



Safe Sleeping and Rest Policy

Policy:

The Rumpus Room is committed to ensuring a safe sleeping and resting environment which is also nurturing, for children attending the Service.

Background:

Sleep and Rest are vital to children's healthy development. "Children who get enough sleep are more engaged and less prone to behavioural problems and moodiness. Sleep also promotes alertness, memory and performance..... Effective rest and sleep strategies are important to ensure that all children feel safe and secure and early childhood education and care settings have a duty of care to ensure that all children are provided with a high level of safety and comfort when resting or sleeping and to maintain adequate supervision" (Child Care and Children's health, Vol 4 No.2, June 2014)

Following an inquest into the death of a child whilst in care the National Regulations now require this policy and ACECQA have published "Principles to inform procedures" and "currently recommended evidence based practices in their article "Safe sleep and rest practices from October 2017 upon which this document is based.

Our safe sleeping and resting procedures aim to meet the individual needs of all children in care, taking into consideration safe sleeping recommendations of Red Nose and Kidsafe NSW and legislative requirements and standards of best practice.

We will consult with families/ guardians on individual sleep and rest needs to ensure practice is responsive to the child's needs and the values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise of each family.

We understand that young children, especially those 0-3 years, settle confidently when they have formed bonds with familiar carers.

Safe cots:

All cots used will meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for Cots (AS/NZS 2172). Portable cots are not used.

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.

Safe cot mattresses

Last Updated 3rd July 2019



Mattresses will be in good condition; 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)

Mattresses should not be elevated or tilted. Remove any plastic packaging from mattresses. Ensure waterproof mattress protectors are strong, not torn, and a tight fit.

Safe bedding

Light bedding is the preferred option; it should be tucked into the mattress to prevent the child from pulling bed linen over their head.

Remove pillows, doonas, loose bedding or fabric, lamb's wool, bumpers and soft toys from cots.

Soft and/or puffy bedding in cots is not necessary and may obstruct a child's breathing.

Pillows are not necessary for babies and increase the baby's risk of sudden unexpected death in infancy including SIDS and fatal sleep accidents.

Red Nose recommends delaying offering a pillow until baby is over two years of age and is no longer sleeping in a cot or portable cot

Keep soft toys out of the sleeping environment for babies under seven months of age because they may cover the nose and mouth and interfere with breathing.

Seven-month-old babies are more likely to explore objects in their sleeping environments 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 (transitional object) during times of separation from their parents.

Thermal stress (overheating) has been implicated in SIDS and SUDI for many years and avoiding overheating has been one of the strategies to reduce risk of SUDI.

Download the information statements – [Pillow Use](#), [Soft Toys in the Cot](#) and [Bedding Amount Recommended for Safe Sleep](#) – for more information on the Red Nose website.

Safe placement

Safety check of sleep and rest environments will be undertaken on a regular basis.

Ensure hanging cords or strings from blinds, curtains, mobiles or electrical devices are away from cots and mattresses.



Ensure all screws in cots are kept tight.

Keep heaters and electrical appliances away from cots.

Do not use electric blankets, hot water bottles and wheat bags in cots.

Do not place anything (e.g. amber teething necklaces) around the neck of a sleeping child. The use of teething bracelets (e.g. amber teething bracelets) is also not recommended while a child sleeps.

Procedures:

Babies and toddlers

- Babies should 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). Babies aged younger than 5–6 months, and who have not been observed to repeatedly roll from back to front and back again on their own, should be re-positioned onto their back when they roll onto their front or side.
- 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.
- Babies over four months of age can generally turn over in a cot. When a baby is placed to sleep, educators should check that any bedding is tucked in secure and is not loose. Babies of this age may be placed in a safe baby sleeping bag (i.e. with fitted neck and arm holes, but no hood). 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.
- 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. Visit the Red Nose website to download an information statement – *Wrapping Babies* – and the brochure – *Safe Wrapping* – for more information.
- 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. If a dummy falls out of a baby's mouth during sleep, it should not be re-inserted, unless the child stirs/wakes.
- 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. Download the brochure – *Cot to bed safety: When to move your child out of a cot* – for more information.

- Babies will be placed with their faces uncovered. Hooded jumpers, bibs, teething necklaces and shoes must be removed before sleeping.
- No comfort toys from home containing ribbons, loops, small removable parts, dummies with chains or teething necklaces will be used in a cot with a child because of strangling or choking risk.
- **Though families may disagree with Centre practice or request an alternative practice the Centre should confidently refer them to the Red Nose website. If there is a written medical statement that is a practice which is contrary to Red Nose advice then the Centre should undertake a Risk assessment to provide the safest environment possible. The medical advice should be added to the child's file for reference. However child safety, as recommended by Red Nose, will always be the first priority.**
- Cot sides must be pulled up when a child is sleeping in a cot. Before the first day of attendance families are encouraged to either demonstrate to educators how they put their child into the cot (wrapping technique etc) or take a video on their phone and email it to the Room Leader.
- Staff complete sleep checks of all sleeping children every 10 minutes by entering the room and checking the breathing and colour of each child. In the Nursery sleep checks are recorded on the sleep check forms located on or near the cot room door.

Older children

- Many children in Mischief Mountain have a sleep time after lunch. Floor mats or stretcher beds are provided for each child. Quiet activities will be provided for children who do not need to rest.
- Educators monitor all sleeping children in the Mischief Mountain room giving attention to breathing and colour. The room ratio is maintained during rest time.
- Staff complete a daily sleep check form every 10 minutes, in the Mischief Mountain room. Educators will check the breathing and colour of each child in the room before initially the chart for that time slot.
- Children in the Tumbling Tides may have a rest after lunch or may have alternative quiet or outside activities. During this time children may listen to a story or music or do stretching activities. Sleeping children are always monitored.
- Children in Rumpus Kings Room probably do not require rest but are likely to have quiet activities for an hour after lunch.



- Children with additional needs will be monitored during rest time taking into account any specific risk associated with their condition, such as fitting.

The Environment:

- The use of pillows and cushions is discouraged but if children bring them from home they can be used if the child is over 2 years old.
- Staff will ensure supervision of the rest and sleeping environments.
- Staff will monitor the room temperature and airflow during sleep or resting periods, as it can be dangerous for children to get overheated.
- The Centre encourages the playing of quiet music to assist children to rest in a calm and relaxing environment.
- Cots and mattresses should be set up to ensure beds are at least 30cm apart to reduce the risk of cross infection, where space is limited a top to tail configuration is wise.
- Children in Mischief Mountain and Tumbling Tides supply their own sheets and take them home to be laundered.
- In the Nursery cot sheets will be changed and laundered for each new child.
- Cot and Bed mattresses are to be wiped with detergent and water to clean
- Sleeping outside is also an option and often preferred.

Requests to limit children's sleep:

It is important to meet children's physical and emotional needs for sleep and rest.

On occasions that families want to limit or prevent children from sleeping we will work to support families' recommendations.

Children will be monitored and encouraged to play quietly during the rest time. If the child shows distress or falls asleep at play educators will transfer the child to a bed and give them a period of sleep.

If a child is to be woken after a certain period of sleep we will call the child's name quietly while near to them, if necessary we loosen their covers and offer them an alternative activity.

We will not apply cold cloth or stand the child up while they are still asleep.

Some research indicates babies have sleep cycles of about 45 minutes during which time they cycle from deep to light sleep. Based on that information we would recommend a minimum period of sleep of 45 minutes. Other wake times should be in multiples of this period.

Sources:

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority- Safe sleep and rest practices from October 2017.
- Red Nose www.rednose.com.au



- National Childcare Accreditation Council www.ncac.gov.au
- Child Care and Children's health, Vol 4 No.2, June 2014

This policy links to the following NQS:

2018 National Quality Standards: 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1, 3.1.2, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 6.1.2,

See Appendix 1-National Law (section) and National Regulations (regulation 168, 81 and 123)

This policy is to be regularly reviewed to ensure it is in line with best practice principles and guidelines.