

Tottenham War Memorial Early Childhood Centre

Safe Sleeping and Rest Policy

The Centre will facilitate effective care of children by complying with the *Red Nose - Safe Sleeping Guidelines* and Recommendations to minimise the risk of SIDS and other sleeping accidents.

Statutory Legislation and Considerations:

Education and Care Services National Regulations

National Quality Standards

Aim:

Children are active throughout the day and require time/s to relax, to be calm, to stop and recharge. Therefore, routines such as rest/sleep/relaxation are important for children's health and well-being. These routines provide opportunities for further one to one interactions, while soothing songs and music also make rest/sleep/relaxation routines a pleasant experience. While the Centre caters to a wide range of children, ensuring individualised needs are met is important.

To support these family requests educators need to work with children and families to provide appropriate opportunities to meet each child's requirements for sleep/rest and relaxation.

Principles to inform procedures:

- Effective sleep and rest strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and is safe.
- We have a duty of care to ensure children are provided with a high level of safety when sleeping/resting and relaxing every reasonable precaution is taken to protect them from harm.
- Approved Providers are responsible for ensuring sleep and rest procedures are in place.
- Policies and procedures should be based on current research and recommended evidence-based principles and guidelines. Red Nose (formally SIDS and KIDS) is considered the recognised national authority on safe sleeping practices for infants and children.
- Regularly review and update sleep and rest policies and procedures to ensure they are maintained in line with best practice principles and guidelines.
- The Centre should consult with families about their child's individual needs and be sensitive to different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise, associated with sleep and rest.
- Children have different sleep, rest and relaxation needs. Children of the same age can have different sleep patterns which need to be considered within the Centre. Each child's comfort must be provided for and there must be appropriate opportunities to meet each child's sleep, rest and relaxation needs.

Strategies for rest/sleep/relaxation routine:

Approved Providers, Nominated Supervisors and Educators have a duty of care to ensure children are provided with a high level of safety when sleeping/resting and relaxing every reasonable precaution is taken to protect them from harm and hazard.

Educators will:

- Discuss rest/sleep/relaxation routines with families to maximise continuity for children between home and the Centre
- Acknowledge that children's sleeping habits and preferences are diverse
- Use familiar gestures or rituals used by the family to settle young children
- Look for signs in children that rest/sleep/relaxation is needed, prior to the usual routine times
- Support children to move into rest/sleep/relaxation routines

- Discuss with families the need for clean bedding material to suit the climate
- Understand the family perspective and work with families when there is concern about these routines eg when a child shows signs of needing to sleep but the family do not want the child to sleep during the day
- Provide a range of means to provide information to families about their child's day including rest/sleep/relaxation routines
- Maintain adequate supervision and educator ratios throughout the rest period.

Other Considerations:

- How to ensure children who are resting/sleeping are supervised throughout this period and how children who may rest/sleep/relax outside the general routines can be monitored.
- How they can help relax children for rest/sleep/relax – using quiet, soothing voices, slightly darkening the area, relaxation techniques that are supported by the family and calming music can be provided.
- Use of comfort toys especially when children are new to the Centre.
- Wherever possible, allowing children to wake at their own pace as some children may need a gradual reintroduction to the brightness and activity of the room.
- Educators do not ever use rest or sleep routine as punishment for children or as an educator convenience.
- Move children to another type of bedding when required and appropriate.
- Older children are always supervised during rest or sleep or relaxation times.
- Baby sleep areas are monitored, including educators visually accessing the area on a regular basis and writing times on the monitoring sheet.
- Children are never forced to rest/sleep/relax and are never restrained in their bedding. However, there is an expectation that these routines mean that the area is quiet, that soft and low voices are used always and that quiet activities such as drawing or quiet music are available.

Safe Sleeping:

Staff utilise the *Red Nose* recommendations and guidelines

1. Put baby on their back to sleep

- Sleeping on the back reduces the risk. The chance of babies dying is greater if they sleep on their tummies or sides.
- There is an increased risk of death for first time tummy sleepers. Put baby on back to sleep, from birth, unless advised in writing to do otherwise by the infant's medical practitioner. Healthy babies placed to sleep on the back are less likely to choke on vomit than tummy sleeping infants.
- Tummy play is safe and good for babies when they are awake, and an adult is present, but don't put baby on tummy to sleep.
- Older babies can turn over and move around the cot. Put them on their back but let them find their own sleeping position. The risk of SIDS in babies over six months is very low.

2. Sleep baby with face uncovered

- Be careful that the baby's face and head stays uncovered during sleep as this decreases the risk of SIDS
- A good way to do this is to put baby's feet at the bottom of the cot so that the baby can't slip down under the blankets.
- When baby is put to sleep check that:
 - Baby is tucked in securely
 - Cot bedding is not loose
 - There are no quilts, doonas, pillows or cot bumpers in the cot

3. Cigarette smoke is bad for babies

Infant exposure to cigarette smoke increases the risk of SIDS. Ensure that babies have a smoke-free environment always in the centre and all staff will adhere to the "*Smoke Free Workplace Policy*".

To prevent serious sleeping accidents, the Centre will use:

A Safe Cot

For each child use a separate safe and strong cot that meets the Australian Standards for Cots.

A Safe Mattress

- Ensure that the mattress is firm, clean and well-fitting.
- If a portable cot is used, use the mattress that is supplied with the cot. Don't add additional padding under the mattress as baby can get trapped face down in gaps created between the mattress and the cot wall.
- Regularly clean the mattress and the bedding, as per procedure

Safe Bedding

- Remove pillows, quilts, doonas, duvets and lambskin from the cot as these may cover baby's face and make breathing difficult.
- If babies are firmly wrapped or swaddled, it is safer not to cover baby's head.

A Safe Place to Sleep - be aware and avoid these hazards in the infant's sleeping environment:

- **Soft sleeping places** where a toddler or baby's face may get covered such as an adult pillow, a tri-pillow, waterbed or bean bag.
- **Remove dangling cords, jewellery or string**, as these could get caught around a baby's neck.
- **Always do up the restraints when baby is in pram, stroller or bouncer or any other baby/toddler equipment.** It can be dangerous if baby becomes tangled in loose restraints.
- **Make sure that the footrest on the stroller is strong and secure.** A weak footrest may give way and cause a baby to become trapped.

Children sleeping in the cot room will be checked at regular intervals (10-15 minutes) to ensure that they are sleeping safely. Educators must go into the cot room and physically observe that the child is breathing. These times of monitoring when children were checked will be entered onto the monitoring chart for documentation.

Cot room use:

- Room needs to be tidy and not used as storage.
- Cots need to be pulled away from walls so that children can't access windows, curtains or power points whilst in cots.
- The area is well ventilated and have natural lighting.
- Unsafe objects not to be used in the room.
- Bottles to be removed once the child has finished drinking or asleep.

Source:

SIDS and Kids, Safe sleeping child care kit, SIDS, Received September 2006

Health and Safety in Children's Services, Model policies, 2003

Red Nose recommendations and guidelines – internet - <http://rednose.com.au/news>

Updated February 2018