

Early Learning

Relaxation and Sleep Policy



Policy Statement

Uniting Early Learning is committed to:

- providing a positive and nurturing environment for all children attending the service;
- recognising that children have different requirements for relaxation and sleep, and being responsive to those needs to ensure that children feel safe and secure at the service;
- consulting with parents about their child's individual relaxation and sleep requirements/practices, and ensuring practices at the service are responsive to the values and cultural beliefs of each family;
- its duty of care to all children at the service, while honouring children's rights and agency during relaxation and sleep periods;
- ensuring that adequate supervision is maintained while children are sleeping, resting or relaxing;
- complying with all legislative requirements, standards and current best practice, including recommendations by Red Nose.

Executive Summary

Sleep/rest and relaxation needs of children should always be considered, having regard to the age of children, developmental stages and daily rest requirements. Parents should be consulted in relation to appropriate relaxation and sleep practices for their child; parents in turn are responsible for informing the service about any specific sleep/rest requirements for their child/ren. A holistic and planned approach should be taken so that a range of active and restful experiences are offered to all children on a daily basis. However, should a parent require a sleep practice outside the guidelines, a letter from a medical practitioner is required. A risk minimisation plan for the child is also to be completed. Children's safety will be the first priority.

Sleep/rest and relaxation practices should be responsive to:

- the individual needs of children at the service,
- parenting beliefs, values, practices and requirements,
- the length of time each child spends at the service,
- circumstance or events occurring at a child's home,
- consistency of practice between home and the service,
- a child's general health and wellbeing,
- the educator's ability to supervise sleeping and relaxing children,
- respectful engagements that support the dignity of children,
- the physical environment, including room temperature, lighting, airflow and noise levels.

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Current Environmental Context

The early years of life are a peak period for growth and development, and quality sleep is essential during this period. Early childhood educators can support parents to establish and maintain good sleep habits in children through the environment provided for sleep and rest:

- Children should sleep and rest with their face uncovered.
- Where able, provide a separate, supervised area that is reserved for sleep and rest. This supports the distinction between awake time and sleep time and helps to minimise distractions. (Refer to: Attachment 36b)
- Babies will be provided with cots and educators will follow safe sleep practices as recommended by Red Nose. (Refer to: Attachment 36c)
- Direct children who do not want to sleep into quiet, restful activities instead.
- Maintain good levels of communication with parents and other caregivers to ensure that you know of anything that might have disturbed the sleep of children in your care.
- Inform parents and caregivers about the rest that their child has had during the day. "(Sleep, Grow and Thrive, 2013)

Employers have a responsibility under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to provide a safe and healthy working environment. This duty extends to others present in the workplace, including children and volunteers. Providing a safe environment for children at the service includes; complying with current Australian/New Zealand standards in relation to equipment, such as cots and mattresses (refer to Attachment 36b).

Attachment 36a:- Responsibilities relating to the Relaxation and Sleep Policy

Attachment 36b:- Safe sleep environments and equipment

Attachment 36c:- Safe sleeping practices for babies

Form 36.1 - Sleep Room Check template ([Click here](#))

Form 36.2 - Sleep letter to parent re changes

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Reference/Sources

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

Keeping Children Safe Policy of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, Approved May 2017-

[Click here](#)

- *Hygiene and Infectious Disease Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Workplace Health and Safety Policy-L2*
- *Staffing Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*
- ACECQA *Safe sleep and rest practices* <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/information-sheets/safe-sleep-and-rest-practices>
- *Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for day nursery, hospital and institutional use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2130:1998)*
- *Australian/New Zealand Standard – Cots for household use – Safety Requirements (AS/NZS 2172:2013)*
- Current standards on the SAI Global website at: www.saiglobal.com
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Section 167*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulation 81*
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety*
- Red Nose *Safe Sleeping*. Early childhood educators, e-learning. <https://rednose.com.au/section/elearning>
- SLEEP – Sleep learning for early education professionals. Professional development resources. Early Childhood Education and Care Queensland Government. (last updated October 2018) <https://qed.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/news-publications/sector-reports/sleep>
- Tasmanian *Licensing Standards for Centre Based Child Care Class 4 (2014)* Standard 6.

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by Uniting Early Learning on: 12/03/2019

Review

This policy is to be reviewed by: 17 December 2020

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