



## Children's Comfort, Rest and Relaxation Policy

**Policy Number:** 1

**Date Updated:** 27/07/2017

### **Rationale and Policy Considerations**

The education and care service understands it has a duty of care to ensure that children are provided with a nurturing environment that provides for children's needs for comfort, rest and relaxation. Children's health and wellbeing is fundamental to their development. Children need to be supported to feel a sense of belonging and comfort within the education and care environment. Experiences that promote awareness of care and safety for themselves and others will assist children to become competent and independent, and develop valuable life skills.

The Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012 requires that the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor take reasonable care to protect children's health and safety. The SIDS Foundation provides guidelines for children's safety whilst sleeping, and relevant health authorities provide information on children's comfort and wellbeing.

### **Legislation and Government Requirements**

- Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012.
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012.
- Federal and State Health and Occupational Health & Safety Legislation

### **Needs**

#### **Children's**

A safe and caring environment in which their needs for comfort, rest and relaxation are met. Ability to choose appropriate clothing for comfort and participation in activities and experiences.

#### **Families'**

Their child's health, wellbeing, comfort and safety is assured and cultural needs recognised and addressed. Young children's routines for sleep and rest which are in place at home are carried through to the education and care service whenever possible.

#### **Educators**

Children are to be dressed appropriately for play and activities. Families understand children's clothing needs and support policy implementation. A comfortable, safe sleep environment for children which meets each child's individual needs; information on latest research and best practices that reduce the risk of SIDS; strategies to monitor care during sleep and rest times.

#### **Management**

Educators to role model appropriate dress standards. Ensure all equipment provided meets Australian Standards. Ensure educators have up to date information on best practice safety precautions for children's sleep, rest and comfort. Provide information sessions and printed material (in relevant languages to the service community) on reducing the risks of SIDS and other pertinent topics.

### **Scope**

This policy is written for children, families, staff and visitors of Merino Court Childcare Centre

### **Policy Statement**

Educators will consult with families in regard to their child's clothing needs for play experiences both indoors and outdoors, and will ensure each child's individual needs are met. Educators will consider children's comfort and safety at all times. In the pre-school environment educators will adjust each child's clothing throughout the day when necessary. School age children will be reminded to adjust their own clothing as necessary.



The staff will talk to children about appropriate clothing for different weather conditions, clothing for sun protection and different fashions and traditional clothing from around the world. Programs will include opportunity for dress-ups as well as allowing time for children to attempt to dress themselves and put their own shoes and socks on. Staff will be patient with new attempts and provide assistance before frustration sets in.

We believe that rest is an important part of the child's day and encourage all children to have a quiet period where they can relax and rejuvenate. This part of the day allows the children to prepare themselves for the afternoon activities, and by resting, are better able to utilise the experiences we provide

Educators will consult with families at all times in regard to their child's sleeping/rest patterns and will develop procedures to ensure each child's individual needs are met. Sleep procedures and sleep equipment will take into account current health and safety advice from recognised health and safety authorities. There will be a comfortable place and experiences that promote rest and relaxation provided for children at all times.

## Policy Principles

### Clothing

- Educators will discuss appropriate dress with children in relation to:
  - current weather conditions and differing seasons
  - indoor or outdoor play
  - different activities.
- Children will be required to wear clothing that will provide protection from harmful UV rays in the warmer months. Children are required to wear shirts that cover their shoulders and neck. Therefore singlets and summer tops with the back missing will be changed for a t-shirt or collared shirt upon arrival at the centre. (Refer to Sun Protection Policy.)
- Hats and sunscreen must be worn whenever the staff and children are engaged in outdoor activities. Legionnaire, bucket or broad brim hats that cover the ears, neck, face and nose need to be provided by families and worn. Most skin cancers appear on the head and neck and are linked to lifetime exposure to UV rays.
- Families and children will be consulted about individual clothing needs, preferences and cultural requirements, and will make every effort to address these issues within the service's requirements for children's health and safety.
- Children will be encouraged to communicate their needs for comfort and assistance, and develop independence and competence in their own personal hygiene, care and safety.
- Educators will ensure that young children and babies are appropriately dressed for their age, mobility, experiences and activities within the service
- Sleeping babies will wear clothes to keep them comfortably warm, but not hot and educators will ensure sleeping babies heads and faces are uncovered to prevent the baby from overheating, in line with SIDS recommendations.
- Educators will encourage children's independence in dressing and undressing and allow sufficient time for children to practice and master these skills within the daily routines of the service.
- The service has a limited supply of spare clothing to ensure children are kept comfortable and dry at all times. Spare clothing, from daycare, that goes home with children will need to be washed and returned for future use.
- Children should arrive at daycare in comfortable footwear that is suitable should we decide to go on an impromptu walking excursion. Children will be given the choice as to whether they want to wear their shoes all day or to take them off. The young children also require shoes as the ground gets hot outside during summer.
- Soiled/wet clothing will not be rinsed or washed at the service as this can spread germs. Soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag, tied firmly to prevent leakage, and returned to the family when they arrive to collect their child.
- Where children have special support needs or are pre-school age, families are required to bring a bag with at least one change of clothing for their child. Children in nappies or toilet training should be provided with more than one change of clothing.
- Parents are asked to label each piece of their child's clothing and shoes, to avoid loss or any mix-up in clothing.

- The service will provide protective clothing to be worn during messy activities and bibs at mealtimes for the younger children.
- Families are encouraged to not send their children to daycare in good clothes. While we make every effort to wear aprons during messy play, we will not be liable for stained clothes as accidents do occur and paint always seems to find the smallest gap!
- Educators will role model appropriate clothing at all times. (Refer to Educator/Staff Clothing Policy)
- Dress-up clothes will be of a suitable size and variety to meet the needs of all children involved in the experience. They will be washed at the end of the program ready for the next use.
- The centre welcomes any donations of suitable spare clothes or dress-ups.

### **Rest and Relaxation**

- Families are asked to arrive before 10.30am to avoid disrupting the other children as they rest.
- Educators will provide an opportunity for children to sleep/rest or relax within the service's daily routine.
- Educators will encourage children to sleep in order to meet their individual developmental needs.
- Children will not be forced to sleep at any time. Children are not forced to sleep but are expected to have a rest on their beds while the other children go to sleep. Quiet activities will be made available for children to experience once the other children are sleep.
- Sleep/rest times will be regarded as a positive, pleasant experience within the service and educators will make every effort to provide a relaxing and comfortable sleep environment for all children. Educators will ensure children are dressed appropriately and closely monitored (within hearing range and regularly observed) whilst sleeping.
- Children will be sat with until they are asleep. Children sleeping in the cot room will be checked every five minutes. Children in the other rooms will have a staff present in the room at all times.
- The sides of the cots will always be raised when an educator is not sitting with them.
- Sleep times will be recorded in the day book for parents to view.
- Jumpers and shoes will be taken off for rest time so that the children do not get too hot and will have something warm to put on when they wake up. Any clothing with hoods or cords will also be removed for sleep.
- Children requiring a bottle will be given it before they go to bed or not left unattended until they have finished and it can be taken from them.
- Each child's bedding will be washed at least once a week or after soiling in line with Health, Hygiene and Infection Control Policy. Those who share a bed have their sheets washed in between each child's use.
- Comforters and/or security toys may be bought in for sleep/rest periods; however such items must not impact on the safety of children whilst sleeping. Dummies will have their cords removed before sleep time.
- Educators will ensure their knowledge and understanding of recommendations from SIDS and Kids is current and applicable. Where possible staff will implement recommendations from SIDS and Kids within the service's sleep/rest routines. Other factors such as age of the child, cultural needs and requests from families will also be considered when tailoring individual sleeping patterns.
- Each room will evaluate their sleep and rest procedure every year and make any necessary changes.
- School age children have access to comfortable spaces away from the main activity areas, where they may relax or undertake quiet activities either alone or with their friends.
- Educators will be aware of children's needs for relaxation and will encourage children that are tired after a day at school or over excited after vigorous activity, to calm themselves by reading, listening quietly to music or quietly chatting with their friends.
- Children will be consulted on the rules and routines that relate to the comfort of individuals and the group.

### **SIDS Recommendations**

- While at the centre, all infants will be put to bed according to the recommended sleeping position.
  - Infants will be placed on their backs
  - Infants' feet will be placed at the bottom of the cot with the sheet folded back in the centre of the bed. There will be no loose bed linen.
  - The room will be smoke free and not over-heated. The cots will be placed away from heaters or electrical appliances.

- Pillows, doonas, quilts, soft toys and bumper pads will not be placed in the cot.
- Heads will not be covered.
- Cots, beds and blankets will all be maintained so they are safe and meet Australian Standards.
- Ensure no dangling cords or strings.
- Sleeping equipment at the education and care service will adhere to Australian Standards and current health and safety advice from recognised authorities. The **SIDS Safe Sleeping Checklist** containing recommendations from SIDS will be completed in line with Maintenance of a Safe Environment Policy.
- The service will provide information for parents on current safe sleeping practices.

#### Related Documents

- **Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010(Vic)** - Section 3(2)(a); 167
- **Education and Care Services National Regulations** -81, 101, 176, 166, 168
- **National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care (Nov 2010)** Element 2.1.2; Element 2.1.3; Element 2.3.1; Element 2.3.2; Element 3.1.2
- **Early Years Learning Framework for Australia** - Practice: Holistic approaches; Responsiveness to children - Outcomes: 3
- **Framework for School Age Care in Australia** - Practice: Holistic approaches; Collaboration with children - Outcomes: 3
- Procedure for monitoring children who are sleeping
- **SIDS Safe Sleeping Checklist**

#### Links to other policies

- Educator/Staff Clothing
- Maintenance of a Safe Environment
- Occupational Safety and Health
- Sun Protection
- Supervision

#### Sources

- Anti Cancer Council of Victoria
- The Cancer Council, Western Australia
- Stonehouse, A. "Children's clothing in child care", QIAS Factsheet #15
- SIDS and Kids website, [www.sidsandkids.org](http://www.sidsandkids.org) accessed 13/1/12
- [www.pscalliance.org.au](http://www.pscalliance.org.au)

#### Further Sources

**National Health and Medical Research Council - *Staying Healthy in Child Care - 4<sup>th</sup> Edition 2005*** - Retrieved April 17, 2011, from [http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files\\_nhmrc/file/publications/synopses/ch43.pdf](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/file/publications/synopses/ch43.pdf)

**Sids and Kids - *Safe Sleeping*** - Retrieved April 17, 2011, from <http://www.sidsandkids.org/safe-sleeping/>

**Sids and Kids - *Child Care Service resources*** - Retrieved April 17, 2011, from <http://www.sidsandkids.org/safe-sleeping/child-care-workers/>

**Kidsafe Australia - links to state/territory websites** - Retrieved 17 April 2011, from <http://www.kidsafe.com.au/>

**SAI Global - portal for buying Australian Standards** - Retrieved 17 April 2011, from <http://infostore.saiglobal.com/store2/>



**Document History**

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