

POLICY & PROCEDURAL STATEMENTS

Topic: Early Learning – Sleep and Rest for Children and Infants

Policy: The safety and wellbeing of each child in our care is the highest priority at Avenue Neighbourhood House @ Eley (ANH@E) Early Learning Centre. During rest and sleep times, ANH@E will follow the current safe sleeping practices and recommendations by Red Nose Australia to create a safe sleep environment.

ANH@E will ensure the baby feels safe and secure in the environment and consult with families about their child's individual needs at sleep/relaxation time. When a family's beliefs and practices are against the Red Nose recommendations, we will not endorse an alternative practice unless we are provided with written advice from a medical practitioner.

ANH@E will ensure the needs for sleep and rest of children and infants being educated and cared for at the Centre have regard to their ages, development stages, and individual needs.

Sleep can be a constant issue for many early childhood educators and care providers, and the complicated balancing act required to keep the children's wellbeing aligned with parental expectation can be difficult to achieve. To address conflicts like this and ensure the safety and wellbeing of children in care, the procedures within this policy will be implemented in line with current Red Nose Australia recommended evidence-based practices.

Relevant Legislation and Standards:

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (Cth).
- Education and Care Services National Regulations.
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety.

Definitions

Centre refers to Avenue Neighbourhood House @ Eley (ANH@E) Early Learning.

Rest as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness, or tranquillity and can include a child being in a state of sleep.

Responsibilities

ANH@E Early Learning Centre, including the Responsible Person, Nominated Supervisor(s) and Certified Supervisors:

- Have a duty of care to ensure children are provided with a high level of safety when sleeping and resting and every reasonable precaution is taken to protect them from harm and hazard.
- Will follow procedures based on current Red Nose Australia evidence-based principles and guidelines.

- Will regularly review and update this policy to ensure it is maintained in line with National Quality Standards and Education and Care Services National Regulations.
- Will receive information and training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of any changes in practices and procedures and their responsibilities in implementing these.
- Will consult with families about their child's individual needs and be sensitive to different values and parenting beliefs, cultural or otherwise, associated with sleep and rest (please refer to Family Beliefs and Requests within this policy).
- A Sleep and Rest Risk Assessment will be conducted every 12 months or after a new risk is identified.

Procedures

- A designated sleeping area is setup with cots and mattresses.
- The sleeping area has heating/cooling set to a temperature of 22 degrees, with ventilation and air purifier running at all times.
- At Orientation, staff will inform parents or caregivers of the current recommended Red Nose Australia safe sleeping recommendations and ANH@E sleep and rest policy and procedures.
- Sleep and relaxation times are an essential part of the day for all the children in the Centre. Some of the children use this time to sleep, others to play quietly in a peaceful and relaxing environment.
- The baby's/child's sleep routine at the Centre is developed with parent/guardian help, including specific health care needs to complement the home routine. Any requests parents/guardians may have, such as limiting sleep times or additional relaxation times, can be discussed in consultation with educators. This will be documented on the child's file.
- The child is welcome to bring along any security items, such as a dummy, blanket, or special toy. Dummies with chains, ribbons, strings, beads or cords attached to dummies will not be permitted.
- Sleeping bags may be provided for children and are permitted in cots only
- All bedding linen is supplied by ANH@E. Each child will be supplied with bed bag containing own sheet and blanket.
- At ANH@E the child will never be forced to sleep but encouraged to either relax by reading or to play quietly. The playrooms and indoor/outdoor program are always set up with quiet activities for children who do not require a formal sleep or relaxation time.
- An infant's individual sleep pattern at home is used for the basis of establishing a sleep routine at the Centre. On enrolment, early learning educators will enquire about the infant's sleep routine and discuss with parents/guardians how their child's individual needs can be accommodated within the Centre's routine.
- Babies under twelve (12) months old will be placed on their back only to sleep unless directed in writing from a medical practitioner.
- Babies under twelve (12) months of age will be placed at the bottom of the cot to sleep with light bedding and should be firmly tucked in at the bottom. A safe infant sleep bag with fitted arm and neck holes can be an alternative.

- Should a baby under twelve (12) months of age move and fall asleep on their side or stomach they will be placed onto their back by a staff member (once they are in a deep sleep).
- A safe and strong cot will be provided that meets the Australian Standard AS/NZS 2172:2003 for cots.
- The mattress will be firm, clean and well fitted.
- Pillows, quilts, or soft toys will not be used in a cot.
- Babies should sleep with their face uncovered.
- To wrap a baby, we will use only cotton sheet. The Red Nose Australia guidelines for [*Wrapping Babies and Safe Wrapping*](#) will be followed. Parents will be referred to these guidelines for safe methods to wrap babies.
- Educators will create a safe, peaceful and relaxing environment at sleep/relaxation time by lowering the lights and playing soothing music.
- Educators will spend special time helping each of the children to bed whilst encouraging independence in dressing and undressing (age appropriate).
- Each baby/child's nappy is checked prior to sleep time and changed if necessary.
- Excess clothing is removed to avoid overheating and safety.
- Educators spend time settling each baby and child so that going to sleep is a pleasant experience.
- Sleeping children are supervised at all times. Supervising staff are within sight and hearing distance to be able to assess breathing and colour of skin to ensure their safety and wellbeing.
- Educators will document your child's sleep times and notify parents when they collect child.
- Educators will maintain the sleep equipment through a daily check list.
- No bassinet
- Top to tail configuration is used in beds to reduce spread of infection/germs

Family Beliefs and Requests

- If a family's beliefs and requests conflict with current Red Nose Australia recommended evidence-based guidelines, the Nominated Supervisor at ANH@E will need to determine if there are exceptional circumstances that allow for alternate practices. It is expected that in these exceptional circumstances the Centre would only endorse the practice, with the written support from the infant's registered medical practitioner.
- In all other circumstances, the Nominated Supervisor and early learning educators will not endorse practices requested by a family, if they differ with Red Nose Australia recommendations.

Sources

www.rednose.org.au

www.ncac.gov.au

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Effective Date	05 June 2024

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