

SLEEP AND REST POLICY



Related Quality Area	QA2: Children’s Health & Safety QA3: Physical Environment
Related Policies	Work Health & Safety

PURPOSE

The Nightcliff Family Centre (the Centre) will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs. The risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) for infants will be minimised by following practices and guidelines set out by health authorities.

If a family’s beliefs and requests are against current recommended evidence-based guidelines, our Centre will need to determine if there are exceptional circumstances that allow for alternate practices.

Our Centre will only approve an alternative practice if the Centre is provided with written advice from, and the contact details of a registered medical practitioner accompanied by a risk assessment and risk minimisation plan for individual children. We have a duty of care to ensure 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. In meeting the Centre’s duty of care, it is a requirement that all Educators implement and adhere to this policy to ensure we respect and cater for each child’s specific needs.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of the Centre.

IMPLEMENTATION

‘Children have different sleep, rest and relaxation needs. Children of the same age can have different sleep patterns that Nominated Supervisors and Educators need to consider within the Centre. As per Standard 2.1 (Element 2.1.1) of the National Quality Standard, each child’s comfort must be provided for and there must be appropriate opportunities to meet each child’s sleep, rest and relaxation needs.’ (ACECQA)

Our Centre defines ‘rest’ as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness, or tranquillity, and can include a child being in a state of sleep. Considering the busy and energetic nature of children’s day, we feel that it is important for children to participate in a quiet/rest period during the day in order to rest, relax, and recharge their body. Effective rest strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and safe in an early childhood environment.

Our Centre will consult with families about their child’s individual needs, ensuring all parties are aware of the different values, cultural, and parenting beliefs and practices, or opinions associated with sleep requirements.

SLEEP AND REST SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

The approved provider, in conjunction with educators of the service, will conduct a comprehensive risk assessment in order to identify any potential risk/s or hazards and ensure the safety of all children during sleep and rest.

The risk assessment will be reviewed at least annually or after being aware of an incident or circumstance where the health, safety or wellbeing of children may be compromised during sleep or rest. All risk assessments will be regularly assessed and evaluated as to facilitate continuous improvement in our service. If a risk concerning a child's safety during sleep and rest is identified during the risk assessment, the approved provider must update the Sleep and Rest Policy and procedure as soon as possible. The risk assessment must be stored safely and securely and kept for a period of 3 years.

Our risk assessment will consider and include the following information:

- the number, age, developmental stages and individual needs of children
- the sleep and rest needs of individual children being educated and cared for (including specific health care needs, cultural preferences, sleep and rest needs of individual children and requests from families about a child's sleep and rest)
- the suitability of staffing arrangements to adequately supervise and monitor children during sleep and rest periods
- the level of knowledge and training of staff supervising children during sleep and rest periods
- the location of sleep and rest areas, including the arrangement of cots and beds within the sleep and rest areas
- the safety and suitability of any cots, beds and bedding equipment, having regard to the ages and developmental stages of the children who will use the cots, bed and bedding equipment
- any potential hazards
 - o in sleep and rest areas
 - o on a child during sleep and rest periods (such as jewellery, clothing)
- the physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments (including temperature, lighting and ventilation)
- for services that provide overnight care (such as services located in hospitals catering for shift workers) the risk assessment must address management of risks relating to overnight care (ACECQA 2023)

BASSINETS

Bassinets are not part of our equipment for sleeping time. Our Service will ensure no bassinets are used or stored within the service. Families will be informed children will not be accepted into care in a bassinet and under no circumstances will a bassinet be permitted to remain on the premises.

Management will ensure:

- Reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the Centre are met, having regard to the ages, developmental stages, and individual needs of each child.
- There are adequate numbers of cots and bedding available to children that meet Australian Standards.
- All cots used in our Centre will meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for Cots (AS/NZS 2172) and will carry a label to indicate this
- All portable cots used in our Centre will meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for children's portable folding cots, AS/NZS 2195, and will carry a label to indicate this.
- Sleep and rest environments will be safe and free from hazards.
- Areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have natural lighting.
- The supervision window (or similar) will be kept clear to ensure safe supervision of sleeping infants.

- Safe sleep practices are documented and shared with families. Nominated Supervisors and Educators are not expected to endorse practices requested by a family, if they differ from [Red Nose](#) safe (formerly SIDS and Kids) sleeping recommendations.
- Ensure they receive information and training to fulfil their role effectively, including being made aware of the sleep and rest policies, their responsibilities in implementing these, and any changes that are made over time.
- Ensure the child's safety is always the first priority.
- Get staff training about sleeping practices

BABIES AND TODDLERS

Recommendations sourced from ACECQA and Red Nose

- Babies should always be placed on their back to sleep when first being settled. Once a baby has been observed to repeatedly roll from back to front and back again on their own, they can be left to find their own preferred sleep or rest position (this is usually around 5–6 months of age).
- If a medical condition exists that prevents a baby from being placed on their back, the alternative practice should be confirmed in writing with the Service, by the child's medical practitioner.
- At no time should a baby's face or head be covered (i.e., with linen). To prevent a baby from wriggling down under bed linen, they should be positioned with their feet at the bottom of the cot.
- Ensure any bed linen is securely tucked underneath the mattress so it cannot ride up and cover the baby's chest or cover his/her head.
- If a baby is wrapped when sleeping, consider the baby's stage of development. Leave their arms free once the startle reflex disappears at around three months of age and discontinue the use of a wrap when the baby can roll from back to tummy to back again (usually four to six months of age). Use only lightweight wraps such as cotton or muslin.
- Ensure there is no soft bedding in baby's sleep environment (pillows, doonas, loose bedding, lambswool or soft toys)
- Conform toys will be removed from beds as soon as the child fall to sleep
- If being used, a dummy should be offered for all sleep periods. Dummy use should be phased out by the end of the first year of a baby's life (in consultation with parents). If a dummy falls out of a baby's mouth during sleep, it should not be re-inserted.
- Babies or young children should not be moved out of a cot into a bed too early; they should also not be kept in a cot for too long. When a young child is observed attempting to climb out of a cot, and looking like they might succeed, it is time to move them out of a cot. This usually occurs when a toddler is between 2 and 3 ½ years of age but could be as early as 18 months.
- Additional supervision is required if a child is wearing a baby sleeping bag whilst sleeping outside a cot. The sleeping suit should be removed as soon as the child wakes to avoid risk of falling and injury. (Red Nose).

EDUCATORS WILL:

- Bottle-fed children will be given their bottles before sleep time, and the bottles will be removed as soon as the child falls asleep or finishes their milk. Additional supervision is required during bottle-feeding to ensure the child's safety.
- ensure that cot rooms and sleep rooms have operational baby monitors on at all times
- observe children at 10-minute intervals while they sleep in these rooms. Educators must go into the rooms and physically observe babies breathing and check the colour of their skin. The educator will then officially record this on a Safe Sleep Record
- encourage the use of sleeping bags with fitted neck and armholes for babies as there is no risk of the infant's face being covered.
- securely lock cots sides into place to ensure children's safety

- turn off wall-mounted heaters before children use the room for sleeping. Cot rooms may be air conditioned and maintained at an appropriate temperature.
- be aware of manual handling practices when lifting babies in and out of cots
- participate in staff development about safe sleeping practices
- understand that bassinets, hammocks and prams/strollers do not carry safety codes for sleep. Babies should not be left in a bassinet, hammock, or pram/stroller to sleep, as these are not safe substitutes for a cot.
- ensure mattresses are kept in good condition; they should be clean, firm and flat, and fit the cot base with not more than a 20mm gap between the mattress sides and ends. A firm sleep surface that is compliant with the new AS/NZS Voluntary Standard (AS/NZS 8811.1:2013 Methods of testing infant products – Sleep surfaces – Test for firmness) should be used.
- not elevate or tilt mattresses
- remove any plastic packaging from mattresses
- ensure that waterproof mattress protectors are strong, not torn, and a tight fit
- use firm, clean, and well-fitting mattresses on portable cots
- remove pillows, doonas, loose bedding or fabric, lamb's wool, bumpers and soft toys from cots
- record sleep and rest patterns to provide information to parents/families.

PRE-SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

EDUCATORS WILL:

- be respectful for children's individual sleep and rest requirements
- discuss children's sleep and rest needs with families and include children in decision making (children's agency)
- provide a tranquil and calm environment for children to rest by turning off lights, playing relaxing music, reading stories, cultural reflection
- ensure children are comfortably clothed
- encourage children to rest their bodies and minds for 20-30 minutes
- introduce relaxation techniques into rest routine- use of a relaxation tape
- ensure children sleep with their face uncovered
- closely monitor sleeping and resting children
- provide quiet activities for children- puzzles, books, drawing if they do not fall asleep
- One educator supervises the sleeping routine and physically observes children breathing and check the colour of their skin. record sleep and rest patterns to provide information to parents/families

POLICY ON JEWELRY

The wearing of jewelry can present a potential hazard to both the child wearing the jewelry and the risk such as that of choking that the jewelry poses to other children.

We do not recommend loose-fitting jewelry such as necklaces and bangles, loose items such as this can snag on other children's clothes and break, and they may also pose a strangulation risk.

Staff will advise parents that the only acceptable jewelry is small stud earrings. If a child arrives at NFC wearing other forms of jewelry, this will be sensitively pointed out by the educator, and the parents will be encouraged to remove it.

NFC will not accept any liability for lost items and any safety issues due to jewelry wearing and we will take steps to ensure the policy is not breached.

ETHNIC AND CULTURAL JEWELRY

The wearing of ethnic jewelry will be deal with on an individual basis, through discussion with the parent and the Director. Staff will be vigilant in ensuring that these do not present a risk as the child engages in other nursery activities and play experiences and the Jewelry will be removed for sleeping time and give it back to Parents and the end of the day.

PARENTS/FAMILIES WILL:

- be informed during orientation of our *Sleep and Rest Policy* and procedure
- be provided with regular information and communication about safe sleep practices from Red Nose and any changes to our policies or procedures
- be informed that if any requirements for sleep for their child differs from Red Nose sleeping recommendations, written authorisation from a medical practitioner will be required
- be requested to provide educators with regular updates on their child’s sleeping routines and patterns, especially for infants

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Josepha Minani Anu Thapa Kathy Man Anju Bali Olive Asis Mei Mei Archie Servai Judy Rondon	Staff and Director	June 2022
POLICY REVIEWED	June 2022	NEXT REVIEW DATE	June 2024
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy reviewed as per review cycle • Staff discussion during staff meeting about to provide milk bottles on beds. • We checked the current dispositions and we confirmed that good practise is not to provide bottle milk on beds to children due to risk of chocking and dental problems 		
POLICY REVIEWED BY	Director Educators and Staff		September 29/2023
POLICY REVIEWED	September 2023	NEXT REVIEW DATE	September 2024

MODIFICATIONS	<p>OCTOBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New information added regarding regulation changes effective 01 October 2023 • annual policy review • Parent/Family section updated
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POLICY REVIEWED BY	Anu Thapa Sifa Assamba Caterina Venturin Judy Rondon	Staff and Director	June 2025
POLICY REVIEWED	MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottle-fed children will be given their bottles before sleep time, and the bottles will be removed as soon as the child falls asleep or finishes their milk. Additional supervision is required during bottle-feeding to ensure the child’s safety 		June 2026