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Sleep and Rest Policy

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Date Created: November 2011 Date to be reviewed: April 2024 Version No: 11

Policy Statement:

Yarrunga Early Learning Centre acknowledges that 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 are imperative for adequate mental and physical health and assists in consolidating new skills learnt.

Background:

Yarrunga Early Learning Centre will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs. Yarrunga will provide beds and cots that comply with Australian Standards. The risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) will be minimised by following practices and guidelines recognised by health authorities.

Scope:

This policy applies to all educators and families that attend Yarrunga Early Learning Centre.

Relevant legislation:

Education and Care Services National Regulations*.* Reg 81 (Sleep and Rest) 103, 105, 110, 115

Guidelines for Red Nose Safe Sleeping in Childcare Facilities

Australian Consumer Law 2011 - Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

The NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011 & the NSW Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011

Location of information:

This information is provided to families on enrolment, as well as from the office on request. Educators are able to access policies directly from their room laptops.

Reference sources:

Guide to the National Quality Standard (3) ACECQA

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations

Red Nose Safe Sleeping Kit – https://rednose.com.au

Standards Australia – www.standards.org.au

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) – [www.accc.gov.au](../www.accc.gov.au) – Cot safety PDF

Strategies:

**The Approved Provider will:**

* “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 81.)
* Ensure there are adequate numbers of cots and bedding available to children that meet Australian Standards.
* Ensure that all cots meet AS/NZS 2172.
* Ensure that areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have natural lighting.
* Ensure that supervision windows are kept clear to ensure safe observation of sleeping children.

**The Nominated Supervisor will:**

* Maintain up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practice and communicate this information to educators and families.

**Educators will:**

* Consult with families about children’s sleep and rest needs. Educators will 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/ mattresses will be wiped over with Germex and a different paper towel for each bed, between each use.
* Ensure that bed linen is clean and in good repair. Bed linen is washed daily.
* Arrange children’s beds and cots, (alternating head to toe) to allow easy access for children and staff.
* Create a relaxing atmosphere for resting children by playing relaxation music, reading stories, turning off lights and ensuring children are comfortably clothed. The environment should be tranquil and calm for both educators and children. Educators will sit near resting children and support them by encouraging them to relax and listen to music or stories.
* 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. It is recommended that educators will only sit with each child for 10-minute periods. It is at the educator’s discretion, in consultation with families, if they sit with them longer as some children need to be sat with longer to help them wind down. Please remember to use back support chairs while patting.
* Encourage children to rest their bodies and minds for 20-30 minutes. If children are awake after this time, they will be provided with alternative activities for the duration of rest time.
* Maintain adequate supervision and maintain educator ratios throughout the sleep/ rest period.
* 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 our policy regarding sleep and rest times.
* Respect family preferences regarding sleep and rest and consider these daily while ensuring children feel safe and secure in the environment. Conversations with families may be necessary to remind families that children will neither be forced to sleep, nor prevented from sleeping. Sleep and rest patterns will be recorded daily for families. When waking the children, as requested by families, we will only wake them after each 45-minute sleep cycle (as advised as per Alina Dan audit).
* 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. The room temperature (no higher than 23˚) will be considered to ensure maximum comfort for the children.

**Children in Cots**

**Educators will**:

* Give bottle-fed children their bottles before going to bed. Children will not be put in cots or in beds with bottles as per the Dental Health Policy and Red Nose recommendations.
* Ensure that cot rooms and sleep rooms must have operational baby monitors on at all times.
* Observe children at 10-15-minute intervals while they sleep in these rooms. Educators must physically go into the rooms and observe babies skin colour and breathing. The educator will then officially record this.
* 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 guidelines. 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 linens will be firmly tucked under the mattress to reduce the risk of a 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. No doonas, duvets, pillows or cot bumpers will be placed in cots.
* Encourage the use of sleeping bags for babies. If they have fitted neck and armholes there is no risk to the child’s face being covered.
* If a baby is swaddled, their head will not be covered.
* Babies under six months of age, do not engage in exploring objects in their sleeping environment and are developmentally too young to take comfort from a toy or object to help them manage any separation distress. Seven-month-old babies are more likely to explore objects in their sleeping environment than younger babies. Some babies over seven months of age may appreciate a small object such as a soft toy to provide comfort and connection during times of separation from their parent.
* Securely lock cots sides into place to ensure children’s safety.
* Check the temperature on wall-mounted heaters before children use the room for sleeping. Cot rooms will be air conditioned and maintained at an appropriate temperature no higher than 23°.
* Be aware of manual handling practices when lifting babies in and out of cots.
* Participate in staff development about safe sleeping practices. The education and care service will access the Red Nose resource kit and provide information to families on safe sleeping practices.
* Place to Sleep – Educators are aware of and avoid these hazards in the nursery environment:
* Soft sleeping places such as tri-pillows or bean bags
* Dangling cords or strings are removed
* Hot water bottles or wheat bags will not be used.
* Educators will always do up restraints when a baby is in a stroller or any other baby/toddler equipment. Children and babies are not to be slept in prams and if they fall asleep in the pram they must be moved to a cot or stretcher bed. Following safe sleep recommendations from Red Nose (2022)

Evaluation:

Communication with families is maintained to encourage a consistent approach in responding appropriately and respectfully to children’s sleep and rest needs. Safe sleeping practices are followed to minimise the risk of harm to children and babies.