



SLEEP REST AND RELAXATION

Links

Education and Care Services National Regulations: 81; 168
National Quality Standard: 2.1.1

Policy statement

Tropics Early Learning believes that rest, sleep and relaxation should be a pleasant, safe experience, where routines are adapted to meet the individual needs of children and families. Effective rest and sleep strategies are important factors in ensuring a child feels safe, secure and develops a sense of belonging within the service.

As per the Education and Care National Regulations, this policy is based on recommendations from Red Nose. If a family's beliefs and practices are in conflict with Red Nose, we cannot endorse an alternative practice, unless we are provided with written advice from a medical practitioner, or other specialist.

Implementation

We will ensure that the following requirements are implemented in our service:

- A quiet and restful environment will be provided for children who require sleep and rest periods that is within hearing and observation range for educators to closely monitor children.
- We will meet individual preferences for children and families, in relation to sleep, rest and relaxation, if they fit within the recommendations of Red Nose.
- We will communicate daily with families about their child's routines that are in place at the service, and what their routines are at home.
- Children's rest environments will be free from cigarette or tobacco smoke.
- Children who do not require sleep or rest will be provided with appropriate play activities.
- We will regularly conduct safety checks of the resting environments and notify the Nominated Supervisor of any hazards.
- We will ensure that, throughout rest periods, ratios are maintained, as per the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Safe resting practices – Babies, Toddlers and Pre-schoolers

- Children will always be placed on their back to rest.
- If a medical condition exists that prevents a child from being placed on their back, the child's medical practitioner must direct the alternative resting practice in writing.
- If children turn over in their sleep, and they are at a developmental level where they can roll back and forth, they will be allowed to find their own sleeping position. If they are not yet able to roll back and forth, they will be repositioned onto their back (usually up to about 5 - 6 months of age).
- At no time will a child's face be covered with bed linen. We will provide fixed sheets, so that they cannot be pulled up over the child's face.
- Pillows, soft toys, lamb's wool and cot bumpers are not recommended, and will not be used in cots

- 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, although they will not be used if they have a hood.
- Wraps may be used, up until the child has developed the startle reflex (around 3 months of age), after this time, arms must be free of the wrap. Wraps will not be used if the child is at an age where they can roll from back to front to back again.
- Dummies may be used, but they will not be attached to chains.
- Calm, relaxing background music will be played.

Supervision of resting children

- All children who are resting or sleeping will be supervised by educators.
- Adults will not rest or sleep in the same environment as a child or group of children.
- All children who have fallen asleep in the Centre will be monitored regularly with specific attention to breathing patterns. Babies will be monitored every 10 minutes, with times recorded.
- Educators will observe the following:
 - the position of each child's body in their cot/on their mattress.
 - each child's breathing rate. If a child is not breathing, then the educator will commence the Centre's First Aid plan for a non-breathing child.
 - the arrangement of bed linen. If a child's face is covered, the educator will immediately uncover the child's face.
 - educators will monitor the security of each cot (e.g. are the sides of the cot up and/or locked) and environment safety (e.g. hanging cords near cots).
 - the temperature of the environment, to avoid overheating.

Settling children for rest

- Babies who cannot hold their bottles will be held and fed by an educator. If a child is placed in a cot with their bottle, they will be supervised at all times while drinking it. The bottle will be removed from the cot when empty, or when the child has fallen asleep.
- No toys will be left in the cots. If a child needs a security toy as a comforter it will be taken out once the child has fallen asleep (e.g. teddy bears).
- The techniques and strategies for settling children before and during a rest period will vary according to the needs of each child and the wishes of families.

The rest environment and equipment

- Educators will conduct safety checks of the resting environments and notify the Nominated Supervisor of any hazards.
- All cots will meet the Australian Safety Standards for Cots.
- Educators will ensure that all cots are placed in an area that is a safe distance from electrical appliances and hanging cords or string.
- Educators will not place an extra mattress or padding under or over the manufacturer's cot mattress.
- Artificial heating will not be used in the environments.
- Educators 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.
- Educators will regularly assess whether older babies or toddlers have the ability to climb over the sides of a cot as this presents a safety risk. In consultation with the family, such children will be encouraged to rest on a bed.

Prams and strollers

- Prams and strollers will not be used for sleeping children. If a child falls to sleep in a pram, they will be immediately transferred into a cot.

Hygiene practices

- Beds will be cleaned with warm water and detergent between children, if they have been soiled, they will be cleaned with warm water and detergent, and placed in the sun.
- Bed linen will be changed between children using the beds.
- In the case of bedding being soiled it will be taken to the laundry, and placed in a bucket to soak with a small amount of disinfectant, then washed separately to other dirty laundry.
- Special bed linen or sleeping aids, clothes (for example, sleeping bags and comforters such as "silky's") that are supplied by the child's family are to be washed at least weekly by the child's family.

Sleepwear

Our educators will:

- Monitor the temperature of the rest environment and address children's clothing needs.
- Ensure that children are not resting in jumpers with hoods and cords that may contribute to a higher risk of choking.
- Sleepwear should take into consideration the child's age, temperature of the rest environment, bed linen used for resting, and the child's individual needs and the request of the child's family.

Sources: *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011; National Quality Standard; Early Years Learning Framework; Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 2172:2010, Cots for household use – Safety requirement; Red Nose; Staying Healthy 2013.*

Policy Redeveloped February 2023 (see archived Policies for previous versions)

Date of review	Modifications made	Approved
February 2023	Redeveloped policy	April 2023