



Rest and safe sleeping policy

Background:

In accordance with Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) an education and care service must take reasonable steps to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of the children being cared for are met, having regard to the ages, developmental stages and individual needs of the children.

Effective rest and sleep strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels secure and safe in a child care environment.

Our policy on rest and sleep is based upon recommendations from the recognised national authority SIDS and Kids.

The service defines 'rest' as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness or tranquility and can include a child being in a state of sleep.

Aim:

- To ensure all children are provided with a high level of safety when resting or sleeping while in care.
- To ensure educators and families are provided with up to date information on safe sleeping practices.
- To ensure rest times are provided throughout the day.
- To ensure rest times are flexible, respond to the individual rest needs of the child and are reflective of parental perspectives.
- To provide a high quality program with a balance of active and passive activities within the daily routine.
- To promote the value of sleep and rest times in the program.

Legislative requirements / Sources:

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 Regulation 81: Sleep and Rest

National Quality Standard: Element 2.1.2: Each child's comfort is provided for and there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation;
Element 2.3.1: Children are adequately supervised at all times
SIDS & Kids Safe Sleeping documents: www.sidsandkids.org/safe-sleeping
SIDS & Kids (2015) SIDS & Kids: Safe sleeping in childcare kit. NSW

Implementation:

For all children:

- Maryland Care & Early Education Centre will provide each child with either a cot (babies and young toddlers) or stretcher bed (older toddlers and preschoolers)
- Light bedding is to be supplied by children's family (a set of cot sheets & blanket in cooler weather) in a material bag or pillow case. All bedding should be labeled with the child's name.
- Families will be consulted regarding their child's rest requirements on enrolment & as educators observe changes in their need for sleep. Rest and sleep times will be documented by educators for parents to view upon collection of their child. Cot room checks are documented every 10 minutes and available to be viewed by families.
- Each day, parents will be asked to indicate their child's sleep/rest requirements on the daily communication sheet.
- Educators will cater for the individual needs of children .
- If a family's beliefs and practices are in conflict with SIDS and Kids we will not offer an alternative practice unless written advice is provided from the family's medical practitioner giving sound medical reasons.
- Quiet and rest times provide the children with the opportunity to develop self-help skills and independence such as; toileting, dressing, making beds and caring for personal items.
- Children will be encouraged to relax in a restful atmosphere. Curtains drawn, lights off, listening to restful stories or music.
- Educators may provide a rub on the back, tummy or forehead for children that require or request assistance to fall asleep.
- Staff will ensure children rest comfortably. This may involve removing or assisting the children to remove shoes, bulky clothing, hair clips and ties ensuring room temperature is suitable and the children have comfortable bedding. Hooded jumpers, bibs and teething necklaces must be removed before resting.
- Comfort toys from home must not contain ribbons, small removable parts or anything that poses a choking risk.
- We prefer not to wake sleeping children nor keep tired children awake. For children that have not rested sufficiently this may contribute to a restless and unsettled remainder of the day. If parents are concerned about their child's

sleeping patterns whilst at care we encourage you to talk to your child's educators.

- We will wake children after a certain time if a letter is written by the parents giving permission for educators to wake their child after a stipulated amount of time.
- Children who do not sleep or wake early from sleep will be offered quiet experiences.

For babies and young toddlers:

- Maryland Care and Early Education follows all safe sleeping guidelines as directed by SIDS and kids.
- Babies will be placed on their back to rest.
- If a medical condition exists that prevents a child from being placed on their back, the alternative resting practice must be directed in writing by the child's medical practitioner.
- If older babies turn over during sleep, allow them to find their own sleeping position, but always lay them on their back when first placing them to rest.
- At no time will a baby's face be covered with linen.
- To prevent a baby from wriggling down under bed linen, they will be placed with their feet closest to the bottom end of the cot.
- Heavy quilts and doonas will not be used as bed linen. Pillows, soft toys, lamb's wool and cot bumpers are not recommended.
- Sleeping bags with a fitted neck and arm holes are an alternative option to bed linen and encourage a baby to rest on their back. Sleeping bags must not have a hood.
- Babies and young children will only be wrapped in light materials such as muslin or cotton.
- Babies will not be overdressed under sleeping bags or wraps.
- Families of infants and young toddlers will be consulted regularly as to the ongoing and changing sleep requirements of their child. Staff will observe younger children for signs of tiredness and respond to the individual rest needs of the child. The sleep needs of infants and toddlers will be respected by staff, including the need for dummies, comfort toys, a specific sleep song or story that assists the child to rest.
- Educators will ensure that cot sides are up and latched when a child is resting or sleeping.

For older toddlers & preschoolers:

- At no time will a toddlers face be covered with bed linen
- Non sleepers will be provided with restful activities books and table activities after they have rested on their beds for a period of time.

- For children attending school the following year a relaxation period will be provided.

Protective behaviours and practices in regards to sleep and rest

- All children who are resting or sleeping will be supervised by staff as per current regulations in regard to ratios
- Students and volunteers will not be left unsupervised when settling children for rest
- All children who have fallen asleep will be monitored regularly. Children in cot rooms will be checked at regular intervals no longer than 10mins
- Adults will not rest or sleep in the same environment as children
- If a child's face becomes covered with bed linen during sleep the covers will be immediately removed from the child's face
- Educators will ensure all stretcher beds and cots are in good repair each day and stretchers are wiped down after every use with neutral.
- Educators will check the environment is safe before placing a baby or child down to sleep or rest. This includes checking there are no hanging cords near cots, that the room temperature is appropriate and that the cot side is up and latched

Provision and maintenance of rest and sleep equipment and environment

- Educators will conduct a safety check of sleep environments throughout the day to ensure they are safe for children
- Hanging cords or strings from blinds, curtains, mobiles or electrical appliances must be tied away from cots or beds and secured to wall
- The service does not permit the use of hot water bottles, electric blankets or heated wheat bags in children's cots or beds
- All new and second hand cots must meet the Australian Standards for cots sold in Australia and be labeled AS 2172. Cots not labeled with the Australian standards will not be used by the service
- Mattresses will be in good condition, clean, firm and must fit the cot base snugly
- Cots and beds will be wiped down between each use
- Each child will have their own bed linen. We provide a small number of spare sets of linen that are laundered between uses

Review:

This policy is the intellectual property of Maryland Care & Early Education Centre and is created with consultation of staff and families attending the service. This policy will be reviewed annually. This policy is available in other languages upon request.

Last Review: August, 2015

Next Review: August, 2016