

Sleep and Rest Procedure

National Quality Standard Area 2 | Children's health and safety

Children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment that safeguards and promotes their health, safety, and wellbeing.

Purpose

This procedure outlines our responsibility in relation to safe sleep and rest procedures compliant with provisions related to children's sleep and rest under the *South Australian Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011*. This includes the *Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations* (including the National Quality Standard (NQS)). Regulation 81 prescribes that services must take reasonable steps to ensure that children's needs for sleep and rest are met, having regard to each child's age, development and needs.

This intention of this procedure is to ensure educators;

- are aware of, and comply with, current evidence-based safe sleep practices and safe sleep environments,
- are aware of where to access resources to build their knowledge about recommended safe sleep practices, and
- promote and model safe sleeping practices and environments to families with young children.

This procedure applies to all staff at this site.

Detail

This procedure is to be read in conjunction with age-appropriate *Red Nose* and *Kidsafe SA* safe sleeping recommendations. We acknowledge the support of Kids SA and Red Nose Australia in the development of this procedure.

Providing a safe sleeping environment

Our Director ensures sleeping environments are regularly assessed to identify and remove all potential hazards. Providing a safe sleep place must consider a child's developmental stage. All educators are responsible for identifying hazards, removing potential hazards, and addressing immediate risks on a daily basis (refer to the safety management procedure and risk management policy).

Hazard considerations may include:

- Beds kept away from hanging cords, mobiles, electrical appliances, and curtains
- Beds have an unobstructed gap, end-to-end and side-to-side, to enable free movement by an educator
- Beds positioned away from heaters to reduce the risk of an infant overheating

- Remove amber teething necklaces and bracelets, other necklaces/chains, string beads, hair bands, and clips (e.g., any object that may detach and become a choking hazard)
- If families choose to use a dummy, the dummy must comply with the Australian mandatory standard AS 2432:1991, have no unsafe decorations and never be tied around an infant's neck. Refer to 'Baby dummies' and 'Baby dummies and chains with unsafe decorations' in the keeping baby safe – a guide to infant and nursery products (ACCC).

Use of prams and pushers

Prams, pushers, bouncinettes, and rockers will not be used unsupervised or as a sleeping environment for children.

A collaborative partnership with families

The development of positive relationships and partnerships builds families confidence that their children are safe in care and enables educators to contribute to parents/caregivers understanding of how to create a safe sleeping environment.

Site leaders and educators will ensure:

- Families and caregivers are consulted during the orientation period about their child's rest and sleep needs, and their beliefs and practices – this will assist in individual children's circumstances and risk factors being assessed
- Families and caregivers are informed of the service's safe sleeping procedure and practices
- Families are aware of the need to inform the service about any changes in their child's medical or health status that may indicate a higher level of supervision is required
- The child's developmental needs in relation to sleep and rest are documented, considering the period of time the child is being educated and cared for (in accordance with regulation 74).
- Families are provided with information about their child's sleep and rest patterns (in accordance with regulation 76) – any risks are identified, and referrals made are documented.
- Safe sleeping practices are promoted and modelled (including safe sleeping information being displayed) and current information is available for families, taking into account an appropriate format for each family
- Referrals to appropriate health professionals and support services are facilitated for further information and support if required (e.g., Kidsafe SA, Child and Family Health Service or a medical practitioner).

Requests to vary sleep practices

Educators must ensure families are informed that our approach **cannot** deviate from current recommended safe sleeping practices. In circumstances where a family request a sleep practice that varies from the recommended practices due to medically indicated reasons, departmental health support planning policies and procedures are to be followed. A health care plan authorised by a medical practitioner that clearly outlines the safest sleep practices to be implemented for the child is required.

In all other situations where a parent requests a practice that differs from this procedure, educators are to discuss safe sleeping practices with the family and the requirement to comply with this procedure, acknowledging the family's values, beliefs, and concerns (including the challenges associated with introducing a new sleep routine).

In circumstances where it is considered that a family may not understand the risks associated with sleeping environments, educators should discuss referring the family to other services for further advice and support to provide a safe sleep environment.

Supervision and monitoring

All children must be adequately supervised at all times. This includes educators actively monitoring and supervising sleeping children. 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. Rooms that are very dark and have music playing may not provide adequate supervision of sleeping children. Supervision windows should be kept clear and not painted over or covered with curtains or posters.

Our Director is responsible for ensuring supervision arrangements enable active and effective monitoring of all children. This may include considering sleeping a child in the same room as an educator, rather than a separate room (when an appropriate quiet and safe area is available), or ensuring playing children are within proximity to sleeping children to allow supervision of both groups. In circumstances where sleeping children are not in the same room as the educator, the Director will implement a process of inspection of sleeping children at regular intervals.

Reviewing sleep practices

Our Director is required to review their service's sleep practices and environments on a regular basis to ensure practices are consistent with recommended safe sleep practices. The resource sleep, rest, relaxation, and the National Quality Standard outlines key questions for reflection under the NQS.

Safe sleeping resources

Further information about recommended safe sleeping practices can be obtained from:

SIDS & KIDS SA | <https://sidssa.org.au/>, email office@sidssa.org.au, or phone (08) 8332 1066

Red Nose Australia | <https://rednose.org.au/>, email education@rednose.com.au, or phone (08) 8332 1066

Kidsafe SA | <https://www.kidsafesa.com.au/>, email enquiries@kidsafesa.com.au, or phone (08) 7089 8554

Child and Family Health Service | <https://www.cafhs.sa.gov.au/>, or phone 1300 733 606

Supporting information

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 |

<https://content.legislation.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-04/10-69aa015%20authorised.pdf>

Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011 |

[https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/_/legislation/lz/c/a/education%20and%20early%20childhood%20services%20\(registration%20and%20standards\)%20act%202011/current/2011.46.uth.pdf](https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/_/legislation/lz/c/a/education%20and%20early%20childhood%20services%20(registration%20and%20standards)%20act%202011/current/2011.46.auth.pdf)

Education and Care Services National Regulations |

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653>

Approvals

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Approval date: **June 2023**
Next review date: **June 2026** (must be 3 years from the approved date)

Revision record
Revision dates: