

**SLEEP AND RELAXATION POLICY****(M)****Mandatory – Quality Area 2****2.1.1****CSReg Div.2 Reg.50****POLICY** as per new changes/legislation to Sleep and Rest regulations – policy updated 2024.04

We will ensure the child feels safe and secure in the childcare environment and consult with the families about their child's individual needs at sleep/relaxation time. The purpose of *sleep and relaxation for children policy* 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.

To minimise the risk of **SIDS** and other sleeping accidents in babies/infants and children during rest/sleep whilst in care at Outlets Co-operative Neighbourhood House LTD follows the (Red Nose practices)

When a family's beliefs and practices are in conflict with Red Nose, we will not endorse an alternative practice unless we are provided with written advice from a medical practitioner.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, MoC, Committee of Management, Nominated Supervisor, Day-to-Day Supervisor, Staff responsible for the care of children whilst at Outlets, all volunteers and work/student placements involved with the sleep routines of children in care at Outlets Co-operative Neighbourhood House LTD.

In meeting Outlets duty of care, it is a requirement that management and staff implement and adhere to the Centre/Service's *Sleep and Relaxation Policy*. Children Services VIC Reg 50

Background

Our *Sleep and Relaxation Policy* provides our educators, management, co-ordinators, other staff, families and the community with the information they need to support Childrens needs for sleep, and rest are met while attending the service/centre.

Child care workers are responsible for the day-to-day care of many children, which includes time that these children spend asleep.

Child care Centres have a duty of care to ensure that all children in their centre are sleeping safely. Children while sleeping will always be adequately supervised so that educators can supervise childrens safety and wellbeing. Educators will be able to visually check the child's sleeping position, breathing and the colour of the child's lips and skin, body temperature, head position, airway and the child's head face, ensuring they remain uncovered.

Research has found that infants who are placed on the tummy to sleep for the first time are at a very high risk of SIDS.

It is very important to ensure that everyone who cares for babies knows how to put them on the back to sleep from birth.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, SIDS, means that babies die suddenly, without warning while they are asleep and where no cause can be found.

Sids for kids have developed a safe sleeping program with recommendations which have been considered and used to compile this policy. SIDS is the most common cause of death in babies between one month and one year of age. Most babies who die of SIDS are under six months.

More babies die of SIDS in winter than in summer.

The risk of SIDS in babies over six months is extremely low.

It is still not clear what causes SIDS. Some factors are thought to work together to reduce the risk of SIDS, but they may or may not help prevent any one SIDS death.

PROCEDURE

The staff responsible for putting the children down for a rest or sleep will ensure they:

They follow Red Nose Practices - SIDS and Kids website and Safe Sleeping Guidelines on reducing the risk of SIDS, to keep up to date with recommendations and research outcomes conducted.

2023 updated legislation – Port-a-cot, Bassinets and Prams and not permitted to be used at Approved Centres.

Baby sleeping bags and other items are not permitted while children are Sleeping.



Bedding

- Sleep area will be provided.
- Blue Child mats with Sheet fitted and cover small sheet – children attending more than once a week will have named designated drawstring bedding bag.
- Cot for babies and <18mths . [*Parent management educate](#)

Put baby on their back to sleep, from birth.

- Sleeping on the back reduces the risk of SIDS. The chance of babies dying from SIDS is greater if they sleep on their tummies or sides.
- 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.
- Older babies can turn over and move around the cot/mattress. 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.

Sleep baby with face uncovered.

- Be careful the baby's face and head stay 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 baby can't slip down under the blankets. You might decide not to use blankets at all and instead use a safe baby sleeping bag: one with fitted neck and armholes.

When baby is put to sleep check that:

- Baby is tucked in securely – *sleeping bags NOT permitted.
- Cot bedding is not loose.
- There are no quilts, doonas, duvets, pillows or cot bumpers in the cot.
- *Dummy and security toy removed once child asleep. (refrain from using dummies)

Cigarette smoke is bad for babies.

- Infant exposure to cigarette smoke increases the risk of SIDS. Ensure that babies have smoke free environment at all times in the centre, in vehicles or while on excursions in any other location.

Upon enrolment of a child or, on a daily basis, as required the staff responsible for the care of children shall ensure they:

- Consult with families about their child's individual needs and to be aware of the different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise that are associated with rest.
- If a family's beliefs and practices are in conflict with SIDS & Kids, then the service will not endorse an alternative practice, unless the service is provided with written advice from a medical practitioner.
- Outlets has a duty of care to ensure that all children are provided with a high level of safety when resting or sleeping while in care.

The primary safe resting and sleeping practices for children in care at this service are:

- All children will be placed on their back to rest when first being settled for a rest. If a child turns onto their side or stomach during sleep, then allow them to find their own sleeping position.
- All children will rest with their face uncovered.
- Children's rest environments are free from cigarette or tobacco smoke.
- The rest environment, equipment and materials will be safe and free from hazards as detailed in the Hygiene Policy.
- Staff/careers monitor resting children at regular intervals and supervise the rest environment as per licensing regulations/best practice standards.
- Staff member assigned to view children sleeping at all times.
- Light bedding is the preferred option, which must be tucked in to prevent the baby from pulling bed linen over their head. Sleeping bags are not permitted (if parents supply, refer to legislation – not permitted)
- At no time will a baby's face be covered with bed 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/mattress.



To prevent serious sleep/rest accidents, the staff responsible for the children shall ensure:

- All children who are resting/sleeping will be supervised by staff/careers.
- Students or volunteers will not be left unsupervised when settling children for a rest.
- All children who have fallen asleep in the service will be monitored regularly within the time frame of 10-15min

The staff responsible for settling children for rest/sleep will follow the below practices for resting children. These make up the general best practice standards.

- meet the individual needs of children;
- maintain health and safety practices;
- minimise any distress or discomfort;
- acknowledge children's emotions, feelings and fears;
- avoid using settling and resting practices as a behaviour guidance strategy because the child begins to relate the rest environment, which should be calm and secure
- understand that young children (especially from 0 to 3 years of age) settle confidently when they have formed bonds with familiar and trusted staff/careers. Services should prioritise their staffing needs with individuals who are familiar with the young children in care before using relief staff whom children may not know.

Provision and maintenance of rest and sleep equipment and environment:

- Outlets childcare staff will carry out a safety check of the resting environments, equipment and/or aids, on a daily basis. If staff/careers identify any hazards they will notify the Approved Provider/CEO immediately.
- Hanging cords or strings from blinds, curtains, mobiles or electrical appliances must be tied away from cots or mattresses to prevent a child from choking or hanging.
- The service does not permit the use of hot water bottles, electric blankets or heated wheat bags in children's bedding or on mattresses. These items present a risk of children either being scalded or developing hyperthermia (overheating).

When Cots are used for rest/sleep time the Responsible person for their purchase or use shall ensure:

The following information is directly referenced to: SIDS & Kids. (2005c)

- All new and second-hand cots sold in Australia must meet the Australian Standards for Cots and be labelled AS 2172. Cots that are not labelled with the Australian Standards will not be used by the service.
- Staff/careers will ensure that all cots are placed in area that is a safe distance from heaters, electrical appliances and hanging cords or string.
- Staff/careers will not place an extra mattress or padding under or over the manufacturer's cot mattress.
- Staff/careers will look for the following hazard signs:
- loose or broken parts;
- missing or loose knobs, screws or sharp catches;
- peeling, cracking paint or splintered wood; and
- any design flaw that reduces the safety of the cot. For example, missing or broken safety latches to sides.

Mattresses are the main bedding base used for rest/sleep time for children in care at Outlets, the centre will ensure the following:

• The Hygiene policy will be always adhered to in conjunction with the above sleep and relaxation procedures

- [Prams/strollers Port-a-cots are NOT used as per 2023 legislation - *Parent management/education](#)

The following Rest and sleep times will form the general basis for designated sleep time, yet the following practices will be adhered to:

- Outlets childcare service encourages flexible resting period for babies and younger toddlers in accordance with parent/guardian input.



- A designated rest/sleep period will occur after lunch for older toddlers and preschoolers if they still require this time.
- Quiet activities are set up for those children not requiring a sleep that will remain stimulating in accordance with the childcare program.
- Individual resting needs of children will be identified by considering an example of some of the following, when a child is unwell, taking medication, after immunisation, stress or a change in sleep patterns

The following will be considered and avoided when allocating a safe place for rest/sleep

- Soft sleeping places where a toddler or baby's face may get covered
- Remove dangling cords or string, as these could get caught around baby's neck.
- Keep heaters and electrical appliances well away to avoid the risk of overheating, burns or electrocution, and keep them away from mobiles, curtains, or other flammable materials.
- Don't have wall mounted heaters in close proximity to where children or infant's sleep.
- Don't use electric blankets, hot water bottles or wheat bags for babies or young children. *A baby who becomes too hot has an increased risk of SIDS.
- 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 baby to become trapped.
- Ensure that nothing is obscuring staff visibility and supervision.

Related documents and policies

Children's Service Act (Vic) 1996

Children's service Regulations (Vic) 32/2020 Reg.50

National Quality Standards NQS

Minister Rules 2017

Child Safe Environment Policy

Child Enrolment procedure

Sids for kids brochure "Safe Sleeping", lullabies aren't the only thing you need to know to put your baby to sleep (Red Nose Practices) www.sidsandkids.org

Parent Information Handbook

Duty of Care

OHS Policy

Hygiene Policy

Childcare room program

Routine

Safety Checks

Risk management

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Outlets Co-operative Neighbourhood House LTD on 22/05/2020

REVIEW DATE: 23/05/2023 - UPDATED 13/11/2023

- updated 15 April 2024