical skills to implement safe sleep and rest practices, develop secure attachments with children and provide sensitive and responsive care
- Ensure there is a procedure for Educators to record time and observation of physical checks of children when sleeping and resting
- When visiting Family Day Care Educators monitor sleeping practices
- Distribute resources on safe sleeping for Family Day Care Educators, including guidelines for Infant Sleeping and the reduction of SUDI

### **Educators**

- Consult 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 that beds/mattresses are clean and in good repair. Beds and mattresses will be wiped over with warm water and vinegar between each use

- Ensure that bed linen is clean and in good repair. Bed linen is for use by an individual child and will be washed before use by another child
- Identify and remove potential hazards from sleep environments such as blinds and cords, necklaces and jewellery, doonas, loose bedding, soft toys
- Ensure the sleeping environment has been considered, with hazards in the sleeping environment removed or mitigated
- Arrange children's cots and beds to allow easy access for children and Educators
- Create a relaxing atmosphere for resting children
- Remember that children do not need to be patted to sleep, by providing a quiet, tranquil environment children will choose to sleep if their body needs it
- Promote children's agency and decision making by providing routines and environments that facilitate rest and sleep opportunities
- Ensure the physical environment caters for non-resting children, such as providing separate resting spaces and incorporating quiet activities in to the program
- Maintain active supervision at all times that children are sleeping or resting, children should always be within sight and hearing distance, checking children at least every ten minutes to see the rise and fall of each child's chest and the colour of their skin and lips
- Ensure that the needs for sleep and rest for children are met, taking into account the ages and development of each child
- Assess each child's circumstances and current health to determine whether higher supervision levels and checks may be required
- Communicate with families about their child's sleeping or rest times, and the services policy regarding sleep and rest time
- Respect cultural differences in relation to sleeping and consider these daily while ensuring children feel safe and secure in the environment
- Ensure children sleep and rest with their face uncovered
- Encourage children to dress appropriately for the room temperature when resting or sleeping. Lighter clothing is preferable, with children encouraged to remove shoes, jumpers, jackets and bulky clothing
- Avoid using sleep and rest practices as a behaviour guidance strategy
- Provide a comfortable quiet place for each child to sleep or rest at any time of the day

## Family Day Care Educators

- Maintain current knowledge of safe sleep and rest practices, through regularly accessing the Red Nose website - [www.rednose.com.au](http://www.rednose.com.au)
- In conjunction with CCEL consult with families about their child's individual needs and be sensitive to different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise, associated with sleep and rest
- Work with CCEL staff to encourage families to adopt recommended safe sleep and rest practices in cases where their requests differ with Red Nose recommendations
- Ensure the provision of the endorsement of a sleep practice by the baby's medical practitioner if their families requests differ with Red Nose recommendations
- Ensure that there are adequate numbers of cots, stretchers and bedding available to children that meet the Australian Standards, and that these are safe, clean and in good repair
- Ensure that all cots meet AS/NZS 2172 and carry a label to indicate that
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the assembly and use of cots
- Ensure that the sleep space is close to the main activity room to enable close observation of sleeping and resting children
- Ensure that supervision windows are kept clear to ensure safe supervision of sleeping children
- Ensure sleep and rest environments are free from cigarette or tobacco smoke
- Ensure that bed linen is clean and in good repair. Bed linen is for use by one child and will be washed before being used by another child
- Communicate with families about their child's sleeping or rest times
- Ensure children will sleep and rest with their face uncovered
- Ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children are met, taking into account the ages, development and individual needs of each child
- Develop a sleep monitoring plan and record these practices on a daily basis
- Ensure that cots are regularly checked, maintained and kept in a hygienic manner
- Children are **not** to share the same bed at the same time
- Ensure that provision is made for:
  - Clean and comfortable mattresses and other bedding, which is in good repair
  - All forms of bedding must be fitted with a waterproof cover
  - If a lounge is regularly used as resting place for a child it must have a waterproof cover
  - Bed clothing appropriate to the climate



- Fresh linen and blankets for each child
- **No** child is to sleep in a room in which an adult is sleeping
- Ensure cots, beds, stretchers, mattresses and other bedding at the Educator's premises are arranged so as to:
  - Be in an area that has natural light
  - Allow easy exit of any child
  - Allow easy access to any child
  - Reduce the risk of cross infection between children
- Remove any unnecessary furniture from the sleeping space that could cause accidental injury or become a trip or fall hazard
- Ensure the safe placement of cots in their home e.g. away from windows where there are blinds and/or curtain cords
- Support children moving from play to rest calmly
- Make provision for children who do not wish to sleep or rest during the day
- Be sensitive to each child's "comfort" for sleeping and to make rest time a positive experience
- Assessment of each child's sleeping circumstances and needs should be undertaken to determine any risk factors
- Ensure that sleeping infants are closely monitored and sleeping children remain within hearing range of the Educator and are also regularly monitored in accordance with the Educators Safe Sleep Plan
- Sleeping children should always be within sight and hearing distance so that Educators can assess the child's breathing and colour of their skin to ensure their safety and wellbeing
- Respect cultural differences in relation to sleeping
- Provide a comfortable quiet place for each child to sleep at any time of the day
- Children's linen should be stored hygienically so that used linen does not touch clean linen, or other children's linen
- Linen should be regularly washed
- Discuss with parent's children's sleeping arrangements
- Follow recommendations by the National SIDS Council of Australia for the practice of safe sleeping, in an effort to reduce the risk of Sudden Infants Death Syndrome (SIDS), unless directed otherwise in writing by a medical practitioner

**LINKS TO:**

- **Education & Care Services National Law**  
Section 165, 167
- **Education & Care Services National Regulations**  
81, 82, 84a, 84b, 84c, 84d, 87, 103, 105, 106, 107, 110, 115, 116, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172
- **National Quality Standards/Elements:**  
2.1.1, 2.1.2, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 6.1.2, 7.1.3
- **Child Safe Standards**  
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

## Families

- Ensure that their child is able to self-settle for sleep and rest in line with current Red Nose recommendations
- Keep the service updated on their child's sleep and routines and /or rest requirements
- Provide informal updates on the previous night's sleep to assist with sleeping during the day
- Work in partnership with Educators and Coordinators to ensure their child has consistent routines and settles into care with minimal stress
- Provide an endorsement from their baby's medical practitioner if they request sleep and rest practices that differ from Red Nose recommendations

## Continual Monitoring and Improvement

Continual improvement and monitoring will occur in the following ways:

- Incidental and planned consultation with families
- Approved Provider and Coordinators accessing current relevant information
- Approved Provider, Coordinators and Educators accessing current and relevant training
- Internal evaluation of incidences and the improvement of systems

## SOURCES

- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Education and Care Services National Law
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Guide to the National Quality Standard
- Implementing the Child Safe Standards: A Guide for Early Education and Outside School Hours Care Services, NSW Department of Education
- A Guide to the Child Safe Standards, NSW Office of the Children's Guardian
- ACECQA – FDC Approved Provider compliance responsibilities
- Be You
- My Time Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia
- The Early Years Learning Framework
- ECA Code of Ethics
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Red Nose Resources & Factsheets
- ACECQA Sleep and Rest for Children – Policy Guidelines
- Safe Sleep Practices in Family Day Care Settings – Red Nose

### LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES:

- Administration of First Aid
- Child-Safe Environment
- Emergency & Evacuation
- Enrolment & Orientation
- Interactions with Children
- Staffing