

## SAFE SLEEP, REST AND RELAXATION POLICY

**Quality Areas:** NQS 2 - Children's Health and Safety

**Policy Owner:** Compliance

Why this is  
*important*

### 1.0 Introduction and Purpose:

Educators create peaceful, personal spaces for children's sleep and rest that ensure they are always protected from harm and hazard. Unsafe sleep environments can increase the risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI), which includes Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and fatal sleep accidents. SUDI remains the most common category of death for infants between 1 month and 1 year of age.

### 2.0 Who does this policy apply to:

Team Members, Families, Children, Board members, Contractors

### 3.0 What is our Policy:

#### 3.1 General Policy Statements

Team members will be equipped with knowledge of safe sleep and rest practices, so that they can work collaboratively with children and families to meet children's individual needs in a safe environment.

Decisions and actions will be guided by current research and guidelines, recognising Red Nose as the authoritative source on safe sleeping practices for infants and children. Educators will prioritise the safety and wellbeing of each child, considering their age and developmental stage.

In addition, educators will respect and incorporate the child's personal preferences, understanding the importance of the socio-cultural background of the child and their family. To provide consistency and comfort, they will also align sleep and rest practices with the routines and experiences that the child is accustomed to at home.

#### 3.2 Partnerships with Families

Our centre is committed to building and maintaining strong partnerships with families. This involves raising awareness about the contemporary sleep and rest practices we model in the centre, as well as sharing our policy and procedures with families. We engage in respectful conversations with families during enrolment, orientation, and throughout their time with us. These discussions are crucial for establishing a shared understanding and commitment to our safe sleep policies and practices.

We consult with families to understand their child's individual needs and are sensitive to the diverse values, parenting beliefs, and cultural practices related to sleep and rest. If a family's beliefs or requests conflict with current recommended practices—such as those from Red Nose—we will require written support from a recognized medical practitioner.

In cases where a child has a confirmed medical condition, our Medical Conditions policy and procedures will be followed. In the absence of medical evidence, we adhere to Red Nose Recommendations.

#### 3.3 Safe Sleep Training Requirements

We are dedicated to ongoing training that promotes the integration of safe sleep practices across our centre. Our training is designed to reflect the latest Red Nose Recommendations and is aligned with our policies, procedures, and supporting documents.

A variety of training and development opportunities are implemented to ensure that team members understand our expectations so that all children can sleep and rest safely according to their individual needs.

As rolled out, all team members (as appropriate to their role specific pathway) are required to complete our on-line sleep, rest, and relaxation training. This training is tailored to those working with children aged 0-2 years and 2-5 years.

All team members will be required to successfully complete the training. The training will comprise of an on-line training module and a Practice Check that verifies their safe sleep and rest skills and knowledge. The completion of this practice check must be kept as part of the team members record folder.

### 3.4 Our Spaces for Sleeping

Our very young children will be provided with a space for cots which is accessible to team members and allows children to sleep as required. Where a cot room is provided team members will refrain, where possible from placing items on windows so that visibility is uninterrupted. Where a document must be placed on a window this will be placed in a way that minimises impacts to see sleeping children.

Supervision is further supported by having cot monitors in cot rooms, adequate lighting so that children can be seen and supervision checks. Temperature of the cot rooms is monitored and kept generally at a temperature to ensure that children do not overheat.

Bassinettes are not used in any centres.

All children will be provided with cots that comply with Australian Standards and linen that is well fitted and in good condition.

Children who sleep on beds will access mattresses or beds that are recommended for their age and team members will ensure that the beds and bedding is in good working order. The decision to transition children from a cot to a bed or trundle will be in accordance with Red Nose Recommendations and in consultation with the parent. Children who sleep and rest on beds and trundles must be directly supervised. That means that the children are in direct sight and sound supervision. Sleeping equipment will be detailed in the centre **Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment**.

### 3.6 Safety, Supervision and Sleep

Ensuring children are safe is of paramount importance including during times of sleep, rest and relaxation. All team members must ensure that children that during times of sleep, rest and relaxation that sleep checks are implemented consistently and these checks are documented. Direct supervision will be implemented for all children on beds and trundles. For example, children cannot be on beds and trundles in rooms where they cannot be seen and relying on 10-minute sleep checks. They must be in sight at all times.

Supervision strategies should be documented and implemented by all team members.

For information about the use of evacuation cots please refer to our Emergency Management Policy section 3.13

### 3.7 Sleep and Rest Risk Assessments

Each centre is required to develop and maintain a risk assessment focused on sleep and rest practices. This assessment documents the risk management strategies for sleep and rest arrangements for children of all age groups. It must be reviewed annually or more frequently if circumstances change. The risk assessment should address, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Staffing arrangements
- Training of team members
- Provision of safe equipment (compliant with Australian Standards and excluding Bassinettes)
- Physical safety, including temperature, lighting, and ventilation
- Location and placement of sleep and rest areas

- Supervision practices
- Cultural needs and requirements

All team members must have access to the sleep and rest risk assessments. These must be in each learning space or the adjoining preparation rooms (if applicable) and be understood and implemented by all team members.

## 5.0 Responsibilities:

### 5.1 Approved Provider will:

1. Provide training and information that sets out expectations about sleep, rest and relaxation policy and procedures. Training will reflect current industry advice and recommendations from recognised authorities such as Red Nose. Training records will be maintained.
2. Ensure there are adequate numbers of cots, beds and bedding available to children that meet Australian Standards (ensure that all cots meet AS/NZS 2172, and any superseding standard)
3. Ensure that areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated with appropriate lighting and maintain an appropriate temperature for sleep.
4. Ensure that where possible, cot rooms have supervision/viewing windows, and they are kept clear to allow an unobstructed line of sight for sleeping children.
5. Ensure that design guidelines reflect spaces for safe sleep and rest.
6. Keep this policy up to date to reflect current legislative requirements, research, and advice from recognised authorities.

### 5.2 Centre Manager / Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure that **I can / can't roll forms** are on display and displayed adjacent to each cot and support understanding of children's sleep practices.
- Provide educators with an induction that includes a comprehensive overview of the sleep, rest and relaxation policy and procedures and this is documented.
- Ensure all educators complete their annual mandatory training requirements, when provided access, that include Safe Sleep, Rest and Relaxation training and the applicable Practice Check (0-2s or 2-5s).
- Use the resources available on the Red Nose website for families and educators.
- Monitor educator practice to ensure it meets the requirements of this policy and procedure and provide additional education, coaching and support where required.
- Ensure that the Sleep and Rest Check or Supervision Check (listed in this policy) is completed when a child is sleeping or resting in a cot or on a bed.
- Ensure that all children who are sleeping are checked at least every 10 minutes in accordance with this policy.
- Ensure that all team members share our principles and expectations of safe sleep with families when touring our centre, upon enrolment, during orientation and whilst they remain enrolled.
- Support educators to conduct a risk analysis if children are choosing to sleep in non-traditional ways. (i.e. outdoors, floor, pillows, etc) to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing is considered.
- Where a centre has a separate sleep room each sleep room will have a cot monitor.
- Sleep and Rest Checks or Supervision Check (listed in this policy) will be undertaken from when the child is placed in their cot and 10 min check will be undertaken from being placed in the cot.
- That a Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment is in place and documents all identified risks.
- Ensure the educational program provides opportunities for each child to sleep or rest and relax as required, based on each child's requirements and preferences.
- Ensure there are adequate numbers of cots, cot mattresses and bedding available to children that meet Australian Standards (AS/NZS 2172) and any superseding standard in the future), and that they are all in good repair and cleaned regularly.
- Understand that any temporary and/or permanent additions, fixtures or alterations to cots and/ or mattresses may compromise the adherence to Red Nose Safe Sleep guidelines or the National Quality Standard
- Regularly monitor areas used for sleep and rest to make sure they are always:
  - Well ventilated
  - Have appropriate lighting

- Are maintained at an appropriate temperature for sleep and/or rest
- Arranged to ensure adequate supervision. This includes making sure that viewing windows are kept clear and are not obstructed by curtains, paint, blinds, posters, artwork etc
- Firm: Use 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)
- Australian standards for beds and cots are correct.
- Quarterly checks will be conducted to assess:
  - The cots and trundles are in good working order (no loose screws).
  - Wheels of cots are in working order.

### 5.3 Team members will:

- Will always follow the sleep and rest best practices information and current Red Nose recommendations, guidelines and posters.
- Provide adequate supervision and protect children from harm by ensuring the following:
  - minimum educator to child ratios requirements is maintained.
  - complete safe sleep checks for all children sleeping and or resting every 10 minutes.
  - cots and beds are in good working order.
  - mattresses are firm, clean, in good repair and fit the cot base and have no more than a 20mm gap between the mattress sides and ends.
  - babies are placed on their back to sleep.
  - cot labels are fully complete and correct.
- Once a baby can roll from back to front and back again and on their own, they can be left to find their own preferred sleep or rest position (usually around 5-6 months of age) and can be placed in a safe baby sleeping bag (i.e. with fitted neck arm holes or sleeves and no hood).
- The Tribal Habits sleep and rest training will be undertaken and that it will then include a practice check.
- If a medical condition exists that prevents a baby from being placed on their back, educators will follow Guardians Medical Conditions policy and procedure.
- Babies and/or children should not be left hammock or pram/stroller to sleep, as these are not safe substitutes for a cot/bed. The following requirements also apply:
  - baby and children's faces must be uncovered.
  - bumpers, soft toys and duvets are not in cots
  - if using blankets rather than a sleeping bag, the baby has been placed to sleep with feet touching the bottom of the cot with light weight blankets securely tucked in.
- Whenever children are resting or sleeping, assess each child's circumstances and current health to determine whether increased supervision may be required.
- When a young child falls asleep not in their cot, educators will safely and respectfully move the child onto a cot or ensure they are safe.
- Ensure that sleep checks are documented accurately and consistently.
- When setting up and checking children during sleep, the temperature of the room and ensuring that light is sufficient will be monitored. Where the temperature is inadequate or the room is too dark to easily see the children, adjustments will be immediately made.
- If children are sleeping outdoors educators will consider weather conditions when making a decision whether sleeping outdoors is appropriate (i.e. will the child get burnt, too cold, too hot, possible rain etc.).
- No child/baby will not be put in cots or in beds with bottles.
- Respect a child's dignity and rights by ensuring children:
  - Those who are older have independent and safe access to beds, bedding and comforters that are age and size appropriate.
  - are not expected or forced to rest on a bed if they choose not to (not for any length of time)
  - are not patted and/or rocked to sleep or their eyes are physically closed by an educator.
  - are not photographed or videoed sleeping unless for medical/health reasons where consent has been received from the child and parent.
  - are given time and encouragement to make and pack away their own bed and bedding.

- Ensure a child's comfort, by:
  - Encouraging children to dress appropriately for the room temperature (lighter clothing is preferable, with children encouraged to remove shoes, jumpers, jackets, and bulky clothing).
  - Monitoring the room temperature to ensure maximum comfort and safety.
  - Maintaining clean and hygienic cots, beds, bedding and mattresses.
- Make intentional programming decisions to ensure children who do not sleep and/or rest can learn whilst ensuring it doesn't impact the comfort of sleeping children.
  - Create a relaxing environment that is aesthetically pleasing, safe and cosy by:
  - Adjusting lighting and/or lights are turned off (there should be enough natural light to be able to see all children and educators clearly – you may need to open a blind or curtain if it is too dark).
  - Being nearby or sitting next to the child's bed or cot.
  - Considering the texture, colour and quality of bedding.
  - Considering the fabrics, furnishings, smell, noise, location and temperature.
  - Playing soft music or reading stories.
  - Ensuring their clothing and bedding is comfortable and adequate.
  - Ensuring the location is safe and comfortable.
- Supervising and eliminating access to hazards.
  - Not forcing children to sleep or preventing them from sleeping.
  - Having a program that reflects the varied sleep requirements of babies/children.
- Communicate with families by:
  - Providing the centre policy, procedure and Red Nose safe sleep information during orientation and whilst they remain enrolled.
  - Recording children's sleep and rest patterns to families each day either in person and/or on Story Park.
  - Listening to their preferences regarding sleep and rest. When considering these preferences, educators must ensure the child's safety is paramount and Red Nose safe sleep practices are upheld.
- Have a good knowledge of safe sleep practices by:
  - Reading, reflecting and being guided by the Red Nose monthly Newsletter that the centre has subscribed to
  - Successfully completing the Red Nose online training module (educators who are RP's and/or work with children under the age of 12 months).
  - Display in all cot rooms Red Nose posters on
    - [Safe Sleeping](#)
    - [Safe Wrapping](#)
    - [Making Up Baby's Cot](#)

#### 5.4 Families and community members will:

- Understand and follow the Red Nose guidelines for Safe sleep practices.
- Follow the policies and procedures relating to medical conditions in the event their child has a medical condition that prevents them from sleeping on their back.
- Respect the educators right to follow the sleep safe practices as described by a recognised authority on Safe Sleep (Red Nose) for their child.
- Understand that educators will neither force a child to sleep nor prevented a child from sleeping.
- Be provided with reading material to deepen their understanding of safe sleep practices.

## 6.0 Definitions

**Red Nose:** Red Nose is the Recognised Authority that provides best practice recommendations related to safe sleep for infants.

## 7.0 Tools and Resources

<b>The most important documents I need are:</b> I can roll posters Over 2 Sleep Check Template Under 2 Years Sleep Check Template Sleep and Rest Check Form Safe Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Practice Check for 0 – 2s and 2 – 5s	<b>Other supporting documents will include:</b> Information Sheet: Safe Sleep and Rest. Safe Sleeping Safe Wrapping Making Up Baby’s Cot <a href="#">Tummy Time</a>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

## 8.0 Sources

Red Nose [Home](#) | [Red Nose Australia](#)

## 9.0 Links to the National Law and Regulations

Section 51(1)(a) Conditions on service approval (safety, health and wellbeing of children).

Regulation 84A Sleep and rest.

Regulation 84B Sleep and rest policies and procedures.

Regulation 84C Risk assessment for purposes of sleep and rest policies and procedures.

Regulation 84D prohibition of bassinets.

Regulation 162 Health Information to be kept in the enrolment record.

Section 166 Offence to use inappropriate discipline.

Regulation 168 (2) Education and care service must have policies and procedures.

<b>Policy owner</b>	Chief Quality and Curriculum Officer		<b>Content author</b>	National Safety and Compliance Manager	
<b>Date published</b>	01/04/2024	<b>Document version</b>	V1.0	<b>Revision due date</b>	01/04/2026
Copyright © 2024 Guardian Early Learning Group Pty Ltd ABN 094 805 820					
Ensure you are using the latest version of this procedure.					
Warning – uncontrolled when printed. This document is current at the time of printing and may be subject to change without notice.					