Children’s Comfort, Rest and Relaxation

RATIONALE & 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 Act 2010 requires that the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor/Coordinator 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.

Philosophy

Documented approach to providing for children’s health and wellbeing; approach to educator/staff professionalism and responsible conduct.

Legislation and Government Requirements

Federal and State Health and Occupational Health & Safety Legislation (Check your State or Territory legislation).

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010(Vic) (or corresponding legislation)

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Children's needs

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’ needs

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.

Educator/Staff needs

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 needs

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.

www.pscalliance.org.au
National Quality Framework

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

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.

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 recognized health and safety authorities. There will be a comfortable place and experiences that promote rest and relaxation provided for children at all times.

Strategies for policy implementation

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. (Refer to Sun Protection Policy.)
- 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 will supply sufficient spare clothing to ensure children are kept comfortable and dry at all times.

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 provide at least one change of clothing for their child in the child’s bag. 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.

Children will be required to wear their shoes whilst outdoors, to avoid injury or insect stings.

Educators will role model appropriate clothing at all times. (Refer to Educator/Staff Clothing Policy)

**Rest and relaxation**

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. Quiet activities will be made available for children to experience whilst other children 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.

Each child’s bedding will be washed at least once a week or after soiling in line with Health, Hygiene and Infection Control Policy.

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.

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 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.

**Recommended by SIDS**

Recommended sleeping position for infants.

– Laying on back.
– Sleep baby with face uncovered.
– Place baby with feet at the bottom of the cot.

Recommended Equipment.

– Ensure equipment meets Australian Standards.
– No loose bed linen.
Ensure no pillows, doonas and cot bumpers are in the cot.

Other considerations

- Room is free from smoke.
- Ensure no dangling cords or strings.
- Cots are placed away from heaters or electrical appliances.

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.

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.

Procedures

Services may find the following list of example procedures, useful tools in the implementation of this policy. List your services precise steps for achieving each action. Ask yourself when, how, where and who is responsible for what actions.

- Laundering procedures
- Procedure for monitoring children who are sleeping
- SIDS Safe Sleeping Checklist
- Standard hygiene procedure
- Toileting procedure

Links to other policies

The following policies may be linked to this policy:

- Educator/Staff Clothing
- FDC Assessments
- FDC Educators Monitoring Support and Supervision
- Maintenance of a Safe Environment
- Occupational Safety and Health
- Sun Protection
- Supervision
Further sources


