

Intereach Children's Services

Sleep and Rest for Children and Infants

Procedure



Applies to	Intereach Family Day Care (FDC) and Intereach Out Of School Hours (OOSH)				
Policy	NQS Two: Children's Health and Safety Policy				
Version	4.0	Date approved	21/09/2023	Next review date	21/09/2026

1. Objective

Intereach as the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisors, staff and educators 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.

The purpose of the Sleep and rest for children procedure is to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending our service and appropriate opportunities are provided to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.

Children under the age of two years have specific safe sleeping needs. Intereach staff and educators will follow guidelines and recommendations set out by [Red Nose](#). The Safe Sleeping public health program outlined by Red Nose has reduced the number of preventable deaths from Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI).

2. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Nominated supervisor to:

- regularly review and update sleep and rest policies and procedures to ensure they are maintained in line with best practice principles and guidelines;
- ensure a sleep and rest risk assessment is conducted at least once every 12 months and as soon as practicable after becoming aware of any circumstances that may affect the safety, health and wellbeing of children during sleep and rest;
- if necessary, updates the sleep and rest procedure after each sleep and rest risk assessment is conducted;
- support educators and staff to consider the risk for each individual child, (including the frequency of checks of children) to reflect the levels of risk identified for children at the service. Factors to be considered include the age of the child, medical conditions, individual needs and history of health and/or sleep issues;
- take responsible steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being cared for are met, having regard to the ages, development stages and individual needs of children;
- ensure that bassinets are not used;
- maintain up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practice and communicate information to educators, staff and families; and,
- ensure safe sleeping is included in the induction training for educators and staff.

It is the responsibility of the FDC Nominated Supervisor or the Coordination Unit to

- ensure sleep and rest risk assessment are conducted for each FDC residence or FDC venue of the service.

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It is the responsibility of the educators and staff to:

- only implement sleep practices that are endorsed by Safe Sleeping public health program outlined by [Red Nose](#). The child's safety will always be the first priority;
- consult with families regarding their child's individual needs and be sensitive to different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise, associated with sleep and rest;
- ensure that bassinets are not used
- endorse practices that conflict with the current recommended guidelines with the written support of the baby's medical practitioner; and,
- consider the risk for each individual child and tailor sleep and rest routines to reflect the levels of risk. Factors to be considered include the age of the child, medical conditions, individual needs and history of health and or sleep issues.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to:

- discussing their child's relaxation and sleep requirements and practices prior to commencing at the service, and when these requirements change.
- providing information on the child's enrolment form if the child requires special items while resting or sleeping e.g., a soft toy; and
- providing a written medical report if their baby/child is not to be placed on their back during sleep;

3. Procedure

Educators and staff will receive information and training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of sleep and rest policies, their responsibility in implementing these and any changes that may be made over time.

3.1. Sleep and rest risk assessment

The sleep and rest risk assessment will identify and assess risks in relation to sleep and rest and specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised. The service will consider:

- the number, ages and development stages of children being educated and cared for, including at the education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service;
- the sleep and rest needs of children at the service (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) including at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service;
- the suitability of staffing arrangements required to adequately supervise and monitor children during sleep and rest periods;
- the level of knowledge and training of the staff supervising children during sleep and rest periods;
- the location of the sleep and rest areas, including the arrangement of cots and beds within the sleep and rest areas, including at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service;
- the safety and suitability of any cots, beds and bedding equipment and having regard to the ages and developmental stages of the children who will use them;
- any potential hazards in sleep and rest areas or on a child during sleep and rest periods.

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- the physical safety and suitability of sleep and rest environments, including temperature, lighting and ventilation at each education and care service and FDC residence or approved FDC venue of the service; and,
- If a FDC service provides overnight care to a child, any risks that the overnight care provided at the FDC residence or approved venue may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of the child.

A record of each sleep and rest risk assessment conducted is kept for the necessary period as per Intereach *Data Security and Retention Policy*.

3.1.1. Additional requirements - Family Day Care

In addition to the sleep and risk assessment, the Nominated Supervisor will ensure that there is a documented practice for the supervision of sleeping children available and is:

- tailored to the unique layout and safety considerations of each family day care residence or venue, as well as the ages of children; and,
- the developmental stages of the children in care.

This will form part of the Educator's annual Home Safety Audit and be reviewed as required.

3.2. Safe sleeping and resting

Educators and staff follow the practices that are endorsed by Red Nose considering child's safety as the first priority.

- Children's wellbeing is supported by providing opportunities for children's sleep, rest and relaxation.
- Each child's comfort, sleep, rest and relaxation needs are met taking into consideration of their age, development stage and individual needs including child's preference and the sociocultural background of each child and family.
- Children's faces are uncovered when they are sleeping or resting.
- Children are provided with sleep and rest environments that are free from cigarette or tobacco smoke and safe and free from hazards.
- Children will be adequately supervised while sleeping or resting.
- Children sleeping and resting and the sleep and rest environments will be closely monitored including:
 - physically checking sleeping children at regular intervals, recommended every 10 minutes; and,
 - ensuring educators are within sight and / or hearing distance of sleeping and resting children so that they can assess a child's breathing and the colour of their skin;
- All sleeping checks are documented as required.
- Each child is provided with individual linen/blankets and the linen and blankets are laundered regularly.
- Mattresses used have a waterproof surface and will be cleaned after each use.
- Families are provided with access to current Red Nose literature which sets out guidelines for sleep and rest practice.

In regard to babies and toddlers, educators and staff will:

- place babies on their back to sleep when they are first being settled;

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- reposition babies back on to their backs if they are unable to roll unassisted;
- position babies with their feet at the bottom of the cot;
- ensure all bedding is tucked in securely and is not loose; and,
- only use safe wrapping guidelines according to the Safe Sleeping public health program outlined by Red Nose.

3.3. Safe environments and equipment

All cots and portable cots used within the service will meet the current mandatory Australian Standard for cots (AS/NZS2172) and folding cots (AS/NZS2195).

Educators and staff will:

- ensure white noise or soft music used does not impede the ability to be able to hear sleeping babies at all times;
- not use bassinets, hammocks and prams/strollers for sleep as they do not display the safety codes for sleep (if a child falls asleep in a pram or stroller whilst on an excursion they will be directly supervised);
- ensure all bedding and equipment are maintained through regular checks;
- ensure mattresses are in good condition and that they are clean, firm, flat and fit the cot base with a gap of less than 20mm;
- ensure that the waterproof mattress protectors are durable, not torn and are a tight fit;
- only use the original mattress that is supplied with a portable cot. No additional padding will be added;
- use light bedding that is tucked into the mattress to prevent a child from pulling bed linen over their head;
- ensure no pillows, doonas, loose bedding, lamb's wool, bumpers and soft toys are left in cots when children are sleeping or resting;
- undertake safety checks of sleep and rest environments on a regular basis;
- ensure hanging cords or strings from blinds, curtains, mobiles or electrical devices are away from cots and mattresses;
- keep heaters and electrical appliances away from cots;
- not use electric blankets, hot water bottles and wheat bags in cots;
- not place anything around the neck of a sleeping child. Teething necklaces and bracelets are to be removed for sleep and rest time; and,
- give bottles prior to being settled in a cot. Refer to the Intereach Children's Services Safe Food Handling Procedure.

3.4. Sleep, rest and relaxation needs

Educators and staff will:

- ensure that the physical environment is safe and conducive to sleep and rest;
- provide quiet alternate activities and experiences for children who do not wish to sleep;
- provide comfortable areas for rest for children who request a rest or are showing clear signs of tiredness, regardless of the time of day;
- avoid using settling and rest practices as a behaviour guidance strategy. Children can begin to relate the sleep and rest environment, which should be calm and secure, as a disciplinary setting; and,

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- minimise any distress and discomfort when settling children. Children's emotions, feelings and fears will be acknowledged.

In addition, Family Day Care educators will:

- ensure no FDC child sleeps in a room in which an adult is sleeping;
- ensure no child who is of or above 7 years of age sleeps in the same room as another child of the opposite sex who is not a relative;
- ensure that FDC children do not sleep on the top bed of a bunk bed, and ensure the ladder is removed or made inaccessible; and,
- have a documented procedure for the manner in which they will adequately supervise and conduct checks of sleeping children, whilst also maintaining adequate supervision of other children in their care.

3.4.1. Overnight care - FDC

The service accepts that the provision of overnight care is a component of flexible delivery in FDC. It is vital that educators offering overnight care maintain a comfortable, safe environment that meets individual needs. If an educator has a child/ren in overnight care, they must:

- seek approval from the Nominated Supervisor prior to overnight care taking place along with a risk assessment;
- notify the Nominated Supervisor of the dates and time overnight care will take place;
- not consume alcohol or a drug during the time care is provided. This also applies to any other person present at home;
- check on the child before they go to sleep and at any time that an educator wakes during the night and when the educator wakes in the morning. For additional safety ensure a baby monitoring device is available; and,
- ensure that all parts of an Educator's Home Safety Audit are maintained at all times. An excursion may take place provided the appropriate risk assessment, and authorisations have been conducted and permission given.

4. Monitoring, evaluation and review

This procedure will be reviewed every three years and incorporate feedback and suggestions from children, families, educators, coordinators, volunteers and students or when there is a legislative change.

5. National Quality Framework

Element	Concept	Description
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
3.1.1	Fit for purpose	Outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, fixtures and fittings are suitable for their purpose, including supporting the access of every child.
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service

Element	Concept	Description
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision making and operation of the service.

6. Context	
6.1. Standards or other external requirements	<p>Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017). <i>National Quality Standards</i></p> <p>Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017). <i>Guide to the National Quality Framework</i></p> <p>Early Childhood Australia (2016). <i>Code of Ethics</i></p> <p>Red Nose Saving Little Lives website. Accessed December 2019 from https://rednose.com.au/resources/health-professionals</p>
6.2. Legislation or other requirements	<p>Education and Care Services National Regulations consolidated 2017 – Regulation 81, 82, 87, 103, 105, 106, 107, 110, 115, 170, 171, 172</p> <p>Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 – Section 165 & 167</p> <p>NSW Public Health Act 2010</p>
6.3. Internal Documentation	<p>FDC Home Safety Audit</p> <p>Medical Management and Risk Minimisation Plan</p> <p>Enrolment form</p> <p>FDC Sleep logs</p> <p>Sleep Risk Assessment Records</p>

1. Document control			
Version	Date approved	Approved by	Next review date
1.0	02/03/2020	R.Phillips, Acting Senior Manager Children and Family Services	02/03/2023
2.0	22/10/2020	S. Hall, General Manager, Operations	22/10/2023
3.0	30/09/2021	M. Tai, General Manager, Operations	30/09/2024
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