

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S SLEEP AND REST

CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY (QUALITY AREA 2)



Part 1 - Purpose

To ensure all children's sleep and rest needs are respectfully met within our Early Childhood Centres.

Part 2 - Scope

This policy and procedure relates to Quality Areas Two and Five of the National Quality Standard.

This policy and procedure applies to all educators and support staff employed to work in an Early Childhood Centre.

Part 3 - Policy

Northside will ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to sleep, rest and relax in accordance with their individual needs. Northside acknowledges that all children have the right to make decisions about their own bodies and wellbeing, and work to provide environments and spaces for children to self-regulate their sleep and rest requirements.

Under no circumstances will any child be "forced" to sleep by any means (including rewards or punishment), or to remain awake if they choose to sleep.

All Centres will provide beds and cots that comply with Australian Standards. The risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) will be minimised by following practices and guidelines set out by health authorities.

Part 4 - Procedures

4.1 Provision of equipment and environments

Northside will ensure that all Centres:

- "Take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for by the service are met, having regard to the ages, development stages and individual needs of the children." (Regulation 81);
- Ensure there are adequate numbers of cots and bedding available to children that meet Australian Standards;
- Ensure that all cots meet AS/NZS 2172;
- Ensure that areas for sleep and rest are well ventilated and have natural lighting;
- Ensure that supervision windows will be kept clear to ensure safe supervision of sleeping children;
- Maintain up to date knowledge regarding safe sleeping practice and communicate this information to educators and families.

4.2 Supporting Sleep and Rest

The Centre Director and Nominated Supervisor of each Centre will ensure that the team of educators will:

- Regularly consult with families about children's sleep and rest needs. Educators will be sensitive to each child's needs so that sleep and rest times are a positive experience;
- Ensure that all beds/mattresses are clean and in good repair;
- Ensure that bed linen is clean and in good repair. Bed linen is only for use by an individual child;
- Arrange children's beds and cots to allow easy access for children and staff;
- The environment is calm and relaxed for both Educators and children. Educators will sit near resting children and support them by encouraging them to relax and listen to music or stories.
- Remember that children do not need to be "patted" to sleep. By providing a quiet, tranquil environment, children will choose to sleep if their body needs it.
- Encourage children to rest their bodies and minds for 20-30 minutes. If children are awake after this time, they will be provided quiet activities for the duration of rest time.
- Maintain adequate supervision and maintain Educator ratios throughout the rest period.

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CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY (QUALITY AREA 2)



- Assess each child's circumstances and current health to determine whether higher supervision levels and checks may be required.
- Respect family preferences regarding sleep and rest and consider these daily while ensuring children feel safe and secure in the environment. Conversations with families may be necessary to remind families that children will neither be forced to sleep nor prevented from sleeping. Sleep and rest patterns will be recorded daily for families.
- Encourage children to dress appropriately for the room temperature when resting or sleeping. Lighter clothing is preferable, with children encouraged to remove shoes, jumpers, jackets and bulky clothing. The room temperature will be considered to ensure maximum comfort for the children.

4.3 Sleep and Rest in Cots

The Centre Director and Nominated Supervisor of each Centre will ensure that the team of Educators will:

- Give children their bottles before going to bed. Children will not be put in cots or in beds with bottles.
- Observe children at 10-15 minute intervals while they sleep in these rooms. Educators must go into the rooms and physically see babies breathing. The Educator will then officially record this.
- Ensure that cot mattresses are clean, firm and the correct size for the cot frame.
- Make up cots to comply with "SIDS safe sleeping guidelines". Babies will be placed on their backs to sleep, but they will be able to find their own sleeping position. No loose bedding is to be available to the child. Bed linens will be firmly tucked under the mattress to reduce the risk of a child covering their face. Put the baby's feet at the bottom of the cot so the baby cannot slip down under the covers. Tuck the baby in securely so bed linen is not loose. No doonas, duvets, pillows or cot bumpers will be placed in cots.
- Encourage the use of sleeping bags for babies. If they have fitted neck and armholes there is no risk for the child'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 will 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. The education and care service will access the SIDS & Kids resource kit and provide information to families on safe sleeping practices.

Part 5 - Definitions

Northside: Northside Community Service, including all Services operated by both Community Services and Children's Services.

Approved Provider: A person who holds a provider approval under the National Quality Framework. A provider approval authorises a person to apply for one or more service approvals and is valid in all jurisdictions.

Nominated Supervisor: A person who is a certified supervisor, has been nominated by the Approved Provider to accept day-to-day management of the Early Childhood Centre and has consented to that nomination.

Certified Supervisor on Duty: A certified supervisor is placed in day-to-day charge of an education and care service if the approved provider or nominated supervisor nominates the certified supervisor as the person in day-to-day charge, and the certified supervisor accepts this nomination in writing.

Part 6 – Related Documents

Education and Care Services National Regulations

located at: <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/maintop/view/inforce/subordleg+653+2011+cd+0+N>

Safe Sleeping Guidelines – SIDS and Kids

located at: <http://www.sidsandkids.org/safe-sleeping/>

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Part 7 – Policy Status and Details

Document Reference:	Children's Services - Sleep and Rest
Status:	Final
Approval Authority:	Simon Rosenberg – Chief Executive Officer
Signature of Approval Authority:	
Approval Date:	22 March 2016
Effective Date:	22 March 2016
Review Date:	22 March 2017
Expiry Date:	22 March 2017
Functional Unit:	Children's Services
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Part 8 – Revision History

Revision Date	Version No.	Change	Reference Sections
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